



# Kansas Trans Reporter

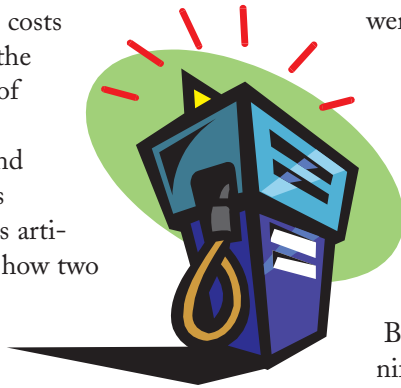
January 2006

The Newsletter for Kansas Rural and Specialized Transportation Providers • The University of Kansas Transportation Center

## What to do about rising fuel costs?

by Justin Dorsey

With fuel costs rising, the ability of transit agencies to maintain service and fare levels becomes more difficult. This article will: 1) discuss how two transit agencies have reacted to higher fuel costs, 2) give tips to increase vehicle fuel economy, and 3) explain the components of fuel prices.



For Ken Barrows, Manager of Lyon County Area Transit, fuel costs have skyrocketed.

October 2005 fuel costs were 77 percent higher than the previous October's.

The agency's service and fare levels so far have remained unchanged. One reason is that

Barrows has seen a significant jump in ridership which he attributes to his customers' response to higher gas prices. October 2005 ridership was 37 percent higher than the pre-

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## United We Ride planning moves forward in KS

by Pat Weaver

As we reported in the October 2005 issue of the *Kansas Trans Reporter*, attention to transportation coordination in Kansas is growing. The Kansas United We Ride effort is gaining traction and supporters as we explore strategies to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of funding streams, regulations and delivery of services. Here's an update since our last issue.

*Appointments.* Several Kansas

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**Gas prices,**

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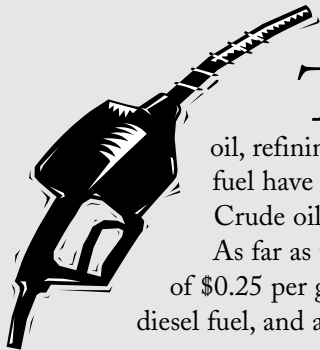
vious October, and a significant increase occurred from September to October this year.

However, even though ridership has increased, the increase in fare receipts has not entirely offset fuel costs. In an attempt to save money, the agency is trying a synthetic motor oil in its transit vehicles to see if it reduces fuel and/or maintenance costs. The results are pending.

At Class LTD in Columbus, Ks, Jim Burton has had to tap into discretionary funds historically used for services such as community residential and employment support for pay for fuel. However, even with higher fuel costs, fares and service have remained unchanged. In fact, due to additional ridership demand, Class LTD has expanded nighttime transit service.

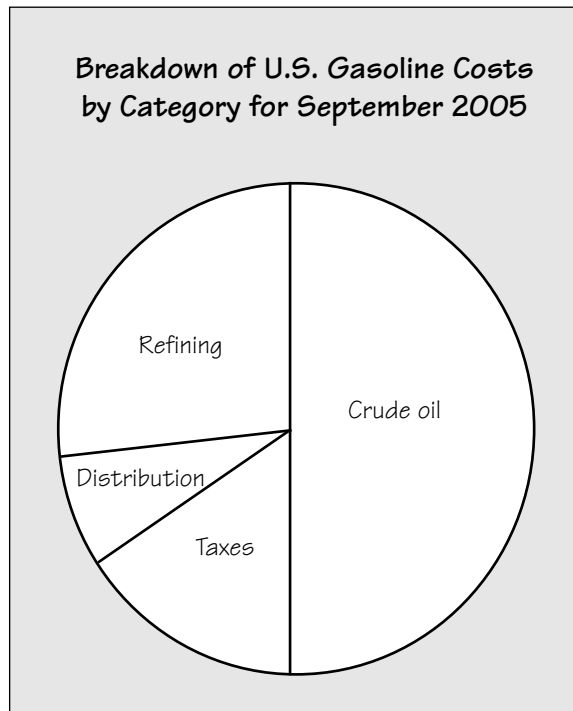
If fuel prices remain high or continue to soar, Class LTD may be forced to increase fares. Like Lyon County Area Transit, Class LTD has put additional emphasis on reducing fuel consumption. For example, they are monitoring air and fuel filter replacement better than before. Finally, Burton believes that having experienced drivers familiar with routes, stops, and traffic flows have helped him keep fuel consumption to a minimum.

For more information on driving techniques and vehicle maintenance operations that can reduce fuel consumption visit: [www.edmunds.com/reviews/list/top10/103164/article.html](http://www.edmunds.com/reviews/list/top10/103164/article.html). And check out the tips on the next page compiled from the first two sources listed at left.



**Fuel cost components**

The price of gas and diesel fuel is a combination of the following costs: crude oil, refining, distribution, and taxes. Gas and diesel fuel have roughly the same distribution of costs. Crude oil is the largest share of the cost. As far as taxes go, in Kansas there are excise taxes of \$0.25 per gallon for gasoline, \$0.27 per gallon for diesel fuel, and a federal tax of \$0.18 per gallon for each.



Sources:

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<http://tonto.eia.doe.gov/oog/info/gdu/gaspump.html>. Provides Energy Information Administration data on U.S. gas price components and the history of fuel prices.

[http://www.kansasgasprices.com/tax\\_info.aspx](http://www.kansasgasprices.com/tax_info.aspx). Provides information on fuel taxes in the State of Kansas. ▲

Lyon County Area Transit is trying synthetic motor oil in its vehicles to see if it reduces fuel consumption and maintenance.

Burton believes that having experienced drivers who are familiar with routes, stops and traffic flows have helped him keep fuel consumption to a minimum.

