

MAY 15, 2006

Subway Advertising Gets Moving

If subway train cars can get wrapped in ads, why not the subway tunnels? At least, that's what the MTA is thinking, as the agency test moving advertisements along tunnel walls. The ads, whose technology the MTA says "is amazing," may be tested this summer, and one



provider of the technology is Sub-Media, whose placements have been on the PATH (you PATH riders get all the new technology first!). ANIMAL new york had looked at the technology a couple years ago and has a good explanation (and links, like this video) of the technology, which uses light to illuminate a series of still photographs that seem animated from a moving train car (think of a zoetrope or even a flipbook). While Gothamist supports any idea that will give help the MTA not raise fares, we're curious how long service will be disrupted in order to install the technology. Hey, maybe that's why the train service is messed on the weekend!

Do you think the subways are at risk of having too much advertising? Or does it not matter? The Daily News says that MTA is also considering "Projecting silent ads onto walls behind subway tracks that bored riders stare at while waiting on platforms" and "Illuminating the poster ads on the sides of buses at night to reel in the attention of pedestrians." Well, let's hope the ads aren't too distracting for pedestrians.

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Comments

Just what we need, more bombardment by advertising messages. So much for the MTA's anti-graffiti moral high ground.

[1] Posted by: [Jason](#) | [May 15, 2006 10:51 AM](#)

To tell you the truth, we're pretty lucky. Our trains and buses don't have nearly as many ads as the trains in Japan, HK, etc.

NY advertisements are tame compared to whats in Asia

[2] Posted by: Kojak | [May 15, 2006 10:57 AM](#)

they already do this on The T in boston...
it's frightening.

[3] Posted by: mike | [May 15, 2006 10:59 AM](#)

this is hardly news. i designed and animated a Shark Week submedia ad for Discovery Channel which was placed on the #2 line between 14th and 34th street **5 years ago**.

[4] Posted by: s | [May 15, 2006 11:00 AM](#)

They used to have one between DeKalb and Grand Street on the D in the early '90s too. Not an ad, just a neat little animation of morphing shapes. Used to add a nice little flavor to the commute.

Don't know if I'd want to get blitzed with an ad campaign though. An animated Dr. Zizmor? Ick...

[5] Posted by: ethos | [May 15, 2006 11:11 AM](#)

The "animated" ads in the subway tunnels in Hong Kong are kind of fun to watch. I just wish they get changed more frequently.

[6] Posted by: lc | [May 15, 2006 11:24 AM](#)

I've seen these in Boston, they are actually pretty fun to watch, it's kind of like watching a flipbook.

[7] Posted by: joe | [May 15, 2006 11:31 AM](#)

The ads in the subway cars give us something to stare at so that you don't get stabbed by the homeless-psychopath sitting across from you.

I think it's creative and fun, and I agree with the comment about helping the MTA avoid fare hikes [even though NYers have it better than most major urban commuters cost-wise].

The real opposition to media "bombardment" will come when interactive screens displaying ads make their way inside the newest set of subway cars [ordered and expo'd last year].

[8] Posted by: [cdjames](#) | [May 15, 2006 11:44 AM](#)

any comparisions between the "T" and the nyc system is silly. stupid turtle line and those wicked retahded trolleys ... ding ding ... hey this is some wicked pissah pahty you got goin on sully.

yuch

[9] Posted by: hr | [May 15, 2006 12:02 PM](#)

But I like the darkness of the subways.

[10] Posted by: Paddy | [May 15, 2006 12:02 PM](#)

I would like to see way more of those Spanish DJs who give away money.

[11] Posted by: el dipshit | [May 15, 2006 12:19 PM](#)

getting on the 42nd st. shuttle train this morning.. i was kinda LOVING it... the entire interior is covered with large images of cities to travel to... it's by Delta and makes you want to hop on a plane and fly far far away....

made me happy.

[12] Posted by: miss | [May 15, 2006 12:24 PM](#)

el dipshit:

YES! i'd like to see the young one struggling to stay on top of the pile of money in motion, not just one still picture.

[13] Posted by: nick | [May 15, 2006 12:44 PM](#)

Wow... Boston stereotypes sure are funny.

Anyway, I lived in Boston while the ads were up on the Red Line; they're unobtrusive and kind of cool, although they chose things that didn't animate well at all -- the Target ad with the floating bullseyes, in particular, just made everyone dizzy.

