

Telling the Public Transit Story: Building Trust with the Community

Javier Panzar – Marketing Representative

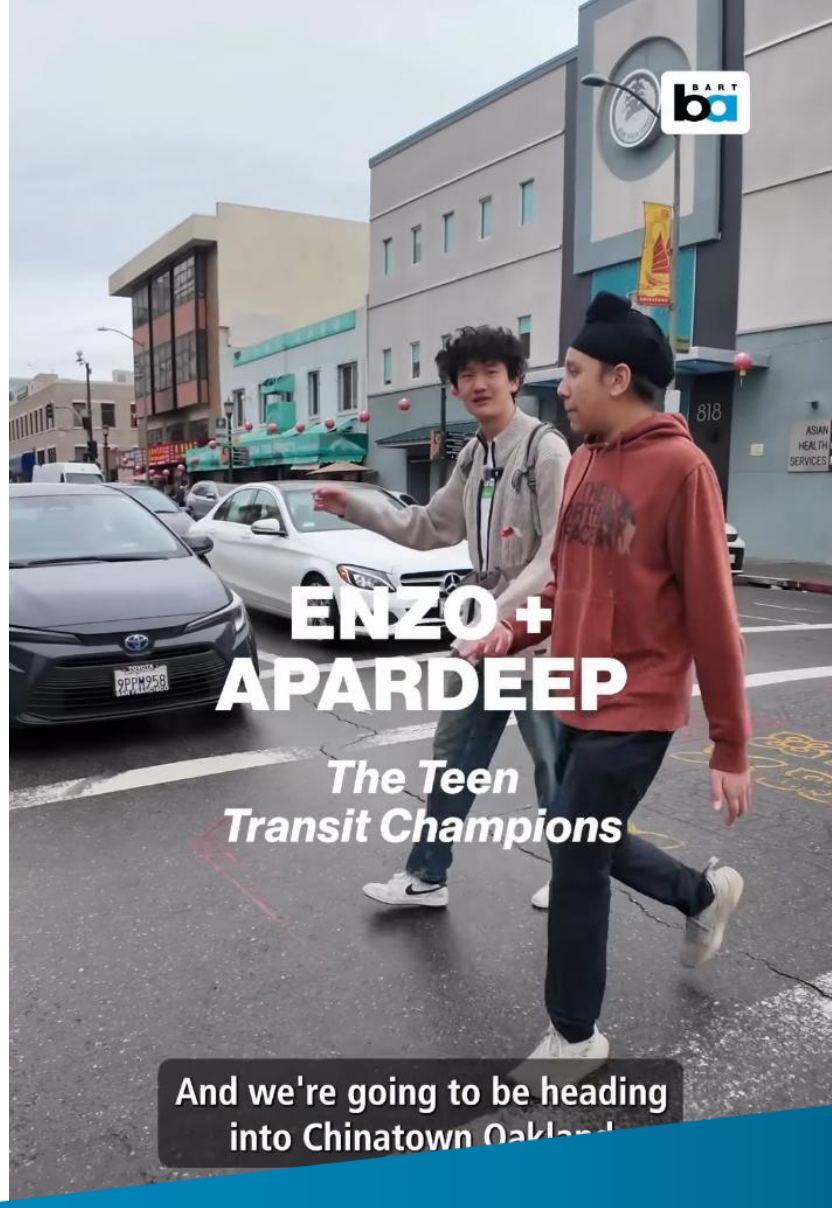
“BART Connects” Our Rider Stories Series

- We reimagined the existing “BART Connects” brand as social first videos
- Scoured Instagram mentions, YouTube, Tik Tok, IRL events etc. for riders with star power who were already repping BART and The Bay in their own way
- Riders took us on journeys to meaningful destinations
- The subjects narrated their journeys in addition to answering questions




OAKLAND CITY CENTER - 12 ST
RICH LYONS
UC Berkeley Chancellor
BART connects me personally
to an awful lot of things


MARIAH
The BART Influencer
I might as well
do something


ENZO +
APARDEEP
The Teen
Transit Champions
And we're going to be heading
into Chinatown Oakland