## How to reduce fuel consumption

Unless driving distance is reduced, the main options for reducing fuel consumption are improved driving techniques and proper vehicle maintenance. Here are some driving techniques that reduce fuel consumption:

- Maintain a steady speed.
- Use rolling resistance to slow down.
- Shift into higher gear as soon as possible.
- Remove unnecessary weight in the vehicle.
- Maintain a considerable distance between vehicles to reduce the frequency of braking and accelerating.
- Limit idling time.
- Although air conditioning can use up to 10 percent more fuel, use it instead of opening the windows when driving over 55 mph. Opening the windows at high speeds allows considerable wind to enter the vehicle which can decrease fuel efficiency by 20 percent.

And here are some maintenance tips:

- Change spark plugs.
- Keep tires properly inflated.
- Maintain proper wheel alignment.
- Replace bad oxygen sensors.

## United We Ride update

*continued from page 1*

Cabinet Secretaries have now appointed state staff to the Governor's Committee on Human Service Transportation Coordination. Included on the Kansas committee are representatives from Aging, Commerce, Commission on Disability Concerns, Health Policy and Finance, Social and Rehabilitation Services and Transportation. Several other agencies have been invited to the table and we expect this list of partners to grow as we consider specific strategies to improve human service mobility in the state.

*Kansas State Self-Assessment completed.* The Governor's Committee met on November 22, 2005, to com-

plete the United We Ride Framework for Action, a self-assessment to help target activities of the committee. This effort also included an effort to further develop the Kansas Transportation Coordination Action Plan which was initiated approximately a year ago. The day-long meeting prioritized goals for the immediate effort and considered specific action steps such as public information.

The top priority for the immediate term will be 1) to assess opportunities for coordination by identifying agency transportation services, program connections, expenditures and other opportunities; and 2) to identify

mobility needs throughout the state through involvement of agencies, consumers and transportation providers. The self-assessment and action plan will set the stage for the committee and work teams to move forward on specific tasks over the next few years.

*Kansas State Transportation Coordination Forum date set.* A statewide meeting has been set for February 8 to assist with further refinement of the action plan, to begin development of work teams, and to develop a strategy for working with local areas or communities interested in completing local self-assessments. This day-long statewide meeting will include representatives of state, regional, and local stakeholders and consumers to continue this work to improve transportation services.

*Kansas Implementation Grant application submitted* This self-assessment and development of the action plan has been supported partially with a United We Ride planning grant from the U.S. Department of Transportation Federal Transit Administration (FTA). FTA recently announced a second round of grants for implementation and Kansas applied for these funds; a joint application from the Departments of Aging, Commerce, SRS and Transportation. If the proposal is funded, activities planned for implementation would include working with five pilot regions and/or communities to regional coordination summits which would lead to regional

**The self-assessment and action plan will set the stage for moving forward on transit coordination over the next few years.**

coordination teams and technical support for those teams. Local planning efforts would include a component on emergency preparedness for vulnerable populations.

*Kansas United We Ride Web site now online.* You can stay up-to-date with Kansas United We Ride efforts by visiting the Kansas RTAP Web site and clicking on "Kansas United We Ride" from the left column. Learn more about the Kansas action plan, local coordination planning tools and other resources by visiting this site.

For more information, contact Pat Weaver at Kansas RTAP at (785) 864-2595 or Jim Van Sichel at the Kansas Department of Transportation, (785) 296-5194. ▲

# The two hour myth

Requirements for employees reporting for random drug and alcohol testing differ from post-accident testing. Don't confuse the two.

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by Laura Snyder  
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**F**or transit drivers who fall under the FTA's drug and alcohol testing rules, there is a rule that employees should report for post-accident drug and alcohol testing within the first two hours of an accident. However, employees have been known to confuse rules for post-accident testing and random testing. There is no two-hour rule for random testing; the reporting timeframe is: immediately.



Here's how random testing works: Most random testing is done using mobile collectors, says Sandy Flickinger, drug and alcohol program manager at the Kansas Department of Transportation. The Mental Health Consortium has a roster of all transit employees in Kansas, and at the beginning of each quarter, their computer randomly selects certain employees to be tested. "It's strictly random, so every employee has an equal chance of being chosen each quarter," says Flickinger. This means that an employee could be selected for testing four times in one

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year, or not at all.

The Consortium then mails letters to transit employers and regional mobile collectors with lists of the employees selected for testing.

The employer and the mobile collector have until the end of the quarter to set up a time to have the collector visit the agency to test the employees.

However, if no time can be worked out\*, the employer can also choose to send employees to a fixed collection site at the time they are notified they have been selected for random testing.

Employees are given no warning about the testing. An employer may request that all employees be present at a certain time for a "meeting," or the employer may call drivers out on route and instruct them to report immediately to a collection site.

Each agency's drug and alcohol policy states the maximum amount of time allowed for an employee to arrive at a fixed site once notified to report for testing. This time frame is normally based on the distance between the service area and the designated testing site. The purpose for immediately reporting to the site is to preserve the integrity of the collection and results.

For more information, contact Sandy Flickinger at KDOT at (785) 368-7091.

Source:

"The Two Hour Rule: Fact or Urban Legend?" ODAPC Dispatches, June 24, 2005. ▲

## 1st national drug and alcohol program conference scheduled for March

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by Laura Snyder  
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**T**he FTA will hold its first Drug and Alcohol (D&A) Program National Conference March 20-21, 2006, at the Hampton Inn Tropicana in Las Vegas, Nevada. Transit agency drug and alcohol program managers, human resource managers, safety managers, union representatives, safety-sensitive contractors and service agents providing services to transit agencies are all invited to this free conference.

