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Press Release

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[MTA Headquarters](#)

IMMEDIATE

MTA Bus Time™; Hits 1 Million Text Requests

The MTA's revolutionary Bus Time™ initiative – the mobile service that provides customers with real-time information on the nearest bus – has just passed a major milestone. Since the service launched its first borough-wide expansion in January 2012, riders have sent 1 million text messages requesting transit info. When commuters text a bus stop code or intersection to 511-123, they immediately receive a text back stating how far away the next bus is.

"We are delighted by the rapid growth of the use of Bus Time," said MTA Chairman Joseph J. Lhota. "This is a service that can really make it much easier to ride the bus, so it's not a surprise that it's proven to be so popular."

MTA NYC Transit rolled out MTA Bus Time first on Staten Island in January 2012. So far, over 33,000 people have used the text messaging component of the service, an average of 37 times per user; that's nearly a quarter of Staten Island bus riders. Users are texting in on average 8 times per week, and 7,500 people text in every week.

The top five most popular bus stops so far have been:

1. Broadway & Rector St. in Manhattan (serving the X17 and X19 buses)
2. Battery Pl. & Washington St. in Manhattan (X10, X11, X12, X14, X17 and X19)
3. Hylan Blvd. & Clove Rd. on Staten Island (S53, S78, S79, X1, X2, X3 and X9)
4. Victory Blvd. & Clove Rd. on Staten Island (S61, S62, S66, S91, S92 and S93)
5. Broadway & E. 13th St. in Manhattan (X1, X10 and X17)

The text messaging capability of Bus Time is powered by Mobile Commons, a Brooklyn-based software and mobile strategy company. When riders text in, Mobile Commons software queries the MTA's GPS system to find out how far away the next bus is. This information is returned by text to the rider within seconds.

"The MTA is streamlining commuting by connecting riders with timely transit information when they need it – on the device they use most, their mobile phone," said Jed Alpert, CEO and Co-founder of Mobile Commons. "The million-text milestone shows just how useful Bus Time has been, and how commuters have adopted it into their lives. We look forward to many more milestones as the program expands across the city."

Nearly all cell phones have the ability to support SMS text messaging and 91 percent of Americans carry a cell phone. More than 6 billion text messages are exchanged every day in the United States.

In addition to all local and express routes serving Staten Island, Bus Time is also running on the B61 and B63 in Brooklyn and the M34 and M34A Select Bus Service routes in Manhattan. The MTA is in the process of deploying the Bus Time technology to the other boroughs on an aggressive timetable. Over the next year, more than 6,000 buses and 14,000 bus stops will be upgraded in order to make Bus Time fully operational city-wide by the end of 2013. The Bronx will be the next borough to receive full Bus Time implementation, by the end of the year. For more information about MTA Bus Time visit www.mta.info/bustime.