

TEN SEISMIC SHIFTS RESHAPING TDM

1. Extreme Commuting:

More and more commuters are commuting longer distances to work. The *2007 Virginia State of the Commute* reports that in some regions of Virginia up to nearly one-half of commuters travel outside the region where they live to go to work. TDM is in a strong position to “rescue” these extreme commuters.

2. New Technology:

Ridematching works. Commuters often object to ridesharing because they have “no one to carpool/vanpool with.” Ridematching helps to overcome this objection to ridesharing. Technological advances make it possible to “ridematch” even more successfully through such innovations as on-demand carpooling. Younger commuters (Gen Ys) are especially interested in online ridematching, particularly when it is on-demand. They want instant matching with ridesharing partners. Such media as Facebook and Craig’s list already offer these opportunities, at least in a de facto way.

3. The Greening of Society:

“Green” is now mainstream. SIR research indicates that 80% of Americans think or act green – they have adopted green attitudes and behaviors. Over half say they will spend more for green products and services. Green is already characterizing transportation choices and will continue to characterize transportation choices in the future.

4. The New Fru(gality) Movement:

Economic conditions and changes have brought about shifts in how money is viewed. Money and material goods are less important. Experiences and relationships are more important. An old New England maxim now applies to “stuff”: Use it up, wear it out, make it do, or do without.

5. Newest Generation – Gen Y or Millennials:

Gen Ys – ages 8-27 – are leading the charge to try transit. Gen Ys who are in the workforce are more likely to adopt transit than other generations. In fact, the younger generation is approaching life differently than preceding generations. They “work to live” rather than “live to work.” They are attracted to and adopting urban living over suburban living. They are committed to civic causes. They are less car-centric, relying and valuing automobiles less than other generations.

6. New Oldest Generation – Aging Boomers:

Just as is true across the nation, Virginia’s population is aging. Boomers are already beginning to move out of the workforce and into retirement. These numbers will grow. As they age, Boomers want to be able to continue to live at home – even with debilitating illnesses. They will rely on “others” – family, friends, and services – for transportation.

7. TDM Becomes the Business of Business:

Research shows that employer transit and TDM services and programs work. Drive alone rates are higher among companies that do not offer transit and TDM services and programs. Transit and TDM marketing and promotion must include businesses. Interest among employers is growing. In an economic time when employers cannot offer certain expensive benefits to their employees or must cut benefits, transit and TDM services and programs are becoming de facto benefits.

8. The New Deal:

Economic stimulus programs are injecting new dollars into drive alone alternatives. This creates new opportunities for TDM – opportunities in terms of money for programs and services, and opportunities among a public more receptive to TDM.

9. The Crude Ahead:

We will never see gas prices comparable to those of the 1980s again. The price of oil – and, hence, the cost of gas – may make occasional dips, but the general trend is upward.

10. The Pace of Change:

A confluence of sources – the economy, the greening of America, the aging of America, technology, and so forth – is causing changes across many dimensions of life and at a rapid pace. TDM must abandon a passive, reactive approach to “sales.” To meet – and even lead – this change, TDM sales and marketing must be proactive and vigorous.

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