

Marketing Transit Sustainability: SouthWest Transit Final Campaign Book



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UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA
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SOUTHWEST TRANSIT FINAL CAMPAIGN BOOK

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Through the RCP project at the University of Minnesota, a student communications team in Hyejoon Rim's Strategic Communications Campaign Class known as Keena/Stanley designed a strategic communications campaign for SouthWest Transit. SouthWest Transit is a commuter public transportation based out of Eden Prairie, Minnesota. They service the public transportation needs of those who live in the southwest suburbs of the Twin Cities and work in Minneapolis. SouthWest Transit also provides public transit for students who live in the southwest suburbs but attend classes at Normandale Community College and the University of Minnesota. SouthWest Transit's goal is to increase awareness of their new Sustainability initiative.

Keena/Stanley's objective was to help SouthWest achieve their goal through effective strategic communication. In Keena/Stanley's first stage of the project, we conducted secondary research to learn more about the history of SouthWest transit as well as public transportation trends and practices at the state level and nationally. Following that, we conducted a communications audit which examined existing SouthWest Transit strategic communications. Once we finished our secondary research, we moved on to conducting our own primary research through a series of surveys and in-depth interviews. This research was targeted at our identified primary target public: UMN students and recent college graduates (millennials). We also identified a secondary target public of existing riders. Our research yielded a few key insights, as listed below:

- Students are generally aware of sustainable practices and place importance on working toward environmental sustainability; they feel responsible for the environment, and want companies to place importance on that, too.
- Students are also somewhat aware of how to incorporate sustainable practices in their daily life.
- Students generally do not engage in eco-friendly practices that require additional work or donation of time or money.
- A sustainability campaign is beneficial among students because it draws on what they value, and should target why SouthWest Transit's services are a convenient way to practice environmental sustainability.

At the core of our research, we had two very important takeaways: our target public was largely unaware of SouthWest Transit but they were very willing to support organizations that support environmental or sustainability causes. These big ideas led us to our objectives, which drove the design of our campaign plan:

1. To increase awareness of the *sustainable SouthWest Transit brand* among University of Minnesota students by 25% by the end of the 2016 fiscal year.
2. To increase awareness of the *services* SouthWest Transit offers among University of Minnesota students by 20% by the end of the 2016 fiscal year.
3. Increase the number of University of Minnesota students who ride SouthWest Transit by 10% by the end of the 2016 fiscal year.
4. To increase awareness of SouthWest Transit as a *sustainable* transportation option among current SouthWest riders by 50% by the end of the 2016 fiscal year.

Using these insights and objectives, we came up with our guiding creative big idea of *Going Green to Save Green*. We would execute this idea through a series of robust strategic communications tactics. For our primary target public, we recommend that SouthWest Transit get involved with a number of UMN events including Welcome Week and the Transportation Fair, just to name a few. In order to help implement these tactics and to increase brand awareness, we also suggested for SouthWest Transit to employ students as brand ambassadors. For our secondary public, we recommended digital based communications directly to riders and a social media campaign that involved a sustainability oriented contest, among other ideas. After devising these tactics, we outlined a budget provided by Virginia and established a timeline for the implementation of tactics. We concluded our efforts with suggestions to evaluate the effectiveness of the campaign through a 300 student survey. We strongly believe our thorough research and collaboratively sourced tactics will serve the strategic communications needs for SouthWest Transit's Sustainability initiative well into the future.

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INTRODUCTION

SouthWest Transit is a publically held transit provider for the South West metro area of the Twin Cities. Founded in 1986, SouthWest Transit now serves the cities of Eden Prairie, Chanhassen, Chaska, and Carver (Fyten & Stowers, 2015). SouthWest Transit is a growing commission, serving up to 1 million rides a year, with current rides primarily focused on commuting to and from the heart of the Twin Cities. SouthWest Transit has recently expanded their services to include SouthWest Prime, an on-demand ride service that is only available in the cities of Eden Prairie, Chanhassen, Chaska, and Carver.

In 2015, SouthWest Transit began a rebranding process, accompanied by the addition of several new services. As part of the ongoing rebranding timeline, Keena || Stanley was asked to develop a campaign plan for an upcoming push for a SouthWest Transit brand that is associated with environmental sustainability in the minds of consumers.

SECONDARY RESEARCH

Organizational Background

As previously stated, SouthWest Transit is a publically held transit provider for the South West metro area of the Twin Cities that now serves the cities of Eden Prairie, Chanhassen, Chaska, and Carver (Fyten & Stowers, 2015). SouthWest Transit is a growing commission, serving up to 1 million rides a year, with room for expansion. The rides SouthWest Transit offers are primarily focused on commuting to and from the heart of the Twin Cities. Each ride costs between \$2.25 and \$3.00 (SouthWest Transit, 2015). SouthWest Transit has recently expanded their services to include SouthWest Prime, an on-demand ride service that is only available in the cities of Eden Prairie, Chanhassen, Chaska, and Carver for \$3.00 per ride.

SouthWest Transit is governed by the SouthWest Transit Commission, comprised of 7 members (SouthWest Transit 2014 Annual Report). The three primary cities of SouthWest Transit--Eden Prairie, Chanhassen, and Chaska--each have one elected official and one member of the public within the commission. The final seat of the SouthWest Transit Commission is held by a "Rider's Representative." The ultimate goal the of the SouthWest Commission is to represent the public's transit needs through planning, policy development, and financial management.

Finances

SouthWest Transit is funded by state, local, federal grants, and as well as SouthWest Transit's reserve funds. Because they are a public transit company, they do not face any direct competition in their primary service. The SouthWest Prime service, however, does compete with the ride-hailing services Uber and Lyft. Ridership increased 7% between Nov. 2013 and 2014, and is expected to remain at similar levels through the end of FY2015. Revenues are expected to increase from additional services such as SouthWest Prime (SouthWest Transit Annual Financial Report, 2015).

State of the Industry

Nationally, public transit is near its most popular in history. It is currently a \$58 billion industry and employs roughly 400,000 people (Public Transit Facts). Locally, Metro Transit is one of the largest public transit systems in the country and has recently expanded their light rail services with the new Green Line (About Metro Transit). Given the state of public transit, both locally and nationally, SouthWest Transit stands to gain much through stronger advertising to increase ridership and inform citizens in their service area of their services - new and existing.

In terms of sustainability conversation, the topic is not unique to one industry, but rather a growing trend among consumers. According to Mintel, “green” consciousness is on the rise, particularly among younger consumers, and today’s consumer does consider the environmental impact of the services and products they purchase (Mintel, 2014). For the public transit industry, this suggests a potential future trend toward green marketing to emphasize how riding a bus or train decreases the negative impact on the environment.

Communication Analysis

SouthWest Transit is a public transit service operating in a high income residential areas in the suburbs of Minneapolis and St. Paul. As such, SouthWest appeals to its demographic of high income residents with two or more cars by designing its buses with comfort and luxury at the forefront. They have built a reputation as a premium service provider that is intended to match or improve upon the experience of commuting via car through commodities such as comfortable seating and free WiFi. In addition to its physical assets, intangible aspects such as superior customer service, agency responsiveness and focus on sustainability attribute to its highly regarded brand image.

Image and Reputation

SouthWest Transit has recently initiated several new communication efforts, most notably changing its secondary color from orange to green, in order to refresh its appearance and promote its sustainability campaign. SouthWest has also launched two new programs, SouthWest Prime and SouthWest Rewards. SouthWest Prime is an on-demand “curb-to-curb” service operating within the city limits of Chanhassen, Chaska, Carver and Eden Prairie.

SouthWest Rewards is an app-accessible rewards program that earns its riders prizes such as events tickets and free rides. Both of these new programs have been promoted on the company's Facebook, Twitter and website, with posters sporting the new color scheme. SouthWest has also taken steps to become more accessible to younger riders by updating their app for iOS, Android, and Windows users.

Current Communication Channels

SouthWest Transit currently utilizes a diverse range of communication channels in order to reach their audience in Carver County. The organization has established consistent messaging in both traditional and new media outlets. Southwest has placed print advertisements in bathrooms, transit facilities, billboards and newspaper ads in local publications like the Chaska Herald, Chanhassen Villager, and the Eden Prairie News. Additional advertising from SouthWest runs through broadcast media channels, like the 60 second spot that airs on AM 1500 (SouthWest Transit, 2015).

