



Platform Reconstruction and Safety Improvements

Phase IV Communications and Outreach Report
November 2022



ORANGE LINE
DEANWOOD
STATION
ORANGE LINE TO
NEW CARROLLTON

Deanwood
Orange Line

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Looking Back on the Communications Campaign

Over the course of 10 months, Metro deployed a multichannel communications and outreach campaign to increase project awareness across the region. Throughout the project, Metro used several Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) to provide insight into customer behavior and sentiments, while measuring the success of this communications campaign. To reach the target audiences with the information that was most useful to them, Metro listened to customers and adjusted communications tactics and messaging based on that feedback. The approach resulted in an effective communications campaign for the final phase of the project:

25%

Customer awareness increased by 25% one month after the communications campaign was launched

82%

Newsletter content was helpful to 82% of subscribers before, during, and after the closures

10%

Customer trust that the closures were needed increased by 10% from April to May 2022

698%

Newsletter subscribers increased by 698% from April to September 2022

Through the Capital Improvement Program, Metro will continue these successes and advance additional large-scale construction projects to create a safe, sustainable, and world-class transit system for the National Capital Region. Metro is committed to working with regional stakeholders to efficiently and effectively communicate with the public to tell Metro's story and ensure the region is kept up to date on upcoming projects.



About the Project

Project Overview

During summer 2022, five Orange Line stations – New Carrollton, Landover, Cheverly, Deanwood, and Minnesota Ave – closed with no rail service from May 28 through September 5, marking the final phase of Metro's largest, most complex capital construction project since the system opened in 1976. During this time, platform reconstruction work was completed at New Carrollton, Landover, and Cheverly, while customer experience improvements were installed at all five stations to bring a higher level of safety, convenience, and communication to all customers. Critical safety repairs were also conducted on several bridges along this segment of the Orange Line.

Customers at the five modernized Orange Line stations now benefit from new safety enhancements:



Slip-resistant tiles



Brighter LED lighting



Larger digital display screens



Rebuilt platform edges



Additional upgrades and amenities

Similar to previous years, Metro used a construction strategy that temporarily closed the stations while work was underway, bolstering safety for customers and construction crews while allowing Metro to minimize service impacts and restore normal service much faster than would otherwise be possible. During the station closures, Metro provided free shuttle bus service and other travel alternatives, and aided customers in navigating the station shutdowns, parking closures, pedestrian detours, and bus stop relocations.



These station closures were part of Metro's Capital Improvement Program which invests in the system safety, reliability, and the region's economy. The reopening of these five stations, along with the previous four years of platform reconstruction work, demonstrates Metro's commitment to deliver a sustainable, equitable, and world-class transit system to the National Capital Region.

Communications & Outreach Strategy

Guided by Metro's Public Participation Plan and Language Assistance Plan, the comprehensive communications and outreach campaign was launched to help the public and stakeholders understand the project impacts prior to, during, and after station closures, reaching customers both at and away from the stations.

Building upon lessons learned from previous stages of this project, the communications plan identified successes, including utilizing *The Washington Post* digital advertisements, and areas of improvement, such as low newsletter sign-ups, to target when executing the communications campaign. To enhance the campaign from previous years, the communications team focused heavily on the identified area of improvement – increasing the newsletter subscriber base prior to the station closures. As a result, a new campaign, invoking enjoyable summer concepts with bold, colorful graphics was created and successfully executed, exceeding key performance indicators three months ahead of schedule.



Other successful in-person and digital tactics to increase awareness about the station closures and project impacts included in-person station assistance, social media, print advertisements, and station signage. Timely multilingual communications were delivered to a diverse customer and stakeholder base to increase awareness, educate about service changes, and provide key project information.

This report summarizes the communications and outreach strategy and results.



Campaign Duration

- 10 months (December 2021–September 2022)

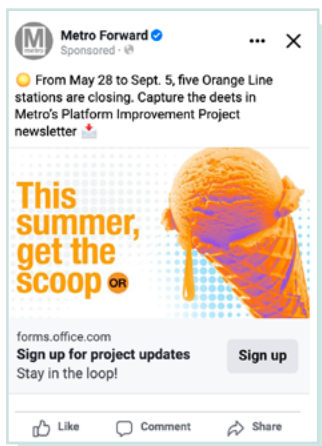
Audiences

- **Target:** Transit customers at New Carrollton, Landover, Cheverly, Deanwood, and Minnesota Ave stations, stakeholders, regional transit providers, and community groups in Prince George's County and Washington, DC.
- **Secondary:** Employees, media, other jurisdictional partners, infrequent customers, and visitors.

