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Press Release

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LIRR

IMMEDIATE

The Service at Penn Station Ticket Windows Just Got Better

New Automated Queuing System Speeds Up the Process of Buying LIRR Tickets

Purchasing Long Island Rail Road tickets at Penn Station just became a little easier with the debut of an automated queuing system that directs customers to the window staffed by next available ticket clerk.

The new system just recently became operational and immediately proved its value, speeding up the sales process and making clear to customers which of 12 ticket windows were open for business.

"Customers can definitely see a difference in waiting time as do our ticket clerks and both have welcomed the innovation," said LIRR President Helena Williams.

"It's terrific and stops confusion on the line and helps overall efficiency," said Ticket Clerk Joseph LaRosa, a Railroad employee for 12 years. "It helps customers realize that we have more windows open and it is more professional than yelling "Next!" into the microphone."

It was just about a year ago that the Railroad eliminated the sometimes chaotic window-by-window ticket lines that had been the mode of operation at Penn Station for generations. After a test run proved successful, the LIRR adopted a queuing system similar to those found in banks.

But it was soon apparent to LIRR managers and ticket clerks that despite their best efforts precious minutes were still being lost as customers hesitated while trying to find the open window. They concluded a better signal system was needed and determined the new automated queuing system fit the bill.

Now, for customers on the central ticket line there can no longer be any doubt about finding the right window. When an agent becomes available, he or she sets off the signal that simultaneously lights up the window number, sounds a bell and prompts a recorded voice that directs the customer to their counter. When there is no clerk working at a window, the screen clearly displays the word "CLOSED."

Penn Station, of course, is the LIRR's busiest terminal with sales of 18,000 tickets on an average weekday, 4,500 sold by agents and the balance at ticket machines.

"We're always working on ways to improve customer service," said Williams. "Recent initiatives like real-time service alerts via the internet, better public address announcements, the introduction of quiet cars and our experiments with mobile ticketing have all been embraced by the riding public. In the months ahead, we plan to keep the new ideas coming."



New Queuing System in Penn Station



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