SouthWest communicates with their audience outside of traditional advertising. They offer several onsite and direct communications with their riders through materials like schedules, facility banners, direct mailings, and news releases. SouthWest Transit has also taken advantage of the quick response and instantaneous communication abilities of social media. Currently SouthWest Transit has a social media presence on Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, and Youtube. The organization's Twitter and Facebook accounts have been active since 2009, but only recently starting utilizing the image-sharing app Instagram. SouthWest Transit relaunched their website to increase its user-friendliness and to act as a place for riders or those looking for additional information about Southwest, their fleet, and their services (SouthWest Transit, 2015). SouthWest Transit utilizes these social media platforms as channels to both send and receive messages from the public.

Recent Communication Efforts

SouthWest Transit utilizes its channels of communication by directly appealing to its audience in an enthused and supportive manner. The content entirely relates to SouthWest

Transit's services and affiliated events and organizations. Aside from one-way tweets encouraging its audience to participate in its promotions, two-way communication between its riders and the brand itself is also a common occurrence. Examples include riders thanking SouthWest Transit for its services or the brand addressing questions or attending to complaints. The brand does not appear to emulate other brands' formal and direct tone, but rather opts for an enthusiastic and informal tone conveyed through pleasantries and exclamation points, as seen in a reply tweet taken from February 26th: "Thanks Sarah! We love to hear you love it! Enjoy the sunny day!!" The brand may want to explore other means of communication, though may argue that this enthusiasm adds to their brand.

Use of Earned Media

SouthWest Transit's use of communication channels and advertising are examples of its owned media, however SouthWest Transit has also garnered earned media in the press. In the past year, a search through the Star Tribune's online archives revealed 13 articles published in the last year that mention SouthWest Transit. One example includes a May article in the Star Tribune featured the launch of SouthWest Transit's Prime service, detailing its capabilities and intended purpose (Smith, 2015). Others references SouthWest Transit in relation to traffic reports, hours open, transit for businesses or events, cold weather transit tips, and even SouthWest Transit's Earth Day activities. Articles from both the Eden Prairie News and Star Tribune relayed that ridership with SouthWest Transit from Carver County to the State Fair this summer hit a record high (Harlow, 2015). Overall, the media coverage of SouthWest Transit in these traditional media formats was positive and informative, regardless of the depth of mention.

Interpretation and Application

Analyzing the communication channels and patterns of Southwest Transit revealed key implications regarding its current audience and overall brand image. By tracking where its communications and advertisements are placed, we can more specifically pinpoint who its messages are reaching and who it is trying to target. Ad placement in publications such as the Chaska Herald, Chanhassen Villager, and the Eden Prairie News suggest a focus on the areas

closest to SouthWest Transit service stations. This audit applies to the planning of our campaign because it shows where they may exist room for increased messaging, or communication channels that have not yet been utilized. Performing this communication audit also demonstrates the tone and personality of the brand. The manner in which SouthWest Transit interacts and addresses its audience reveals how it wants to be perceived; SouthWest Transit's communications from both the organization's website and social media platforms displayed a voice that was enthused, informal, supportive, and friendly. The brand interacts frequently with users on social media platforms, and from our research, is quick to respond in a positive light.

Current Situation

SouthWest Transit underwent a rebranding process within the past year that sheds light on both their current situation and the direction in which they would like to go. The rebranding process followed an overall decrease in ridership, and is part of a larger vision to increase ridership and move toward a long-term goal of educating their target publics about sustainability.

Development

Initially, the service saw a stretch of growth from 2000-2008 when ridership experienced double-digit gains each year (SouthWest, 2015). Ridership numbers then took a downward turn during the 2009-2012 recession and post-recession years, especially in the rides taken for work purposes. During that time, the University of Minnesota ridership segment remained constant, even growing, but has decreased since the improvement in the economy (SouthWest, 2015). Following this overall decrease in ridership, the company entered a rebranding process, which began in the first quarter of 2015, and involved redesigning the color scheme of the brand. This rebranding accompanied several new or extended SouthWest Transit features, including the Carver Station and expansion of the reverse commute services (SouthWest, 2015). For each marketing opportunity, SouthWest Transit drew on their community ties to promote the change in service or brand, seeking community cooperation as a way to spread the word about their services (Fyten & Stowers, 2015).

Current Situation

For SouthWest Transit, the continuation of this rebranding process, as well as the promotion of some of SouthWest Transit's newer and extended services, comprise the company's current position as of the beginning of Fall 2015 ((Fyten & Stowers, 2015). The sustainability focus, however, reflects a current trend in marketing and brand development; the "green marketing" push present in many major brands for the past several years has several implications for the current situation for sustainability marketing (Intel, 2011). The current status of the green marketing trend suggests any brand moving in a sustainable direction must plan to stick with green initiatives for the long term to avoid creating a communications campaign that later becomes a liability. Brands must "focus on careful brand management based around those green actions that are core to the company's business model", and must also fight to remain true to the brand, since "even real green claims can be counterproductive if they conflict with customers' existing perceptions of a brand" (Intel, 2011). For SouthWest Transit, this would imply they are currently heading in the right direction thanks to the recent rebranding that now associates the brand with "green" initiatives, but must also push to define every aspect of the new brand as they move forward to avoid confusion or miscommunication about the brand's values.

Direction

The sustainability theme is closely linked to the direction the company sees itself heading in the future; SouthWest Transit wants to provide all-encompassing information to educate the public about sustainability, seeking to give potential customers a compelling reason to ride public transit rather than drive cars to work (Fyten & Stowers, 2015). Furthermore, the key issue includes identifying ways in which sustainability might resonate with their audience. An additional secondary problem may include increasing ridership across their services, especially the newer services such as SouthWest Prime, and maintaining their image as a premium service that allows riders to also use their transit time well, such as WiFi allowing the commute to be productive (SouthWest, 2015).

Central Issue

Based on this development history, current position and direction, **the central issue facing this campaign is educating both current and non-riders about sustainability to create a brand that is closely associated with environmental sustainability.** This campaign will hopefully serve as a means to communicate information and compelling reasons why non-riders should consider using public transportation -- specifically SouthWest Transit -- rather than driving a car. We will therefore focus on increasing SouthWest Transit's long term market share and ridership through a campaign directed at target publics emphasizing the sustainability benefits of using public transportation.

Vision

Ultimately, SouthWest Transit wants to educate their riders on their push for sustainability. Since they do not have hybrid buses yet, they are choosing to make their service sustainable by describing taking the bus as the sustainable option. SouthWest Transit understands that marketing is crucial in getting these messages pushed out to the public. Without marketing messages, the "sustainability" theme has no substantial meaning behind it. They hope to inspire more riders to take the option that is best for the environment in the long run. By convincing more car users to switch over to public transit, they eliminate the amount of harm to the atmosphere caused by cars. With this tactic, riders will be informed on the benefits of public transit, and will turn to SouthWest as their service provider of choice.

Pitfalls

One of the major pitfalls facing SouthWest Transit is communication to non-riders. Anyone regularly riding SouthWest Transit buses has a high chance of coming in contact with SouthWest Transit materials, and is therefore much easier to reach. Non-riders, however, do not necessarily come into contact with materials from SouthWest Transit, nor do they always have a reason to try the service. Campaign materials must therefore explore new, innovative ways to connect with any non-riders. SouthWest Transit also faces new requirement to maintain a sustainable appearance now that the brand is choosing to market itself as a sustainable company.

While buses by nature are more eco-friendly than cars, SouthWest Transit must make the standards for what constitutes their vehicles as eco-friendly clear so publics do not assume the company has hybrid vehicles, uses specific fuel, etc. Also, without the accreditation that comes along with hybrid buses, their “sustainability” messages may not be taken seriously, as opposed to companies that have hybrid buses with the same “sustainability” messages.

Interpretation and Application

In order for SouthWest Transit’s sustainability messages to be taken seriously, we will have to disseminate information in such a way that does not come across as fact claims, but rather educates target publics. We will also have to continue to monitor what other public transportation services say in regards to sustainability sector so that our messages do not contradict their messages or extensively overlap. As mentioned in the industry analysis, sustainability is a growing consumer trend across all industries, and therefore an important one to monitor to ensure correct facts and originality in tactics. Using information similar to that used by another company, even one not in the public transit sector, does not necessarily strike a potential rider and make SouthWest Transit memorable. Any wrong information or claims also immediately discredits SouthWest Transit in terms of sustainability. A decrease in ridership among University of Minnesota students since the economic recession also points to potential for students as a potential public not previously targeted in SouthWest Transit’s communication strategies.

