



Case Study: TriMet

# *A Brand in Motion*



TRIMET

TriMet's vehicles are the agency's flagships, and our updated design underscores TriMet's harmonious integration into one of America's most beautiful urban centers.



More than any other urban transit system in America, TriMet has succeeded in making the metropolitan region it serves more vibrant, accessible, and livable. TriMet has built a world-class transportation system that includes America's most successful light rail service, TriMet MAX. Yet despite all this, at the time we were engaged, most Portland area residents saw TriMet as merely a provider of standard-issue bus service. To help people understand TriMet's pivotal role in shaping and enhancing the region's livability, we led the transit agency through a comprehensive overhaul of its visual identity and launched a five-year branding campaign.



## *Bridging the Gap*

Our branding effort began with audience research to learn which transportation issues most concerned TriMet's customers. At the same time, workshops with TriMet leaders uncovered the vision, values, guiding principles, and personality traits that comprised the agency's unique identity. Together, these insights allowed us to craft a brand platform that articulated TriMet's unique value in terms its audiences would find meaningful and compelling.

Once we had the foundation of a brand platform, we needed to strengthen the TriMet brand systematically: first, by executing a much needed update of its visual identity; and then, by creating brand experiences that would transform an indifferent public into enthusiastic believers.



TRI MET

TriMet's updated logo reflects the innovative character, unrivaled livability, and regional pride of the community it serves.

All internal and external collateral were redesigned to visually reflect the positive changes within TriMet.



## Expressing TriMet's True Colors

A dramatic overhaul of TriMet's visual identity was essential to their rebranding effort. Employees needed to be inspired and reenergized; the business community needed to recognize TriMet as a vital and indispensable partner; and the public needed a reason to look at TriMet anew. Their old identity system could support none of these objectives.

Using sweeping arcs, a newly minted typeface, and an upbeat palette of primary colors, we developed an identity system that underscores

TriMet's innovation, optimism, and proficiency while adding a distinctive visual accent to one of America's most beautiful urban centers.





## Putting Ideals Into Action

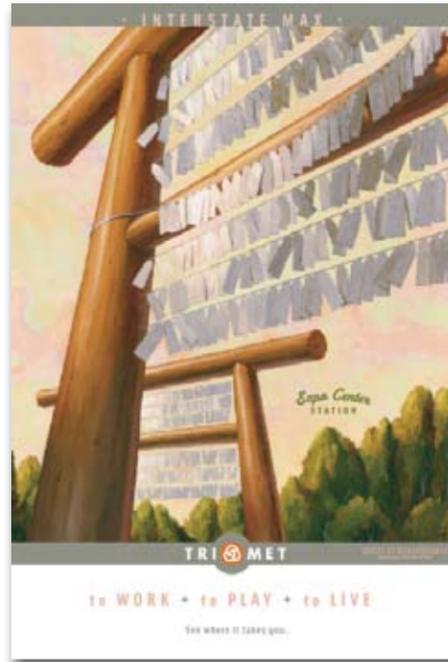
After we launched its new identity, TriMet experienced the biggest one-year jump in its public “excellence” rating since 1989. To deliver on raised expectations, we worked with TriMet to ensure that every interaction with customers lived up to the brand’s promise of service, convenience, and ease of use.

also remodeled TriMet’s flagship ticket office in downtown Portland’s Pioneer Square, and generally helped TriMet seize every opportunity to optimize their riders’ experiences.

Together we redesigned the interface of TriMet’s ticket vending machines to make them easier to use and improved the quality of TriMet’s on-board information graphics. We

We helped TriMet transform everyday customer encounters into brand-building experiences.





TriMet's annual poster campaigns feature evocative illustrations that entice riders to explore Portland's many recreational destinations.

## Illustrating TriMet's Value

Following the unveiling of TriMet's new look, we launched a five-year marketing campaign that took advantage of TriMet's free media space to increase off-peak ridership and remind Portlanders of TriMet's essential role in helping to make the region such a great place to live.

The first wave of illustrated posters and bus placards highlighted Portland's unique integration of nature and public spaces into the urban landscape. A year later, the posters showcased the art installations along TriMet's new Interstate MAX line, alerting people to

exciting new developments in one of Portland's long-neglected neighborhoods. The third year campaign invited riders to discover a wide range of regional stores, restaurants, and cultural institutions. All of these campaigns provided opportunities for co-branded communications to support local businesses and cultural venues. TriMet's posters have actually become popular collectables, and they're offered for sale on TriMet's online store.

By year three, TriMet's marketing campaign had garnered much attention and praise from other transit agencies around the country. TriMet had established an innovative and very popular marketing program, and Portlanders eagerly anticipated the next set of illustrations. This time, we created a series of images that encouraged riders to look beyond the daily commute and think of public transportation as a means of improving the quality of their lives. The campaign made it clear that TriMet shares the same values as the community it serves.

## Several Years Later

As a direct result of this brand re-design and extensive ongoing marketing effort, TriMet has not only revitalized its internal sense of identity, it has also received the credit among the general public for creating a visionary urban transit system. TriMet has offered the business community co-promotional opportunities that support the local economy. In addition, off-peak ridership has increased. Ticket sales at automated ticket machines have increased. And the visibility of one of the top urban transit systems in the country has dramatically increased—both locally and throughout the nation.





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