



ASSESSING THE POTENTIAL FOR A BIXI SPORTING EVENT IN 2025

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INTRODUCTION

BIXI Montréal is a non-profit organization established in 2014 to manage Montreal's bike-sharing system. It operates a network of over 11,000 bikes, including 2,600 electric bikes, across more than 900 stations in Montreal and surrounding areas.

BIXI serves as an active mode of transportation, contributing to the health and well-being of Quebecers while aiming to be recognized as a key player in Quebec's public transit system

OVERVIEW OF BIXI AND ITS MEMBERSHIP TRENDS

Growth of Bixi's Membership

BIXI has experienced significant growth in recent years. In 2023, ridership increased by 23% compared to 2022, reaching 6.2 million rides. The system has also seen a 10% increase in membership sales, with 37,000 new memberships in 2023. This growth can be attributed to factors such as increased awareness of sustainable transportation options and shifts in urban mobility patterns.

Membership Types

BIXI offers various membership options to cater to different user needs:

1. Monthly Membership: Priced at \$22, this flexible option allows unlimited 45-minute rides on regular BIXI bikes for 30 days.
2. Seasonal Membership: Available from April 15 to November 15 for \$107, this option provides unlimited 45-minute rides on regular BIXI bikes throughout the season.

Both membership types charge 17¢ per minute for rides exceeding 45 minutes. The seasonal membership has seen a shift in customer mix, with annual members making up 79% of users in 2023, compared to 75% in 2022.



Challenges and Opportunities

BIXI faces several challenges in maintaining and growing its membership base:

1. Seasonality: Due to Montreal's harsh winters, BIXI operates seasonally from mid-April to mid-November.
2. Infrastructure: The lack of dedicated bike lanes in some areas may deter potential users concerned about safety.
3. Competition: Other mobility services may compete for urban commuters' attention.

However, BIXI also has significant opportunities:

1. Increased interest in sustainable transportation: Growing awareness of environmental issues may drive more people to choose bike-sharing.
2. Health and fitness trends: BIXI can capitalize on the increasing focus on active lifestyles.
3. E-bike expansion: The introduction of more electric bikes has proven successful, with e-bike revenue per trip outperforming regular bikes.

New Engagement Strategies

Exploring new engagement strategies, such as sporting events, could benefit BIXI by:

1. Attracting new user segments: Events could introduce BIXI to potential users who haven't considered bike-sharing before.
2. Increasing visibility: High-profile events can raise awareness of BIXI's services.
3. Promoting health benefits: Sporting events align with BIXI's mission to contribute to the health and well-being of Quebecers.

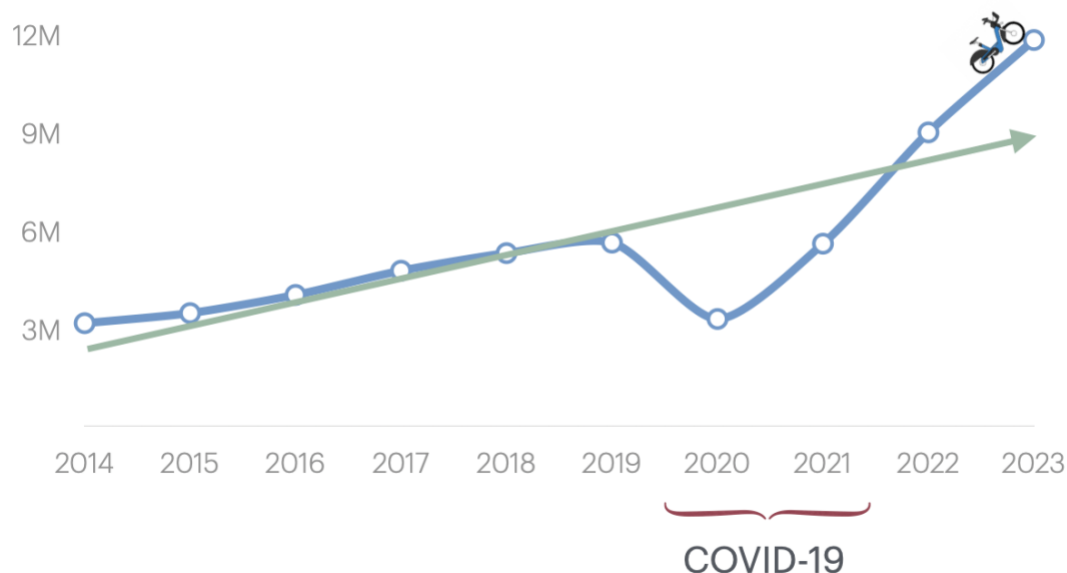
By leveraging these opportunities and addressing challenges, BIXI can continue to grow its membership base and solidify its position as a key player in Quebec's public transit system.