Preliminary Identification of Target Publics

Preliminary Group

SouthWest Transit primarily serves cities found in Hennepin and Carver County. The range of their target publics is wide, but generally spans groups within the aforementioned area. The main cities served by SouthWest Transit include Minneapolis, Eden Prairie, Chanhassen, Chaska, and Carver (SouthWest 2015). Being a public transportation agency, the publics that include residents within SouthWest Transit’s service areas, including University of Minnesota students, are relevant to the campaign at hand.

Relationship With The Organization

Most people who live in these areas generally commute to work by via private transportation. SouthWest also only captures roughly five percent of MetroTransit's ridership (SouthWest 2015), leaving room for market expansion, especially in SouthWest Transit's service areas.

Perceptions, Attitudes, and Behaviors

An analysis of target consumer publics in the SouthWest Transit service area reveals the following information. Residents of Eden Prairie, Chaska, Chanhassen, and Carver are predominantly white, Christian, own their own home, own two or more vehicles, and a median family income between \$96,000 and \$105,000. (SouthWest Transit, 2015; US Census, 2010). Students, offer a contrast, however, as they are typically known for having a lower income and living close to campus. However, the University of Minnesota population also encompasses professors, university employees and graduate students who may commute. Additional research revealed that within the College of Science and Engineering alone, seventy-one percent of graduates find a job in Minnesota (University of Minnesota, 2015), suggesting potential for future ridership.

Although demographics are crucial, these target publics relationship with SouthWest Transit, as well as their perceptions, attitudes, and behaviors are equally, if not more important. Many of the communities within the purview of SouthWest Transit could fall under the category of a bedroom community. Although the cities themselves have companies and organizations that employ the populace, most citizens commute to a more urbanized center for work, such as Minneapolis. In addition to that, over a third of Eden Prairie households have children in a household and 42.1% of Carver County households have children. For houses that don't have children, those households are 58.2% married couples living together in Eden Prairie and 62.9% in Carver County (US Census, 2010).

Examining these statistics, a few conclusions can be drawn. Many of the residents of SouthWest Transit's service area value family and community. Most of them are established

enough in their careers to afford homes in an affluent area. Their discretionary income is also higher than that of their counterparts who live in Minneapolis. Higher discretionary income allows them to more easily purchase a vehicle and all the additional costs that follow like fuel, maintenance, and insurance. Although these private transportation costs are significantly more than using SouthWest Transit, over ninety percent of citizens still use a car or other means of private transportation to get to work (SouthWest, 2015). In order to win over the target publics, a number of steps could be taken by SouthWest Transit.

Interpretation & Application

A preliminary look at potential target publics reveal several opportunities and potential complications to overcome. Upon review of the areas SouthWest Transit services and the non-rider population there, SouthWest will have to use future communications campaigns to provide those who choose to drive instead of ride public transit with a compelling reason to switch. Sustainability may work as a method of motivation should residents desire a more eco-friendly mode of transportation, but the campaign would have to highlight ways in which becoming more environmentally sustainable directly benefits their lives. This information also suggests University of Minnesota students may be a smart target public for SouthWest Transit to focus on because of the potential for future ridership in addition to current ridership. Students also fall into the younger age group referenced in the Industry Analysis that values sustainability, and with a lower income, might be more likely to respond to messaging that highlights not only the eco-friendly benefits of public transportation, but also the monetary benefits. Although further research is required before making a concrete suggestion for a communications strategy, based on the existing knowledge of the publics, any of the aforementioned options could be feasible.

PRIMARY RESEARCH RESULTS

SouthWest Transit's recent rebranding process spanned not only a logo change, but also a renewed desire to emphasize the brand's connection to environmental sustainability. The company's primary goal is to educate current and potential consumers on sustainability; why sustainability is important, how public transit is environmentally sustainable, and how SouthWest Transit is a great option for sustainable lifestyles. The goal of this research was to determine the current level of awareness and knowledge to inform how to construct educational messaging in a sustainability campaign. Research methods included an online survey to gather quantitative data from the target audience, as well as two in-depth interviews to gather a deeper, qualitative understanding of sustainability awareness.

Problem Statement

Creating this association with sustainability includes the company's audience of current riders, but also a primary target audience of University of Minnesota students. SouthWest Transit has previously conducted extensive research on their current pool of riders; as such, the research efforts outlined here were directed at University of Minnesota students. SouthWest Transit's most recent marketing survey results indicated that 2.7% of riders choose to ride for sustainability reasons, giving us an existing awareness of the current rider population's knowledge of sustainability (Rider Survey Results, 2015). The UMN student audience, therefore, was chosen for several reasons, one of which being that young adults (ages 18-34) are the most likely to consider sustainable practices when choosing products or actions (Mintel, 2014). Another primary reason for choosing this group was the audience's likelihood of becoming future riders. University of Minnesota students have a greater likelihood of finding jobs in the Twin Cities area--the area SouthWest Transit caters to--and therefore becoming future riders. Additionally, SouthWest Transit's 2015 Marketing Report indicated a recent decline in the number of University of Minnesota students riding SouthWest Transit. The problem we wanted to answer with research, therefore, was determining the college students' awareness and attitudes

toward sustainability in order to inform a campaign directed at this age group, in addition to current riders.

Questions/Hypotheses

Before conducting our research, our group identified a few questions we wanted answered about the young-adult demographic and environmental sustainability. The purpose of the survey and in-depth interviews was to uncover if 18-22 year olds are motivated to incorporate eco-friendly behaviors for the sake of promoting a sustainable lifestyle, if the age group considers sustainability to be an important issue, and if they are even aware of and currently practicing environmental sustainability. Going into the research, we also formulated hypotheses about what the results of our survey would yield in regards to environmental sustainability and SouthWest Transit. Our three hypotheses were as stated: 1) respondents between the ages of 18-22 are likely to incorporate environmentally sustainable practices into their lifestyle, 2) respondents between the ages of 18-22 are likely to think environmental sustainability is an important issue, and finally 3) that respondents between the ages of 18-22 are aware of SouthWest and its services. We sought to observe the above phenomena because we wanted to discover how best to create an educational sustainability campaign; we cannot create a campaign that resonates with the audience if we are unaware of their current level of awareness and attitude toward the topic. Knowing the target public's awareness will allow us to design relevant messaging that effectively communicates SouthWest Transit's sustainability benefits.

Method

We conducted a survey through the University of Minnesota Qualtrics program, as well as two in-depth interviews. We chose to use a survey method because a survey provides quantitative data we would then be able to analyze and predict any trends among our important target public. Additional in-depth interviews were conducted to provide a more in-depth, qualitative, background look at some of the potential deeper causes for the phenomena, such as a given student might care about sustainability. For the survey research, we targeted students at the University of Minnesota ages 18-22, which is a total population size of around 32,300 students

(University of Minnesota, 2015). We were able to sample 88 students in total. Our sampling technique relied on convenience sampling via two areas of distribution: posting the survey link to team members' individual social media, as well as sending out the link to a class at the School of Journalism and Mass Communication with three extra credit points as an incentive for taking the survey. These techniques were chosen due to the convenience and ease of gathering our targeted data within the desired timeframe, and also because this was the demographic the research targeted. A copy of our survey instrument is included in the Appendix. The survey itself was open from October 11, 2015 to October 17, 2015. Following the closure of the survey, data was collected using the Qualtrics system synthesis, as well as SPSS programming, to examine the quantitative results from the survey.

The survey was also followed with two in-depth interviews conducted with individuals who were not current SouthWest Transit riders, but lived in the areas SouthWest Transit serves. Interview subjects sat down with a team member to answer several open-ended questions concerning sustainability and SouthWest Transit. These subjects were chosen based on convenience sampling, similar to the survey sampling technique, but also fit the criteria of being a non-rider from an area SouthWest Transit serves, to ensure they would provide relative, qualitative information. Notes were taken during each interview, the results of which were recorded in the "Findings" section of this report.

Findings

Survey

Due to the nature of our sampling, the respondents represent a fairly homogenous subpopulation. Seventy-five percent of our respondents reside less than 2 miles from campus and eighty-three percent are 22 years old or younger. As far as sex, sixty-six percent are female and thirty-four percent are male.