The conference will address FTA drug and alcohol testing regulations and DOT procedures for transportation workplace drug and alcohol testing programs. Speakers will include Jerry Powers of the FTA Office of Safety and Security and Mark Snider of the Office of Drug and Alcohol Policy and Compliance.

The two-day conference will be structured into breakout sessions for both new and veteran program managers. Technical assistance tables will be set up where agencies can have their policies reviewed. Policy makers, auditors, and experts in the field will all be available to answer questions.

For information on registration, visit the FTA's Web site at <http://www.fta.dot.gov/>. ▲

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\*Sometimes a scheduling conflict prevents a mobile collector from working out a time to visit the agency. Also, when a back-up driver is selected for random testing, it is sometimes difficult for a manager to schedule a mobile collector visit at a time when the driver will be working.



## Give and take

Disclosing and substantiating quid pro quo donations

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by Nishtha Mehta  
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**T**ransit agencies often get donations from patrons and passengers that can help sustain operations and provide better service. Understanding procedures associated with documenting gifts and donations is important for accurate tax records and avoiding fines. This article will tell you what you need to do for quid pro quo gifts.

The Internal Revenue Service (IRS) defines a “quid pro quo contribution” as a payment made by a donor that is partly offset by goods and services provided to the donor by the receiving agency. If a non-profit transit agency receives a donation of \$75 or more that is offset by goods and services, a disclosure statement is needed. Both the agency and the donor need to fulfill specific filing requirements with regard to disclosure statements. This brings us to the question of ...

### What agencies need to do

Under the Internal Revenue Code (IRC), most non-profit agencies are classified as a 501(c)(3)s. They can be either public or private charities. The disclosure requirements for public and private charities are essentially the same, with a few added stipulations for private foundations.

*Public Charity.* To be classified as a public charity, an agency must receive a large percentage of its support from the public. These organizations must keep track of all the receipts and records of donations they

receive. (A check can usually serve as a receipt.)

If the amount of the donation is \$75 or more, regardless of what is given in exchange, the agency must file a written statement for the donor, detailing the particulars of the gift.

Here are two examples of applying this rule: If a donor makes a contribution of \$60 to an agency, and receives a service valued at \$20 in exchange, the gift to the agency is \$40. The amount originally donated to the agency is \$60, or less than the \$75 threshold. A disclosure statement is not required.

On the other hand, if the gift made to the agency is \$120, with goods and services provided in exchange for \$80 in value, the requirement is different. The difference between the gift and the goods received is still \$40, but the monetary amount received was \$120, exceeding the \$75 threshold. This donation is subject to disclosure.

In some cases, agencies do not need to provide information about goods received in exchange for a donation. [However, the donation itself will still need to be reported in a disclosure statement, if over \$75.] IRC section 513(h)(2) defines certain token goods, such as key-chains and bookmarks bearing the company’s logo, as low-cost items that do not bear mention. The code specifies that these goods must be \$5 or less in value to be considered low-cost and should be reserved for donors contributing \$25 or more.

Another example in this code is when the donor is supplied with unordered, low-cost publications.

These items are treated as having no market value and do not require written substantiation.

A third example of goods considered as having insubstantial market value is when the benefits received by the donor are no more than two percent of the donation, or \$50, whichever is less. For example, if the donor contributes \$1,000, and the goods received in exchange are worth \$15, no disclosure statement is needed. The \$15 is less than two percent of the donation.

In all other cases of quid pro quo donations that require disclosure statements, the non-profit transit agencies should remember to provide donors with details about what they received in exchange for their gift.

*Private Charity.* A private foundation must comply with all disclosure requirements of a public charity. In addition, they must provide copies of their annual tax returns to the state’s attorney general and make any documents or letters sent by the agency to the IRS (including the agency’s tax exemption application) available to the public during regular business hours at their main office and any other branch office with three or more employees. They must also post a notice at the main office’s local newspaper announcing the availability of the agency’s annual tax return for public review, and the name of the principal manager. A copy of this notice, along with a statement signed by the manager indicating when and in what publication the notice appeared, must be filed with each federal tax return.

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**T**hank you letters are important acknowledgements of any monetary donations you may receive. Here's an example:

*Date*

*Address of Donor (write complete address)*

*Dear Donor (write name)*

*On behalf of (write name) nonprofit transit agency, I would like to thank you for your generous contribution. We are pleased to acknowledge your gift on (date of receipt) of the following (specify amount of cash given).*

*Your gift will be used to support or enable an agency run program. (describe the program)*

*(This paragraph needs to be included only if any goods and services are supplied in exchange of the donation): The agency provided the following goods and services with an estimated value of \$\_\_\_\_\_ in return for your contribution. (describe goods and services provided to the donor)*

*Your donation played an integral part in the organization/success of our project. Thank you for your generous support of our efforts.*

*Sincerely,*

*(hand-sign your name)*

*(write your title)*

services received. Donors are required to keep disclosure statements for any charitable contribution worth a deduction of \$250 or more.

Although the donor does not need to retain statements for individual contributions less than \$250, it is advisable for both donors and receiving agencies to maintain accurate records of any transaction that takes place between them.

### **Tips to remember**

Written substantiation has to be provided to the donor in a timely manner; either at the time of solicitation of the donation or at the receipt of the donation. This statement has no prescribed format; it could be a letter, a postcard or a computer-generated form.

Also remember that, according to IRS's IRC 6174 (a), a penalty of \$10 per contribution, not exceeding \$5,000 per fund-raising event, can be imposed on any agency that does not meet the disclosure requirements. Transit agencies can avoid these fees by providing written substantiation. If, for some reason, they are unable to do so, they may need to prove that the failure was due to a "reasonable cause." Reasonable causes depend on the circumstances and facts associated with a particular case. You should consult an attorney about your particular situation.