Objectives

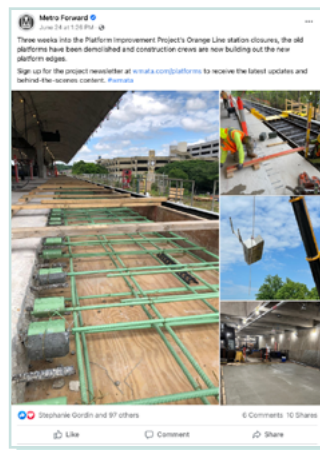
- Announce project scope, duration, service impacts, and travel alternatives, and drive customer awareness about project impacts.
- Coordinate with internal and external partners.
- Provide customer service and ongoing project updates at impacted stations.
- Announce stations are reopening and retain ridership.
- Prioritize customer and employee safety and fiscal responsibility.
- Celebrate the hard work, success, and improvements made by the four-year platform rehabilitation program, and thank customers for their patience.





Before Construction

December 1, 2021–May 27, 2022



During Construction

May 28–September 5, 2022



After Construction

September 6–30, 2022

Tactics

- Web page
- Stakeholder coordination
- Customer signage
- In-person station assistance
- Employee communications
- Bilingual communications toolkit
- Newsletters
- Owned and paid media
- Photo and video content
- Service and station maps
- Press releases
- Service advisories
- Customer research
- Handouts
- Community-based organization outreach

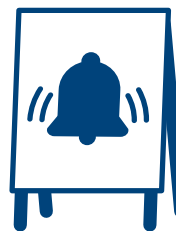
Results By the Numbers



60
earned
media
stories



44,150
unique web
page views



593
wayfinding
and
notification
signs



527,806
customer engagements

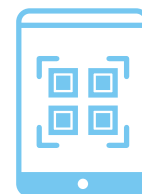


40,122
handouts
distributed

3,551,171
media impressions



average
newsletter click rate
6%

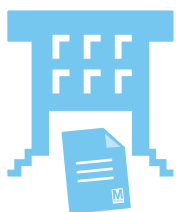


1,321
QR code
scans

91,672
non-English customer
engagements



31.34%
average newsletter
open rate



30
material dropoffs
to community centers

1,206
newsletter
recipients



4,354
mailers sent
to residences
and businesses



Results

Key Performance Indicators

By opening the lines of communication, Metro was able to consistently receive and implement customer feedback.



Customer awareness

Increased as a result of the multichannel communications and outreach campaign efforts.



Customer trust

Increased when Metro emphasized the project's importance to increase safety and service reliability.



Newsletter subscribers

Increased from the beginning of the communications and outreach campaign until the stations reopened.



82% of newsletter subscribers found Metro's information helpful throughout the project, citing photo and video content, construction updates, and service information as being the most useful components.



INSIGHTS

- Targeting newsletter sign-ups prior to the project start date gave Metro a large base of individuals to communicate important project updates, in a way that was most convenient and accessible to the audience.

A Closer Look

Going Digital: wmata.com/platforms



Unique Page Views Over
9 Month Timeframe

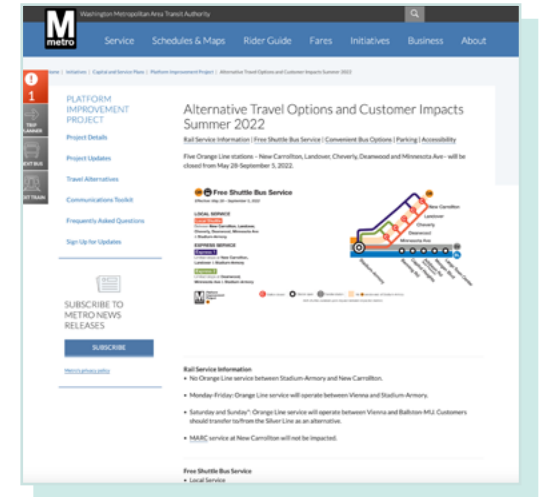
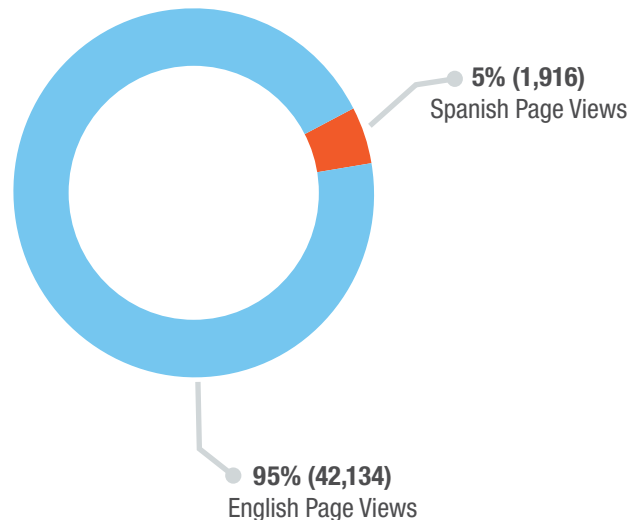
44,150



