

2007 Commuter Store Study

SPONSOR:

[Arlington County Commuter Services](#) (ACCS)

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OVERALL STUDY PURPOSE:

- ☞ To understand how ACCS' Commuter Store™ concept is currently performing.
- ☞ To identify ways to improve the product and service delivery.
- ☞ To measure the overall impact of ACCS' investment in the Commuter Store.
- ☞ To establish benchmarks from which performance gains can be made.

OBJECTIVES OF RESEARCH:

- ☞ Profile ACCS' Commuter Stores' current users.
- ☞ Identify what prompted visit(s): ad, Web site, referral, store sign, store front, metro/transit onboard ad, newsletter, map, brochure, etc.
- ☞ Assess the current customer experience and related satisfaction with ACCS' Commuter Stores.
- ☞ Identify store users' needs for commuter information, fare media, and trip planning assistance services.
- ☞ Understand extent to which store is meeting needs - based on attributes of "retail experience" (i.e., customer service, store layout, information, etc.).
- ☞ Find perceived opportunities and challenges with stores' existing products/services.
- ☞ Identify return on investment/impact of the commuter stores. Results/outcomes of store services – did they influence or support travel change.

- ☞ Understand the previous from different perspectives - by audience sub-segments – e.g., repeat customers vs. first time, etc.

METHODOLOGY:

Mode of Data Collection	Store intercepts - 4-question pre-survey - Follow-up online survey in store or later - \$5 Gourmet Coffee Card incentive
Completed Surveys	547 Completes - 171 Ballston Mall Store Customers - 200 Crystal City Underground Mall Store Customers - 176 Rosslyn Metro Mall Store Customers
Survey Population	- Visitors to the three Commuter Stores between 3/27/07 and 4/5/07
Survey Instrument	- Paper pre-questionnaire, then Online Follow-up (slightly different versions for in and out of store) - Spanish option available, but not utilized
Criteria for Participation	- Store Customer

KEY FINDINGS

Pertinent Background Findings from 2006 Arlington County Resident Study (Telephone Version):

- ☞ 52% of all residents sought information on types of transportation they could use and 47% sought transportation services.
- ☞ 6% of those who sought information used Arlington Organizations (including The Commuter Stores) as an information source.
- ☞ Of those who sought information, 54% looked for transit routes/schedules. Four in ten residents who sought information took action to change how they travel around Arlington.
- ☞ 2% were aware of The Commuter Store without prompting; 44% were aware when aided.
- ☞ At 11%, The Commuter Store was the most utilized Arlington Transportation Service Organization.

Demographics of Commuter Store Survey Respondents:

- ☞ More males than females responded to the survey (60% were male).
- ☞ Race did not vary much among the stores with more than half identifying themselves as White, non-Hispanic. When compared with the Arlington County Census, Whites and Hispanics were under-represented at the store, while African-Americans were over-represented.
- ☞ Not surprisingly, Crystal City customers had higher incomes than the other Stores' customers. When compared with the census, lower income groups were well represented in the survey.
- ☞ Crystal City customers were more likely to be employed with 95% employed full time. 19% of Ballston customers were not employed.
- ☞ Age wise, Crystal City customers were more likely to be Baby Boomers (born 1946 – 1964), and Ballston had the most Silent Generation customers (born 1925 – 1945).

- ☞ 35% of the respondents neither lived nor worked in Arlington County, but utilized the Stores as they were passing through.
- ☞ Customers were transit riders, with less than 15% driving alone as their main source of commuting to work. A third to almost half drove alone as a secondary mode of transportation.

Customer Behavior:

- ☞ Most respondents were repeat customers, with less than a quarter visiting for the first time. Two thirds of customers visited at least once a month. 40% made their first visit within the last year.
- ☞ The majority heard about the Commuter Stores via “passing by” or referral. Less than 10% had heard through advertising.
- ☞ Most visited their particular store because it was close to their home or work.
- ☞ About three-quarters visited the Stores specifically to purchase tickets or fares and more than three-quarters who visited the Stores made a purchase. This includes 50% of those who say they drive alone for the majority of the time, and 59% of first-time customers. What they purchased varied significantly by Store. Those who did not purchase said they just didn’t need anything.
- ☞ Almost half picked up a free schedule or brochure. What they chose varied by Store.

Store Experience:

- ☞ More than 90% had a good experience with The Commuter Store. And 88% said they are likely to recommend. The Net Promoter Score is 78%. 93% said they are likely to return. These are extremely high satisfaction and loyalty scores.
- ☞ Store attributes (convenient location, easy to find way around, pleasant, right sound, right lighting, convenient hours, easy to find) received high marks (more than three-quarters agree).
- ☞ More than 85% also agree that the staff is professional, knowledgeable, and helpful.

Store Impact:

- ☞ 32% made a change in work travel and 32% made a change in non-work travel since first visiting The Commuter Store. Most of those changes involved an increase in transit use, and most of those who changed previously drove alone.
- ☞ Slightly less than half of the respondents also purchased tickets from places other than The Commuter Store.
- ☞ Two-thirds of customers also looked for travel information in places other than The Commuter Store.

OTHER RELATED STUDIES, PLANS & DOCUMENTS:

2006 – 2008 Arlington County Commuter Services (ACCS) Research and Evaluation Plan

AVAILABLE DOCUMENTS:

Questionnaires
Data Tables
PowerPoint Presentation Final Report

KEY WORDS:

ACCS, Arlington County, Arlington County Commuter Services, Attitudes, Awareness, Commuter assistance services, commuters, Commuter Store, commuting, demographics, driving trips, evaluation, non-commute trips, performance measurement, satisfaction, scorecard, services, TDM, TDM Planning and Administration, The Commuter Store, The Mobile Commuter Store, Transit, Transportation Alternatives, Transportation Demand Management, Transportation Needs, Transportation Options, Transportation System