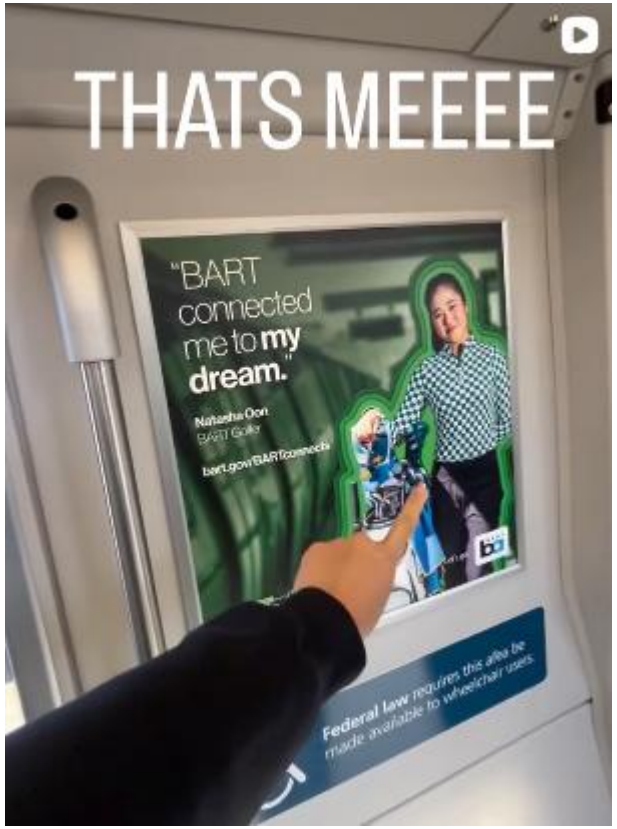
Multiple uses for our content

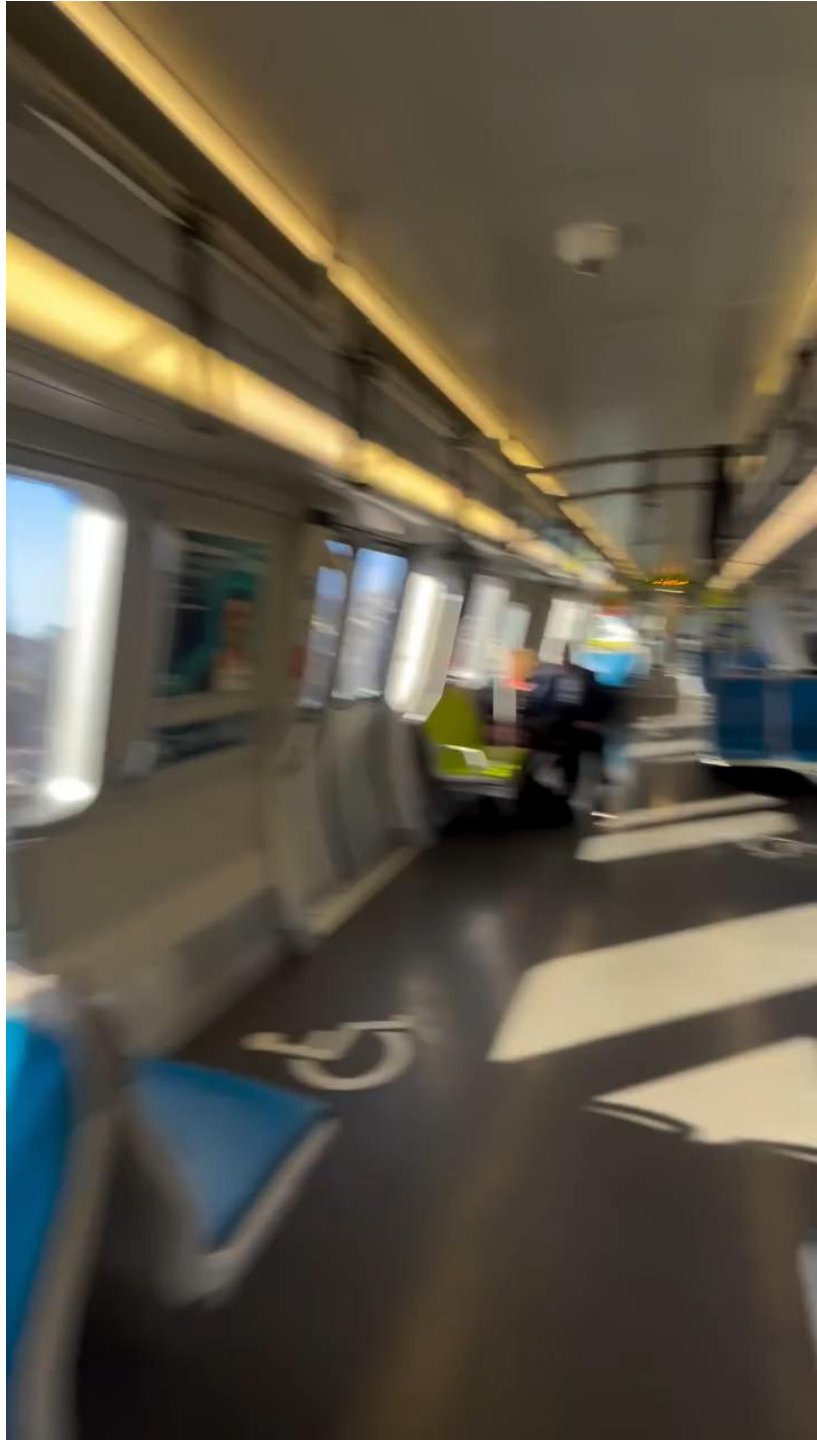
- We took our time banking up interviews over 6 months
- The shoots were usually small, gritty affairs. The subject + me (with a DJI camera and a single mic) Sometimes a photographer and another BART staffer if they were hard to pin down.
- We got a lot of bang for our buck: Photos for train car ads. We turned the videos into online stories on a dedicated page. Board materials too.



