

Email from client:

Dear J-TAG,

The MTA would like modernize our approach to transportation, and we are contacting you due to your formidable data analysis prowess. We believe that our transit system can better serve our customers using your advanced data modeling techniques. In 2013, we had 1.708 billion riders, clearly qualifying this problem as "big data."

During peak hours, our subway cars can be consistently overcapacity, which is a crippling problem for efficient transit use. Some commuters are forced to wait long stretches of time until a subway car arrives with adequate room for riding. As a result, commuters are late for work and social gatherings, and become stressed and upset. Also, for commuters who are lucky enough to get onto one of these packed cars, the commute can be a particularly stressful one. We are interested in harnessing the power of data and analytics to help alert commuters to when and where lines are over capacity. In turn we hope that commuters can begin to think about alternative routes or think about alternative times for travel. We are hopeful that this kind of information can help ease commuter congestion and ultimately help ease commuter stress.

We'd like to hire you to analyze the MTA subway data, which as I'm sure you know is available freely from the city, to help us gauge the likely fullness subways of lines and to communicate this to our riders. Do you think this is something that would be feasible for J-TAG? From there we can explore what kind of an engagement would make sense for all of us.

Best,  
Mark and Donny,  
MTA NYC