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Press Release

November 16, 2020

Metro-North

IMMEDIATE

MTA Unveils New Capacity Tracking and Real-Time Location Features in Metro-North TrainTime App

App Now Provides Real-Time Information to Let Customers Maximize Social Distancing and to See Current Location of Approaching Trains

[View Video of App Demonstration](#)

[See Photos of App Demonstration](#)

MTA Metro-North Railroad President Catherine Rinaldi today unveiled major new features to the Metro-North TrainTime app, including one that lets customers track in real time the amount of space available on each car of an approaching train. The feature is designed to help customers keep appropriate social distance during the COVID-19 pandemic. Riders can also easily track the location of trains before and after arriving at their origin station right within the app.

The enhancements to the app being announced today result from the talent and creativity of in-house staff members at Metro-North, the Metropolitan Transportation Authority, and the Long Island Rail Road. In July, Metro-North sponsored a [hackathon](#) attended by teams of tech experts who are continuing to work with the MTA and Metro-North to further refine and enhance the app.

"The capacity-tracking update to the Metro-North TrainTime app provides another level of confidence for Metro-North riders as they come back to the system," **Rinaldi said**. "The more information we can provide to help customers practice social distancing once they are on board, the better we can provide a safer and more pleasant ride for our customers."

"The MTA is continually exploring ways to provide better information and real-time data to our customers during the pandemic so they can feel safer using our system," **said Mark Dowd, MTA Chief Innovation Officer**. "This new feature demonstrates the innovative solutions we are implementing on our railroads."

"The new features are a result of the combined efforts of Chief of MTA IT Enterprise Applications Carolyn Ortega and the rest of our in-house team, plus the new tech talent who met the challenge to inform Metro-North riders about their commutes in real-time," **said MTA Chief Technology Officer Raf Portnoy**. "These app improvements are important in the current climate, but will also serve the public post-COVID."

"We are thrilled about the newly updated Metro-North TrainTime app. Making as much information available to riders as possible is crucial in making them feel safer and more comfortable on the railroad - especially during the COVID-19 era," **said Randy Glucksman, MTA Board member and Chair of the Metro-North Railroad Commuter Council**. "Such ongoing and impressive updates provide commuters with the technology they need to improve their confidence in their trip and in the system. We're looking forward to the ongoing development and partnership with NJ Transit so that West-of-Hudson riders will similarly benefit."

"Knowing how crowded your train is before you board is a great benefit for Metro-North riders. The information the upgraded TrainTime app provides is particularly significant as we seek to be as socially distant as possible during the COVID crisis, but it will continue to help riders plan their lives and commutes into the future," **said Lisa Daglian, Executive Director of the Permanent Citizens Advisory Committee to the MTA**. "We appreciate the steps Metro-North is taking to make riders feel as safe and comfortable as possible during these challenging times and thank their team for continuing to come up with innovative solutions to unconventional problems."

"In the Westchester suburbs, so many households have at least one person who commutes to New York City," **said Assemblywoman Amy Paulin, Chairperson, Committee on Corporations, Authorities and Commissions**. "While people have slowly begun to make that commute again, many are still avoiding the train because they are worried about crowds. The capacity-tracking update to the Metro-North TrainTime app will alleviate that concern and help make people feel safe taking the train again."

Customers who already have the app installed will receive an automatic update with the new feature, and will be able to do so on a new, more detailed interface. An additional feature of the app provides customers with push notifications for track assignments at Grand Central Terminal allowing riders to spread out throughout the station complexes rather than standing in immediate proximity to departure boards.

The capacity tracking feature is being rolled out by car fleet. It is currently available for trains operating on the electric portions of the Harlem Line and Hudson Line. These trains are composed of M7 railcars. The feature is in development for the M8 car fleet that provides service on the New Haven Line, and for Metro-North's diesel fleet.

Updates such as the MTA eTix one-tap connection was added in September, streamlining ticket purchasing for customers who used the [MTA eTix](#) app to buy their mobile tickets in advance of travel. Forty percent of all tickets purchased by Metro-North customers are acquired via eTix. Tickets purchased

using a mobile device cost the same as those purchased at a ticket machine. Customers can pay with Visa, MasterCard, Discover and American Express or use digital wallets like Apple Pay and Master Pass.

Since its inception in 2013, the free mobile app, which is available on [Google Play](#) and [the AppStore](#), has provided real-time status and schedule information to customers via their smartphones, along with destination, track assignment and real-time position of the next 12 trains at a given station. Features also include service alerts, fare information, ADA accessibility, parking availability and connecting services. The app is also translated into six languages -- English, Spanish, Chinese, Yiddish, Portuguese and Italian.

Highlights of the Metro-North TrainTime app include:

- New, refreshed interface with detailed results
- Real-time capacity tracking to enhance social distancing
- Real-time capacity tracking on station signage 5 minutes prior to train arrival
- Real-time train location updated every three seconds
- Closed car notifications
- Ability to bookmark favorite trips
- Easier access to eTix
- Six available languages -- English, Spanish, Chinese, Yiddish, Portuguese and Italian

The hackathon was the first sponsored by the MTA in six years. Previous MTA-sponsored AppQuest challenges in 2012, 2013 and 2014 assisted in the development of other apps to help MTA customers navigate the system.

For more information about the Metro-North TrainTime app, visit <http://web.mta.info/mnr/html/traintimeapp.htm>