



# Kansas RTAP Fact Sheet

A Service of The University of Kansas Transportation Center for Rural Transit Providers

## CD Brings New Dimension to Transit Driver Training

by Dawn Jourdan



*At Bi-State Transit Authority, an instructor monitors the progress of trainees and is available to answer questions—adding a human touch to the driver training process.*

These days it seems like almost everything can be done on a personal computer. Recent technological advances have simplified both personal and work-related functions. Recently, the San Diego Transit Authority has developed a computer training program that will enable transit agencies to provide on-screen driver training.

Their program, entitled *The Professional*, is a CD-ROM computer program designed to assist transit agencies with educating new and existing drivers. It covers a number of topics, including pre-trip inspections, customer service, and driver health and well-being. It is available for purchase from the National Transit Institute (NTI) at 732/932-1700.

Nathan Kniker, Director of Safety and Training of the Bi-State Transit Authority in St. Louis, says that his agency uses this software, along with other supplemental materials, to instruct new drivers. Kniker maintains that the program works well for his agency because it allows drivers to work on their own. He notes that the program is especially effective because concepts taught in the first portion of the program are integrated throughout. This assists users with long-term retention of the information.

One potential criticism of computerized training that it is impersonal. No teacher is present to answer questions or test understanding. However, these obstacles may be easily overcome. The Bi-State Transit Authority has come up with two solutions to put the human element back into computerized training. First, an instructor monitors the progress of trainees who use the program and is available to address questions. In addition, the agency conducts a face-to-

face assessment with newly-trained employees to determine the level of understanding derived from the computerized training process.

*The Professional* may be operated on a 486DX2/66 personal computer with at least 8 MB of Ram and 60 MB of free disk space. The program will run under either Windows 3.1 or Windows 95. The monitor must have 640x460 resolution in order to fully support the visual component of the package. Additional technological requirements include a sound blaster, 4X CD-ROM and a key board and mouse. Knicker suggests that a high quality sound blaster and video card will contribute to the enjoyable use of the program. If you are unfamiliar with any of this computer jargon, Renee Haider, at NTI, will be glad to translate these requirements before you purchase the software. She can be reached at (732) 932-1700 ext. 23.

Technological advancement is inevitable and should be embraced. If your agency is reconsidering the way training is provided to drivers, *The Professional* might be the solution you are seeking.

### Source

"CD-ROM Training Program Meets Needs of Both Large and Small Agencies," *NTI Transitions*, National Transit Institute.

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