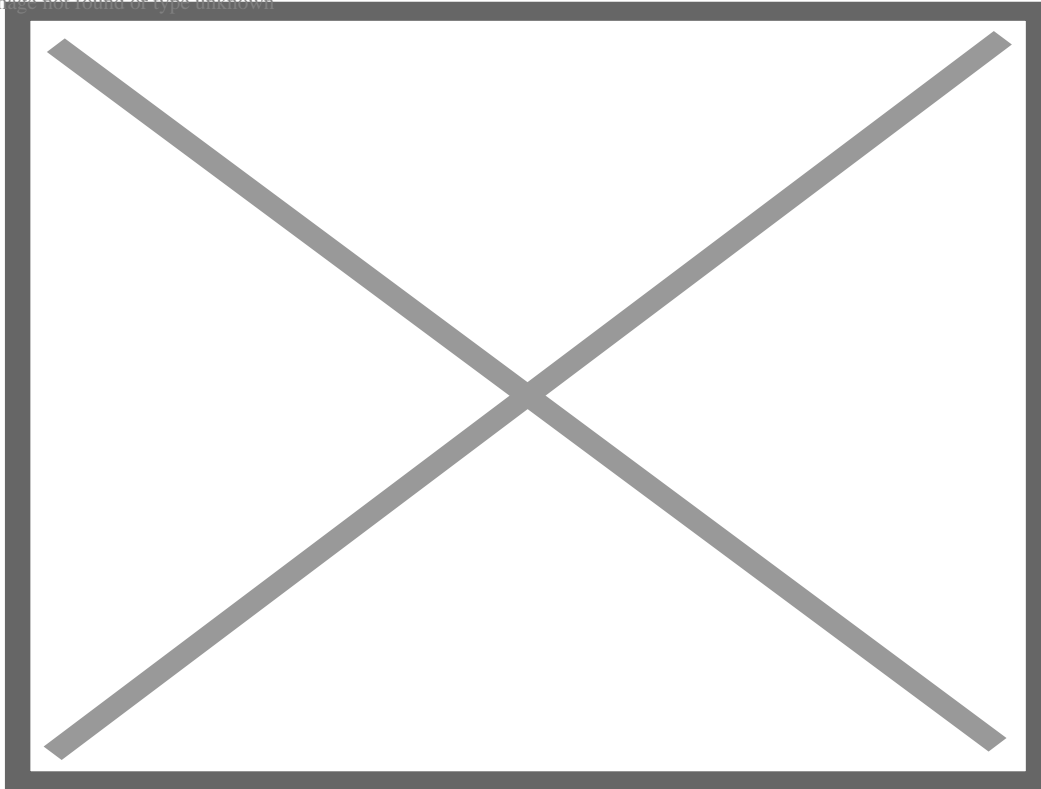Home > Real Time is Going Prime Time!

Thursday, January 5, 2017

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Finding ways to improve the customer experience is always top-of-mind at MTS. Recent technology enhancements for smartphone users and at transit centers are taking our service amenities to the next level and putting MTS front and center in the eyes of customers.

Powered-up Pylons! Large 16-foot-tall pylons now grace all the Rapid stations on Broadway from City College to Santa Fe Depot. The pylons are embedded with digital video screens that share next-arrival information for buses, advertisements, weather updates, upcoming events and more. The MTS Marketing Department holds the keys to content and has the ability to update content remotely at the click of a button from the Mills Building.

All Aboard! Next-Arrival Electronic Display Boards Now at all 53 Trolley Transit Stations To know when the next Trolley is arriving, passengers now just need to look up. Thanks to the MTS IT team, electronic display boards showing real-time nexttrain arrival information are active at all 53 transit stations and on all three rail lines. The electronic boards connect GPS locating technology and Trolley schedules to map out the next arrival times. The information is used to create "by-the-minute" accuracy of the next arriving Trolley. The display boards identify the line,

current time and the next three Trolley arrival times.

What's "App"-ening! Introducing the OneBusAway App With 70 percent of MTS passengers carrying smartphones, enhancing the availability of real-time bus and Trolley schedule information through app-based technology was a top priority. The OneBusAway app creates an efficient travel experience for passengers by delivering schedule information right to a user's smartphone. OneBusAway uses GPS signals from MTS buses to provide updated arrival time information on almost all MTS routes. There was no cost for MTS to set up this app and no cost for users to download or use. It has a simple design, basic functionality and easy navigation. Users can bookmark bus stops and use the phone's GPS to find nearby bus stops. Information displayed includes destination and minutes until arrival so passengers know when to expect the next bus.

Open Sesame = Open Data... MTS now has an application programming interface (API), which gives app developers open access to our real-time bus scheduling data. "There are many apps available to our riders that show our bus schedule. The purpose of MTS opening this data is so everyone uses our real-time information about our buses rather than guessing or pulling it from other sources," said Manager of Transportation Communication and Technology Devin Braun. Also, due to the new next-train arrival system, real-time data will soon be available for Trolley too!

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