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Press Release

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IMMEDIATE

MTA Metro-North Railroad To Test Smartphone Ticketing This Summer

Images on screens of iPhones, Androids and Blackberries Offer New Options

MTA Metro-North Railroad, working with transit mobile ticketing specialists Masabi US Ltd., will begin testing a smartphone app that will let people buy their train tickets anywhere, anytime and never have to hold a piece of paper.

This technology will allow customers to use today's phones to quickly and securely buy and display electronic tickets thereby avoiding queues at ticket machines or having to use cash on-board trains.

"We are as excited to begin testing the next generation ticket selling technology as we were when we introduced ticket vending machines a quarter of a century ago," said Metro-North President Howard Permut. "Our customers adapted quickly to TVMs and the machines became the preferred way to buy tickets. The latest test is intended to ensure that the newest technology will be equally easy to use, as well as secure and reliable."

During the pilot, railroad employees will act as users and will be able to download the free app to their iPhone, Android or Blackberry phones. Through the app, these users can buy any type of ticket, one-way, round trip, 10-trip, monthly etc., with any origin and destination using their credit or debit cards to make the purchase.

The time and date stamped electronic ticket shows up on the purchaser's phone screen as a secure image that a conductor can validate visually. The electronic ticket also shows as a bar code that can be scanned by a conductor's hand held device to verify that the barcode is valid.

"Smartphones have the potential to transform the public transit systems across the United States. Passengers will be able to quickly and easily find, buy and display tickets on their phones wherever they are without having to worry about carrying cash or waiting in line, thereby providing a better commuter experience," said Giacomo Biggiero, Director of Masabi US Ltd. "We're delighted to be working with the MTA."

Next month, railroad staff will begin testing the mobile ticketing technology including a time measurement study to compare the new method to current on-board ticket selling, collection and inspection. Efficacy and anti-fraud measures also will be tested. If successful, Metro-North will seek to expand the program to its customers.

Masabi US Ltd also is working with Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority (MBTA) to introduce smartphone rail ticketing system this fall. Masabi's technology also supports the future move to contactless "near-field communications" technology when these handsets become more widely available, allowing tickets to be checked or gates opened by simply tapping a compatible device against a reader.

The company's technology also is used by 13 of the UK's transit agencies, including Virgin Trains, Cross Country Trains, Chiltern Railways and thetrainline.com. For more information see www.masabi.com/us