Times Square at a Crossroads
Unparalleled Demands

Times Square covers just 1.9 square miles of geographic area, yet its density far exceeds other neighborhoods.

- Up to 481,585 pedestrians per day
- 39 million annual visitors
- 18,106 hotel rooms
- 71,029 live entertainment seats
- 29 million sq. ft. of commercial office space
- 359,224 + 225,000 daily MTA + PABT commuters
- 170,000 employees living across the 5 boroughs
- 12x as many SAPO-permitted events in Times Square v. 34th St.
There is an unprecedented number of competing uses of Times Square’s public spaces.
Quirky is Fine, Creepy is Not

**DAILY NEWS**
Times Square performer dressed as Super Mario arrested after allegedly groping woman

**NEW YORK POST**
Two men dressed as Statue of Liberty's brawl

**gothamist**
Extra, Extra: Silver Man Allegedly Pulls Knife In Times Square Turf War

**PIX**
Times Square Spider-Man arrested for punching NYPD officer

**CBS New York.com**
Man dressed as Cookie Monster accused of shoving a child in Times Square

**NEW YORK POST**
‘Woody’ from ‘Toy Story’ arrested on sex charges

**DAILY NEWS**
Times Square Spider-Man accused of groping woman

**PIX**
Topless women in Times Square causing outrage for posing with underage tourists

**THE HUFFINGTON POST**
Batman In Times Square Goes On Expletive-Filled Rant
Had drinks with someone who works near Times Square and is regularly sexually harassed by a gauntlet of men dressed as Elmo.

The best part of being a girl in Times Square is the naked women only charge you $5 for a picture instead of the $20 they charge the guys.

@TimesSquareNYC My friend's ass was grabbed twice by Elmo while she was just standing and taking a picture of Times Square.

Things you can hear in Times Square: "I just got mugged by Mickey Mouse." "It's Spider-Man--watch out!" "Are they naked?"

So yesterday at Times Square a guy asked if I wanted his free mixtape. I said no. His buddy said "he must be afraid of black people."

@gaaabe I once listened to a kid's cd in times square and it was really good so I bought one for $5. got home and he sold me a blank disc.

Times Square attractions include aggressive catcalls from a man whose profession is wearing a full-body Elmo suit.
Jon Sosis @FunnyJS

I can't believe Elmo just called me the n-word. Like...I don't know what to do right now. #nyc #timessquare

5:23 PM - 17 Mar 2014

David Apolo @D_Apolo

"Elmo, get your damn hands off me." Girl in Times Square

New York, NY

5:12 PM - 2 Apr 2014

Justin Arenas @justinarenass

Note to self: Never give a dollar donation to a guy wanting for you to hear his mixtape in Times Square.

FAVORITES 4

8:51 PM - 12 Jul 2015

Mike Rhone @mikeRhoneTM

The small boy telling his father he's scared of Elmo has learned far too young what's wrong with Times Square.

1:01 PM - 8 Nov 2014

Andy @SpritzRoad

When my friend & I went 2 Times Square we were forced by Minnie Mouse, Mario & Elmo 2 take a pic & they wouldn't let us leave until we paid

5:33 PM - 8 Jul 2014

Lauren Michelle @NYCvixen

The 'rappers' who harass tourists in Times Square to buy their mixtape are menaces to society. #NYC

1:18 PM - 23 May 2015

Dake McJowell @JakeMcDoo

Batman told me to fuck off! I was merely pointing out that Batman wears a utility belt and not a fannypack. #TimesSquare

3 RETWEETS 10 FAVORITES

2:30 PM - 9 Apr 2015

Jonah Emery @JonahEmery

The guys trying to hawk their music CD's in Times Square ruined my experience of it.

6:16 PM - 27 May 2015
Dear CD guys in Times Square, yelling at and harassing people who don’t take your (blank) cds will not make them give you money.

Koryna Flores
@korynaflores
7:48 PM – 21 May 2015

Jeni Hinton
@LoveDisneyMost
@Attractions my daughter watched "Elmo" pickpocket someone in Times Square. Beware of fake characters!

6:28 AM – 1 May 2014

Meg Taylor C
@megtaylorjr
Elmo no bullshit just grabbed my face and tried to make out with me. I hate you Times Square.

9:05 AM – 9 Apr 2014

Bailey Dunks
@BayDunks7
I've seen 8 naked ladies in a matter of 15 minutes in Times Square.
“My friend and I, who are sixteen-year-old Asian girls, were walking down Times Square, and there were three costumed characters who… pushed us into taking photos with them without explaining that it would cost money. They wouldn’t let us go. They even tried to keep my friend with them, and they wanted me to go to the ATM and get money… The Trip to Times Square that we had dreamed of was a nightmare.”
“Yesterday two of [the naked ladies] came up to me and pressed themselves up against me trying to get me to stop and take a picture. Not only was this uncomfortable but their body paint rubbed off on my suit.”

—Times Square Employee, Email

“I have seen the aggressive nature of the CD hawking increase dramatically in the past few months. Just today... there was a large group of 10-15 males that were ‘giving away their free CDs’ and then when the passersby reject the donation, the encounter turns very hostile.”

—Times Square Employee, Email

“The characters are out of control... I also don't appreciate their comments as a I walk by as a female.”

—Times Square Employee, Survey Response

“I was waiting to cross the street and a character put his paw around my shoulder. They should not be touching people who are not seeking a photo or their attention in any way.”

—Times Square Employee, Survey Response

“My husband’s office is located a block away from where [the naked ladies] stand and he cannot pass that way at all without one or several of them getting in front of him and aggressively trying to grab him or get his attention... We do not wish to see their highly aggressive tactics of grabbing and getting directly in front of us as we walk down the street to try to enter the stores.”

—New York Resident, Email

“Costumed characters have become a major problem. I try to ignore them, but when they purposefully reach out & touch you in a crowded area it makes one feel very uncomfortable.”

—Times Square Employee, Survey Response

“As I walked past with my lunch, one man thrust a CD at my chest to which I said ‘no’ to, and then he asked for my lunch and said he was hungry... He became agitated, cursed at me and proceeded to yell insults at me as I crossed the street.”

—Times Square Employee, Email

“When walking by, costumed characters frequently reach out and touch my children to try to get my attention.”

—Times Square Local, Survey Response

“The costumed characters attack tourists when they don't tip. I have stepped in more than once and stopped a character from verbally abusing tourists. It misrepresents NYC and makes me uncomfortable.”

—Times Square Employee, Survey Response

“I had only $5 in my wallet at that time and expected it would be enough. But after we took the pictures, [the characters] tried to say that they needed $25... I showed my wallet to them and...they found that I had €15 in my wallet. They thought that if I gave them €15, then that would be enough for the $25. I feel bad about giving them so much money, I only hope there will be no other people than me.”

—Nick, Visitor from Washington D.C., Interview