Generally, our respondents held similar attitudes regarding sustainability and their responsibility to engage in it. Because of this, there was not much variance in our responses (most standard deviations were around 1). Likewise, most of our responses tended to be close to the center, with most respondents expressing some level of ambivalence to the subject matter. There was a set of statements which elicited the strongest responses.

The following statements were our **highest rated statements** in terms of respondents who said they agree or strongly agree concerning environmental perceptions and behaviors:

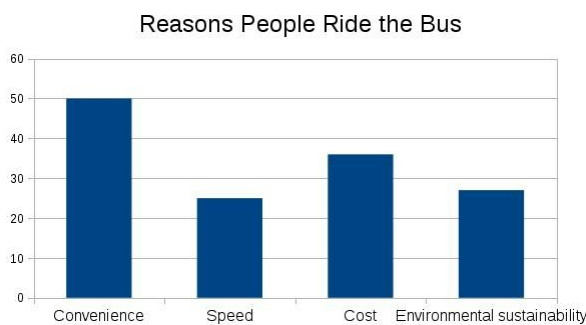
1. It's important for companies to promote environmental sustainability → 97%
2. It's important to engage in environmental practices. → 94%
3. I recycle. → 94%
4. Make efforts to conserve energy at work and home. → 93%
5. I carpool or drive a fuel-efficient car. → 87%
6. Care about environmental issues → 80%
7. Think about how my actions affect the natural world → 76%
8. Think they are a part of the problem. → 75%

On the opposite end, respondents generally disagreed with statements concerning eco-friendly practices that required additional time or money from the participants. Most respondents did not volunteer with eco-friendly organizations, nor did they donate money to environmentally sustainable organizations.

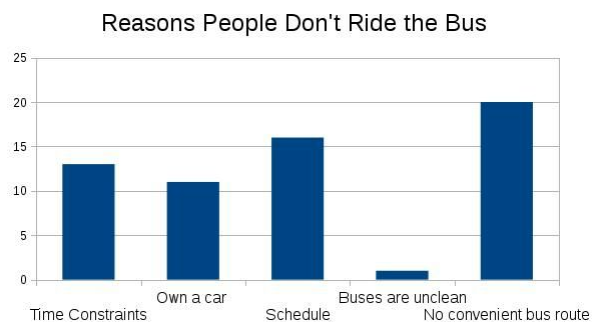
As far as SouthWest Transit awareness, the majority of respondents were not overly familiar with them or their services. In fact, they comprised our **lowest rated statements** - that is, people tended to disagree, strongly disagree, or were completely neutral to the following statements:

1. I am aware of SouthWest Prime services → 97% disagree
2. I use SouthWest Transit at least once a week → 95% disagree
3. I would recommend SouthWest Transit to a family member → 82% disagree

We also asked respondents to check all reasons why they do or do not ride the bus, with the results graphed below:



[Figure 1]



[Figure 2]

In-Depth Interviews

Both in-depth interviews were conducted with female subjects within the 18-22 age range who lived in one of the areas SouthWest Transit services. One interview subject in particular described a habit of splitting time between living near the University of Minnesota campus (Dinkytown area) and Chanhassen (another area SouthWest Transit serves). When asked about bus usage, both respondents described a willingness to consider using public transit when traveling in groups (one specifically mentioned visiting bars or parties with multiple friends) both from a sustainable aspect, as well as a safety aspect. Subjects said public transit is a more convenient way to travel in groups than trying to arrange rides or a carpool of some sort.

Despite commute time, both subjects said they are more likely to drive their car than ride public transit, not only because of the convenience of the car, but also because they do not think SouthWest Transit stops are close enough to their residence to be worth using on a regular basis rather than a car. One subject also said working late, past the hours SouthWest Transit is open, means there is little chance of using the service to commute home.

Both subjects did feel environmental sustainability is very important to their daily lives. One of the female subjects in particular indicated a belief in the dangers of climate change and a desire to support companies that respect the environment. The other felt similarly, saying she felt some sense of responsibility to incorporate eco-friendly practices into her lifestyle when possible and when convenient. One of the subjects further said she would consider using a service like SouthWest Transit if she were to settle in an area they service following graduation from college because she believes using a bus is more sustainable than using a car.

Interpretation and Application:

After conducting research, we discovered that two of our original hypotheses proved to be correct, while the final hypothesis concerning awareness of SouthWest Transit was not. We have highlighted key applications and interpretations of the findings below:

- Through our survey, we learned that our desired demographic generally engages in environmentally sustainable practices and agrees that sustainability is important, but aren't aware of SouthWest Transit nor its services.
- The survey helps reaffirm the client's objective of creating a campaign focusing on the sustainability of riding a bus, as it is something that people value. Only 31% of respondents indicated that they ride the bus to be ecologically sustainable, which was the second lowest result for any of the applicable reasons after speed. Although this initially appears as a weakness in the campaign, it indicates the existence of a discrepancy between perception of sustainability and desire to practice eco-friendly actions, and actual action taken to ride public transit.
- High levels of self-reported environmental awareness and concern suggests a campaign that educates the public on SouthWest Transit's services while simultaneously promoting their eco-friendly, sustainable practices would be relevant to this public and target their reported values, particularly the perception that companies should be practicing environmental sustainability.
- The survey was subject to several limitations and oversights that likely affected the data, the foremost of which being our sampling technique. Due to timing and accessibility complications, we had to opt for convenience sampling to reach respondents. This sampling technique limits the generalizability of our survey data because our sample is not random, and therefore not an accurate representation of the population. This may also have affected trends or results in the data in some unforeseen way.

Big Ideas

Overall, our research was extremely helpful in directing us toward big ideas for our campaign. From the research we conducted, we reached four key concepts to use as we move forward in our campaign design. The first concept is that **students are generally aware of sustainable practices and place importance on working toward environmental sustainability; they feel responsible for the environment, and want companies to place importance on that, too.** This is especially helpful as we continue to consider which publics to

target. While communicating to current riders about SouthWest Transit's sustainability benefits, students are a desirable secondary target public because they are aware of sustainability and find it important, and also see great value in companies that promote eco-friendly practices. Our second key takeaway was that **students are also somewhat aware of how to incorporate sustainable practices in their daily life**. Several survey questions targeted respondents' understanding of sustainability and how to practice sustainability, and while many participants overall rated themselves as understanding how to practice sustainability, there were also respondents who placed themselves in the middle or lower end, suggesting some room for further education on other ways to incorporate sustainability.

Our third key concept was that **students generally do not engage in eco-friendly practices that require additional work or donation of time or money**. This was most clearly observed in the lack of students who donate time to volunteer or donate money to promote eco-friendly practices, though many indicated they do recycle on a regular basis. Our campaign, therefore, should communicate why SouthWest Transit is an environmentally sustainable service that is convenient and does not require extra money or time. Our final big idea, and the message we will incorporate into our campaign, is a summary of the previous three key ideas. Our research suggests that the **sustainability campaign is beneficial among students because it draws on what they value, and should target why SouthWest Transit's services are a convenient way to practice environmental sustainability**.

SWOT ANALYSIS

<p style="text-align: center;">Strengths</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Strong tradition in the existing community/service area ● Unbeatable public transportation amenities ● High ridership among higher education/higher income populace ● Wildly popular SW Prime shared ridership program ● Reasonably strong existing communication strategy 	<p style="text-align: center;">Weaknesses</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Limited to the Southwest suburbs ● Metro Transit, and other public transportation companies, offers the same services ● Mobile app could use retooling to increase ease of use (i.e. eliminate additional pop-up web pages outside of app) ● Limited data on non-riders ● Difficult to market brand amenities to non-riders (unable to experience benefits without riding bus service) ● Routes/scheduling don't always work for target public
<p style="text-align: center;">Opportunities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Trends of being “eco-friendly” (Green to be seen) ● Emerging workforce looking to move outside the city, especially graduating college students ● Transplants to the Twin Cities suburbs could begin to use SWT ● Continually increasing suburb population increases Total Available Market for SWT 	<p style="text-align: center;">Threats</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Alternative transportation industries ● Potential of LRT expansion ● Key demographic own 2+ cars ● Uber/Lyft have far stronger user bases than SW Prime

