

Mountaineer Winter 2022-23 Survey Response Executive Summary

Compiled by Joy Doyle May 16, 2023 after May 10, 2023 debrief with Downtowner

8,072 surveys were distributed
648 survey responses received (506 last year)
8% response rate

There were no real surprises in the survey results. Responses were pretty consistent with prior surveys.

Opportunities for Future Improvements

NPS score 83 (last year 90) - A score of 80 or more is considered exceptionally good.

After reviewing survey feedback and rider comments, Downtowner attributes the score decrease to higher wait times and wait time accuracy. Both of these items were caused by a myriad of factors, some more uncontrollable such as severe snowstorms and poor cell signal in the Olympic Valley Alpine Meadows areas and some more controllable such as too few vans online during holiday weeks when demand is at its highest .

Most of the complaints in the survey were related to wait times and wait time accuracy:

- 1) To improve wait times Downtowner is recommending, and has included in their winter 2023-24 quote/proposal an increase in our fleet size, an increase in driver hours, and an extra assistant manager who can cover for drivers who call out sick or cannot make it in due to road conditions.
- 2) Wait times during / right after big snowstorms are going to have higher wait times due to a surge in demand coupled with bad road conditions. Downtowner has agreed to send more app notifications to remind people of what to expect.
- 3) Regarding wait time accuracy, Downtowner informed us that for the first time cell reception, or lack thereof, substantially affected their ability to operate properly. This negatively impacted wait times and wait time accuracy, especially in Alpine Meadows. Poor weather and lots of people in a geographic area all using their cell devices impact service reliability. Downtowner requests MTC, Palisades Tahoe, and whomever else has influence to expand bandwidth / improve technology so that this isn't the case in the future. Apparently because of the issue, the app would not close out rides. It was frustrating to the drivers and the passengers. I will start with Mike on developing solutions to get this addressed.
- 4) Mountaineer's marketing included 7-minute average wait time, because that had been the average wait time for the first four seasons. Downtowner and I agree that in the future MTC will use the following to market, "Wait Time Expectation: a pickup in less than 20 minutes, most of the time." According to Downtowner 20-minute or less is the wait time to strive for based on industry standards. We believe this new wording will accurately set expectations, which is important.

Related to comments about preferring Nissans over Ford Transits

Downtowner is attempting to source low-profile roof Nissan vans for winter 2023-24. This is consistent with MTC's request for a low-profile roof fleet. The other option is the low-profile roof Ford Transit. Downtowner is looking at both vehicles as potential options.

Other Standouts:

Most Desired Service Expansions (question 8)

43% rated desirable or very desirable - later end time in Olympic Valley

37% rated desirable or very desirable - additional midweek service in Alpine Meadows

35% rated desirable or very desirable - later end time in Alpine Meadows

Use TART or TART Connect in addition to Mountaineer (question #9)

86% no

More likely to use TART and TART Connect if they could easily access through the Mountaineer app (question #10)

41% yes

36% maybe

Do you have other suggestions for Mountaineer?" (question #11)

347 responses | 53% of total respondents

Following are the responses from more than one respondent:

- Many positive and complimentary comments
- Many comments about long wait times and wait time inaccuracy (arriving before passengers are ready and the app predicted originally, arriving a lot later than the app predicted originally, and bouncing around a lot)
- 17 requests for more midweek Alpine Meadows service
- 16 requests for more vans and/or more drivers
- 13 requests for daily service between the valleys (some specifically requested early a.m.)
- 9 comments related to poor cell, wi-fi, bandwidth service
- 9 requests for summer service
- 8 requests for later Alpine Meadows service
- 7 suggests special lane for Mountaineer vehicles
- 6 complaints about ski rack damaging equipment
- Several comments about this year's van fleet not as favored as prior seasons
- 4 safety related complaints, especially in neighborhoods
- 4 complaints about transit center location
- 4 requests for later Olympic Valley service
- 3 comments about Munchkins pickup
- 2 requests for electric vehicles

Do you have other suggestions for Mountaineer?" (question #11) continued

One-offs (I feel worthy to include):

- A place for drivers to stay overnight during storms/storm cycles
- Link to other transit services
- Requested better pickup and dropoff location descriptions in Olympic Valley
- Earlier morning weekend pick ups for employees
- Complaints about waiting for guests not ready
- Suggested chains, shovels, sand and other tools in vans in case they get stuck or to access steep streets in Olympic Valley