Average Time
Spent on Page

1 min, 41 sec

English & Spanish Views



The travel alternatives and customer impacts page was kept up to date with information on station changes, shuttle bus operations, and bus service to assist customers with planning their travel.



INSIGHTS

- The web page was used to host additional newsletter content, such as the People Behind the Project and Business Spotlight features, allowing longform content to be repurposed and promoted on other communications channels.

A Closer Look

Going Digital: wmata.com/platforms

Most Viewed English and Spanish Web Pages

1



Homepage

English views: 17,377

Spanish views: 1,498

2

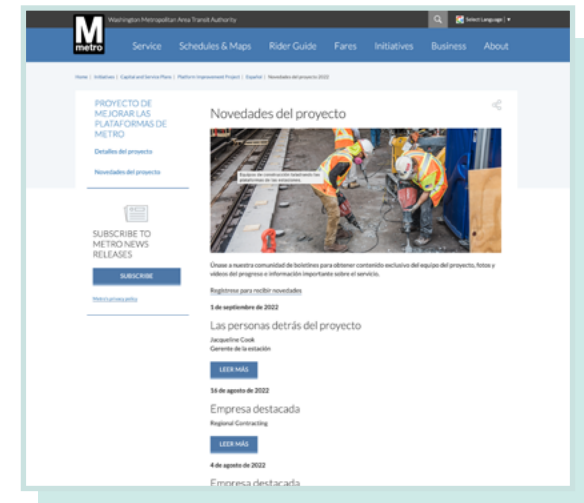


Travel Alternatives & Customer Impacts

English views: 11,568

Spanish views: 177

3



Project Updates

English views: 5,458

Spanish views: 173



INSIGHTS

- Across both the English and Spanish web pages, the Homepage, Travel Alternatives & Customer Impacts, and Project Updates pages had the most unique page views. Throughout the project, these pages were promoted the most and were continuously updated to keep customers informed about the most recent project developments.