Keep in mind that this informa-

## **Quid pro donations,** *continued from page 5*

### **The disclosure statement**

A disclosure statement is written acknowledgement that a donation has been received by a non-profit agency. It is issued by the agency to the donor. It should include information about the amount of the donor's contribution that is deductible for federal income tax purposes. It should also provide an estimate of the market value of goods and services provided by the agency in exchange for the gift.

A common acknowledgement for a donation is a thank you letter. This letter should be sent promptly and written with care. It should describe what the donation supports or enables the agency to do. It is important to personally acknowledge the gift and sign the note by hand. Such notes can also contain a sentence about upcoming programs and

services that the donor may be interested in. See an example above.

Even though the task of providing the written substantiation falls to the agency, the donor also needs to fulfill certain responsibilities to comply with tax law for individuals. This brings us to the question of...

### **What donors need to do**

Donors can claim any quid pro quo gift to your agency as a tax deduction, minus the value of goods and

**According to IRS's IRC 6174 (a), a penalty of \$10 per contribution, not exceeding \$5,000 per fund-raising event, can be imposed on any agency that does not meet the disclosure requirements. Transit agencies can avoid these fees by providing written substantiation for donations.**



tion is provided as a general guideline. Specific situations may vary and it is always recommended that you consult a tax advisor to address your questions and needs.

Sources:

Lisa Petkun, Attorney,  
Pepper Hamilton LLP  
Philadelphia.

Christine DeMarea, Attorney,  
Husch and Eppenger LLC  
Kansas City.

*Difference between Public and Private Foundations*, National Heritage Foundation. 2005.

“Goods and Services: Disclosure Requirements.” Kathleen A. Stephenson and Lisa B. Petkun. *On the Record*, May/June 2004.

“Updates on Disclosure and Substantiation Rules.” Michael Seto and Dave Jones. Internal Revenue Service 2004.

“Fund Raising Issues,” Michael Seto and Dave Jones. Internal Revenue Service 2000. Internal Revenue Service [www.irs.gov](http://www.irs.gov).

“Knowing how to say thank you.” Arts Law Memo published by St. Louis Volunteer Lawyers and Accountants for the Arts. April 2000.

“Ask a Question!” (Frequently asked questions by non-profit managers and board members) Kansas Non-Profit Association [www.ksnonprofitassoc.net/questions.htm](http://www.ksnonprofitassoc.net/questions.htm).

“Internal Revenue Service Exempt Organizations” <http://www.irs.gov/charities/article/0,,id=96430,00.html#3>. ▲

# See Spot ride

## Accommodating service animals on buses

.....  
by Nishtha Mehta  
.....



same size as dogs). These animals guide visually-impaired and hearing-impaired individuals, provide seizure-alerts, and assist with mobility by fetching dropped items and pulling wheelchairs. They provide safety and comfort to their owner.

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) mandates that service animals be permitted on board any vehicle open to the public. This brings us to the question of how a driver can recognize and best accommodate a service animal.

### Service animal, or pet?

Making a decision to allow an unknown animal aboard a vehicle can be tricky. Drivers may find it difficult to tell the difference between service animals and pets. All transit agencies in Kansas, to remain in compliance with ADA, are required to allow service animal

**D**rivers sometimes encounter passengers traveling with service animals on their routes. These animals are more than just pets. They are a vital part of

It is important to understand that some passengers with service animals may have a largely undetectable disability. An example is epilepsy.

everyday life and are essential to their owners' independence. This article will provide information for drivers on how to recognize and accommodate service animals to provide the best possible service for their owners and the rest of your passengers.

A common misconception about service animals is that they are only "seeing eye dogs," but in fact service animals also include cats, monkeys, birds, pigs and even miniature horses (these are usually the

access to their public-use vehicles. The same rule does not apply to pets. Here are some ways the driver can determine whether the animal waiting to board is a service animal or a pet.

Some, but not all, service animals wear special collars and harnesses; however, no license or certification is required for these animals. To clarify any doubt about the role of the animal, the driver can simply

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## Service animals,

*continued from page 7*

ask the owner if the animal is a service animal. If the owner responds that it is a service animal, the driver can then inquire about the tasks the animal has been trained to perform. This will provide some information about the animal. No other questions regarding certification or the rider's disability can be asked.

It is important to understand that some passengers who have service animals may have largely undetectable disability, such as epilepsy.

**E**aster Seals Project ACTION has published a *Transit Operator's Pocket Guide* that provides drivers with information on how to assist and serve passengers traveling with service animals. It can be accessed for free at [www.projectaction.org](http://www.projectaction.org) (click on Free Resources, then click on Order and Download Free Publication, and then select Transit Operator's Pocket Guide.)

In some cases, the rider could have multiple disabilities, for example, a passenger using a wheelchair could also have a visual impairment and the service animal accompanying the passenger may be a guide dog and a mobility-assistance dog.

If at first glance the animal does not seem to be a service animal, but on being asked the passenger claims it is, the driver should welcome the animal on board the vehicle.

While the driver has to allow a service animal access, some exceptions can be made. The animal has to be under the control of the handler or a designated caretaker at all times. If the animal threatens the safety of the driver or a passenger, access to the vehicle can be denied. This decision has to be made based on the behavior of that particular animal; it should not be based on past experiences with that particular breed or type of animal. Rest assured that

such a situation rarely occurs, as service animals are almost always well-trained and well-behaved.

### Extending a helping hand

Once the driver has determined that a service animal will be boarding the vehicle, he or she can ask the owner or handler if any help is needed. Ed Eames, President of International Association of Assistance Dog Partners (IAADP), asserts that drivers have to be careful about asking the passenger before providing any assistance, as this gesture can be misinterpreted as taking power away

from the disabled person. If requested, the driver can inform the other passengers not to pet the animal.

