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Press Release

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[NYC Transit](#)

IMMEDIATE

MTA New York City Transit Uses Web to Help Reconnect Riders with Their Lost Items

Using the internet as a central tool, MTA New York City Transit has streamlined and modernized the way it attempts to reunite bus and subway customers with their lost property. Finally, riders have access to an on-line system they can use to inquire about their lost items and receive an e-mailed response.

Retrieving a valued item that has been left behind on a bus or in the subway has long been a taxing and time-consuming endeavor, requiring multiple telephone calls or visits to the Lost Property Unit seeking information about such items. The new system allows customers to use their computers to quickly inquire about their property through the MTA website.

"The modernization of NYC Transit's Lost Property Unit is another example of the MTA making customers our top priority," said MTA Executive Director and CEO Elliot G. Sander. "We have turned this into a first class, customer-friendly Lost and Found operation that will help reunite our customers with their lost belongings as quickly and conveniently as possible."

"The new on-line presence for the Lost Property Unit really brings this important function into the 21st century," said NYC Transit President Howard H. Roberts, Jr. "Over the years, NYC Transit's Lost Property Unit has been the last stop for all things left on subway trains, in stations and buses. The staff has facilitated the recovery by our customers of thousands of lost items large and small but it has been done pretty much the same way it was when the system was opened more than a century ago. The modernization of the Lost Property Unit will make the entire operation more convenient for customers and more efficient for our employees."

The easy-to-use features of the new program include a handy drop-down menu for the selection of date, subway line and station. There is also a drop-down menu for a description of the item, including the color, brand name, size, etc. Additionally, customers can write a text description of their lost item. After the inquiry is entered, the system will inform the customer if a possible match has been logged in. Customers inquiring about their lost property will receive a reference number and a notification through email if there is a possible match based on the lost information provided. Using that same reference number, customers will be able to make follow up inquiries at their convenience by entering that number in the program's tracking system.

Aside from making it easier for riders to find their lost items, the new system will also benefit employees by lessening the time they must spend on the telephone fielding questions. The new computer-based data system also boosts efficiency by helping employees keep track of the unit's vast inventory of lost items. In 2008, 19,000 lost items were logged into the unit's database, of which 42% was claimed. We expect that this new system will help reunite even more owners with their lost items.

The system was created completely in-house by the Internet Technologies Group of NYC Transit's Technology & Information Services Division. "Using the power of the latest Web and database technologies, customers will find the web/Kiosk site very user friendly, and the process for matching, reporting and retrieving their property more accessible," said Sohaib Mallick, Senior Director of Applications/Internet Technologies, Technology and Information Services, NYC Transit.

For customers who do visit the Lost Property Unit, a computer kiosk has been installed at the office, located on the lower mezzanine level of the 34th Street Station on the Eighth Avenue Line. Using the kiosk, customers can access all of the same information as they can from any computer, and if their MP3 device or wallet has been turned in, they can retrieve it at the same time. The Lost Property Office's hours are: Monday, Tuesday and Friday from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. and on Wednesday and Thursday from 11 a.m. to 7 p.m.