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CASE STUDY

Orange County Transportation Authority brings real-time information and security lighting to bus stops with Papercast and Urban Solar

"The Orange County Transportation Authority launched a project to install digital real-time arrival signage and solar lighting in coordination with our new limited stop "Bravo!" service Route 553 along Main Street in the city of Santa Ana. OCTA released a competitive procurement for purchase of the digital devices. Urban Solar and Papercast were awarded the contract to manufacture and install 23 locations that will serve the new Route 553. They were selected because they have the best devices, at the best prices, out of the proposals we received. We have had an excellent experience working with Urban Solar and Papercast and are very satisfied with our purchase. We have received positive feedback from our customers and OCTA staff on the design and functionality of the devices."

OCTA

Jeff Tatro
Section Manager
Stops & Zones and Schedule Checking
Orange County Transportation Authority

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Optimizing the bus rider experience

The Orange County Transportation Authority (OCTA) is one of the largest transit agencies in the United States with 50 million riders annually across 34 cities within the Orange County area. The Authority is committed to continuously improving passenger amenities at bus stops as part of its ongoing strategy to optimize the rider experience and to connect people safely and efficiently to the places they want to be, whether it is for work, school or entertainment.

Following a competitive RFP process, OCTA selected Urban Solar with Papercast technology as its partner to improve bus stops with real-time information and security lighting on Route 553 along Main Street in the city of Santa Ana.

The relationship with OCTA dates back to 2016, following a project to install 630 Urban Solar PV Stop pole-mounted lighting systems to enhance safety and reduce pass-bys at bus stops.

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The ultimate passenger information and lighting solution

Urban Solar teamed up with longstanding partner, Papercast, a leading global provider of e-paper displays with installations in 47 countries, to deploy Papercast® 13" e-paper displays and PV Stop+ lighting and power systems.

Papercast ultra-low power e-paper displays deliver real-time information and alerts on the arrival of bus services directly to riders at bus stops along Route 553. The interactive display features a button that triggers text-to-speech announcements so that the visually impaired get informed with upcoming bus arrival times.

Connected wirelessly to the Papercast Content Management System (CMS), OCTA can configure, design and display a wide range of live travel information, as well as manage, monitor and troubleshoot devices remotely, and set-up operational alerts.

Papercast has achieved industry-leading power efficiency which means its displayed can be fully solar powered, making it one of the most sustainable outdoor signage solutions on the market – a perfect complement to Urban Solar's PV Stop+ lighting systems.

The solution allows riders to plan their trips with more certainty. Timely and relevant information is at the core of passenger satisfaction – its reduces perceived and actual wait times, and increases ridership.

The Urban Solar PV Stop+ units are equipped with SmartLink wireless control and monitoring that allows OCTA to monitor battery health, change lighting profiles and remotely reboot the e-paper displays if ever required.

Existing poles were used to keep installation costs minimal. Experienced Urban Solar partner ShelterCLEAN Services was chosen as an installation partner, and the new systems were operational within 2 weeks.

The project along OCTA's Santa Ana route was completed in June 2022 and has since prompted very positive feedback from ridership and staff.

About Urban Solar:
Urban Solar is the North American market leader in off-grid lighting and amenities for bus stops. Since 2008, Urban Solar solutions have enhanced safety and user experience at over 18,000 bus stops across the United States and Canada.

About Papercast:
Papercast offers the widest range of e-paper displays, with deployments in over 47 countries including the US and Canada. Papercast displays provide a versatile, reliable and sustainable solution for sharing dynamic digital content with riders, which can be easily customized and updated by the cloud-based Content Management System (CMS).

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