Drivers can also assist passengers traveling with service animals in boarding or dismounting from the vehicle. According to Eames, a common situation is when a wheelchair lift is not wide enough to accommodate both the passenger and the animal. In such instances, the owner may ask the driver to take the leash. However, it is important to know that the service animal is working and should not be touched or given any command unless asked to do so by the passenger.

Service animals must be allowed to ride with their owners. The drivers cannot require passengers with service animals to sit in a specified area. Most assistance animals are trained to sit under the passenger's seat or at the handler's feet. This allows the aisle to be clear. Some

drivers—especially van and sedan operators—choose to carry a sheet or towel for the animals to sit on. This can also help contain dander or hair.

### Making the right move

The ADA recognizes the important role service animals play in providing independence, safety, and a better quality of life to persons with disabilities. By mandating that service animals be allowed aboard public vehicles, the rights of persons with disabilities are protected. Allowing access to these animals is not only the lawful thing to do; it is also the right thing to do.

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Dr. Ed Eames, President, International Association of Assistance Dog Partners.

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## Special events dig up new opportunities to increase public awareness and revenue

by Laura Snyder

If you're looking for a strategic way to promote your transit agency, and aren't afraid of making an investment, you might want to consider hosting a special event or promotion. By forming a partnership or sponsoring an activity, you can get your agency's name out and attract new riders.

Denise Draper, senior account leader for R & R Partners in Phoenix, Ariz., led a series of successful special promotions for Valley Metro, a fixed-route transit agency in Phoenix, resulting in an 11 percent increase in unaided awareness of the agency —when a person is asked to identify the transit provider without any hints or options from which to choose.

Draper knows firsthand how to make the most out of a special promotion. Valley Metro kicked off a

promotion, so Draper felt this would be a good way to promote Valley Metro's Ride Share Week. For \$14,000—which Draper negotiated down from \$28,000—Valley Metro received around \$380,000 in advertis-



ing. As a sponsor, Valley Metro's logo was on all entry forms, radio commercials and other promotional materials for the event.

To promote ridesharing, Valley Metro teamed up with the Arizona Department of Transportation. On "Carpool Wednesday," Valley Metro reminded drivers about carpooling

Rideshare matchlist requests over the next four months.

Another day during that week, Valley Metro worked with a call center to promote bus ridership. Public Service Announcements (PSAs) on local television and radio stations informed the public that the first 2,004 people who called in would receive a free bus pass, because it was the year 2004. Operators quickly asked callers a few questions, such as if and where they currently rode the bus and how they heard about it, and then awarded them one all-day bus pass, a \$3.60 value. The \$15,000 campaign was successful: Draper said 12 percent of callers redeemed their bus passes, in contrast to the 2 percent they had expected.

Draper believes the agency's investment paid off. Before the promotional week, unaided awareness of Valley Metro was at only 23 percent. One year later, it had jumped to 34 percent.

Draper recommends that other agencies wanting to participate in similar promotional events first evaluate their objectives. This makes it easier to select a partner or event to sponsor that reflects your own agenda. Also, Draper says you should expect to spend a little more on these partnerships than you normally would on a campaign or media buy.

For more information on special promotions and Valley Metro, contact Denise Draper at (480) 317-6066 or e-mail [denise.draper@rrpartners.com](mailto:denise.draper@rrpartners.com). ▲

Before the promotional week, unaided awareness of Valley Metro was at only 23 percent. One year later, it had jumped to 34 percent.

promotional week to coincide with the launch of their new brand — which included a new logo, tagline and look.

Valley Metro signed on as a sponsor for the *Phoenix New Times* annual 10-kilometer walk/run/roller blade event. Both parties were supporting alternative modes of trans-

during the morning and afternoon commutes by posting messages on LCD screens over the highways that typically show changes in traffic and construction. The LCD screens read, "Today is Carpool Day. Are you carpooling? Log onto [valleymetro.org](http://valleymetro.org) to find a partner." Valley Metro's Web site then saw a 145 percent increase in



# Universal design in action

Smart planning helps Kansas City accommodate more passenger needs

by Laura Snyder

When concentrating on making your transit vehicle and facilities compliant with the Americans with Disabilities Association (ADA)<sup>1</sup>, it's sometimes easy to overlook the rest of your riders. Universal design is a concept of design that focuses on developing products and services for as wide of a range of people as possible—riders with a wide variety of skills and abilities. This article will explore some methods of universal design employed by the Metro Area Express (MAX), a new rapid transit bus service in Kansas City, Mo.

Improving overall access to and ease of using a transit system is especially desirable because it attracts and retains riders. Richard Jarrold, senior director of System Development and Engineering for the Kansas City Area Transportation Authority (KCATA), says this was a goal when designing MAX.

Bus shelters were a major focus of accessibility. "We wanted them to be more appealing to people who don't ride the bus today, as well as our current customers," Jarrold says. While the ADA requires bus stops to be accessible for persons in wheelchairs, KCATA went a step beyond basic compliance. The seat in each

shelter does not stretch the entire length; rather, there is more than adequate space on each end of the bench for a wheelchair, stroller or shopping bags.

During the daytime, the roof of the shelter allows just enough sunlight into the shelter to provide light but not enough to make it uncomfortably hot. KCATA accomplished



*At KTKA's MAX bus shelters, there is more than adequate space on each end of the bench for a wheelchair, stroller or packages.*

this by putting opaque decals over 80 percent of the roof, leaving about 20 percent of the clear acrylic roof open for sunlight to shine through.

