

## Effectiveness Statement

Entry Title: Increasing Bus Ridership with Innovative College Pass Program

Subcategory: Partnership

Member Type/Size: Group 3- Greater than 20 million annual passenger trips

AdWheel Category: Best Marketing and Communications to Increase Ridership or Sales

Organization: Orange County Transportation Authority

## Target Audiences

Located in a high transit-demand area of Orange County, the Rancho Santiago Community College District (RSCCD) includes:

- Santa Ana College (SAC) (19,600 students)
- Santiago Canyon College (SCC) (8,900 students)
- District-wide Continuing Education Program (20,400 students)

The college pass program was launched in August 2017 with students from Santa Ana College and the Continuing Education Program. Based on the success of the program, and demand from both students and school administration, it was expanded to include the additional 8,900 students of Santiago Canyon College in August 2018. The College Pass Program now provides bus service to all students in the Rancho Santiago Community College District. Students from all schools were target audiences.

## Situation/Challenge

Like many transportation agencies across the country, OCTA has experienced a decrease in bus ridership. College students are a key audience for ridership growth, so OCTA reached out to local colleges to establish partnerships for a new program. The Rancho Santiago Community College District expressed interest in working with OCTA to create a program that would provide affordable public transportation for students.

The challenge was that while multiple colleges were interested in the College Pass program, many would not qualify for funding from California's Low Carbon Transit Operations Program (LCTOP). Additionally, the students would need to vote to approve the proposed program. If approved, the College Pass Program would allow all students to use OC Bus by using their student ID.

## **Strategy/Objective**

The objective was to provide low-cost bus rides to all RSCCD students. This was accomplished by leveraging LCTOP funds and working with district management and students to highlight the benefits of the program:

- Increased transit ridership
- Attracting new riders / new students
- Saving on the cost of transportation
- Ensuring reliable access to education
- Managing campus parking

Starting with initial information about the student vote, marketing soon focused on encouraging students to use their new transit benefit. For less than \$7 per semester, all RSCCD students can take unlimited bus trips within Orange County to school, work, or fun. Tactics included: on-campus marketing materials / outreach, bus ads, on campus ads, brochures, and Facebook advertising.

## **Results/Impacts**

The College Pass Program allows more than 48,900 RSCCD students to ride the bus by showing their student ID or using the mobile app. With the use of LCTOP funds and the student approved transportation fee, the cost of the pass is low while also encouraging students to use their free ride benefit.

As of November 2018 (Aug. 2017 to Nov. 2018), the College Pass has:

- 1.5 million student boardings
- Been used by 9,759 unique students

Based on student survey results:

- 14% of SAC and 26% of Continuing Education riders were new bus riders
- 77% of existing student riders rode more frequently with the College Pass Program
- 99% of students would recommend OC Bus to a friend
- Nearly 70% of those who rode the bus to school also chose OC Bus to travel to other destination

## **Why This Entry Should Win**

The first program of its kind in Orange County, this is a positive and achievable example of developing new programs and increasing ridership using existing transit service. The OCTA College Pass Program provides a road map for other transit agencies to follow to grow ridership while helping the community thrive.

The College Pass Program also ensures access to education and future opportunities to disadvantaged communities. Based on a 2017 student survey, 4% of participating students from Santa Ana College and 23% of students from Continuing Education said that if it wasn't for the College Pass Program, they would not be able to attend college.

This innovative program helps students discover the benefits of public transportation, get to school and, ultimately, achieve their dreams.



**Orange County Transportation Authority  
College Pass Program**

# TARGET AUDIENCE

- Rancho Santiago Community College District, which includes Santa Ana College (SAC) and Santiago Canyon College (SCC).
- Located in a high transit-demand area of Orange County.
- Students meet the disadvantaged community demographic requirements for funding from California's Low Carbon Transit Operations Program (LCTOP).



## SITUATION/CHALLENGE

- Like many transportation agencies across the country, OCTA has experienced a decrease in bus ridership.
- Connecting college students to education affordably is a priority for OCTA, which has identified college students as a key audience for ridership growth.
- OCTA reached out to local colleges with the concept of developing partnerships that would establish a College Pass Program to allow every student with a valid student ID to access OC Bus services.



