

WATCH IT!
24/7 News, Sports, Biz
& Entertainment Videos
REGISTER | HEADLINES

DAILY NEWS
City News

SEARCH FOR

IN

Current

GO

DAILY DISH
CLASSIFIEDS | HELP

Mining for ad dollars

DAILY NEWS
Exclusive

MTA sees network of tunnels as a cash cow

BY PETE DONOHUE
DAILY NEWS STAFF WRITER

Coming to a dark and dank subway tunnel near you:
commercials.

The MTA is considering using its warren of underground tubes as advertising space, eyeing electronic panels that are capable of broadcasting commercials to straphangers - a captive audience, to be sure.



Smith for NEWS

The ads would feature a series of changing images, similar to early silent movies or kiddie flipbooks. They would be displayed at rates determined by train speeds - ensuring the ads are not mere blurs to peering riders.

"The technology is amazing," Roco Krsulic, who heads the Metropolitan Transportation Authority's real estate and advertising department, told the Daily News.

The tunnel technology, which has been tried on PATH lines, in Chicago and elsewhere, will be tested in the city's tubes before officials decide whether to go with a full-blown campaign, Krsulic said.

The first tests in the nation's biggest subway system could begin this summer.

Other underground - and aboveground - transit ad ideas being mulled by the MTA include:

- Projecting silent ads onto walls behind subway tracks that bored riders stare at while waiting on platforms.
- Illuminating the poster ads on the sides of buses at night to reel in the attention of pedestrians.

The commercial possibilities mark the latest twists in the MTA's successful drive to increase advertising revenues, which are then reinvested in the maintenance of the transportation system.

Last year, the money ad train hauled in \$90 million - \$60 million more than 1996.

The increase in revenues has come as transit officials have undertaken such ventures as selling all the ad space in a given station or train to one company, and experimenting with electronic billboards at station entrances.

MTA spokesman Tom Kelly said that soaring revenues also are a direct result of improving conditions in the mass transit network as the authority continues an overhaul launched in the 1980s, involving station rehabilitations, new subway cars and buses.

Ridership has soared - and so has advertisers' interest.

While the number of ads has decreased, the price the MTA can charge for space has gone up, Krsulic said.

Officials stressed that no decisions on new strategies have been made. The authority doesn't want to overwhelm riders, officials said.





Commuter advocates gave advertising in the system mixed reviews.

"I don't like it all, but in these times, when you need every dollar you can get, aesthetics takes a back seat to economics," said Beverly Dolinsky, executive director of the New York City Transit Riders Council.

But Gene Russianoff of the Straphangers Campaign believes the ads are worth it if they help reduce fiscal pressure to raise fares - especially with a hike being mulled for next year.

"I give [transit officials] good grades" on ad sales, he said. "They have managed to increase revenues without punishing riders with [too many] ads in their face."

Originally published on May 15, 2006

 XML	Fresh stories hot off the site every day via RSS!
	Have stories like this emailed right to your inbox!
	Email this story
	Printer-friendly version

[Home](#) | [News & Views](#) | [Sports](#) | [Entertainment](#) | [Business](#) | [Boroughs](#) | [City Life](#) | [Services](#)

All contents © 2006 Daily News, L.P.
[Terms and Conditions of Use](#) | [Privacy Policy](#)