



A Transit Agency's Perspective on the Value of Commuter Benefits



**Metrochek/SmartBenefits® Program
Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority**

April 7, 2005

A Transit Agency's Perspective on the Value of Commuter Benefits



Presentation Overview

- What is the Metrochek/SmartBenefits program
- Employer and employee participation
- Unique situation: How Do We Handle It
- What works for Metro

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Presentation Overview



Metrochek Transit Benefit Program

- Washington Metro Region's transit benefit program
- Metrochek
 - Farecard for Metrorail
 - Voucher for bus, commuter rail and van pools
 - 170+ transit service partners
 - Employee exchanges voucher for commuter services
 - \$1, \$5, \$10, \$20, and \$30 denominations
 - 8 million cards distributed annually



- SmartBenefits® – electronic benefit load on SmarTrip®

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Metrochek Transit Benefit Program



SmartBenefits® Program

- **Electronic distribution of:**
 - transit
 - van pool
 - parking benefits
- **Web-based employer input**
- **Vendor-based employee pick-up with SmarTrip®**
- **Launched September 2000**



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SmartBenefits® Program



SmarTrip® Features

- **Permanent, plastic, rechargeable**
- **Computer chip tracks value of the card**
- **Use on Metrorail, Metrobus and Metro parking**
- **Registered SmarTrip® insures replacement value**
- **Holds \$300 in value**
- **\$5 fee per card**
- **Approaching 1 million cards distributed**



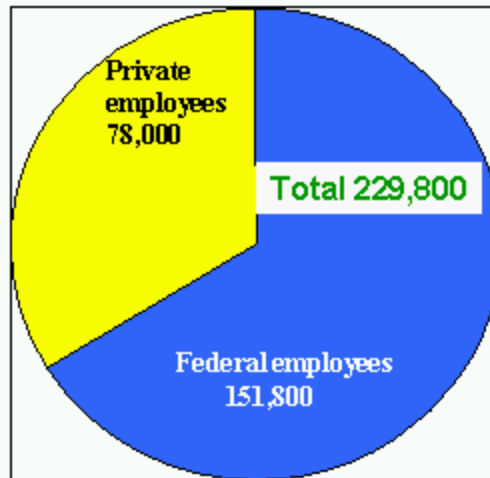
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SmarTrip® Features



Metrochek Program Participation

Employee Participation



SmartBenefits® Participation
40,000 or 17 percent

Employer Participation

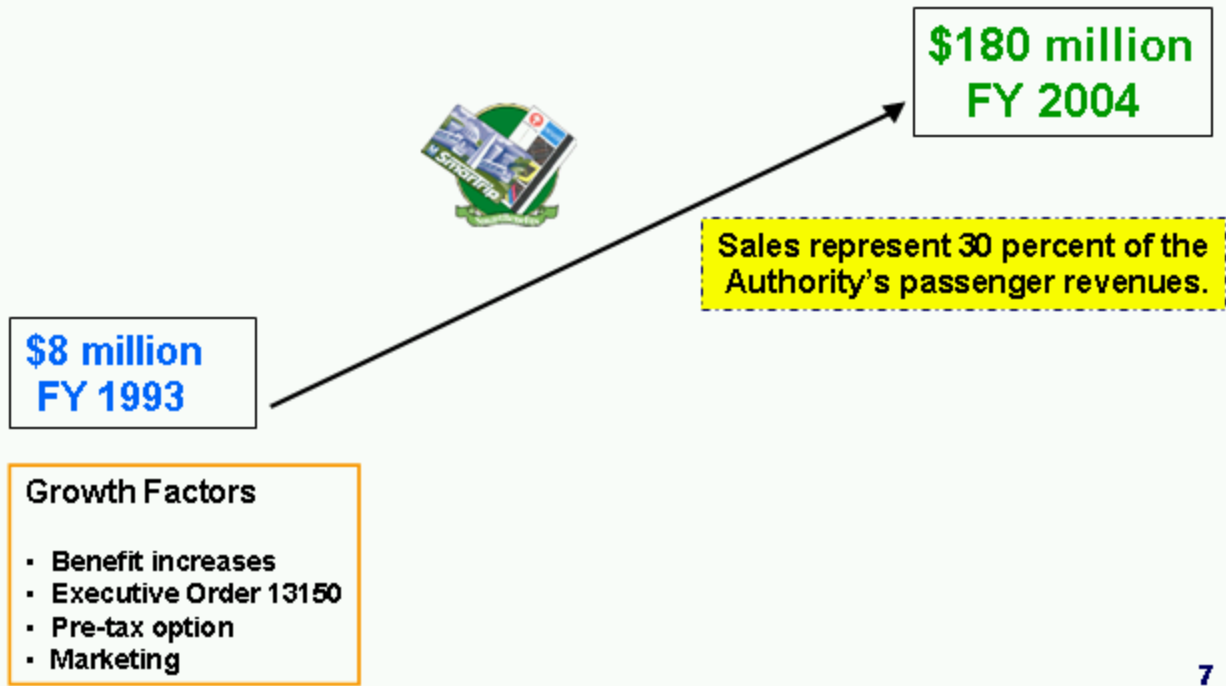
- **Private sector 4,000**
 - Employer paid 2,095
 - Pre-tax 182
 - Combination 1,723
- **Federal agencies 283**
 - Employer paid 281
 - Pre-tax 2

SmartBenefits® Participation
1,307 or 30 percent

Metrochek Program Participation



Metrochek Program Sales



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Metrochek Program Sales



How Do We Handle It

Metro Staffing

- **3 account representatives + 1 manager**
 - 1,400 employer accounts each
 - Regional territory assignments
Maryland - Washington, DC - Virginia

Regional Staffing

- **15+ TMA's - Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments**

Private and Federal Organizations

- **7 Third-party program administrators**

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How Do We Handle It



How Do We Handle It Maximize Staff Time

- **Online SmartBenefits enrollments**
- **Enhanced web site information**
- **Telephone tree to redirect calls**
 - Customer Information
 - Customer Service
 - Speak with Account Representative
- **Large employers – office visits**
- **Small employers – phone service**
- **Host SmartBenefits employer seminars**



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How Do We Handle It Maximize Staff Time



Metro – TMA's – Partners Share Same Message

- Improves recruitment and retention
- Reduces parking expenses
- Increases productivity
- Improves community image
- Saves transit/vanpool costs
- Saves taxes
- Reduces traffic congestion
- Improves air quality
- Increase ridership and revenue



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Metro – TMA's – Partners Share Same Message



Summary

Internal

- **Maximize staff time**
- **Focus on established goals**
- **Enhance Web site and communications tools**

External

- **Utilize regional resources**
 - **Sales calls and presentations**
 - **Program enrollments**
 - **Host “Transit Day” events**
 - **Communicate with partners**
- **Advantage**
 - **Extra staff without hiring**



Establish Partnerships

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Summary



Thank You



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Thank You