# ESTABLISHED PARTNERSHIP WITH RANCHO SANTIAGO COMMUNITY COLLEGE DISTRICT



- **College Pass pilot program**
  - ANY full-time or part-time student can ride with ID on all 57 local OC routes any day
  - Students approve fees through referendum to ride with very low cost
  - Proven to generate increased student use
- **Benefits for Students & Schools:**
  - Reduce traffic congestion & parking demand/overflow
  - Improve access to education for students
  - Enhance sustainability goals
- **Benefits for OCTA:**
  - Increase ridership and market share
  - Introduce younger generation to riding transit
  - Optimize existing service capacity





- OCTA offers a free pass program for one year through grant funding starting Fall 2017
- Students approve fees through a referendum to continue the program  
Fall 2018 – Summer 2020
- Fees are assessed based on revenue-neutral approach
- SAC enrolled students: 6,257 full-time, 16,081 part-time (average based on Spring 2017 and Fall 2016)

## STRATEGY/OBJECTIVES

- Provide free or low-cost bus rides to Rancho Santiago Community College District students.
- Leverage Low Carbon Emission Program LCTOP funds where possible.
- Work with district management/students to establish low per-semester student transportation fee for all students to fund the program from fall 2017 through summer 2020.


ATTENTION: SCC FULL TIME & PART TIME STUDENTS

# VOTE FOR BUS

MAY  
23 & 24

SANTIAGO CANYON COLLEGE STUDENT BUS PASS

COUNT ON OC BUS FOR SCHOOL, WORK, AND FUN DESTINATIONS!



To get unlimited bus rides, vote to have a small fee added to student fees. Pricing information and voting date coming soon!

Starting in fall, ride for \$5 or less per semester through a student fee.

Full-time students (enrolled in 12 units or more) will pay \$5 per semester.  
Part-time students (enrolled in less than 12 units) will pay \$4.30 per semester.

How do I get this deal?


Vote to approve the proposal from the Orange County Transportation Authority for unlimited bus rides for Santiago Canyon College students.



SEE HOW MUCH YOU CAN SAVE!

	Regular Pass Cost	Cost per Semester (\$ mo./180 days)	Savings per Semester	
			Part-Time (approx. cost)	Full-Time (approx. cost)
<b>SCC Student Fee (part-time)</b>		<b>\$5.00</b>		
<b>SCC Student Fee (full-time)</b>		<b>\$4.30</b>		
College 30-Day Pass	\$46	\$276	\$270.25	\$269.25
Cash Fare One Day Pass	\$5	\$900	\$894.25	\$893.25

Watch your email for instructions  
Vote by Survey Monkey on May 23 & 24

For more information, please contact Student Life and Leadership at (714) 628-4918



# STUDENT VOTE RESULTS

SANTA ANA COLLEGE

# VOTE



**FREE BUS RIDES/TRANPORTATION FEE PILOT PROGRAM**

WHO?	HOW MUCH?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All part-time and full-time students</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>First year free through OCTA grant</li> <li>After the first year, only \$6.75 (full-time student) \$5.75 (part-time) per semester</li> <li>Cost included in student fees (Fall/Summer, Spring/Winter)</li> </ul>
WHY?	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Unlimited bus rides throughout OC</li> <li>Save money</li> <li>No driving &amp; parking hassles</li> <li>Save the environment</li> </ul>	

For more information, please contact the Office of Student Life at 714-564-6214

 **Vote for OC Bus on May 8, 2017**

86%  
YES

ATTENTION: SCC FULL TIME & PART TIME STUDENTS

# VOTE FOR BUS

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**How do I get this deal?**  
Vote to approve the proposal from the Orange County Transportation Authority for unlimited bus rides for Santiago Canyon College students.

**SEE HOW MUCH YOU CAN SAVE!**

	Regular Pass Cost	Cost per Semester (6 mo./180 days)	Savings per Semester	
			Part-Time (approx. cost)	Full-Time (approx. cost)
SCC Student Fee (part-time)		\$5.00		
SCC Student Fee (full-time)		\$4.30		
College 30-Day Pass	\$46	\$276	\$270.25	\$269.25
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83%  
YES

- Three Year Pilot with SAC Credit students began Fall 2017
  - LCTOP grant funds (1<sup>st</sup> year)
  - Student approved semester fees (2<sup>nd</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> year)
- Three Year Pilot with SAC & SCC Continuing Education
  - LCTOP grant funds (1<sup>st</sup> year)
  - School funded (2<sup>nd</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> year)
- Launch an extensive marketing program



## MARKETING TACTICS: WRAPPED BUS

- Wrapped an OCTA bus in school colors & mascot to promote the pass.
- Developed concepts and choose final design with feedback from Santiago Canyon College

### Sample Concepts



### Final Design



# MARKETING TACTICS

- Produced marketing materials for distribution on campus.