A Closer Look

Sharing Updates: Newsletters



1,206 Subscribers



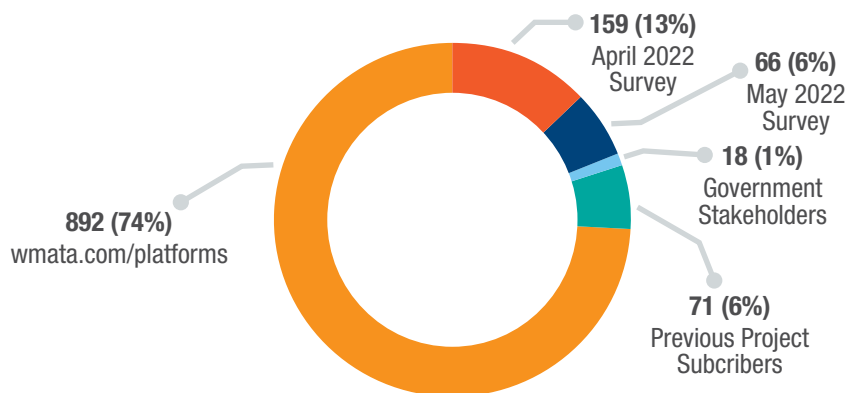
13 Newsletters

698% Increase In Subscribers After
“This Summer” Campaign

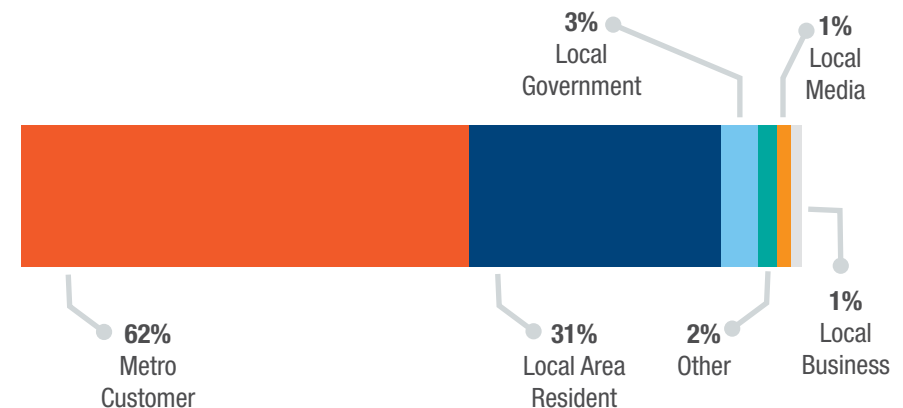


An Average of 82% Subscribers Found
the Message Helpful Across All Newsletters

Sources of Newsletter Subscribers



Breakdown of Newsletter Survey Respondents



INSIGHTS

- In previous project phases, Metro struggled to share information digitally with customers, because the newsletter subscription base was very low. To solve this problem, a bold, attention-grabbing campaign that invoked enjoyable summer concepts, known internally as “this summer,” was created to increase newsletter sign-ups. With a lofty goal to reach 1,000 subscribers by September 1, the campaign successfully exceeded the goal by June.



A Closer Look

Sharing Updates: Newsletters



31.34% Average Open Rate

6% Average Click Rate



Scan to view a project newsletter!

Before Construction

5 Newsletters

31.1% Average Open Rate ▲

6.97% Average Click Rate ▲

During Construction

7 Newsletters

31.06% Average Open Rate ▲

9.97% Average Click Rate ▲

After Construction

1 Newsletter

34.25% Average Open Rate ▲

2% Average Click Rate ▼

▼ Lower than Industry Standard

▲ Higher than Industry Standard

20.44% Open Rate Standard

2.25% Click Rate Standard



INSIGHTS

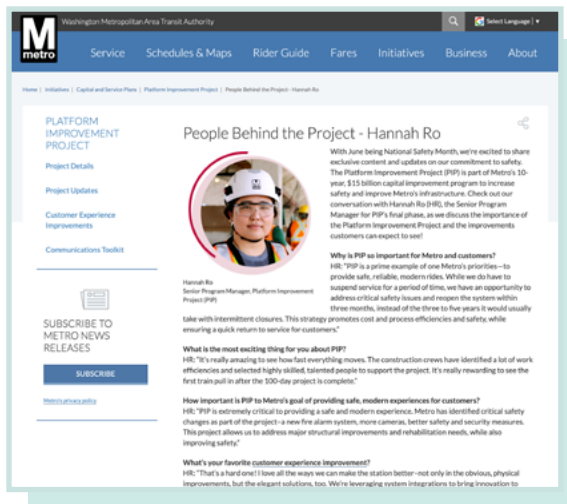
- Newsletter recipients engaged with content the most when there were visual components, specifically video content. The most clicked-on link was the timelapse video of demolition at Landover Station.

A Closer Look

Sharing Updates: Newsletters

Most Viewed Newsletter Articles

1



People Behind the Project: Hannah Ro – 217 views

2



June 2022 Construction Update – 203 views

3



People Behind The Project: Jameshia Peterson – 172 views



“It provided an update of construction. And the project manager was introduced. It is nice to put a face on the project. The pictures gave a great visual.”

— Local Resident



“The countdown clock got my attention and the quick facts at the top of the message are helpful.”

— Local Resident



Metro staff encourage customers to sign up for project updates at the New Carrollton Station pop-up event.



When the stations reopened, Metro staff welcomed customers back and distributed water bottles as a token of appreciation.



INSIGHTS

- Distribution of paper versions of the newsletter instilled confidence in customers that the project was on schedule by showing construction progress and photos.



5
Pop-up
Events



76
Customer Inquiries
Through Customer Service



22,230
Staff Hours
Worked



4,354
Mailers Sent to
Local Residents



“Thank you all for your help. It does really make a difference for those passengers new to this station.”