KEY PUBLICS

Key Publics

	UMN Students	Non-UMN Students
Residents	<p>UMN students from suburban areas SouthWest serves</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Non-riders • Aware public: knows about SouthWest Transit after living in areas SouthWest Transit caters toward • Aware public: knows information about environmental sustainability, knows how to practice sustainability to some extent, believes practicing eco-friendly habits is important • Does not currently ride public transportation for sustainability • Would consider moving to an area SouthWest serves following graduation when they get a job and settle down 	<p>Current SouthWest Transit riders</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Active public: currently rides SouthWest Transit and is aware of the brand and their services • Aware public: likely to be aware of how to practice sustainable actions, but may not necessarily choose to ride public transit for sustainability • May also not yet associate SouthWest Transit with environmental sustainability • Easy to target with current SouthWest communication <p>Non-riders who have lived in the Twin Cities area for several years</p>
Non-residents	<p>UMN students not from suburban areas SouthWest serves</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Non-riders • Latent public: does not know about SouthWest Transit, nor any of the services it offers • Aware public: knows information about environmental sustainability, knows how to practice sustainability to some extent, believes practicing eco-friendly habits is important • Believes companies should promote sustainability; more likely to purchase products from a company that promotes eco-friendly practices • Does not currently ride public transportation for sustainability • Likely to also consider moving near the area in the future should they find work in the Twin Cities area after graduation 	<p>Non-riders who are transplants to the Twin Cities area</p>

Based on our secondary and primary research, our primary target public that we targeted in our primary research was UMN students who do not ride SouthWest Transit. Our in-depth interviews focused on UMN students who are non-riders but are originally from the SouthWest service area. Many of them also still partially live and/or work within Chaska, Chanhassen, or Eden Prairie while also spending time as a student in Minneapolis. Despite this, they still choose to drive between their obligations in Minneapolis and their obligations in the suburbs. We would classify this group public group as an aware public. They are aware of the sustainability issue and they know about it, but they're not interested enough to organize, discuss, or act upon the issue. A strong action-oriented message could turn this aware public into an active public, even if they don't necessarily become riders. Because this group is on the cusp of becoming an active public, they are our most important target public.

In addition, we consider the non-riding UMN students as our primary target public. Over ninety percent were unaware of SouthWest Transit but the overwhelming majority did care about sustainable behaviors. Among this group, we would classify them as a latent public in terms of SouthWest Transit. By and large, they are unaware of SouthWest Transit. On the corollary, this public would be an aware public with respects to environmental sustainability, especially considering the majority of these groups do care about brands that associate their voice and message with environmental and sustainable public interest causes. For that reason, we believe we could use the SWT campaign to turn this primary target public from a latent public into at least an aware public. This group also has the potential to become an active public if they remain choose to live in the SWT service areas of Carver, Chaska, Chanhassen, and Eden Prairie after they graduate. They could also become an active public if, similar to the first group, their awareness of environmental sustainability pushes them to pursue public transit in order to promote environmentally sustainable practices in their daily lives.

Final secondary target publics are varied. They range from transplants to the Twin Cities to existing riders. Existing riders would be classified as an active public. According to our meetings with Matt and Virginia from SWT, the "bread and butter" of SWT are professionals who live in the suburbs and work downtown, and college students make up a much smaller component of that. Their demographics are varied and their psychographics are even more

diverse. One common theme among this group is that they live in higher-income communities and already own cars. Despite owning their own reliable private transportation, many of them have ridden SWT for years and will probably continue to do so. If they become aware of SWT sustainability efforts, especially in a changing economic and environmental climate, it would cement their loyalty to the brand. Non-riding residents would be considered a latent public; they are either unaware of SouthWest Transit, or somewhat aware of their services but choose not to use public transit because they prefer to drive. Here we see an opportunity to introduce SouthWest Transit's new brand look and feel as being an environmentally sustainable alternative to driving.

Other secondary publics briefly notated in the above chart include transplants to the area and residents who are non-riders. Transplants to the Twin Cities could generally be young adults to middle aged couples, aged 28-40 and have young children in their home. They may have just moved from another part of the country to the Twin Cities suburbs to raise their children, but their career is in the Twin Cities. We would classify this secondary target public as a latent public since they are most likely unaware of SWT and their sustainability campaign. Given the right communications strategy SWT and their commitment to sustainability could be the perfect fit for this secondary public.

PLANS, GOALS & OBJECTIVES

Goals

SouthWest Transit is currently rebranding their image. Their goal is to frame SouthWest Transit as the sustainable option for public transportation. They have already replaced the logo to instill the sustainable mentality they are promoting. The goal of our sustainability campaign is to emphasize SouthWest Transit's connection to environmental sustainability.

SouthWest Transit intends to position themselves as an ecologically-conscious brand that resonates with younger non-riders. Our primary research indicated that millennials believe environmental practices are important and strongly feel that companies should promote environmentally sustainable practices. SouthWest can take advantage of Millennials' keen interest in sustainability by launching a ecologically-aware campaign. The campaign will target new millennial riders that desire more sustainable transportation options. We will support their business by creating a communications campaign that frames SouthWest as the most sustainable transportation option.

Ultimately, the overall goals of SouthWest Transit are to "provide a quality riding experience that fulfills the needs and exceeds the expectations of [their] customers" (SouthWest Transit, 2015). SouthWest Transit hopes to oversee a positive riding experiences for each of its customers. One way SouthWest Transit plans to do so is by becoming a more modern and sustainable brand within the eyes of their consumers. As a result, SouthWest Transit and Keena || Stanley plan to increase awareness of sustainability goals of SouthWest Transit, as well as the positive, sustainable effects of taking public transit. As a result of this campaign, both SouthWest Transit and Keena || Stanley hope to see an increased recall and awareness of SouthWest Transit's sustainability efforts, and in the long run, increased ridership. Therefore, the primary goal of this communication campaign is to create a "green" brand association and educate target publics about the "green" benefits of public transit. This goal is attainable with specific and measurable objectives, which Keena || Stanley intends to achieve by the end of the 2016 fiscal year.

Objectives

Primary Public: University of Minnesota Students

5. To increase awareness of the *sustainable SouthWest Transit brand* among University of Minnesota students by 25% by the end of the 2016 fiscal year.
6. To increase awareness of the *services* SouthWest Transit offers among University of Minnesota students by 20% by the end of the 2016 fiscal year.
7. Increase the number of University of Minnesota students who ride SouthWest Transit by 10% by the end of the 2016 fiscal year.

Secondary Public: Current Riders

1. To increase awareness of SouthWest Transit as a *sustainable* transportation option among current SouthWest riders by 50% by the end of the 2016 fiscal year.

STRATEGIC PROGRAMMING

Introduction

In light of the objectives outlined previously, Keena || Stanley has developed a campaign plan designed to fulfill the objectives. Our main campaign idea is focused on a desire to increase brand awareness and visibility among the primary public of University of Minnesota students. We want to engage students with SouthWest Transit in a way that will reach as many of the students as possible in the most efficient manner. Our campaign is also designed to educate and promote sustainability issues; we want students to generate buzz about the topic of sustainability so SouthWest Transit can become a brand associated with an issue students are actively engaging. Our main campaign idea is subsequently to pursue a partnership with the University of Minnesota in order to directly target UMN incoming freshmen, and as a result, the entire student population. For the secondary public, we have developed an additional campaign plan that draws on pre-existing tactics to engage with current riders on the topic of sustainability. We will also outline a new social media-focused campaign element that uses existing riders as influencers among other existing riders.

Our campaign plan draws on the two-step flow theoretical model to ensure maximum impact and credibility among the target public. The two-step flow model suggests having an influence on those who are influencers within the lives of the target public will create a campaign that resonates on a more personal level among the audience. It also increases credibility of the campaign because the audience is receiving messages from a source they already trust to some extent. In the case of our campaign, the University of Minnesota is a key influencer in the lives of students, and a partnership provides a perfect opportunity to use the university's credibility and pre-established activities to reach the primary and secondary publics.

Primary Public: UMN Students

Action and Media Strategy

Although SouthWest Transit buses have a formidable presence on campus and can be seen driving down Washington Avenue on a daily basis, our research found that university students don't strongly resonate with SWT and in actuality have very low awareness of the brand

in general. To raise brand awareness and ultimately increase ridership, we aim to have incoming freshmen beginning their University of Minnesota experience already familiar, aware and engaged with SouthWest Transit. By taking advantage of Welcome Week, incoming freshmen's first immersive experience with the university, SWT can hold stronger control of students' impressions of its brand and make them aware of the key distinguishing factors and selling points of SWT and its premium fleet of buses. A strong and notable partnership with the University of Minnesota will align SWT as a fun, relatable and accessible brand concerned and engaged with the campus in the minds of students. Taking advantage of the momentum created by Welcome Week, SouthWest Transit will continue its role as a partner with the University of Minnesota to sponsor ongoing future events and build brand equity with this sought-after demographic.