## THERE ARE SO MANY REASONS TO RIDE OC BUS, AND IT'S FREE!

To school, for play, to the beach, for shopping, or anywhere you want.

With unlimited rides on all OC Bus local fixed routes\*, it's easy to hop aboard for school, work, and shopping. Relax and ride safe, air-conditioned buses while avoiding parking costs and contributing to a healthier environment.

\*Additional fare applies for OC Express and Express Routes

### WHAT DO I NEED TO DO?

Activate your ID before using it as a bus pass.

SAC Students: Cashiers Office Hours VL205  
Regular Hours  
M - F 8:00 am to 5:00 pm  
Spring Rush Hours: Feb 5-16  
M - Th 8:00 am to 7:00 pm  
F 8:00 am to 5:00 pm

### HOW DOES IT WORK?

Your student ID is also your bus pass. Swipe it and ride on 63 OC Bus routes.

### HOW LONG IS IT GOOD FOR?

Student IDs are non-transferable and must be reactivated each semester to be valid as a bus pass. The Spring 2018 ID will expire August 31, 2018.

### GET STARTED TODAY

1. Activate your ID at the SAC Cashiers Office VL205. Now it's a bus pass!
2. Visit [OCbus.com](http://OCbus.com) and discover all the great rplaces you can go.
3. Hop aboard, swipe your pass, and go!

### WHO IS ELIGIBLE?

- > Santa Ana College full and part-time students with an activated student ID
- > School of Continuing Education students at Santa Ana College and Santiago Canyon College with 12+ weekly hours and an activated student ID.

### WHO PAYS FOR IT?

Starting with the fall 2017 semester, the first year of this 3-year pilot program will be funded by the Low Carbon Transit Operations Program (LCTOP), a part of the Cal-and-Trade Program.

During the second and third years (fall 2018 - summer 2020), fees approved by SAC students in May 2017 will pay for the program.

For Continuing Education students, second and third year fees will be paid by the Rancho Santiago Community College District.

Visit [OCbus.com/SAC](http://OCbus.com/SAC) for more information.

## INTRODUCING THE NEW Santiago Canyon College Student Pass Program

# YOU'RE INVITED TO THE KICKOFF CEREMONY!

**STRENGER PLAZA  
WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 26, 2018 | 11:45AM - 12:45PM**

Did you know being an SCC Student not only gets you **UNLIMITED** bus rides to and from school, but also **ANYWHERE** in OC? Learn how **Sharing The Ride** can save you gas money, the hassle of parking and traffic, while also saving the earth.

**SANTIAGO CANYON COLLEGE**  
8045 E CHAPMAN AVE  
ORANGE, CA 92869

FREE, LIGHT REFRESHMENTS AND FOOD WILL BE SERVED

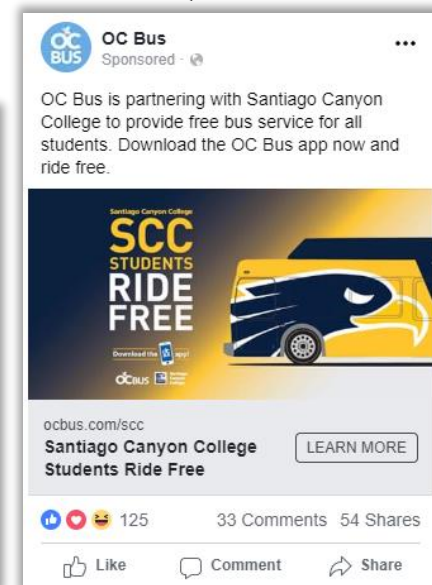
## FALL 2018

# DOWNLOAD THE OC BUS APP AND START RIDING!

Visit [OCbus.com/SAC](http://OCbus.com/SAC) for more information.