— Customer at Stadium-Armory Station

A Closer Look

Helping Hands: Customer Outreach

Total Customer Engagements
527,806

17% Non-English Engagements

ሰላም

SPANISH
10%

안녕하세요

OTHER
1%

Korean, Mandarin,
Vietnamese, French, Arabic,
German, Portuguese

AMHARIC
6%

hello

hola



Metro staff engage with customers at pop-up events prior to the station closures.

Common Customer Questions

- How long does the Express Shuttle take compared to the Local Shuttle?
- Will the stations reopen on time?
- What work is being done to the stations?
- Is the shuttle frequency the same on weekdays and weekends?
- Are the Blue Line closures every weekend this summer?

10,630 Giveaways Distributed

5,000
Water
Bottles

4,500
Tote
Bags

580
USB
Fans

550
Popsicles

40,122 Handouts Distributed

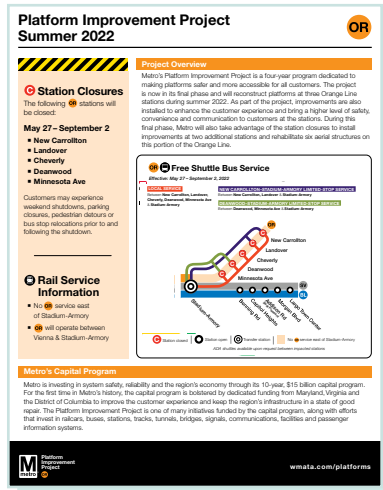
30,442
Station Closures
Take-ones

7,000
Newsletter
Handouts

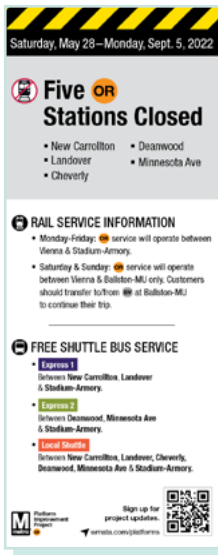
2,680
Bus Relocation
Take-ones

A Closer Look

Spreading the Word: Communications Toolkit



Project factsheet



Station closures take-one

Communications Toolkit

We understand the Platform Improvement Project will have a large impact on your community. To help communicate this important work we've developed a bilingual communications toolkit with resources in English and Spanish. Please share information through your own channels.

Multimedia

- [Photo gallery](#)
- View our [Service alert video](#) to learn more about service changes this summer
- See what last year's riders thought about their renovated stations in our customer testimonial video ([English / Español](#))

Station Closures Resources

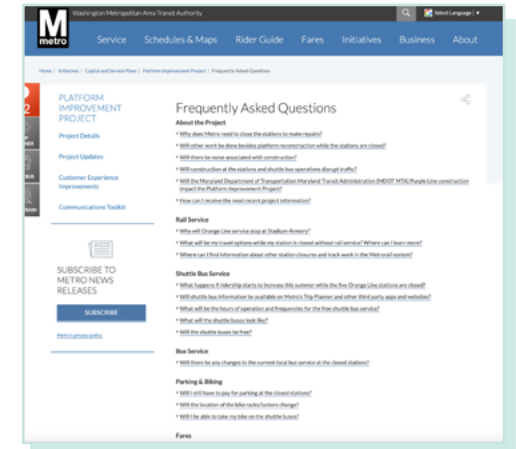
Use these resources to share information about the station closures and travel alternatives.

- Project fact sheet ([English / Español](#))
- Station closures map ([English / Español](#))
- Free shuttle bus map ([English / Español](#))
- Free shuttle bus service map: weekends only ([English / Español](#))
- [Frequently Asked Questions](#) (English)
- Take ones ([English/ Español](#))

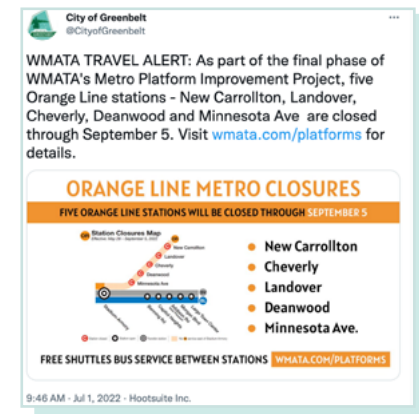
A communications toolkit, with English and Spanish resources including pre-approved messaging, maps, videos, fact sheets, and other project resources was posted on wmata.com/platforms. This page generated 769 page views.



Stakeholders across the region reminded customers of project impacts before, during, and after the closures.



One popular resource, the Frequently Asked Questions page, was viewed nearly 600 times.



