BOSTON MARATHON BOMBING and MBTA See Say mobile app

Transit Riders "Saw Something and Said Something" using MBTA See Say

On April 15, 2013 two bombs went off at the finish line of the Boston Marathon. Many spectators used the MBTA to get to the marathon. Some transit riders had the **MBTA See Say** smartphone app, for reporting safety and security problems to transit police.

PRE-EXPLOSION

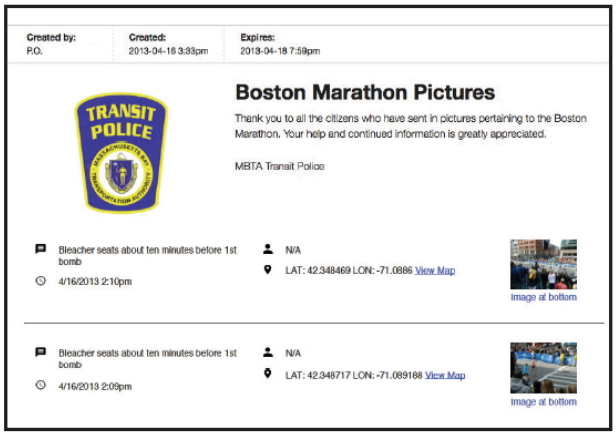
Before the bombs went off, many spectators were casually taking photos of the crowd and runners, using their smartphones.

POST-EXPLOSION

After the bombs exploded at the finish line, about 100 messages were received by MBTA police from riders using the **MBTA See Say app**. Some messages came in immediately, some over the next few days.

CROWD-SOURCING AT ITS FINEST

Transit riders used the **MBTA See Say app** to upload photos of the crowd by the finish line, taken minutes before the bombs. They wanted police to have their photos in case the perpetrator(s) were in the crowd.



Photos submitted via cell phone like the ones above are critical when trying to track down and stop criminals in real-time.

AFTERMATH – MBTA UPDATED AND THANKED RIDERS

Three days after the bombing, the MBTA police used ELERTS console to broadcast a message to the app users, thanking them for submitting information and photos about the marathon.

Two weeks after the bombing, the MBTA police used ELERTS console to broadcast a message to all MBTA See Say app users, with a message from Transit police officer Richard Donahue, who was shot in the pursuit of the marathon bomber.

Outbound messages sent to MBTA See Say app users built rapport with the transit rider community, at a time when the entire city was on edge.

PHONE CALLS FAILED, BUT THE MBTA APP WORKED

Transit riders using the MBTA See Say app demonstrated the power of ELERTS crowd-sourced incident reporting solution. In the chaos, when cell towers were over-run by too much traffic, the mobile app still worked. Voice calls and SMS text messages failed, but the mobile app delivered messages promptly to transit police dispatchers.

ELERTS Corp in Weymouth, MA developed the MBTA See Say app.