absences, assigning open work, managing the extraboard and the volunteer lists placed heavy demands on dispatchers. Employees sometimes found it challenging to access the information required to make on-the-spot decisions. For example, it was not easy to get a complete picture when looking for information about operators, such as their absence records, their hours worked and their seniority.

Performing the mark up (i.e. bidding for work assignments) was another manual, paper-based process that left itself open to human error. Furthermore, it was difficult to precisely track employee hours. Management was looking for a new system that would make employees more accountable for the hours they submitted and help them to control operator costs.

**GOALS**

Capital Metro determined that by updating their systems and computer automating some key tasks they could better manage their operations and ultimately deliver better service to the public.

Capital Metro wanted to provide dispatchers and management with better information for better decision making. As Gary McCray, dispatch coordinator at Capital Metro explained, “We wanted a system that would show dispatchers everything they needed to know on a given day. We also wanted to be able to tell dispatchers right away if they were violating a rule by assigning an operator to a piece of work.”

The transit authority sought to automate many of the manual processes associated with the mark up, daily dispatch and timekeeping to improve efficiency and reduce the potential for human error. They also wanted to store and manage data for easy retrieval, analysis and reporting purposes.
**SOLUTION**

In 1999, Capital Metro selected Trapeze to implement an operations management solution that included modules for work selection, daily dispatch activities, long-term work planning, timekeeping and vehicle management.

When asked why the transit authority chose Trapeze, Mr. McCray mentioned past success working with Trapeze to implement a para-transit scheduling system.

He also focused on the competitiveness of the Trapeze offering. “Trapeze had a lot to offer compared to the other systems we demosed,” said Mr. McCray. “The Trapeze solution was user friendly and included most of the features that we were specifically looking for to provide more efficient service to our customers.”

Trapeze integrated the operations management solution with its fixed route scheduling software, which reduced data redundancy and simplified the process of managing timetable, block and runcut data.

In 2004 Capital Metro extended the system with remote sign-in terminals that enabled employees to sign in with a simple swipe of their employee card.

**RESULTS**

The Trapeze system enabled Capital Metro to improve the availability of operational information to dispatchers and enable them to become more efficient.

According to Mr. McCray, the bidding module makes it easier to perform many tasks associated with the mark up, including assigning and deleting runs, vacation days and extra work. It prevents employees from making common mistakes and alerts them when an operator is not qualified to operate a vehicle or route.

He is equally enthusiastic about the Daily Activities module. “In addition to helping you make better decisions on the fly, it allows you to call up historical information to find out what happened on any given day last year. This is very useful when doing research connected with a grievance, for example.”

“Trapeze has provided Capital Metro with a system that enables us to work more efficiently and also to reduce man hours. Trapeze can enhance any transportation authority’s daily activities.”

**BOTTOM LINE**

Mr. McCray sums up the benefits of the Trapeze operations management solution thus: “Trapeze has provided Capital Metro with a system that enables us to work more efficiently and also to reduce man hours. Trapeze can enhance any transportation authority’s daily activities.”