AMERICA rides the BUS
This brochure provides information on the positive development and direction of the bus industry today, as well as on the broad-based need the bus industry fills in American communities.

The brochure has been underwritten by the private sector business members of the American Public Transportation Association.
From coast to coast, America is riding the bus.

Last year, people took nearly 6 billion bus trips. Why? Buses are convenient. They offer routes that can respond to passenger demand. They're accessible in urban, suburban and rural areas. They take cars off the road, help unsnarl traffic congestion and contribute to environmental quality. They're comfortable and modern. And they go where riders need to go every day of the year. What's more, the public agencies that operate these buses work hard to make sure riders get what they want, not only in terms of service and information, but also through a host of programs.

Public transit buses are woven into the very fabric of our communities. They're part of the action on America's special occasions—joining in the parade on Martin Luther King Day...standing by for Halloween fun...giving free rides on New Year's Eve...helping get voters to the ballot box on Election Day...getting to and from sporting events. There is no doubt about it: the bus is better than ever. It's all part of the renaissance in public transportation. For millions of people all over America, the bus has become the better way to go.
All across America, people are constantly on the go, traveling countless miles in a round of activities that make up their daily lives. Quietly, in community after community, the public transit bus is satisfying those travel needs—perhaps more than anyone realizes. Millions of people in cities find the bus an ideal complement to rapid rail transit, allowing the modes to function together in integrated multimodal systems. Commuters from New York to Honolulu relax, read the newspaper, catch up on work, while riding safe, comfortable buses through rush-hour traffic.

Providing a Lifeline of Service

For some riders, public transit is their ticket to the world. A web of public bus, paratransit and demand-response “dial-a-ride” services provides a veritable lifeline of service. Day and night in every part of the country, you’ll see a kaleidoscope of customized public buses serving different kinds of people. A senior citizen in Redding, California, relies on the Redding Area Bus Authority (RABA) bus to make her 10 A.M. cardiologist appointment…in Louisville, the Job Hunter bus brings area residents to job interviews…during the summer, grade-schoolers in Reno use their Freedom Passes to ride the bus to the public library…late-shift employees in Miami doze as the Night Owl drives them home. And the list goes on.
Driving The Future

Why is the bus so popular? Because dedicated industry professionals keep it attuned to riders’ changing needs. Contrary to popular belief, bus emissions are clean…and getting cleaner, thanks to proactive bus manufacturers and engine producers. Near-zero-emissions hybrid electric buses have already been introduced in New York and California; and in cities around the country buses fueled by compressed natural gas are on the roads, helping to cut down traffic congestion while keeping the air clean.

Maintenance departments are using higher-tech preventive maintenance strategies, increasing training and streamlining their workflows to improve safety, reliability and the appearance of their fleets. Today, with security issues more important than ever, bus operations directors are working doubly hard to assure uninterrupted service, additional safety equipment and added mobility in times of emergency.

6:00 a.m.

As day breaks, early-bird commuters ride NJ TRANSIT.

Well before dawn, NJ TRANSIT buses are on the road, carrying nearly a quarter of a million riders a day to points in New Jersey, New York and Pennsylvania. Passengers relax in new ergonomically designed S-back reclining seats and catch up on a little reading, thanks to light-emitting diode reading lamps. A public address system, both inside and outside the bus, keeps them up to date with key bus service information. NJ TRANSIT is the third largest transit system in the country, and provides bus, rail and light rail services for 352,000 daily commuters.
Public transportation agencies are building new facilities that benefit riders and the community. It’s happening all across the country. Thanks to a public/private partnership, Bostonians will enjoy some 250 new bus shelters throughout the city as part of the Boston Coordinated Street Furniture Program, a multimillion-dollar capital investment—funded through advertising—integrated with street furniture elements. Operating one of the country’s largest fleets of compressed natural gas buses, Los Angeles recently added three more refueling stations, with more on the way.

More and more communities are designing their streets and intersections with the bus passenger as a primary consideration, resulting in a transit-friendly environment for the rider.

Investment isn’t just related to the major cities. In the early 1990s, Chattanooga Area Regional Transportation Authority (CARTA) invested in the future of Chattanooga, Tennessee, with the purchase of two small electric shuttle buses. Today CARTA operates one of the country’s largest fleets of electric buses on a high-frequency, free, downtown shuttle route.
In Beaver County, Pennsylvania, the $14 million, 80,000-square-foot Expressway Travel Center recently opened, housing Beaver County Transit Authority’s expanding bus fleet and a Customer Information Center. And in Santa Monica, California, the Big Blue Bus is advancing bus transit’s future through investment in a $12 million downtown transit mall project, complete with exclusive transit lanes, improved lighting and state-of-the-art transit amenities.

Likewise, bus rapid transit (BRT) is promising to revolutionize public transportation, with its high-frequency service featuring superior passenger amenities along exclusive rights of way. Features such as bus stations, level boardings, off-board fare collection, and traffic signal priority lead to a much more satisfying rider experience. In just a few short years, this new mode, considered midway between light rail and traditional bus service, has significantly expanded its presence across the U.S.