We also plan to adopt an integrated marketing communications campaign, utilizing both traditional and digital media to increase awareness of the SouthWest Transit brand. Engaging the primary audience with the brand on social media is a key part of the strategy behind partnering SouthWest Transit with the University of Minnesota. Implementing a schedule for postings, sharing giveaways, and asking students to follow and share with hashtags is an effective way to create buzz with the audience. SouthWest Transit can utilize its existing social media accounts and extend the enthusiastic brand voice it has developed into this strategy. Using digital media is an effective strategy to increase interaction between the student primary audience and SouthWest Transit.

Traditional promotional efforts will include positioning posters depicting our "Go Green to Save Green" campaign around key areas on campus, such as the Northrop Mall and the West Bank plaza on a bi-monthly basis. Partnered with the print media promotion, we will work with University of Minnesota to show digital banners on screens in Coffman Union and in the resident halls, which organizations and student groups frequently use to promote events.

Message Strategy

In order to reach our primary audience of college students who are non-riders of SouthWest Transit, we plan on using two key messages. First, we plan to emphasize the

emotional appeal of being “green” in our messages. Students are famous for having little to no money, thus we decided to capitalize on the fact that public transportation is usually significantly cheaper than commuting via car. In light of that fact, Keena || Stanley came up with a broad message for a creative campaign: **Go Green to Save Green**. “Green” in this message has three meanings. One, where going green is choosing SouthWest Transit, whose newly designed logo features a bold green. The second meaning of “green” applies largely to our target audience, where saving green implies saving money, a valuable asset to college students. Lastly, “green” used in either form uses SouthWest Transit’s overarching theme, where riding public transit is more eco-friendly and environmentally sustainable. Each three meanings of “green” applies to the primary target audience in multiple ways, causing the individual cater the message even more specifically to him or herself. This creative strategy also draws on the ethical theory of corporate social responsibility; we predict that if students associate SouthWest Transit with eco-friendly practices, they will be more likely to choose to ride SouthWest because they value corporate social responsibility, and would see SouthWest as a responsible company.

Secondly, Keena || Stanley plans to deliver resource and value-based information as a rational appeal to students. The great amenities SouthWest Transit busses have, such as free WiFi, leather seating, and wooden floors, are largely unadvertised, causing college students to be completely unaware of the reasons why SouthWest Transit is a large appeal. Thus, our plan is to showcase the little things of SouthWest Transit, and underline why is is the **Best Public Transit Experience**. By creating awareness of SouthWest Transit’s amenities, more students will be inclined to see what they can get for their money as a rider of public transport. This strategy will also frame students’ views of public transit; any students who historically choose not to ride the bus because they feel it is too expensive or creates negative experiences may see public transit as a more viable option because the messaging strategy is framing public transit in a more positive light.

Tactics

Because college students are generally not a part of SWT’s ridership, we must look outside of SWT’s current channels to effectively reach them. Given that our survey found most

students possessed little to no awareness of SWT and their services, we suggest a 3-prong approach that will build relationships with students by becoming an official sponsor of the University's Welcome Week program, maintaining an ongoing social media outreach effort, and utilizing brand ambassadors to build and preserve SWT's relationship with students.

Welcome Week Transportation Sponsor

Our first tactic is for SWT to become a sponsor of Welcome Week - a weeklong introduction of the University and surrounding area to incoming freshmen. By offering their transportation services to and from the various city destinations (Super Target, Mall of America, etc.), SWT can inform students that their bus passes work on all SWT buses as many may associate SWT with private bus services such as Greyhound. This will also be a good way to get students to download the rewards app so they can rack of some points throughout the week as they ride SWT buses around the Twin Cities.

Welcome Week Social Media Scavenger Hunt

There is also an exploration component of Welcome Week where students wander an area such as Downtown or Uptown to get familiar with the city's offerings. On top of providing transportation there, SWT can provide a list of destinations that students should visit and encourage them to tweet at SWT when they've reached these places for a chance to win a prize such as Gopher tickets. This both incentivizes this interaction with SWT and is a good way to get students to follow them on social media platforms.

Once students are following them on social media platforms (likely Twitter or Instagram), they can be made aware of student-centric rewards such as tickets to various Gopher sporting events. By maintaining rewards which are more appealing to students, SWT stands to keep the attention of this public through ongoing use of their apps and engagement on social media which informs students of these rewards and any other special promotions for students. By highlighting sustainability as the focus of these social media interactions, SWT can encourage communication with this public who has, through our research, related a high value on "green" companies. When SWT rewards students through promotions and the rewards program, it reinforces their actions by validating the importance of a sustainable lifestyle and gives students the social currency that society grants those who engage in environmental stewardship.

UMN Transportation Fair

As part of the UMN's first weeks of school activities, SWT should take part in the University's transportation fair - an event where companies such as Nice Ride, Zipcar, Hourcar, etc. inform students of their services and offer activities, prizes and merchandise. This will be another good place to remind students of their rewards program, and how there are prizes which are ideal for a students and their lifestyle. SWT can also host a contest in which students must use their knowledge of sustainable practices to win prizes such as Gopher tickets, Gopher gear, or maybe even "green" prizes (portable solar chargers for smartphones, reusable bags, etc.).

UMN Brand Ambassador Program

Taking the University relationship past official activities, SWT should utilize brand ambassadors on campus to foster a positive relationship with students. Brand ambassadors are often young, fresh minds who act as a relatable face of the brand. They aren't making hard sells but do educate a number of student on how a certain brand can fit into their hectic, yet exciting college lifestyle. These ambassadors would most likely be a select number of upperclassmen who have a decent amount of proven experience in strategic communications. Virginia could supervise, mentor, and train these students to become effective communicators for SWT and sustainability. In addition to being paid with a portion of SWT sustainability money, these students are gaining valuable experience with a reputable organization that could help them find success in other internships and careers.

The primary responsibilities of the ambassadors would be to help implement the tactics previously outlined in this. They would assist in Welcome Week activities like the scavenger hunt and Transportation Fair as well as engaging with social media outreach at the University, especially in the first month or two of the semester. Ambassadors would also work directly with students on campus by identifying student groups and freshman classes that have a focus on sustainability. Ambassadors could make brief guest speeches on SWT's behalf that would explain the benefits of riding SWT. Speeches given by brand ambassadors would be short and succinct. These three tenants would be the overarching themes within the speeches: Internal intellectual fulfilment, social approval, and social prestige. In addition to giving speeches,

ambassadors can explore the possibility of partnering with residence halls to educate freshman residents about sustainability projects.

Many other companies including Spotify, Apple, Red Bull, and Target have used Brand Ambassadors with great success on college campuses. As the third and final prong in our tactical approach, we strongly believe Brand Ambassadors can be a critical component to the success of SWT's integrated marketing campaign.

Secondary Public: Current Riders

Action and Media Strategy

The media strategy for the secondary audience, SouthWest Transit's current riders, is to position SWT as a sustainable and environmentally-conscious organization that people can feel good about supporting. SWT should continue to advertise and promote its eco-friendly practices at the bus stations and billboards in Carver County where most current riders reside. In addition, SWT can implement its strategy through organizational media that current riders are exposed to like its website, app, and social media.

Materials that advertise the sustainability of SWT should be implemented simultaneously and at the start of the campaign in the winter, and occur steadily in order to successfully position the brand. The timing and exposure of media should have a higher concentration leading into the spring when the rider survey takes place, so that SWT can evaluate the campaign and whether or not the messages are engaging the audience.

Message Strategy

The key messaging for our secondary audience revolves around congratulating and patting existing SouthWest Transit riders on the back. We give riders a pat on the back for choosing SouthWest Transit instead of commuting in their own cars. This messaging will go out shortly after New Year's resolutions have gone astray. The messages say to the riders that even though they may have given up on their New Year's resolutions, they helped SouthWest Transit with their New Year's resolution to help the environment and be a sustainable company. The

goal of these messages is to create dialogue between existing riders and potential riders. By feeling good for making their transportation choices, riders will spread the joy of their sustainability and encourage their friends and coworkers to do the same. Their efforts help SouthWest Transit be a sustainable transportation provider, which is the main message SouthWest Transit is trying to get across.

