

TfL Finances – Advertising Revenue

The London Assembly Budget and Performance Committee recently commissioned fresh research from YouGov to look at Londoners' attitudes towards advertising on London's transport network.

We surveyed 1,003 adults, all of whom live in London. We asked each person whether they would oppose or support particular kinds of advertising that Transport for London is not yet exploring as a way to avoid fare increases or service reductions.

Our Committee is currently investigating TfL's financial situation as a whole. We will publish our findings in November 2018, once TfL has provided further detail about the impact of the delay to Crossrail on its finances. The report will paint a picture of a public transport body that is facing real difficulties in breaking even and whose business plan is looking increasingly challenging. We will explore how advertising revenue can contribute to funding operating other parts of the network. This survey is intended as a starting point for a discussion what kinds, of advertising Londoners would accept during their journeys around the capital.



We found clear support for sponsored stations or Tube lines. This echoes findings from other sources. TfL has so far refused to entertain this idea, arguing that the Tube map and station names are key to helping passengers navigate the network, and that any more long-term brand associations would threaten accessibility.

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Relaxing restrictions on junk food adverts?



The Mayor's pledge to ban High Fat, Salt and Sugar advertising on TfL services has public support. TfL currently gets £13 million every year from these kinds of adverts. TfL says that it should be able to replace this revenue with different advertisers, although we have heard that it might not be as easy at that.

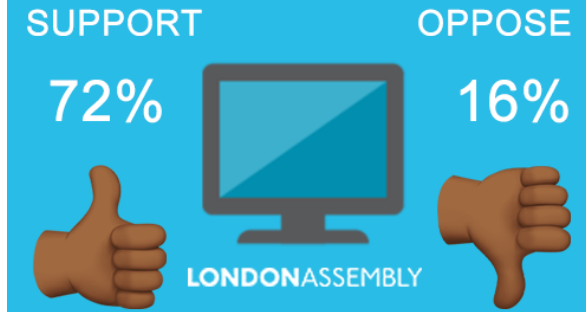
Advertising around cycle lanes?



The Mayor has pledged to spend on average £169 million each year on new cycling schemes to 2022-23. At present there is no advertising revenue derived from TfL's cycling infrastructure outside of Santander cycles, as there is for other modes.

Of course, cycling is a social good in that it improves health outcomes, cuts congestion and reduces air pollution. We are not advocating any particular method of advertisement, rather prompting TfL to have the conversation. Safety cannot be compromised, and nothing should be done that in any way impedes cycling's growth as a primary mode of transport.

More electronic advertising screens?



More electronic advertising screens – around stations, in Tube carriages, on buses – garnered the most support of the five options we put to the public. This is perhaps unsurprising as electronic screens already exist on the transport network, mostly on the Underground, and so passengers are used to this advertising method. The question TfL should now explore is how much further it can go with electronic screens and how fast it can install them.

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Pop-up ads when using wi-fi on the Tube?

SUPPORT

32%



LONDONASSEMBLY

OPPOSE

56%



Pop-up ads when using free wi-fi on the Underground received little support from Londoners. It appears Londoners are not keen on more intrusive advertising. Wi-fi on the underground doesn't cost TfL anything to run, as the commercial contracts with the providers should cover how much it costs to run.

Audio adverts?

SUPPORT

28%



LONDONASSEMBLY

OPPOSE

61%



Audio adverts on public transport – using either electronic screens with sound or on existing announcement systems – received the least support of all. Whilst this kind of advertising does exist in other parts of the world it appears that Londoners have no appetite for it.

Note on methodology: We commissioned YouGov to look at Londoners' attitudes towards advertising on the transport network. YouGov surveyed 1,003 adults, all of whom self-report as living or working in London. We gave the context of why TfL is looking to increase its commercial income, to try and avoid increasing fares or reducing services, before asking to what extent you support or oppose each of the types of advertising.

The percentages in this output are net support or oppose figures, i.e. they group together both "tend to support" and "strongly support" responses. Percentages in this output do not sum to 100 per cent as "don't know" responses have been removed.

You can download the full data set [here](#).

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The Budget and Performance Committee holds the Mayor to account for his financial decisions and performance across the Greater London Authority. It is responsible for scrutinising the Mayor's budget proposals for the next year, and carrying out investigations across the Mayor's various policy areas, such as transport, police, fire, housing, and regeneration.

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