Throughout the project, stakeholders used content from the toolkit to share timely and accurate project updates to their audiences.

A Closer Look

Building Partnerships: Stakeholder Outreach

Orange Line Reopening Media Event With:

- Randy Clarke, *Metro General Manager and Chief Executive Officer*
- Floyd Holt, *Deputy Chief Administrative Officer, Prince George's Office of the County Executive*
- Chris Van Hollen, *United States Senator, Maryland*
- Dannielle M. Glaros, *Councilmember, Prince George's County*
- Dr. Tracy Hadden Loh, *Metro Board Member*



1,000
Handouts distributed across 30 recreation centers, libraries, and schools.



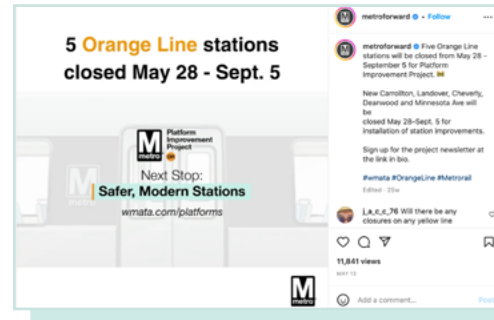
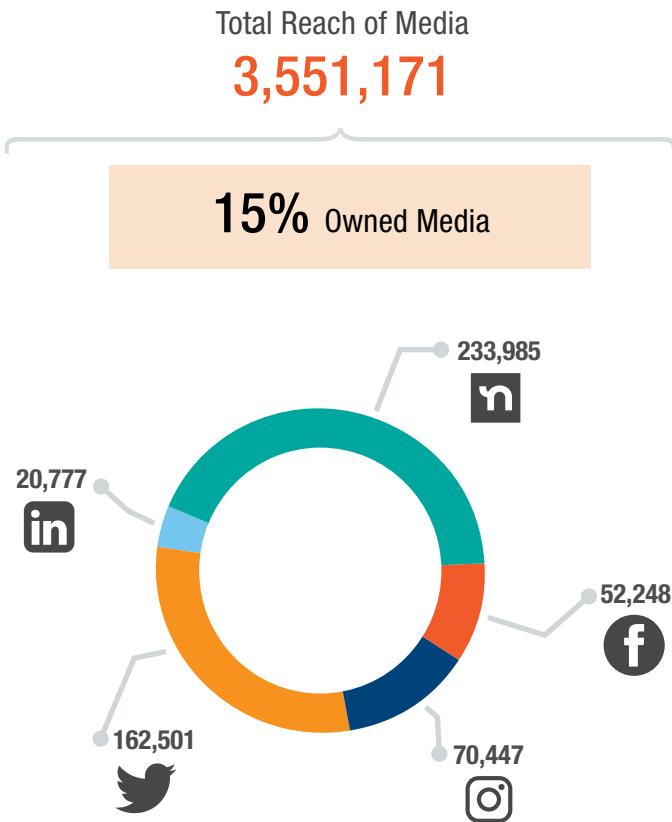
INSIGHTS

- Over 40 personal emails sent to stakeholders and material distribution to 30 recreation centers, libraries, schools, and community centers near the closed stations were essential in spreading the word to the greater community, specifically those without Internet access.

 **10** Stakeholder Meetings

A Closer Look

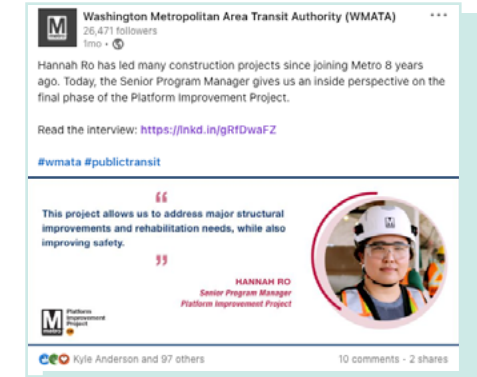
Amplifying the Message: Media & Advertising