ANALYSIS OF BIXI TRIP DATA

This section examines trends in Bixi's trip volumes over the years, identifies seasonal patterns, and assesses the impact of external factors like weather and the COVID-19 pandemic. It also provides insights into the peak months for Bixi usage. Understanding these trends helps to evaluate the feasibility of hosting a sporting event to boost membership.

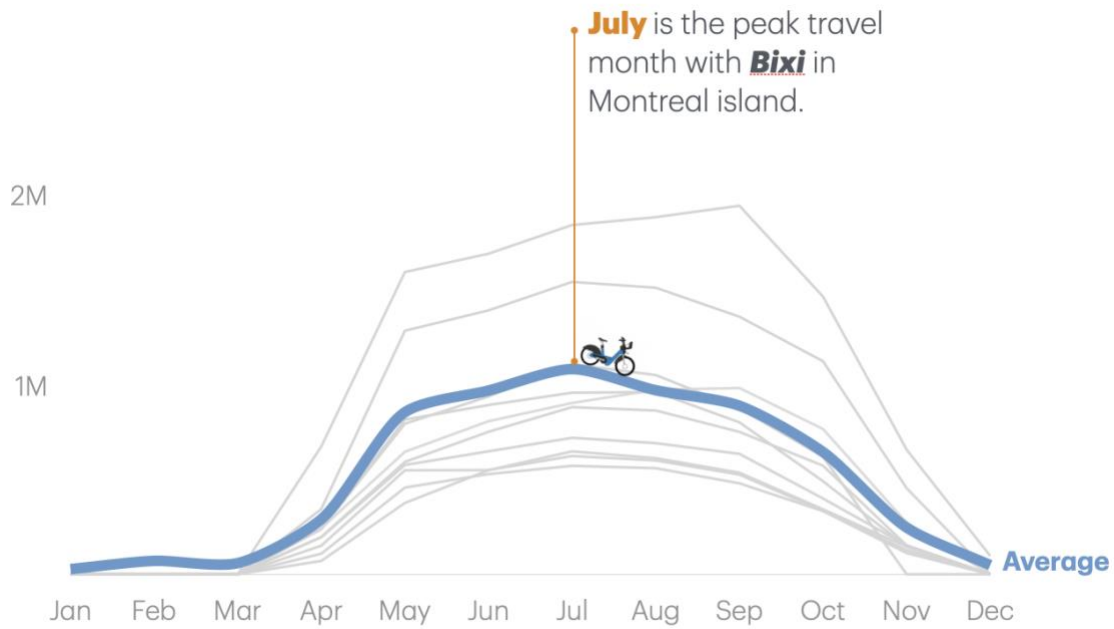
How Has the Volume of Trips Changed Over Time?

The graph illustrates a consistent increase in Bixi's total trips from 2014 to 2024. Between 2014 and 2019, Bixi doubled its annual trips, growing from 3 million to 6 million. However, in 2020, the COVID-19 pandemic led to a sharp decline in trips due to movement restrictions, dropping the total back to 3 million, the same level as in 2014. With the relaxation of restrictions in 2021, Bixi's trips quickly recovered to pre-pandemic levels. Although the pandemic caused a two-year setback in growth, Bixi rebounded strongly, and by 2022, the growth rate accelerated significantly, surging from 6 million to approximately 12 million trips per year within just two years, tripling the pace of growth.