Tactics

In order to communicate with SouthWest Transit's current riders, we will make use of and improve on their existing channels of communication. In the theme of sustainability, these efforts will be largely, if not completely, paperless. One tactic we will implement is a SouthWest Transit "Rider of the Week." A question can be included in the annual rider survey that allows riders to opt-into this program which features weekly profiles of SWT riders. SWT can offer incentive in the form of additional rewards points to any riders considering this program. Each week, one rider will be selected at random and featured on all of SouthWest Transit's social accounts. A picture of their choosing will be posted, along with a paragraph about why they choose to ride SouthWest or what their favorite parts of their commute are. This is a simple way to show riders that SouthWest Transit values their business and loyalty while also showing potential riders the many advantages of using SouthWest Transit for their daily commute.

We also believe that a digital facelift can help communicate SWT's sustainable qualities. We suggest a website redesign during Spring reflecting the start of the sustainability campaign. This redesign will consist of the creation of a new page that educates people on the sustainable benefits of using public transit as well as other ways people can reduce their carbon footprint. These messages will build a stronger association between the SouthWest Transit brand and environmental sustainability while also reminding current riders that they are engaging in one of the best ways to reduce your impact on the environment.

SouthWest Transit should also make efforts to build a more robust mobile application by consolidating their services. As it stands, there are two mobile applications which contain features that redirect users to a browser to finish the process. First, SouthWest Transit should consolidate these apps, so that users do not need to open separate apps to access rewards and a

bus schedule. Second, the app’s features need to be able to complete in the app instead of redirecting to a web page. Removing this barrier will create a more usable app and also encourage users to continue using it. Due to inconsistencies in mobile browsers between different mobile platforms, there can be display and usability side-effects that are hard to predict and fix, so building an app which has all the offerings of the website in a single place will create a better user experience and encourage future use.

Lastly, we think that integrating the rider survey directly into the app will be a great way to get more responses and show SouthWest Transit’s commitment to engage in sustainable practices. We also suggest implementing push notifications into the app to let users know when new rewards have been uploaded. This will keep users from forgetting about the rewards program while also letting them know about prizes they may enjoy.

Timeline

The timeline below outlines a schedule for implementing campaign tactics for both our primary and secondary target publics. Green indicates an active, ongoing tactic, yellow indicates the tactic is being prepared or in evaluation, and red indicates the tactic is not currently being implemented.

<i>Green = Active Tactic Yellow = Tactic Prep/Evaluation Red = Stop Tactic</i>	January	February	March	April	May	June	July	August	September	October	November	December
Primary Target Public (Students)												
Welcome Week & Scavenger Hunt	Red	Red	Red	Red	Red	Red	Red	Yellow	Green	Yellow	Red	Red
Transportation Fair	Red	Red	Red	Red	Red	Red	Red	Yellow	Green	Green	Yellow	Red
Social Media Buzz/Ambassadors Speaking to Classes and Groups	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green
Secondary Target Public (Existing Riders)												
Rider Survey	Green	Green	Green	Yellow	Red	Red	Red	Red	Red	Red	Red	Red
New Years Resolution Appreciation Communications	Green	Green	Yellow	Red	Red	Red	Red	Red	Red	Red	Red	Green
Faces of Sustainability	Red	Yellow	Green	Green	Green	Yellow	Red	Red	Red	Red	Red	Red

Included under the “Social Media Buzz” category in the timeline are the ongoing social media efforts we recommend SouthWest adapt as a tactic for both target audiences. Such programs would include offering a reward during Gopher Games for those who tweet at or tag SouthWest in an Instagram post with some sort of response to a prompt (i.e. “Who has the best Gopher Gear? Tag us in a picture of you in your gear for a chance to win a pair of gopheralls!”). We

would also recommend doing a similar social media outreach during Earth Day on April 22 to ask all social media followers to tag them and share how they practice environmental sustainability. These actions on targeted days and events, such as Earth Day, would allow SouthWest to take advantage of relevant events to generate buzz.

Budget

SouthWest estimates that approximately \$10,000 can be used for the sustainability campaign. Due to our tactics not involving traditional media purchases such as broadcast commercial or print advertisements, the budget would be best reflected in a small, person to person marketing effort. Social media is a tool that can be used largely at relatively low cost in order to promote and execute our tactics. Approximately half of the budget should go towards paying Brand Ambassadors and the other half would go towards purchasing sponsorship for UMN events like the Transportation fair or purchasing give away items for the UMN Welcome Week Scavenger Hunt.

Evaluation

Evaluation is a crucial final component of the strategic programming plan; evaluation allows Keena || Stanley to assess the success of the sustainability campaign. We have outlined the evaluation criteria, method and analysis process we believe would be the best way to evaluate the strategic programming after its implementation.

Evaluation Criteria

Similar to the criteria used in the primary research collected in our survey process, we will measure audience awareness, behavior and brand recognition. These criteria are most important because they directly relate to the client's goals for both the primary and secondary audience, as identified during the research phases. For the primary audience, we hope to see an increased awareness of SouthWest Transit and its services and an increase in University of Minnesota students riding SouthWest Transit. Among the secondary audience of current riders,

the goal was to build recognition of SouthWest Transit as a sustainable, environmentally-friendly brand.

Evaluation Method

To measure awareness, behavior and brand recognition, we suggest conducting a survey among both target audiences to measure the outcome. For the primary audience, we would conduct a survey among University of Minnesota students with a sample size of at least 300 students. We would use random sampling via the University of Minnesota student directory when conducting this survey so we could generalize the data collected. This method would allow us to assess the awareness and behavior of the average University of Minnesota student in relation to SouthWest Transit. SouthWest Transit would partner with the University of Minnesota to distribute the survey online via email to all freshmen, since the freshmen would have just participated in the program. To give the freshmen incentive to take the survey, we suggest offering some sort of incentive raffle students may enter by taking the survey. For the secondary audience of current riders, we suggest using the existing annual rider survey, but edited to include additional questions concerning sustainability. This method has proven highly effective in past distribution, and would allow SouthWest Transit to learn the brand perceptions of the current riders. The survey would be passed out at stations in the same manner it has been in the past so respondents could finish the survey during their ride.

Evaluation Analysis

The data collected should inform SouthWest Transit's future communication decisions, and used as a comparison basis for future campaign decisions. If the numbers of University of Minnesota students aware of SouthWest Transit has increased, this might be an excellent indicator that the program among first year students, for example, has increased the awareness of the services. Should the communication programs implemented raise awareness and behavior change among University of Minnesota students, we would recommend a continuation of the programs from year to year. For the secondary audience of current riders, this analysis would also inform how SouthWest Transit should proceed with their communications about

sustainability; high levels of association with sustainability would suggest less need for future campaign messaging directly related to sustainability. Overall, the evaluation process would tell us the extent of the campaign's success, and inform SouthWest Transit's future communications.

SNAPSHOT OF COMMUNICATION PLAN

Secondary Research Findings	Primary Research	Key Publics	Goals & Objectives
SouthWest Transit is a publically held transit company that is in a marketplace with rising demand for public transit.	Many University of Minnesota students, aged 18-22, are completely unaware of SouthWest Transit and the services they provide.	Our Primary public is University of Minnesota Students. Our secondary public are the existing riders of SouthWest Transit.	Our overall goals and objectives is to increase awareness, whether about sustainability or the overall SouthWest Transit Brand.

Strategies	Theme / Message	Tactics	Timing / Budget
For our primary audience, we will increase awareness in partnership with the University of Minnesota. For our secondary audience, we will reward our existing riders' good, sustainable behavior.	Our overall message is that riding with SouthWest Transit is a cheap way to become more sustainable and eco-conscious.	While we have many tactics planned, the most important and new ideas involve incorporating social media to make SouthWest Transit's brand image relatable and relevant.	SouthWest Transit is able to allocate about \$10,000 towards this communication plan. Timing will be highly focused around Earth Day/springtime and Welcome Week at the University of Minnesota.

Evaluation

We hope to see an increased amount of student riders, as well as a raised awareness of sustainability among riders. These will be measured by rider surveys.