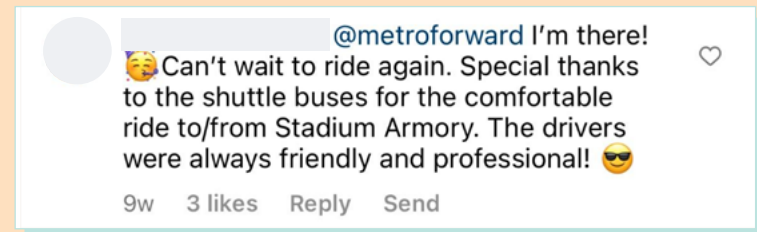
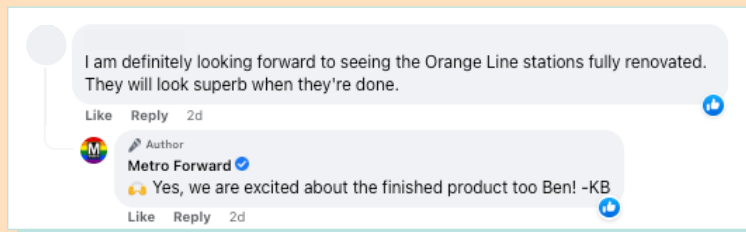
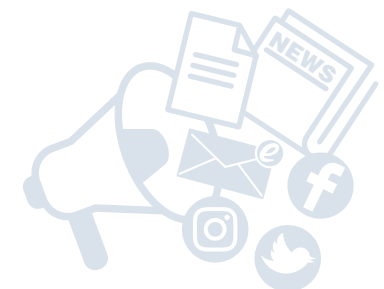
The service alert video was the most popular project Instagram post, generating over 11,800 views.



The station reopening video, posted to Twitter, generated 7,651 views and 21 retweets.

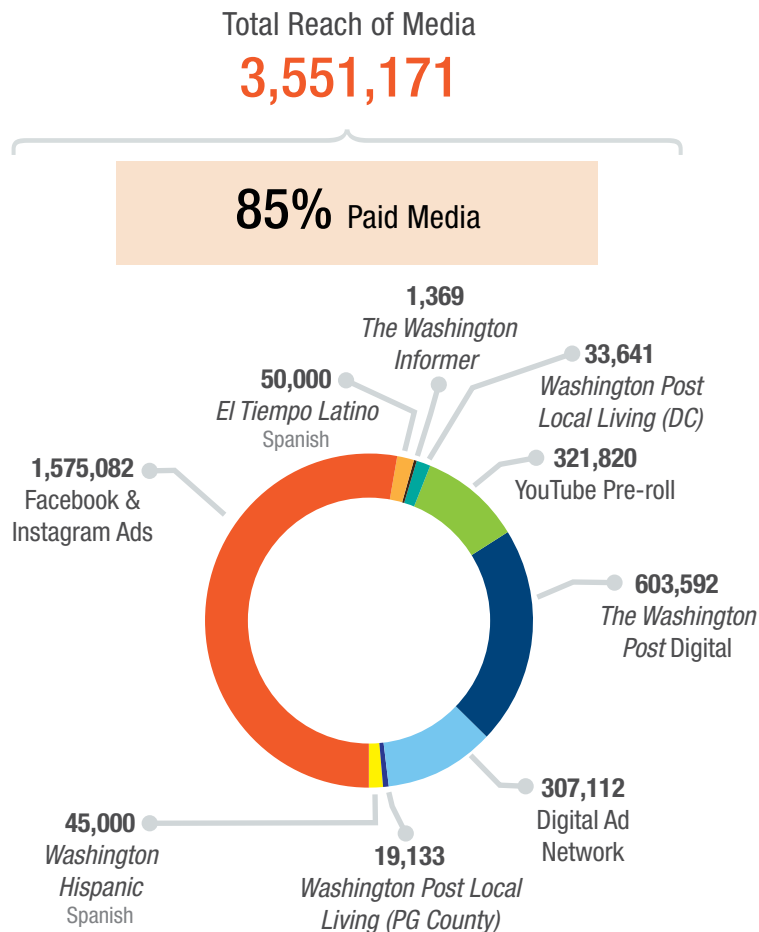


Owned media promoting the “People Behind the Project” article on Metro’s LinkedIn generated 99 likes and 10 comments.



A Closer Look

Amplifying the Message: Media & Advertising



Before Construction

28 Media Stories



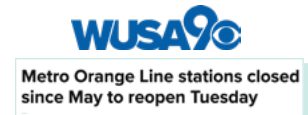
During Construction

23 Media Stories



After Construction

9 Media Stories



INSIGHTS

- Building on lessons learned from Metro's Rockville Canopy Replacement Project a few months earlier, *The Washington Post* digital ads continued to be an effective way to inform customers about large capital projects, generating over 600,000 impressions.
- Newsletter content repurposed for social media, specifically the People Behind the Project features, were well-received on LinkedIn, generating shares among Metro employees celebrating their colleagues.