Social Impact

- Bonus: Some of our subjects made their own content!
- We got 514k views on IG alone
- Generated positive comments from diverse communities





Al Zak • 3rd+
Engineering Leader | ex-AWS | ex-Amazon | UC Berkeley-Ha...
4w •
+ Follow ···

Love seeing Chancellor Rich Lyons lead by example here. BART isn't just a way to get around; it's what connects campuses, jobs, and communities across the Bay Area. Small choices like hopping on transit add up, and it means a lot when leaders model them.

#GoBears #BART #PublicTransit

ginakotos She's so cute! BART has helped me feel independent as a woman in the Bay Area without a car ❤️ I always feel safe as we're whisked away in style!

13w 27 likes Reply

BART Archives

- The old photos and video offer quick hits of nostalgia but they also provide history and context showing how far transit has come in The Bay!

- Some posts offer direct contrasts: “We used to have TWO Car trains! Starting next month, 10 car trains are back!”

- Some riffed on viral trends, e.g. “What were you like in the 90s”



Check out the unique trains that connected the Bay before BART



They were designed and built to go over the lower level

Is that a two-car BART train???



When BART ran 24/7 after the Loma Prieta earthquake in 1989



The new transportation backbone of the Bay Area

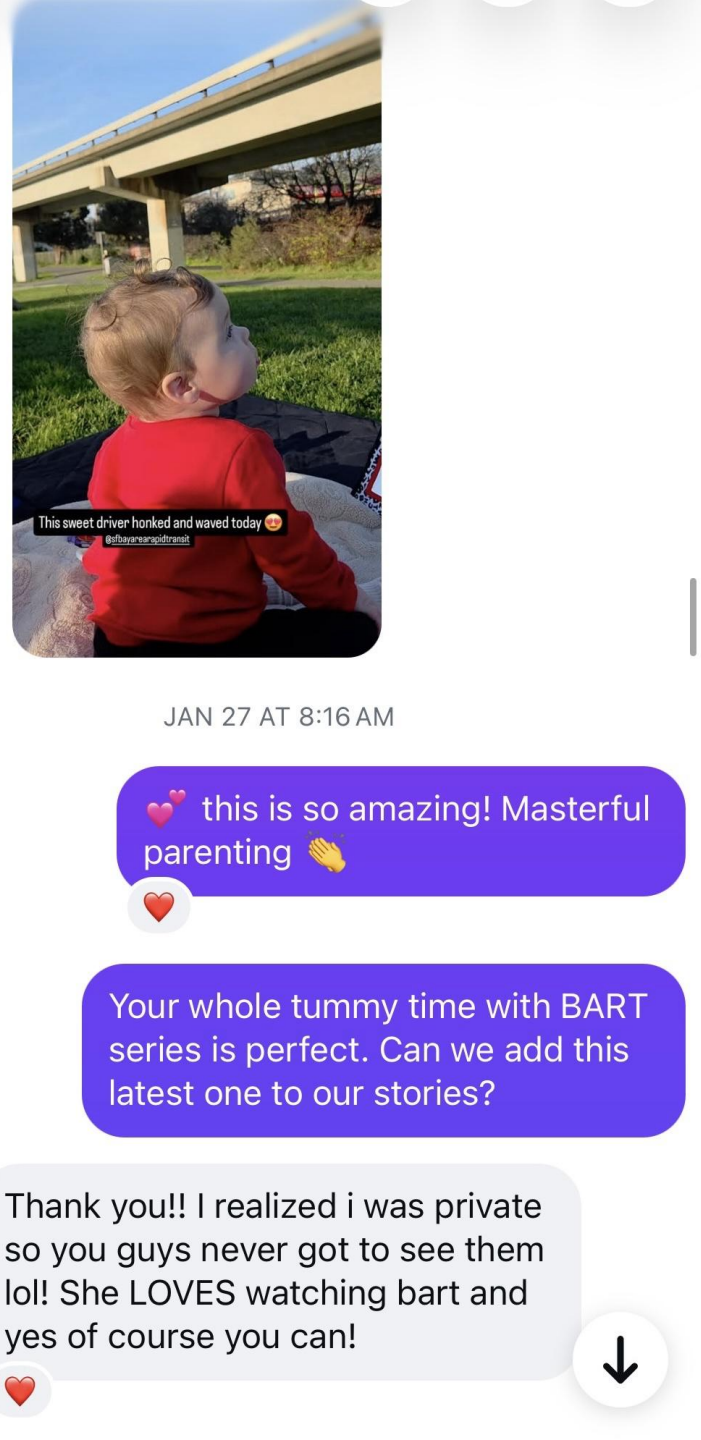
BART Archives

- Mixing old footage with new interviews can be a very engaging way to tell as story
- Historical material helps tell transit's Big Picture story: What used to exist, what was lost, what was gained, how we got here!
- Befriend your local transit museum for access to old stuff, or see what is lying around the office in strange corners. Do a call out.
- Let the community show off their expertise
- Nerdy and specific can find a big audience



Final tip

- Look at your DMs and mentions all the time! There are great stories in there waiting for you
- People are already talking about you, how can you elevate them?
- DMs with this local parent became our most viewed social media video ever with over 1M views!







Questions