

# Improved train services get thumbs up

But still a long road ahead for buses in terms of customer satisfaction, survey finds

By **AUDREY TAN**

COMMUTERS are happier with trains but not public buses, according to the latest Customer Satisfaction Index of Singapore released yesterday.

The two biggest bugbears for public bus services from SMRT and SBS Transit were the frequency of buses and customer service, which were among the most important factors to commuters.

There were also no improvements in bus comfort and cleanliness since last year.

"The Bus Service Enhancement Programme and our continued investment in hardware, software, manpower and training will hopefully improve the overall customer experience," said SBS Transit's senior vice-president of corporate communications Tammy Tan.

This is the third year in a row that bus services have seen a drop in its index score, going from 66.4 out of 100 in 2011, to 61.6 last year and 60.6 yesterday.

Train services, which include the MRT and LRT, rebounded from the 61.9 scored last year in the wake of a series of breakdowns, to get 64.1.

Those surveyed said they saw improvements in comfort, frequency and punctuality.

SMRT director of corporate marketing and communications Alina Boey said the firm was "quite happy" with the results and that it was "heartening to know that efforts put in for customer service and improving speed and travel experience have



Those surveyed said they saw improvements in the comfort, frequency and punctuality of train services, which include the MRT and LRT. ST PHOTO: NURIA LING

## Public education institutes improved the most: Survey

PUBLIC and private education institutions here have seen improvements in satisfaction scores, according to the findings of an annual study.

Of the three sectors measured in the Customer Satisfaction Index of Singapore, public education institutions saw the biggest improvement, with a gain of 7.9 percentage

points from a year earlier.

These institutions, which include polytechnics, universities and the Institute of Technical Education (ITE), scored 72.8 out of 100 in the index.

The study also questioned students on a range of educational issues ranging from quality of teaching to campus

experience.

Polytechnic students, for example, placed an emphasis on the relevance of their courses to their future careers.

A spokesman for Nanyang Polytechnic said: "We ensure our students are in demand by providing them with real-world experience that enables them to contribute immediately when

they start their careers."

In terms of improvements in customer satisfaction levels, private education institutions rose the least out of the three sectors, gaining 4.6 percentage points to 72.2.

The findings were based on a survey carried out among students between May and July. **AUDREY TAN**

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**KEEPING CUSTOMERS HAPPY**  
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yielded positive results”.

Yesterday's index by the Institute of Service Excellence at the Singapore Management University (SMU) measured customer satisfaction across the transport and logistics, public and private education sectors. From May to July, 11,123 responses on 191 companies in these sectors were gathered.

All three sectors showed year-on-year improvement in customer satisfaction scores, with transport and logistics going up by 6.4 per cent, public education rising 7.9 per cent, and private education institutions improving by 4.6 per cent.

"The challenge is for all companies to keep their fingers on the pulse of what matters most to their customers, and deliver on them," said SMU's assistant professor of marketing Marcus Lee.

Now in its seventh year, the index will also survey other sectors including health care and the food and beverage industry in the coming months.

✉ [audreyt@sph.com.sg](mailto:audreyt@sph.com.sg)