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Press Release

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[NYC Transit](#)

IMMEDIATE

# MTA New York City Transit Introduces Trip Planner Voice

*Travel information now available over the phone whenever you need it*

MTA New York City Transit now offers a new dimension to the Trip Planner experience with Trip Planner Voice, enabling customers to access bus and subway travel itinerary information via the telephone 24/7 without the need to wait to speak to an agent. Using advanced interactive voice response (IVR) and speech recognition technology, Trip Planner Voice allows customers to access NYC Transit's Automated Travel Information Service (ATIS) to plan their trips.

"Trip Planner Voice is yet another example of how the MTA and its operating agencies seek out and employ the latest in technology to upgrade the customer experience," MTA Chairman H. Dale Hemmerdinger said. "Finding the easiest and fastest way to take a trip should not be a chore. We are constantly working to make the experience of using our subway and bus system as easy as possible and this new element that we have just added to Trip Planner goes a long way towards achieving that goal," added Hemmerdinger.

Introduced three years ago, Trip Planner, NYC Transit's award winning on-line itinerary service, already makes it easier for bus and subway customers to access travel directions to unfamiliar destinations. Available on-line at [www.tripplanner.mta.info](http://www.tripplanner.mta.info), Trip Planner is a full-featured, itinerary planner incorporating geographic and transit data to provide bus and subway customers with the best and most accurate directions, fare information, walking distances and scheduled connections to and from other transit modes and transfers. In April 2009, an average of 18,045 customers used Trip Planner daily, up from 6,640 in 2008, a 172% increase.

On average, 4,560 customers call the Travel Information Center (TIC) daily. By adding a Voice component to Trip Planner, NYC Transit is aiming to reduce the wait time customers experience on TIC phone lines while providing customers with the ability to access travel information via the phone at their convenience. "This is another means by which we are improving customer service and helping to satisfy requests for information," said Paul Fleuranges, Vice President for Corporate Communications. "Trip Planner Voice is a big step forward in the effort to help give our customers easy access to information that will help them travel to unfamiliar destinations throughout the five boroughs."

Trip Planner Voice is a combination of three separate but compatible technology solutions – speech recognition functionality provided by Nuance Communications and route and schedule data retrieval through an interface to the traveler information solution provided by Trapeze Group. Aspect, a unified communications (UC) solutions provider, supplied the capabilities to link these first two systems together and create the logic behind the interaction. With the three solutions working together in the background, the voice capability allows callers to the Travel Information Center (TIC) to speak their requests around travel origin and destination directions by address, intersection or landmark using bus, subway or Staten Island Railway schedule information.

The Trapeze traveler information software provides the route and schedule data to Trip Planner, Trip Planner Voice as well as the software used by the TIC customer service agents. This ensures that regardless of the method used by our customers to get their information, the response is consistent and accurate. Trip Planner Voice was released in a Beta version in January 2009. Since then, 62,877 customers have used the service with the number of daily customers that use the service increasing from 366 to 741. "Trip Planner Voice is still very much a work in progress," said Fred Benjamin, Assistant Vice President for Customer Services. "Since we launched, we have worked with our vendors to make adjustments in the program to respond to caller requests and comments. It's something we'll be doing over the next few months as we work to ensure that Trip Planner Voice is as customer-friendly as possible."

Trip Planner Voice is easy to use and accessible through the main travel information number, 718-330-1234. Getting accurate travel directions is as easy as following the prompts. "The Trip Planner Voice system acts as a virtual customer service agent," said Greg Bullock, Senior Director of Systems Administration for Customer Services. "By taking advantage of the efficiencies this technology provides, we're able to extend the number of hours callers can obtain travel plans while simultaneously providing our agents with the time to interact with customers that have complex requests that require more attention."

Trip Planner and now Trip Planner Voice provide customers with a variety of search options, including service in the area and route schedule information. In addition, customers are offered the most reliable and convenient access to planned service changes. Up to 96 customers can use the customized IVR simultaneously, 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Trip Planner Voice is currently available in English only, but a Spanish version is currently in development.

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### About Aspect

Aspect provides software and consulting services that turn the potential of unified communications into real business results across the enterprise and in

the contact center. Applying 35 years of insight and experience, Aspect helps more than two-thirds of the FORTUNE Global 100, as well as small and medium enterprises, power their business processes with communications. For more information, visit [www.aspect.com](http://www.aspect.com).

About Nuance Communications, Inc.

Nuance is a leading provider of speech, imaging and interaction solutions for businesses and consumers around the world. Its technologies, applications and services make the user experience more compelling by transforming the way people interact with information and how they create, share and use documents. Every day, millions of users and thousands of businesses experience Nuance's proven applications and professional services. For more information, please visit: [www.nuance.com](http://www.nuance.com).

About Trapeze Group

Trapeze group delivers solutions that consider the full 360 degrees of passenger transport. Whether addressing the needs of a single department, an entire organization, or the community, Trapeze provides some of the most advanced software, intelligent transportation systems (ITS) and mobile technologies in the industry. Hundreds of government and commercial organizations across North America, Europe and Asia Pacific have turned to Trapeze to realize efficiencies, enhance the quality and scope of their services, and safely transport more people with less cost. Visit [www.trapezegrup.com](http://www.trapezegrup.com).