Lights on the shelter make it more noticeable by passersby, but the lights are carefully angled so they do not shine down directly on the waiting passengers. Jarrold says this is to provide a sense of security to passengers without illuminating and therefore identifying them. "The shelter glows, not the people," he says.

KCATA wanted the bus shelters to be visible in an urban setting,

which contains visual competition from tall buildings and traffic lights. After doing a study, they concluded that signs 18 feet in the air would provide maximum visibility without being an eyesore in the community. That's about twice as high as typical markers, says Jarrold. KCATA perches signs with the MAX logo atop 18-foot stainless steel poles to identify bus shelters for people up to two blocks away.

As a part of rapid transit, the bus itself must be specially designed to load and drop off passengers quickly. Jarrold says the MAX bus was designed with wider doors and a low floor. These features can also benefit passengers with disabilities or those traveling with luggage, strollers or shopping bags.

Other design specifications were included on the MAX bus to improve general comfort of all passengers. The front cap of the bus has more glass, and the side

windows are larger. Jarrold says this was done to create a lighter atmosphere. "We wanted it to feel more open, airy and light," he says. Most of the seats on the bus are raised a little higher than on normal busses, which Jarrold says should make the passengers more comfortable.

For more information on the KCATA's design methods used for the MAX system, contact Richard Jarrold at (816) 346-0356 or [djarrold@kcata.org](mailto:djarrold@kcata.org). ▲

<sup>1</sup>You can find ADA compliance standards online at <http://www.access-board.gov/transit/html/vguide.htm>.

## Principles of universal design

Universal design is the creation of products and environments to be usable by all people, to the greatest extent possible, without the need for adaptation or specialized design. The following principles were developed by the Center for Universal Design at North Carolina State University in collaboration with a consortium of universal design researchers and practitioners from across the United States.

### Principle One: Equitable Use

The design is useful and marketable to people with diverse abilities.

Guidelines:

- Provide the same means of use for all users: identical whenever possible; equivalent when not.
- Avoid segregating or stigmatizing any users.
- Provisions for privacy, security, and safety should be equally available to all users.
- Make the design appealing to all users.

### Principle Two: Flexibility in Use

The design accommodates a wide range of individual preferences and abilities.

Guidelines:

- Provide choice in methods of use.
- Accommodate right- or left-handed access and use.
- Facilitate the user's accuracy and precision.
- Provide adaptability to the user's pace.

### Principle Three: Simple and Intuitive Use

Use of the design is easy to understand, regardless of the user's experience, knowledge, language skills, or current concentration level.

Guidelines:

- Eliminate unnecessary complexity.
- Be consistent with user expectations and intuition.
- Accommodate a wide range of literacy and language skills.
- Arrange information consistent with its importance.
- Provide effective prompting and feedback during and after task completion.

### Principle Four: Perceptible Information

The design communicates necessary information effectively to the user, regardless of ambient conditions or the user's sensory abilities.

Guidelines:

- Use different modes (pictorial, verbal, tactile) for redundant presentation of essential information.
- Provide adequate contrast between essential information and its surroundings.
- Maximize legibility of essential information.

- Differentiate elements in ways that can be described (i.e., make it easy to give instructions or directions).

- Provide compatibility with a variety of techniques or devices used by people with sensory limitations.

### Principle Five: Tolerance for Error

The design minimizes hazards and the adverse consequences of accidental or unintended actions.

Guidelines:

- Arrange elements to minimize hazards and errors: most used elements, most accessible; hazardous elements eliminated, isolated, or shielded.
- Provide warnings of hazards and errors.
- Provide fail-safe features.
- Discourage unconscious action in tasks that require vigilance.

### Principle Six: Low Physical Effort

The design can be used efficiently and comfortably and with a minimum of fatigue.

Guidelines:

- Allow user to maintain a neutral body position.
- Use reasonable operating forces.
- Minimize repetitive actions.
- Minimize sustained physical effort.

### Principle Seven: Size and Space for Approach and Use

Appropriate size and space is provided for approach, reach, manipulation, and use regardless of user's body size, posture, or mobility.

Guidelines:

- Provide a clear line of sight to important elements for any seated or standing user.
- Make reach to all components comfortable for any seated or standing user.
- Accommodate variations in hand- and grip-size.
- Provide adequate space for the use of assistive devices or personal assistance.

From *Principles of Universal Design*, ©1977, North Carolina State University Center for Universal Design, [www.design.ncsu.edu/cud](http://www.design.ncsu.edu/cud).



# Infected computer? Here are some tools for your medicine kit

by Laura Snyder

By now, you've probably heard the lecture on the importance of antivirus software. You know that it only takes one little virus to find its way into your computer and wreak havoc with your files. Now there's also spyware—software that is installed on your computer via the Web without your knowledge. These nasty programs track the use of your computer and transmit information about Web sites you visit to third party marketing companies, as well as clog your computer with advertisements.

But with so many spyware removal tools and antivirus software products on the market, how do you know which ones will suit your needs and budget? We've reviewed the most popular antivirus software and spyware removal tools for you to help you make this decision.

## Antivirus software

Symantec's **Norton Antivirus 2005** is the top-selling and one of the most well-known brands of antivirus software. It also has excellent consumer reviews. However, Jim Henderson, manager of UNI Computers, Lawrence, KS, says Norton's popularity means virus writers target it specifically and create viruses to get past it. For this reason, you'll want to download updates of this software daily.

Costing around \$50, Norton offers real-time protection, meaning it automatically scans your computer and e-mail for viruses and worms. For



\$20 more, you can get its Internet Security package, which offers firewall protection, anti-spam, privacy control, and parental control. While consumer reviews say the control screen is easy to navigate, they also cite installation and compatibility issues. If you need help with your Norton Antivirus soft-

## For best protection, use antivirus software and two or three types of spyware removal tools.

ware, you get one year of free online support with your purchase, but after that, be prepared to pay \$30 per incident for support.

