

The Coupes and Convertibles  
of Mercedes-Benz.

Click here for your Southern California Mercedes-Benz Dealer

<http://www.latimes.com/news/local/la-me-subway7apr07,0,3931078.story?coll=la-home-headlines>

## A feast for the eyes at subway stations

McDonald's newest ad campaign brings in needed revenue, the transit agency says.

By Jean Guccione  
Times Staff Writer

April 7, 2007

The MTA has TVs blasting ads at bus riders. It has ads wrapping around hundreds of buses.

Now, in another attempt to generate cash, the transit agency has allowed McDonald's to transform Metro Rail's biggest subway terminal into a massive ad campaign for the company's new Angus burger.

The 7th Street/Metro Center station in downtown Los Angeles is plastered with huge pictures of the burger — on walls, ceilings, lining the columns.

The ads are jarring some riders, who say the experience makes them want to never eat a burger again. But the MTA argues that the ads bring in much-needed revenue, particularly at a time when it has proposed increasing fares.

So far, the \$3-billion-a-year agency has collected \$146,000 from the advertising, which began appearing last month.

The Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority also has a separate five-year, \$77-million contract with CBS Outdoors to place advertising on its buses.

Besides 7th/Metro, the MTA has redecorated three other subway stations.

Commuters using the North Hollywood and Universal stations are bombarded with banners for the new "Shrek the Third" movie. At Union Station, subway riders are greeted with displays on the walls and floors touting an April 14 pay-per-view fight.

Trains along the Green Line, which travels down the center of the 105 Freeway, also are covered with the McDonald's ads.

In addition, the transit agency is trying to sell space on its Gold Line trains and at two more subway stations: at Hollywood Boulevard and Highland Avenue, and at Hollywood and Vine Street.

Ryan White, 26, likes the new ad campaigns.

"It's a good idea. It's making money and it looks better" than the tunnel's plain gray walls, said White, a South Los Angeles handyman who depends on public transit to get to jobs.

He can name each product and the station where its ads are located. When he learned how much money the ads generate, he smiled and said: "I wish I had had the idea."

But others aren't as receptive. "I think it's kind of annoying," said Erica Ibarra, 18, of East Los Angeles. "It doesn't make me crave [a hamburger] at all."

Karla Lopez, 21, believes that the agency should ban fast-food ads. Her 2-year-old son, Matthew, begs her to go to McDonald's each time they walk through the subway station.

She's not opposed to advertising — just to the giant burgers.

"They contradict themselves too much," Lopez said, referring to officials who press parents, in another set of bus advertisements, to make healthful food choices for their kids.

\*

[jean.guccione@latimes.com](mailto:jean.guccione@latimes.com)