It's **really** only annoying because in Boston, they installed the ads at night. Get ready for even more track work!

[14] Posted by: [Zach](#) | [May 15, 2006 12:53 PM](#)

The Path Train has this. I saw an advertisement for SNAPPLE. I thought that I was seeing things. In reality, people who ride the trains should be shown ads that make them want to save money not spend it.

[15] Posted by: [MH](#) | [May 15, 2006 01:03 PM](#)

It's true, the Green Line in Boston is really ridiculously bad.

[16] Posted by: [joe](#) | [May 15, 2006 01:33 PM](#)

WOW, i remember seeing this when i was a really young, (keep in mind i'm only 22 now) but i tried googleing and searching for this for years, my parents thought it was jsut my imagination... i knew i seen this before!... i vaguely remember it being a cartoon with someone pouring a bowl of cereal or something... it was between pacific and grand street. on the B line (now the D)

Anyway .. finally i can put this thought to rest!

[17] Posted by: [mike](#) | [May 15, 2006 01:50 PM](#)

I remember getting off the plane at Logan and looking for the Silver Line. Of course I thought this was an actual train since it looked like it fit in so nicely on the T Map. When I got outside, low and behold it was a fuckin long ass bus with electric trolley-wire on top. The bus even had its own tunnels underground only it was allowed to go through, like a wannabe train with wheels.

Like what the fuck is this supposed to be??? If you can't afford a god damn train don't buy a freaking BUS and name it a line.

[18] Posted by: [Jeebus](#) | [May 15, 2006 02:29 PM](#)

ah yes, nothing like a divergence of discussion to boston T-bashing; before i clicked the comments i knew someone would bring up the existence of these ads in the T, yet i wasn't ready for the onslaught of boston hate. the charm of boston is that if you live there, you know to either take the bus, walk, or ride a bike. leave the T to the tourists who are dumb enough to use it.

[19] Posted by: [eliz](#) | [May 15, 2006 04:39 PM](#)

Never mind more advertising, perhaps the money raised could be used to buy a couple more FREAKIN' MAPS to stick in the subway cars??

2 maps per car is BEYOND THIRD WORLD. Every other subway system on the planet has little horizontal maps showing which stops the train goes to, that you can see from every seat, EXCEPT NEW YORK.

Maps aren't just for tourists. I live here and I haven't memorized where EVERY SINGLE NYC subway lines goes. So instead I have to carry a set of maps AT ALL TIMES. Which are out of date every 6 months anyway because MTA keeps re-routing the trains.

MAP. Do you hear me, MYA?? M A P!!!!

[20] Posted by: [Interlard](#) | [May 15, 2006 05:14 PM](#)

hahahahah "charm"; what good does charm do you when you're all the way out in brighton and you need to get downtown? basically, youre screwed if you take the T, you can walk faster than that damn thing, and in boston, you cant hail cabs on the street. backwards backwater town that it is, you either need to give yourself an extar hour to account for the antique "charm" of the train, or call for a cab and pray that it actually comes to get you when you need it, knowing you will shell out about twice what the same distance covered would cost here. i am SO GLAD i dont live there anymore.

[21] Posted by: [s](#) | [May 15, 2006 05:37 PM](#)

While the average MTA subway line is superior to its T counterpart, I

maintain that the Red Line is Boston is as good as the best MTA lines. Also, Boston has a pretty decent bus system, if you're stuck dealing with the dreaded B line (if I recall, the D isn't so bad).

[22] Posted by: Samantha T | [May 15, 2006 10:03 PM](#)

I recall seeing something like this on PATH which I didn't like. Why must there be ads everywhere.

Interlard, maps can come in handy, especially when the system goes to hell and you need to figure out your options on a line you don't normally take. Most people know the subway line or lines they take on a regular basis (or at least the part they ride). Hell, I still sometimes think that the Q still runs over the 6th Avenue IND sometimes and goes to Queens - something it hasn't done in a couple of years.

[23] Posted by: Toby | [May 15, 2006 10:44 PM](#)

The art that ethos mentioned was nice -- and it was around in the 1980s too. I remember being on the train as some little kid saw it and he said "ooooo, I liiiike it." Very cute.

Advertisements -- not so cute.

[24] Posted by: JT | [May 16, 2006 12:34 PM](#)

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