

RESEARCH SUMMARY

Title	LU Whiteboard Posters		
Objective	To explore what role whiteboards play in the broader customer information strategy and how the design can be optimised to meet customers' needs		
Date	30/10/2015	Agency	2CV
Methodology	In-station observations/intercepts & staff interviews 3 x 2 hour Qualitative creative focus groups with sensorium gallery Expert review with information design specialists		

Abstract

Although staff and customers feel that whiteboard posters are an important source of information in stations, they also feel that they currently lack impact and effectiveness. This is due to a lack of message relevance, too much information being conveyed, information not always being up-to-date, and finally, too many posters in stations. TfL would benefit from a new whiteboard poster design strategy that sets out the core principles needed to have greater impact and become a trusted source of information. This strategy could benefit from setting out some clear principles on: what to communicate, how to communicate it and where to position the posters in the station.

Key findings

Whiteboard posters are an important source of customer information. However, the busy station environment means that customers have only a few short seconds to read all of the information being conveyed. Currently both staff and customers agree that changes to **what** information is conveyed and **how** it is communicated are needed for whiteboard posters to have greater impact and become an important source of customer information.

At present, whiteboard posters can be left up for too long, they can lack relevance to customers, and often there is too much information being conveyed on individual posters. Customers feel they cannot "opt out" of the posters being stuck up so they become part of the background rather than something which is attended to. Layered onto this is an inconsistent use and design of whiteboard posters across messaging areas and the sense that there are **too many** posters in stations. Staff are sometimes not sure whether posters are really relevant to their station and are unsure as to whether they should be put on display.

A new strategy that sets out some clear principles on the following would be highly beneficial and increase the impact and effectiveness of whiteboard posters.

- **What to communicate:** Customers want whiteboard posters to alert them to **imminent changes to the service** to their line, that will have a short-term impact on their journeys – today, tomorrow or the weekend. Staff would like stronger rationale for why posters have been sent to their station and which messages to prioritise week by week.
- **How to communicate:** Less words, more colour and graphics, to make whiteboard posters more eye-catching and distinctive. Customers would like to see more of TfL's heritage and reputation for great design reflected.
- **Where to position:** Staff would benefit from more guidance on where the whiteboard posters should be positioned and the relevant time period for displaying them. Whilst space in stations can be limited, as far as possible, posters should be positioned to be in the optimum relevant position for customers.

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