

## New Computers Help Speed Information to Metro Patrons

(Feb. 20) Metro riders who call 1-800-COMMUTE are getting information much more quickly these days, thanks to the new faster and smarter computers now in use by Customer Information agents.

With the new computers, Customer Information agents are able to answer calls sooner and provide callers with detailed itineraries faster, says Tom Longsdon, manager, Metro Information.

The average time a patron waits to speak with an agent has dropped from about five-and-a-half minutes a year ago to just over two minutes today. This also has made life more pleasant for both patrons and agents.

"Clearly, the customers are happier when they reach us because they haven't been waiting as long," Longsdon says.

More responsive computers also have trimmed 35 second off the length of an average call. That's a savings of 68 staff hours per day, given the 7,000 daily calls coming in to Customer Information.

"This enables us to handle more incoming calls with the same number of agents," notes Longsdon.

### Retrieve information faster

The new computers retrieve information faster from the main frame. They also can store up to 10 itineraries at a time, allowing an agent to give a patron multiple travel options more quickly.

The effect of the new technology also has benefited the Customer Information agents, Longsdon says. "They now have some downtime between calls to take a deep breath. They almost always had calls in cue before."

Several additional enhancements should be added before the fiscal year ends in June. Customer Information computers will provide agents with regional maps on-screen. The computers also should have plot maps of Metro Rail and Metrolink stations, along with real-time transit system updates such as route detours.

Customer Information has 108 full-time and part-time agents and 86 work stations. A maximum of 70 agents are on staff during the day. Agents provide information on Metro lines, as well as for all municipal bus lines and Metrolink. The highest call volume is between 12:30 and 2:30 p.m.

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Faster computers speed up service in Customer Information.