**McAfee**, also a well-known product with excellent consumer reviews, is comparable in price to Norton with a cost of around \$50. McAfee VirusScan 2005 offers real time protection against viruses and worms like Norton, and for \$30 more, you can get added firewall protection. It scans both your e-mail and your computer. Consumers say it is user-friendly, and while telephone help services are \$30 to \$40 a pop, online help is available for free through e-mail and live chat.

Grisoft's **AVG** is popular because it offers a free home edition. While the free edition is not for business use — it does not work on server operating systems and does not scan network drives — the professional edition costs only \$33. The AVG professional edition scans your e-mail as well as the computer itself, and allows you to tailor the number and frequency of scans to your needs. The professional edition also offers free online support.

Henderson's favorite is Trend Micro **PC-cillin**, because he says it's a better value, offering real time protection from viruses and worms, plus a firewall, anti-spam and spyware removal tool, all for just \$40. He still recommends running an additional spyware removal tool with PC-cillin to make sure it catches all spyware. PC-cillin is rated as the best overall software by reviewers, according to [www.consumersearch.com](http://www.consumersearch.com). A year of free telephone technical support comes with your purchase.

There are many other brands of antivirus software, but when making a decision to use one, keep in mind your agency's needs. Some software products are meant for systems with more computers than your agency may have. You'll also want to make sure you check for and download updates and new versions of your software frequently. "New viruses come out everyday," says Henderson. "It's pointless to run a virus scan without the updates."

## Spyware removal tools

No single spyware removal tool can catch all of the spyware coming into your computer. For this reason, you'll

### Real-time vs. manual-scan protection

Real-time protection means your antivirus or spyware removal software is constantly scanning your computer, looking for worms and viruses. If your antivirus software or spyware removal tools do not offer real-time protection, you can manually scan your computer periodically to check for viruses, worms, and spyware. Whichever method you use, be sure to keep the software updated so that it detects the latest "bugs" out there.

want to have two different spyware products, such as CounterSpy or Spy Sweeper, and one free tool, like SpyBot or Ad-Aware. However, you should never use more than one antivirus software, as they may conflict with each other.

Sunbelt Software **CounterSpy 1.0** is the most effective spyware removal tool, according to www.consumersearch.com, but even this one only catches 70 to 85 percent of spyware. Again, that's why you'll want

to use two spyware removal tools. CounterSpy costs around \$20 and is a real-time protection program, which is rare for spyware removal tools, says Henderson.

**Webroot Software Spy Sweeper** is also rated highly effective by www.consumersearch.com, but experts recommend pairing it with CounterSpy for the most protection, especially because Spy Sweeper does not have real-time

*Go to next page*

one transit agency, but is being used for two.

The biggest obstacle Straight sees, however, is that the system is just more complicated than he anticipated, making it more difficult for the dispatchers to learn. Another issue is acceptance. "You have some drivers who buy into it and some who don't," says Straight.

Leanne Kroeger, lead dispatcher, agreed with Straight. "We are seeing a little resistance from staff who don't want to accept the system," she says.

Kroeger's main complaint is the availability of support. "There's no one available to help troubleshoot problems at 5:45 in the morning," she says. Reaching someone on the phone is also difficult because of the automated system she must go through to talk to an actual person.

Overall, Kroeger likes the system, though. "In the beginning I didn't think I would, but it just makes the job so much easier. It's not actually less work to do, but the communication between the dispatchers and drivers is a little clearer, and we are better able to rectify problems," says Kroeger.

While Straight says the introduction of ITS hasn't improved ridership yet, he thinks adjusting the timings for dropping off and picking up riders will help make that possible. For example, a driver picking up a passenger waiting at the curbside may need less than a minute to accomplish this. However, the system allows two minutes for the task. Those minutes add up with each stop. The result is that the driver gets ahead of schedule. If the timings are tweaked, the driver may have time to pick up another passenger or two and still stay on schedule.

For more information on the ITS program in Ellis County, call Ron Straight at (785) 621-2078. ▲

## Ellis County adjusts to ITS

by Laura Snyder

Intelligent Transportation Systems is up and running in Ellis County, with Reno County not far behind. In contrast to the former paper system, dispatching now uses a software program called Trapeze. Mobile Data Terminals (MDTs) with small liquid crystal display (LCD) screens are installed on each bus; these allow the drivers to communicate with dispatchers by the touch of a button.

An Automated Vehicle Locator (AVL) system tracks the buses, using bus-mounted global positioning units. That way, the dispatch office can look at an electronic map on the

computer in the office and see the exact location of each bus at any given time.

Of course, this early in the game, and the system isn't perfect. Ron Straight, transportation manager at Developmental Services of Northwest Kansas, Inc. (DSNWK) in Hays, says they are still ironing out some wrinkles, including the automated dispatch sending incorrect information to drivers about the passengers, such as whether a passenger uses a wheelchair, walker or cane.

