

RESEARCH SUMMARY

Title	Hybrid buses
Objective	Customer and driver experience of hybrid buses across eight hybrid bus models
Date	September 2009
Methodology	1,213 customer interviews on hybrid buses, and 40 mini depth interviews with their bus drivers across eight garages.

Key findings

- There is no conclusive preference for one particular model of the hybrid buses being trialled.
- Wright Bus models 4 and 1 have high customer ratings and good bus driver feedback. ADL model 6 has high customer ratings, and more positive driver feedback. Volvo and Optare models receive weaker driver and customer feedback, particularly the Optare.
- When prompted with specific attributes of the bus and the quality of the ride, Wright Bus and ADL models tend to receive higher customer ratings: for less vibration (Wright Bus model 4) and for best appearance and ease of getting on / moving around inside (ADL model 6). However, Wright Bus model 3 is rated worst for appearance, the ease of getting on and moving around inside, and for smoothness of ride.
- Drivers consider the Volvo (model 7) to be unsafe due to a 'power surge' when braking. It is the only model where drivers prefer the diesel bus. Drivers consider the Volvo, Optare and Wright Bus model 4 to have slow pick-up / responsiveness. Wright Bus model 3 is not seen as robust, and it lacks 'feel'. It also has lower customer feedback for smoothness of ride.
- 96% of customers support the introduction of hybrid buses. 81% strongly support this. All bus drivers welcome their introduction, for the environmental benefits, quieter ride and smoother ride (at least for most models).

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