## MARKETING TACTICS: DIGITAL MARKETING

- Launched a Facebook advertising campaign targeted students who live around Santiago Canyon College to increase awareness of the program. The campaign reached over 62,000 people and had more than 2,600 clicks. There was overwhelming positive engagement including:
  - Over 455K views
  - 2,985 total post engagements
  - Over 3,200 landing page views



## MARKETING TACTICS

- Conducted kickoff event featuring presentations by local officials and outreach events at SCC.



What happens here matters.

**SCC RIDES FREE**

Learn how at [OCbus.com/SCC](http://OCbus.com/SCC)

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FREE, LIGHT REFRESHMENTS AND FOOD WILL BE SERVED

Santiago Canyon College | OCTA | OCBUS | OCBUSRIDESHARE | spectru@ocbus.com





# IMPLEMENTATION

- Full bus wrap and bus ads
- King ads
- Campus kiosk ads
- Brochures





New College  
Added  
August 2018

**639**

Unique participating students  
(Aug. 12, 2018 to Nov. 20, 2018)

**31,379**

Boardings  
(Aug. 12, 2018 to Nov. 20, 2018)



SANTA ANA COLLEGE

## VOTE

FREE BUS RIDES/TRANSPORTATION FEE PILOT PROGRAM

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For more information, please contact the Office of Student Life at 714.564.8219

**OCBUS** Vote for OC Bus on May 8, 2017

# 1.5 mil

Student boardings  
(Aug. 2017 to Nov. 2018)

# 9,759

Participating students  
(Aug. 2017 to Nov. 2018)



SANTA ANA COLLEGE

TRANSLATE | CANVAS | WEBCHECKOUT | MENU

APPLY | CLASS SCHEDULE | TUITION ASSISTANCE

<p>INNOVATIVE PROGRAMS</p>	<p>PERSONALIZED SERVICES</p>	<p>VIBRANT COMMUNITY</p>
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UPCOMING EVENTS

- Nov 9: Stern Spark Day
- Nov 10: Underrepresented Students: Call to Action Week
- Nov 10: SACCD Board Reception
- Nov 14: SAC Big Band Applied Backstage

MORE EVENTS >

SPOTLIGHT

**RIDE FREE with your STUDENT i.d.**

SAC Students Can Ride OC Bus for Free!

Update your SAC ID Card for the spring 2018 semester!

Data reported as of 11/20/18. November 2018 data is YTD. College Pass Program includes: Santa Ana College, Santa Ana College Continuing Education, Santiago Canyon College (new in 2018-19), and Santiago Canyon College Continuing Education

## STUDENT SURVEY METHODOLOGY

### Santa Ana College Student Survey

- Conducted Nov – Dec. 2017
- Emailed a survey link to 3,000 students that had used the SAC pass
- Received 1,013 survey responses
  - 33% response rate to email
  - 5.2% response of student population

### Continuing Education Student Survey

- Conducted Dec. 2017
- Online and printed bilingual survey for Continuing Education students
- Received more than 600 survey responses, including 232 college pass users
  - 3.3% response rate for student population

## Santa Ana College Fall 2017 Student Survey

**14%**

Did not ride the bus before the pass program

**77%**

Of those who had used the bus before, 77% said they used the bus more frequently with the pass program

**98%**



Students say the program helped reach their educational goals

**88%**

Haven't parked on campus since the pass program

## Continuing Education Fall 2017 Student Survey

**26%**

Did not ride the bus before the pass program

**96%**

Students say the program helped reach their educational goals

## ACTUAL STUDENT FEEDBACK

- *This bus pass is incredible, I've put in at least \$200 into bus passes between last year and last semester and the SAC pass helped me actually be able to afford all my books this semester!*
- *Great program. I used to take the bus only once or twice per month and walk both ways because I couldn't afford to buy a bus pass but now I use it everyday.*
- *It has made my life so much easier. I am able to go to work and home a lot faster. Also, I don't have to relay on others to take me. Prior to this, I had no experience of riding the bus, but now I am able to do that.*
- *This program has helped me a lot. I don't make a lot of money and the pass has been a blessing. I don't drive nor do I have a license since having a car is too expensive.*

THANK YOU



*Together we ride*