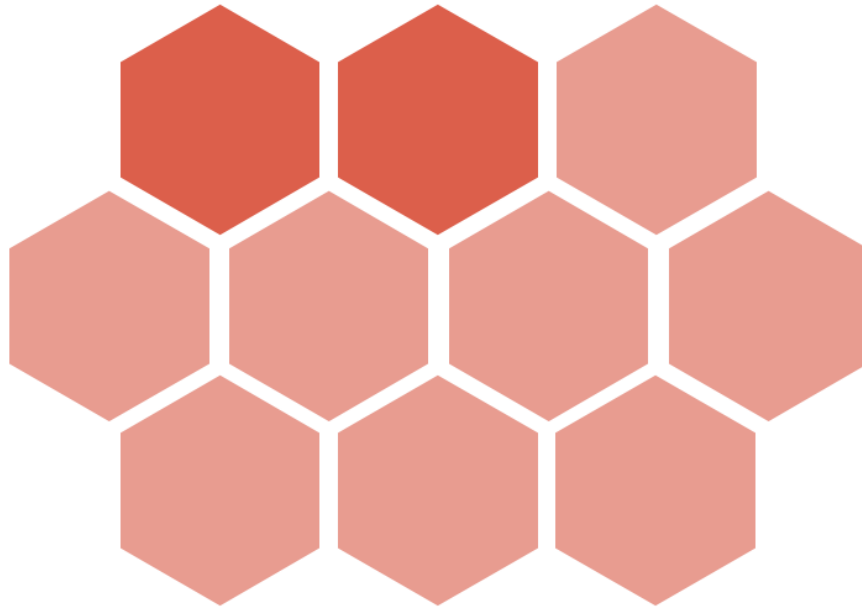
Identifying the Peak Trip Volume Month

The plot shows a clear seasonal pattern in Bixi's trip volume, resembling a bell curve. Trip numbers start to increase gradually in March, with a sharper rise from April to May. The growth continues, reaching a peak in July, which aligns with favorable summer weather and festival season in Montreal. After July, trip volumes steadily decline through the fall months, tapering off until December. This peak in July makes it an ideal time for targeted engagement efforts.



Impact of Weather on Trip Volumes

Before analyzing this aspect, the initial assumption was that rain and wind would have the greatest influence on bicycle trips. For each Bixi trip, weather data for the specific date was retrieved, and the analysis was divided into five categories: hot vs. cold, rainy vs. dry, humid vs. not humid, windy vs. calm, and sunny vs. cloudy. The results showed that temperature, wind speed, and sunshine or cloud cover had minimal impact on trip volumes. However, rain and humidity significantly affected whether users chose to use bicycles.



