



Information Update – Customer Perception Survey Pilot

To: Chair and Board of Directors
Through: Interim President/CEO Jennifer Pyrz
From: Manager of Special Projects and Regional Mobility Integration Ryan Wilhite
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CUSTOMER PERCEPTION SURVEY PILOT

BACKGROUND:

IndyGo routinely conducts surveys for a variety of purposes and projects. In 2023, IndyGo staff started researching the utility of a customer perception survey. Other agencies conduct similar surveys on a routine basis to help understand their performance in the eyes of customers. The purpose of the customer perception survey is to understand the customer’s experience better; projects or programs could be generated from the results.

At the time of the pilot, IndyGo only regularly surveyed its customers every five years; the survey is called the On-Board Survey. The On-Board Survey is required by the FTA and is used to understand who is riding IndyGo and how they ride the bus. It is statistically significant and used for analysis purposes. The survey is limited, typically, to questions about a person’s background and the ins and outs of their travel behavior; we do not ask them how they feel about the service.

The Customer Perception Survey was designed to fill the gap between the On-Board Survey and our customer service feedback (complaints, compliments, etc.). Staff hope to use the information to understand better how our customers perceive our service, including any measurable differences after initiatives are completed. We also considered using this touchpoint to conduct smaller focus groups. Through our partnership with the O’Neill School of Public and Environmental Affairs (SPEA) at IU-Indianapolis, the Peterson Fellows researched other transit agencies, coordinated internally, designed the process, and helped administer the survey. Because IndyGo never completed the survey before, we considered the first iteration a pilot.

The survey included approximately three dozen questions. The questions included basic demographic questions, riding habits, questions about projects, and rankings of communication methods. The survey was distributed at the CTC and targeted to fixed route riders. We distributed the survey in-person, online, and at a kiosk at the Julia Carson Transit Center (CTC). For in-person administration, we purchased iPads and hired a Transit Ambassador to work at the CTC. The survey was available from September 17 thru September 23. We surveyed in-person at the CTC typically the hours of 6 am to 2 pm, except for two days where we surveyed 2

pm to 10 pm. We staggered hours to understand through the pilot if we'd receive more responses during different hours. To incentivize individuals to take the long survey, we offered the respondent of a completed survey a MyKey limited use media (LUM) with \$4.

We collected 679 verified responses; 352 were taken online and 327 surveys were taken in-person. Some highlights include:

- Respondents were more likely to recommend us to friends/colleagues (7.64 average out of 10);
- Respondents agreed that IndyGo does well on the 7 parts of successful transit;
- Frequency, reliability, and speed were the top three improvements that would encourage respondents to ride IndyGo more frequently;
- Initiatives identified as easier to ride IndyGo – Red Line, MyKey, frequency, and BRT;
- Significant % of respondents reported using MyKey to pay;
- A majority of respondents had no car available to them;
- A majority of respondents were not on SNAP.

From a pilot perspective, the survey was a success. We demonstrated the utility of the survey and the feasibility of the process. Internal stakeholders were engaged in creating the survey and invested in the outcomes. We are planning on conducting the Customer Perception Survey at least annually. If we offer the survey more often, we can split up the questions. We are targeting September 2024 for our next survey.

RECOMMENDATION:

Receive the report.

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