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Press Release

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[MTA Headquarters](#)

IMMEDIATE

MTA Marks Millionth OMNY Tap

*Public Pilot Started May 31 at 16 Subway Stations, Staten Island MTA Buses;
Customers Average Rate of 22,000 Taps onto Subways and Buses Every Weekday;
80% of Taps Came from Digital Wallets, Exceeding Retail Industry Usage Rate
Photos from the Event are Available [Here](#); Video is Available [Here](#)*

The Metropolitan Transportation Authority (MTA) today announced that a subway customer entering the Fulton Center station at 9:05 p.m. on August 8 provided the one millionth successful tap on the OMNY new fare payment system, a remarkable milestone accomplished at a much higher usage rate than initially estimated.

"When we launched OMNY a mere 10 weeks ago today, we knew that some New Yorkers would immediately begin paying their fare with a tap," said Patrick J. Foye, MTA Chairman and CEO. "But even our most optimistic forecasts didn't anticipate how popular OMNY would become in such a short time. OMNY is an essential part of the modernization of the MTA and its success shows that with the right attention and resources, we can do big things to move our system forward."

OMNY launched as a limited public pilot at noon on May 31 at 16 subway stations along the Lexington Avenue [4](#) [5](#) [6](#) line and on all Staten Island buses. Within the first three days, subways and bus customers used OMNY more than 18,000 times, far exceeding original estimates of 7,000 taps in the first week. Nearly three months later, average usage rates are three to four times greater than expected, topping 22,000 per weekday and leading to the million-tap milestone just 69 days after the public launch. Also unexpected was the surprisingly high number of OMNY customers using smartphones for payment, with 80% using through digital wallets compared to 20% using OMNY through contactless cards.

"We're thrilled that OMNY is getting thousands of customers onto subway trains and buses faster than ever," said Alan Putre, MTA's OMNY Program Executive. "Not only are we pleasantly surprised by our customers' quick adoption of OMNY, but also with the number that are choosing to pay with their smart devices rather than a physical card. This should be a clear signal to the financial industry that New Yorkers are more than ready for the next generation of payment cards."

MTA customer usage of digital wallets far exceeds the retail industry's 15% usage of digital wallets, which highlights high interest in contactless payment technology and a strong appetite for contactless payment options. The MTA's initial OMNY usage estimates were based on similar digital wallet and contactless card usage in retail industries, and the success of OMNY shows that New Yorkers are quick to adapt to new uses for technology but limited by available contactless payment options.

Contactless payment technology has been readily available for years in many countries where those residents regularly use bank-issued contactless cards for payment. Similarly through OMNY, tourists and non-domestic customers familiar with contactless technology never have to wait at a fare vending machine or station booth, allowing easy and seamless entry into the subway system with their own smartphone or contactless card. So far, customers from 93 countries outside of the U.S. have paid their fares using OMNY, with 62% percent of those customers coming from Great Britain, Canada, Italy, Germany and France.

OMNY, which stands for One Metro New York, is the first transit fare payment system with open-loop contactless payments, which means that riders can pay their subway or bus fare by tapping contactless credit, debit, and reloadable prepaid cards, mobile phones, smart watches, and other wearable devices. It will eventually be available across the MTA's two commuter railroads as well. For information on how to make contactless payments with OMNY, including an instructional video, click [here](#).

BACKGROUND ON MTA FARE PAYMENTS

- The MetroCard was first tested in the system in 1993, debuting to the larger public in January 1994. Tokens were discontinued in May 2003.
- OMNY readers are currently installed on all Staten Island MTA buses and at all subway station entrances on the 456 lines between Grand Central-42 St and Atlantic Av-Barclays Ctr. They will be installed in all subway stations and on all buses by the end of 2020. Once all stations and buses are equipped with the new technology, OMNY will support fare options similar to the ones currently available through MetroCard.
- MTA will issue its own contactless OMNY transit card for customers who wish to pay with cash in 2021.
- The MetroCard will be retired in 2023.
- OMNY readers accept contactless cards from Visa, Mastercard, American Express, and eventually Discover Card as well as Apple Pay, Google Pay, Samsung Pay and Fitbit Pay.