

TRANSIT BUS VIDEO MONITORS: More Than Meets the Eye

By Jay Barringer, REI®



REI's Ultrawide 37" LCD Monitor on City Line Bus

In 2023, passengers traveled [nearly 37 billion miles](#) on public transit systems, presenting operators with countless opportunities to engage and comfort their riders. Many capitalized on these opportunities by leveraging their high-definition bus video monitors.

Today's high-tech monitors can provide brilliant, crystal-clear images impressive enough to wow even passive riders. Even more, they come in a variety of sizes to fit most spaces, including those with limited vertical clearance.

Yet, transit bus video monitors are capable of so much more than vivid pictures. Read on to discover six ways they can enhance passenger trust, safety and interest in your operation.

1. Improve the Experience

Bus video monitors can help energize the passenger experience with bold, brilliant messaging about route schedules, news, weather, entertainment options and more. Sharp images are more apt to capture passenger attention. In addition, they convey professionalism and include modern features that riders will associate with your operation. The

result: increased chances for rider trust, retention and repeat business.

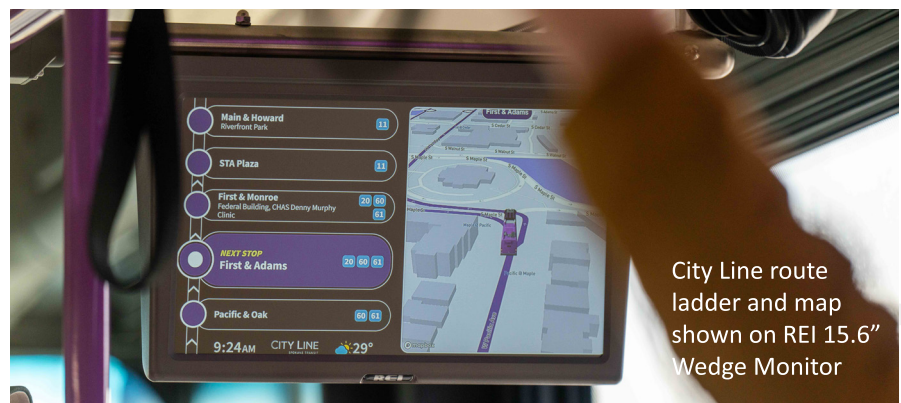
For its new bus rapid transit line, City Line, Spokane Transit Authority in Spokane, Washington set out to create a rail-like experience for passengers. In addition to a new bus design, near level boarding, new stations and frequency of service, City Line features REI monitors – including their ultrawide models – to show route maps and stop information.

Carly Cortright, Spokane Transit Authority's Chief Communications and Customer Service Officer, states, "They elevate the customer experience to hopefully encourage more people to try transit because it's sleek and modern.

We specifically wanted to create a train-like experience that showed riders where they are on the route. There is certainty about where a train is going. We wanted bus riders to have the same confidence about their location and destination. It is also a unique feature to the 60-foot City Line buses that there are five doors: two on the left side of the bus. The monitors show riders which side to exit."

2. Communicate Safety Messages

Safety is everything to transit employees and passengers. Professional-quality HD monitors may be utilized to play safety announcements, PSAs, amber alerts, and emergency notifications,



City Line route ladder and map shown on REI 15.6" Wedge Monitor

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City Line route information on 37" LCD Monitor by REI

contributing to passengers' peace of mind. They'll feel safer knowing precautions may be needed before, during or after their bus trips. Furthermore, reliable notifications will help build customer confidence in operations' efficiency and commitment to safety.

Cortright continues, "It definitely is a more dynamic approach to relaying information. Being able to provide real-time information, that's first and foremost what we want the monitors to be able to do; share rapidly changing conditions or an upcoming service alert. The monitors are a proactive way to push that data to customers instead of forcing them to actively search for it."

3. Reduce Expenses & Waste

Some transit agencies display advertisements and other notifications on monitors rather than paper. This electronic distribution saves on paper, printing, and cleaning costs, while reducing waste. As a result, passengers are likely to notice and appreciate the cleanliness and tidiness of the transit vehicles.

4. Strengthen Security

Bus video monitors are multitaskers and can be utilized for fleet surveillance too. Agencies may stream [live, bus surveillance system views](#) on their monitors to help deter questionable activities by passengers. When passengers know that they're being watched, incidents such as theft and other threatening acts may become less likely. This sense of security can encourage passengers to choose transit buses over other transportation options.

5. Earn Extra Revenue

Spokane Transit Authority does not display advertisements on its City Line bus monitors, but transit operators have the option to generate extra revenue by doing so. These spaces can be particularly appealing to outside vendors as their ads may be GPS-activated by [digital media players](#) and played back as buses travel near the businesses being advertised. Furthermore, an ultrawide 37-inch monitor can display two ads simultaneously, increasing revenue opportunities beyond passenger fares.

6. Promote Transit Services

Informed passengers are more relaxed passengers. Providing service notifications through bus video monitors can ease travel anxiety and help passengers better manage their schedules. Monitors can display a variety of updates, including changes to routes, service areas, connections, rules/regulations and available amenities.

Chris Tohm, Spokane Transit Authority's Web Services Manager, concludes, "The ability to show content inside of a moving vehicle that orients somebody to their location can be reassuring to passengers. We can all relate to that sense of relief in knowing we're on the right route and on schedule."



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