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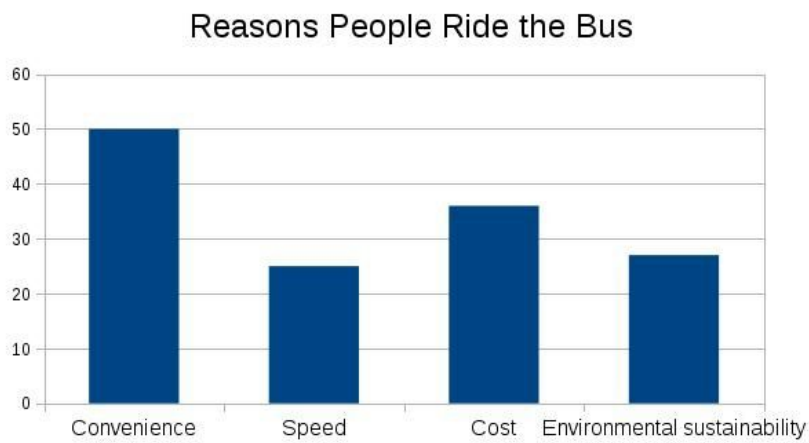
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APPENDIX

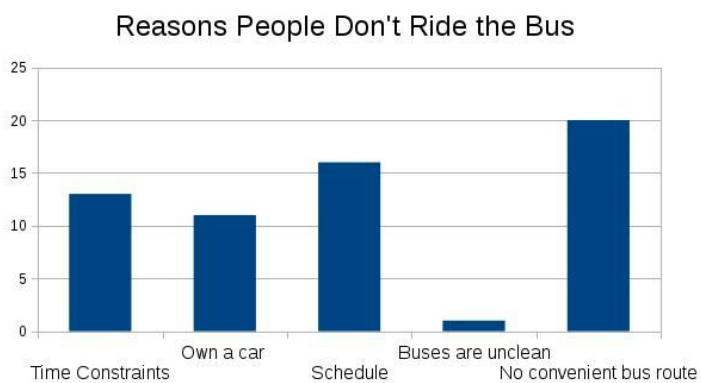
SouthWest Sustainability Logo



Research Results Figure 1:



Research Results Figure 2:



Campaign Plan Timeline

<i>Green = Active Tactic Yellow = Tactic Prep/Evaluation Red = Stop Tactic</i>	January	February	March	April	May	June	July	August	September	October	November	December
Primary Target Public (Students)												
Welcome Week & Scavenger Hunt	Red	Red	Red	Red	Red	Red	Red	Yellow	Green	Yellow	Red	Red
Transportation Fair	Red	Red	Red	Red	Red	Red	Red	Yellow	Green	Green	Yellow	Red
Social Media Buzz/Ambassadors Speaking to Classes and Groups	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green
Secondary Target Public (Existing Riders)												
Rider Survey	Green	Green	Green	Yellow	Red	Red	Red	Red	Red	Red	Red	Red
New Years Resolution Appreciation Communications	Green	Green	Yellow	Red	Red	Red	Red	Red	Red	Red	Red	Green
Faces of Sustainability	Red	Yellow	Green	Green	Green	Yellow	Red	Red	Red	Red	Red	Red

Survey Questions

SouthWest Transit SusTainability

Q1 Thank you for taking time to participate in this survey. Before you begin, please know that there are no right or wrong answers. We are interested in knowing your opinions and beliefs around environmental sustainability. All your answers are confidential. No information that might make it possible to identify survey participants will be included in any reports that are written. This survey should take about 5 minutes to complete. Once again, we thank you for your time and participation!

Q2 This section will ask some questions about your perceptions of environmental sustainability. Specifically, these questions will address environmental sustainability defined as any action or practice that contributes to the quality of environment on a long-term basis.

Q3 What comes to mind when you think of the term ‘sustainability’?

Q4 Please rate the likeliness of the following actions occurring in your life:

	Very Unlikely	Unlikely	Undecided	Likely	Very Likely
Often think about how my actions affect the natural world.	m	m	m	m	m
Actively search for information about environmental sustainability.	m	m	m	m	m
Look for information about the environment on TV or other media.	m	m	m	m	m
Look for information about the environment online.	m	m	m	m	m
Receive information about the environment from social media.	m	m	m	m	m
Do volunteer work for a group that helps the environment.	m	m	m	m	m
Donate money to a nature or environmental organization.	m	m	m	m	m
Talk to others about the	m	m	m	m	m

importance of the environment.					
Conserve energy at work or at home.	m	m	m	m	m
Recycle bottles, cans and paper.	m	m	m	m	m
Carpool or drive a fuel efficient car.	m	m	m	m	m
Use “green” non-plastic shopping bags.	m	m	m	m	m

Q5 Please rate how true the following statements are for your life:

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
Environmental issues are important to me.	m	m	m	m	m
I understand how to practice environmental sustainability.	m	m	m	m	m
I think it is important to engage in environmentally friendly practices.	m	m	m	m	m
I want to do everything I can to protect	m	m	m	m	m

the environment.					
There is a lot I can do to practice environmental sustainability.	m	m	m	m	m
I understand the impact my actions have on the environment.	m	m	m	m	m
I am interested in learning about environmental issues.	m	m	m	m	m
I am a part of the solution to environmental sustainability.	m	m	m	m	m
I am part of the problem with environmental sustainability.	m	m	m	m	m
I have a responsibility to do everything I can to practice environmental sustainability.	m	m	m	m	m
It is important for companies to promote environmental sustainability.	m	m	m	m	m
I am more likely to purchase products or services from a company	m	m	m	m	m

that is environmentally sustainable.					
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Q6 Given you decided to practice environmental sustainability, please rate how likely you would be to participate in the following activities:

	Very Unlikely	Unlikely	Undecided	Likely	Very Likely
Carpool on a weekly basis	m	m	m	m	m
Carpool on a daily basis	m	m	m	m	m
Use public transit on a weekly basis	m	m	m	m	m
Use public transit on a daily basis	m	m	m	m	m
Drive my car on a weekly basis	m	m	m	m	m
Drive my car on a daily basis	m	m	m	m	m
Bike on a weekly basis	m	m	m	m	m
Bike on a daily basis	m	m	m	m	m

Q7 If you do currently ride public transit on a weekly basis, please check all of the reasons why you choose to use public transit:

q It's located in a convenient location for my commute

- q It's faster than other methods of transportation
- q It's less expensive than other forms of transportation
- q It's an environmentally sustainable form of transportation
- q Not applicable (I do not ride public transit on a weekly basis)
- q Other (please specify) _____

Q8 If you do not currently ride public transit, please check all of the reason why you do not choose to use public transit:

- q I don't have time in the morning
- q I believe my car is more comfortable
- q My schedule is inconsistent
- q I assume buses are unclean
- q My commute is not represented by a bus route
- q Not applicable (I do ride public transit on a weekly basis)
- q Other (please specify) _____

Q9 Please rate how true the following statements are for you:

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
I am familiar with SouthWest Transit.	m	m	m	m	m
I use SouthWest Transit at least once a week.	m	m	m	m	m
I would recommend SouthWest Transit to family member, friend, or colleague.	m	m	m	m	m
I am aware of SouthWest Prime services.	m	m	m	m	m

I would use SouthWest Prime services.	m	m	m	m	m
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Q10 Which age category best describes you?

m Under 18

m 18-22

m 23-30

m 31-40

m 41-50

m 51-60

m Over 60

Q11 What gender do you identify as:

m Male

m Female

m Other: _____

Q12 Are you a University of Minnesota student?

m Yes, full-time undergraduate student (13+ credits)

m Yes, part-time undergraduate student

m Yes, graduate student

m No

Q13 In which location do you currently reside?

m On campus housing

m 1-2 miles off campus

m 3-5 miles off campus

m 5-10 miles off campus

m 10-15 miles off campus

m More than 15 miles off campus

m Other: _____

Q14 Relationship status:

m Single

m Married without children

m Married with children

m Living with partner

m In a relationship

m Other (please specify): _____

Q15 Do you own a car?

m Yes

m No

Q16 How many cars do you own?

Q17 How long is your daily commute to campus?

m 5-15 minutes

m 15-30 minutes

m 30 minutes-1 hour

m 1 hour

m 1 hour-1 hour and 30 minutes

m 1 hour and 30 minutes-2 hours

m 2 hours or more

Q18 Frequency of commute:

m 1-2 times a week

m 3-4 times a week

m 5-6 times a week

m 7 or more times a week

Q19 If taking this survey for class credit, please enter your x500.

Q20 Thank you for your participation!