

## **2008 Arlington Transit (ART) Rider Study**

### **SPONSOR:**

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

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### **RESEARCH SUPPLIER:**

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### **OVERALL STUDY PURPOSE:**

- ☞ The 2008 ART Study is a component of the 2006-2008 ACCS Program Research and Evaluation Plan.
- ☞ The purposes of the research study are to:
  - Understand who is using ART and how they are using it.
  - Understand how ART is currently performing.
  - Identify ways to improve the product and service delivery.
  - Establish benchmarks to assess future performance gains.

## **OBJECTIVES OF RESEARCH:**

- ☞ Determine characteristics of bus use, such as frequency, length, reason for trips, etc.
- ☞ Determine satisfaction with and attitudes toward ART
- ☞ Develop a demographic profile of riders
- ☞ Estimate the number of individuals who use ART using SmarTrip ridership and reported frequency
- ☞ Benchmark for evaluating the impact of future service

## **METHODOLOGY:**

Mode of Data Collection	Self-administered 4-page Onboard Paper Questionnaire: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Interceptors rode the bus between 9/15/08 and 9/28/08</li><li>- There were two different types of surveys labeled A and B where questions 8 through 11 differed</li><li>- Both of these surveys were translated into Spanish and riders were given a choice</li><li>- Respondents were offered a free bus pass for taking the survey</li><li>- Quotas were set for each route based on ridership</li></ul>
Completed Surveys	2,206 total surveys (700 of which were in Spanish)
Survey Population	ART Riders
Survey Instrument	Paper Questionnaire
Criteria for Participation	Riding the bus

## **KEY FINDINGS**

### **Demographic Profiles:**

- ☞ 55% of the respondents were female. The mean age is 36 – compared with the Arlington Profile, ART riders tend to be younger. The majority of riders are minorities – 31% Hispanic, 28% African-American, 9% Asian (27% White, non-Hispanic).
- ☞ 84% of Riders live in Arlington. 63% of riders work in Arlington.
- ☞ 13% are not employed and 21% are Students. 70% have annual household incomes below \$60,000.
- ☞ This report also looks at comparisons of different riders segments: Spanish-speaking Riders, ART Commuters, Frequent Riders, Long-term Riders, Prime Riders (long term and frequent), and Choice Riders (those who choose to ride the bus over driving alone).

### **Use of ART:**

- ☞ 58% say they ride ART buses 5 or more days a week.
- ☞ 67% of Riders have been riding the bus for less than 3 years and 31% have been riding for less than a year.
- ☞ Two thirds of riders live less than 3 blocks from a bus stop.
- ☞ 61% of riders transferred to or from Metrobus/rail on the trip where they were surveyed.
- ☞ 45% said they would take another bus if ART were not available, 10% would drive alone, and 7% would not make the trip at all.
- ☞ 74% use ART to get to/from work. Other popular uses are errands, dining and entertainment, and school.
- ☞ 31% say that the bus (not specifically ART) is their primary mode; only 7% drive alone.

## **Satisfaction with ART:**

- ☞ Nearly all service attributes are rated as important – particularly safety and reliability. For the most part, ART gets high marks on those attributes, especially in terms of payment process, lighting, and safety.
- ☞ The areas that show the largest opportunity (using the SIR Opportunity Index) are short wait times, on time performance, and clean buses.
- ☞ Using multiple regression to determine what drives satisfaction with ART, 5 aspects were shown to be significant – Driver is courteous, Bus is clean, Wait time is short, Bus runs on time, and Bus is handicap accessible (this has a negative relationship). Driver courteousness and short wait time had particularly strong impacts.
- ☞ More than half of all Riders were aware of ArlingtonTransit.com, Bike on Bus, 228-RIDE, and ART Schedules for handhelds, but less than half were aware of ART Alerts and the ART Forum.
- ☞ 79% find ART Bus and Bus Stop information easy to understand, 76% find the information useful, and 71% find the information up-to-date.
- ☞ Satisfaction with ART is high (85% gave a 4 or 5 on a scale of 1 to 5) and likelihood of recommending is even higher (87% gave a 4 or 5 on a scale of 1 to 5).
- ☞ Satisfaction varied slightly by route – 74 had the highest and 75 had the lowest (but the sample sizes were very small for some of the routes).

## **Advertising and Other Arlington Services:**

- ☞ 27% recall seeing or hearing transportation advertising.
- ☞ ART Riders are familiar with many Arlington Services and some have used them.

## **OTHER RELATED STUDIES, PLANS & DOCUMENTS:**

### **AVAILABLE DOCUMENTS:**

Questionnaire
Data Tables
PowerPoint Presentation Final Report

### **KEY WORDS:**

ACCS, Arlington County, Arlington County Commuter Services, ART, Attitudes, Awareness, Bus, Commute, Commute mode, Commuters, Commuting, Demographics, Hispanic, Latino, Performance Measurement, Rider Profile, Transit, Transportation Alternatives, Transportation Options, Transportation System