Low humid day trips trips are 4 times more than **humid day trips**

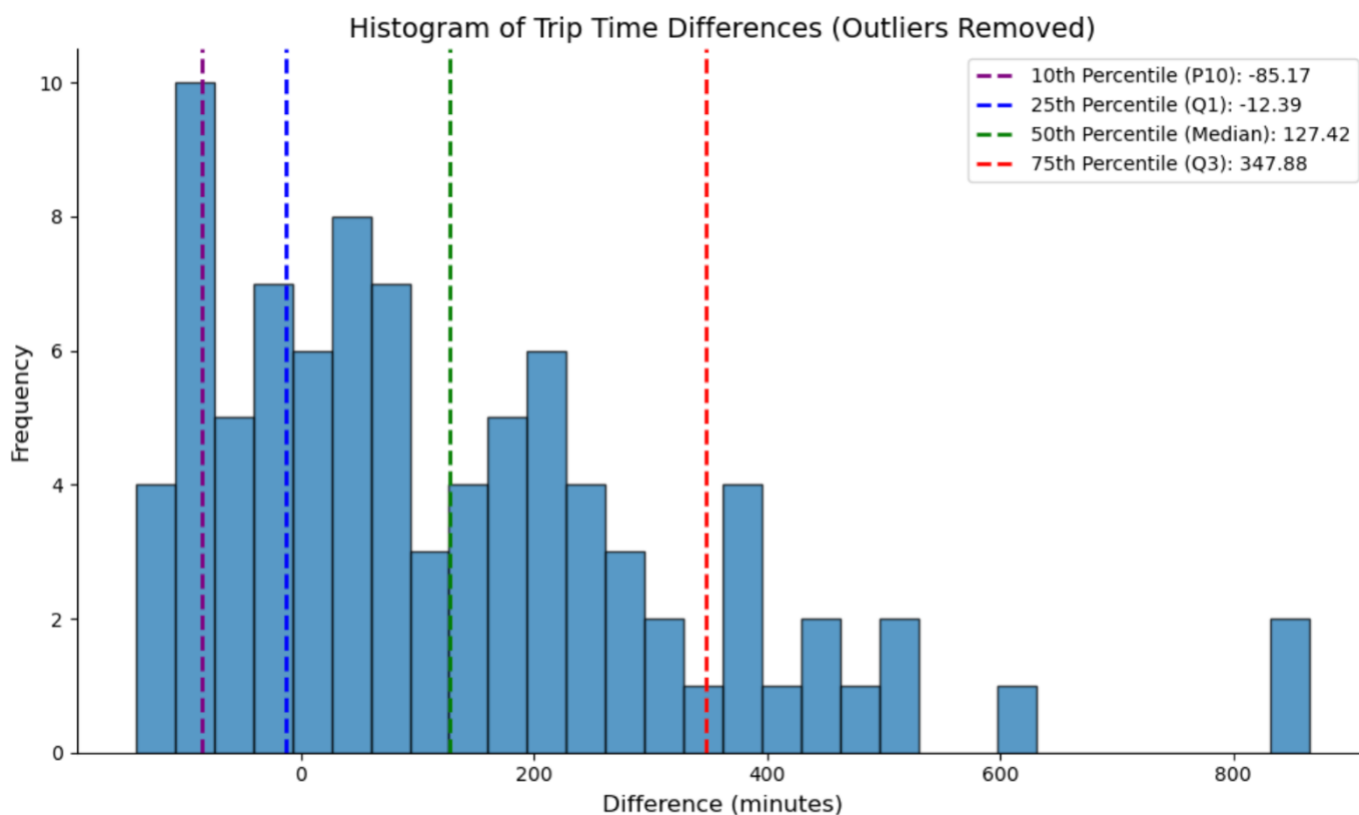


Rainy day trips trips are 4 times more than **dry day trips**

Analyzing User Physicality and Its Implications

To assess the physical fitness of Bixi users, I compared the duration of each Bixi trip to the estimated travel time provided by Google Maps. The logic behind this analysis is that trips completed faster than the estimated time are likely undertaken by users with high physical endurance, while those that closely match or are slightly longer than the estimated time are done by users with good physical fitness. Conversely, trips that significantly exceed the estimated time may indicate that the users are less physically fit.

The analysis revealed that **around 40% of trips** were completed by users with good physical fitness, and **15% by users with strong physical fitness** (those who completed trips faster than the estimated time). This indicates a substantial portion of Bixi users who are physically active and could be interested in participating in a sporting event. Recognizing this segment helps Bixi to tailor a sporting event and marketing campaign that appeals directly to these users, emphasizing fitness and health benefits. This approach could drive engagement and potentially increase membership among those who are already inclined toward regular physical activity.



Difference = $\text{abs}(\text{trip time} - \text{google estimated time})$

FEASIBILITY OF A SPORTING EVENT

Potential Benefits of Hosting a Sporting Event

Hosting a sporting event presents numerous advantages for Bixi. It combines elements of fun, excitement, and a sense of challenge, creating a dynamic atmosphere that appeals to participants. The event can be designed as a group activity, building a sense of community among cyclists and encouraging friendly competition with the allure of prizes. This generates positive buzz and hype, enhancing visibility and brand recognition. The event also offers Bixi a prime opportunity for advertising, not only promoting the event itself but also highlighting the health benefits of cycling. By showcasing how cycling can be an enjoyable way to stay fit, the event can attract non-members who may be enticed to purchase a membership for the rest of the year, converting them into long-term users.

Optimal Timing for the Event (June to August)

Extensive research into Montreal's tourist patterns, festival season, and weather conditions indicates that June, July, and August are ideal months for hosting a Bixi sporting event. During these months, Montreal experiences an influx of tourists and vibrant community activities, such as music festivals and cultural events, making it easier to draw crowds. Additionally, the summer weather is more predictable and conducive to outdoor activities, with warmer temperatures and longer daylight hours, creating an ideal environment for cycling events. By aligning the event with the city's peak tourist season, Bixi can maximize participation and visibility, leveraging the seasonal enthusiasm to boost membership interest.