Also, now that Reno County is also using the Trapeze software, Straight said DSNWK dispatchers can see Reno County's client list and locations as well as their own. Not good. Straight thinks this is happening because Trapeze is designed for

## Rural Transit Conferences and Workshops

Jan. 22-24, 2006  
SWTA's 26th Annual  
Conference & Expo  
Phoenix Marriott Mesas Hotel  
Mesa, Ariz.  
Call 800-456-6372  
www.swta.org

February 19-22, 2006  
APTA Marketing &  
Communications Workshop  
Phoenix, Ariz.  
Contact: Cara Reeve  
Phone: 202-496-4874

March 14-15, 2006  
Managing the Cost of ADA  
Paratransit Services  
Austin, Texas  
Register online at  
<http://www.ntionline.com/CourseInfo.ASP?CourseNumber=ID017>  
Phone: 732-932-1700

March 20-21, 2006  
FTA Drug & Alcohol Program  
National Conference  
Las Vegas, Nev.  
www.fta.dot.gov

March 21-22, 2006  
NTI's Statewide Transportation  
Planning Course  
Kansas City, Mo.  
[www.ntionline.com/documents/registrationform.pdf](http://www.ntionline.com/documents/registrationform.pdf)  
Phone: 732-932-1700

April 30 - May 3, 2006  
Bus and Paratransit Conference  
Hilton and Marriott Hotels  
Orange County, Calif.  
Contact: Heather Rachels  
Phone: 202-496-4838

June 4-9, 2006  
Community Transportation  
Association Expo and Medical  
Transportation Conference  
The Gaylord Palms Resort  
Orlando, Fla.  
www.ctaa.org/

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To include meetings or  
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1530 W. 15th St., Room 2160,  
Lawrence, KS 66045.  
Email: [weaver@ku.edu](mailto:weaver@ku.edu)

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### Software, continued from page 13

protection. Expect to pay around \$30 for Spy Sweeper.

You'll be happy to know that there are some reliable spyware removal tools available for free.

**SpyBot Search & Destroy** is one of them. It offers real-time protection, and lets you choose which programs to remove. It will also warn you before you disable spyware or adware that Spybot will also disable the ad-supported software it came from. Unfortunately, you will be limited to PC use with this software; SpyBot doesn't work on Macs.

The free version of Lavasoft's **Ad-Aware** only scans manually, but for \$15, you can upgrade to its "plus" version which includes Ad-watch, a real-time monitor program, as well as more security features and customer support for life. Both versions actually let you choose which programs to delete after the scan finishes.

Microsoft is beta testing a real-time spyware removal tool, called **AntiSpyware**. The product can be downloaded for free at Microsoft's website. Antispyware was initially

well-received by consumers when it was launched in January, but [www.adwarereport.com](http://www.adwarereport.com) reports that effectiveness of the product has declined, and hackers have created a worm that disables AntiSpyware. Unfortunately, we can only guess about what sort of fine-tuning will be done, what kind of technical support will be offered, and the price tag.

One final piece of advice: Henderson says it's important to take advantage of those free Windows updates that pop up on your computer. New viruses are constantly being created to sneak around the protections in your system. Windows releases updates to fix the vulnerabilities that allow this. You can find Windows updates on the Microsoft website, at <http://windowupdate.microsoft.com>.

For more information, contact Jim Henderson, manager of UNI Computers, or any of UNI's employees, at (785) 814-7582.

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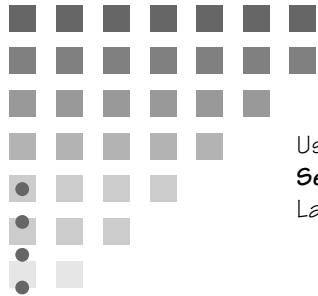
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## Resources Order Form



Use this order form to order the resources listed here.

**Send the order form to:** KUTC Lending Library, 1530 W. 15th Street, Room 2160, Lawrence, KS 66044. Or fax the form to 785/ 864-3199.

### Publications and videotapes

- Use and Abuse of Psychoactive Prescription Drugs and Over-the-Counter Medications** (publication). The Center for Substance Abuse Treatment provides a brief background on the use of prescription drugs/ over-the-counter medications and describes the evolution of psychoactive prescribing.
- Give 'Em the Facts: Prescription and Over-the-Counter Drug Abuse** (publication). The National Clearinghouse for Drug and Alcohol Information provides information on common medications and how they affect behavior. Especially useful for safety-sensitive work.
- Working with Difficult Passengers – Fact Sheet #1** (publication). Kansas RTAP offers many helpful suggestions for handling difficult situations with transit passengers.
- Communications 101 – Dealing with the Media** (publication). Scott Bogren of CTAA describes how to develop a positive relationship with the press – one that is beneficial to your agency.

- Accessibility Handbook for Transit Facilities** (publication). This handbook from the U.S. Department of Transportation helps architects, engineers, and transit system managers understand and follow federal regulations for transportation facilities to be accessible to persons with disabilities. This handbook explains what is required by the regulations in language that is easy to understand and includes many illustrations.

The major areas of accessibility addressed regarding transit facilities and the Americans with Disabilities Act are facility sites and entrances, interior elements, and waiting and boarding areas.

Included in this handbook are facilities accessibility checklists which ask numerous questions about facilities and also vehicle requirements. Using the checklists, anyone assessing a facility or vehicle can answer the questions and use the responses to determine where accessible features need to be added or improved.

This handbook is a companion to the Final Rule and is a reference source for questions about transit facility accessibility.

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City	State	Zip + 4	Date materials needed



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# Kansas Trans Reporter

The *Kansas Trans Reporter* is an educational publication published quarterly by the Kansas University Transportation Center. The newsletter is distributed free to rural and specialized transit providers and others with an interest in rural and specialized service.

The *Kansas Trans Reporter* is co-sponsored by the Federal Transit Administration under its Rural Transportation Assistance Program (RTAP) and the Kansas Department of Transportation. The purposes of the program are to: 1) educate transit operators about the latest technologies in rural and specialized transit; 2) encourage their translation into practical application; and 3) to share information among operators.

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Project Director ..... Pat Weaver  
Editor ..... Lisa Harris  
Contributors . . . . Laura Snyder, Justin Dorsey, Nishtha Mehta

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