A Closer Look

Navigating Change: Station Signage

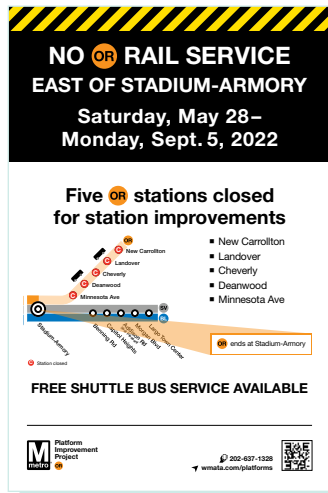
Before Construction

During Construction

After Construction

Paper and
Digital
Signs in the
System
593

1,321
QR Code
Scans



Notification signage in 26 Orange Line stations.



"This summer" digital signage posted across the system.



Shuttle bus signage at six stations.



Station closed signage at five stations.



Bus relocation signage at New Carrollton.



"Welcome back" digital signage at five stations.

About the Report

Appendix A: Customer Demographics

Station	Fall 2019 Weekday Ridership	Minority	Low-income	Asian	African American	Latino	Top Limited English Proficiency (LEP) Languages
New Carrollton	7,100	62%	9%	3%	50%	5%	Spanish, French
Landover	1,900	86%	21%	1%	79%	6%	Spanish
Cheverly	1,100	64%	8%	2%	52%	8%	Spanish
Deanwood	1,500	95%	38%	0%	84%	5%	Spanish
Minnesota Ave	2,400	89%	41%	4%	78%	5%	—

About the Report

Appendix B: Station Ridership

Station	2019 Weekday Ridership	April 2022	May 2022
Metrorail System	626,270	228,250	231,470
Orange Line	210,110	70,620	69,210
New Carrollton	7,100	1,952	1,904
Landover	1,900	538	561
Cheverly	1,100	336	336
Deanwood	1,500	521	536
Minnesota Ave	2,400	525	540

About the Report

Sources

Information retrieved by September 2022. Information and data in this report is compiled from a variety of sources. In the case of discrepancies between this report and the original data source, the original data source shall prevail.

- Page 3.** The communications and outreach campaign was guided by a strategic communications plan developed in November 2021, Metro's Public Participation Plan (PPP), and Metro's Language Assistance Plan (LAP).
- Page 7.** Results were drawn from customer surveys conducted in April 2022 and May 2022, inline newsletter surveys, and subscriber numbers in Mailchimp.
- Page 8 & 9** Google Analytics provided by Metro of wmata.com/platforms from January 2022-September 2022.
- Page 10.** Data sourced from inline newsletters survey results, developed using QuestionPro. The number of newsletter recipients represents the total subscribers at the end of the project. Identities listed under "other" in the chart on the right side of the page include, but are not limited to, Metro employees working on the project, federal employees, and contractors.
- Page 11.** Data sourced from Mailchimp newsletters sent between February 2022 and September 2022. Subscription numbers and engagement fluctuated throughout the project. The industry standard is a benchmark used by Mailchimp to compare Metro's newsletter campaign analytics with similar organizations categorized in the "Travel and Transportation" industry.
- Page 12.** Google Analytics provided by Metro of wmata.com/platforms Project Updates page from May 2022-September 2022.
- Pages 13 & 14** . . . Data sourced from IdleTime Advertising outreach team reporting between March 2022 and September 2022.
- Page 15.** Google Analytics provided by Metro of wmata.com/platforms Communications toolkit page from March 2022-September 2022.
- Page 16.** Data for owned social media metrics provided by Metro from February 2022-September 2022.
- Page 18.** Data for paid advertisements sourced from Facebook, Instagram, DyAdmic, *El Tiempo Latino*, YouTube, *The Washington Post*, *Washington Hispanic*, and *The Washington Informer* from April-September 2022.
- Page 19.** Total QR codes scans are from posted signage and handouts distributed at New Carrollton, Landover, Cheverly, Deanwood, Minnesota Ave, and Deanwood.
- Page 20.** Data sourced from Metro's PPP.
- Page 21.** Data sourced from Metro's Ridership Portal. Data in each column is the weekday average.



ORANGE LINE
DENWOOD
STATION

ORANGE LINE TO
NEW CARROLLTON

ORANGE LINE TO
VIENNA/FAIRFAX-GMU



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