Targeting Users with Good Physicality for Everyday Commuting

My analysis has shown that a significant percentage of Bixi trips are completed by users with above-average physical fitness. These users, whether members or non-members, demonstrate an affinity for longer or faster trips, indicating a readiness for physical challenges. The goal of this sporting event and its accompanying marketing campaign is to convert non-member users into committed members. By highlighting the benefits of maintaining a healthy lifestyle through cycling and offering special membership deals, the event can attract these physically active non-members. This strategy encourages them to incorporate cycling into their daily routines, ultimately increasing Bixi's membership base and fostering a community of active, health-conscious users.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Event Concept and Structure

The proposed Bixi sporting event could take the form of a multi-week cycling challenge, such as a "Bixi Summer Challenge," running from June through August. Participants would be encouraged to complete a certain number of trips or cover specific distances each week to win prizes, such as free Bixi memberships, branded gear, or discounts at local businesses. The event could include different categories based on physical challenge levels, making it accessible for users of various fitness levels—from casual riders to those seeking a more intense challenge. Events like city-wide scavenger hunts, group rides, and weekend races could be organized to keep engagement high throughout the summer. Additionally, an app-based leaderboard could be implemented to track progress and encourage friendly competition, fostering a sense of community among participants.

Marketing Strategy: Promoting Health Benefits of Bixi

The marketing strategy should focus on positioning Bixi as a fun and effective way to maintain a healthy lifestyle. Emphasizing the cardiovascular and mental health benefits of regular cycling can appeal to health-conscious users. Campaigns could feature testimonials from regular Bixi users who have experienced positive health changes through cycling. Targeted ads on social media, particularly those featuring before-and-after fitness stories, can resonate with non-members considering a shift to a more active lifestyle. During the event period, promotional materials could highlight the advantages of biking over other forms of transport, such as reducing stress and improving physical fitness. This messaging, combined with the challenge and excitement of the event, can motivate potential users to join Bixi and experience the benefits firsthand.

Potential Partnerships and Incentives for Participation

To enhance the event's reach and impact, Bixi could partner with local businesses, gyms, health food stores, and sportswear brands. These partners could provide prizes such as free gym memberships, sports gear, or discounts on healthy meals to winners or frequent participants. Collaborating with local tourism boards could also help attract tourists looking for a unique way to explore Montreal during the summer.

In addition, partnering with popular fitness tracking apps like **Strava** or other sports apps could add a digital dimension to the event. Bixi users could track their rides through these apps, participate in challenges, and share their achievements on social media, increasing visibility for both Bixi and its partners. These apps could host exclusive Bixi segments or leaderboards, offering additional incentives like Strava Premium membership discounts for participants or featuring top performers in event highlights.

Offering incentives like discounted Bixi memberships for participants who complete the challenge or loyalty rewards for frequent riders can further motivate both new and existing users to stay engaged throughout the event. Additionally, partnerships with local media outlets could boost visibility and coverage, helping to spread awareness of the event to a broader audience. By combining the

community-building power of local partners with the digital reach of fitness apps, Bixi can maximize engagement and attract a diverse group of participants.

CONCLUSION

Summary of Findings

The analysis indicates a steady growth in Bixi trips over the years, with a clear seasonal peak in July, making the summer months the most active period for users. The study also shows that a significant proportion of Bixi users have good or strong physicality, suggesting that many riders have the potential to be engaged in a sporting event. The analysis of weather patterns further supports that June to August is the ideal time frame for outdoor activities in Montreal. Moreover, a targeted event focused on physical fitness could convert many of the active non-members into full-time members by emphasizing the health benefits of cycling and providing a structured challenge.

Final Recommendations for Bixi's Sporting Event Strategy

Based on the analysis, it is recommended that Bixi organize a structured sporting event during the summer months of 2025 to leverage the high activity levels of July and the favorable weather conditions. The event should be designed to appeal to users with good physicality and should emphasize both the fun and health benefits of cycling. Bixi should also invest in a marketing campaign that highlights the physical and mental health advantages of regular biking. Collaborating with local businesses and offering attractive incentives can help maximize engagement and ensure the event's success. With these strategies, Bixi can strengthen its brand image, foster community engagement, and increase membership conversions, setting the stage for sustainable growth in the coming years.

