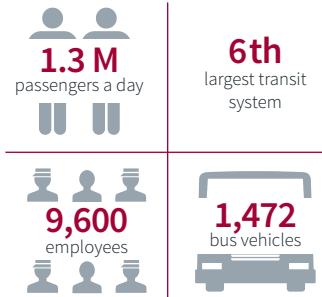




ELIMINATING THE PAPER PROCESS HAS TRANSFORMED SEPTA SCHEDULING AND OPERATIONS

Southeastern Pennsylvania Transportation Authority



Industry

Fixed Route

Products

OPS
Sign-In Terminal

SEPTA'S Achievement



Before
Manually update
bidding

After
Automatically
bid for shifts



Southeastern Pennsylvania Transportation Authority has traded its manual employee sign-in and other operations for seamless schedule management and improved service for riders.

Background: John Reynolds, Senior Director of Transportation at Southeastern Pennsylvania Transportation Authority (SEPTA), has been with the agency for 30 years. He has seen SEPTA, which serves Philadelphia and surrounding counties, advance from antiquated radios on buses to state-of-the-art systems with digital readouts and GPS that track on-time performance. The agency has been steadily progressive; but like many agencies, there were still many time-consuming manual tasks prone to human error and costly inefficiencies. With expanding bus, rail, and subway service that carries more than a million passengers a day, Reynolds needed to retire pen and paper documentation across the board, and make the move to automated workforce management.

Challenges: A transit agency can't run without its operators, so keeping track of when they report in for work, when they call in sick, unexpected schedule changes, and so on, is key to smooth performance and reliable service for riders. SEPTA was using a manual sign-in system where some operators were coming in earlier than scheduled for work and expecting to be paid for the additional time.

Communication with drivers was also an issue. The agency was using notes on paper to message operators about work matters, which left the door wide open for lost or misplaced notes, and no way of knowing whether the operators received the messages.

"You either put something on the transit run, or put a note where they report to the dispatcher," Reynolds explained. "Then you have to hope that the operator sees the notice."

If an operator called in sick, dispatchers would have to remember to manually update the sick call and open the work — instead of it doing so automatically.

"We want to make sure operators experience the change as seamless. We're anticipating even more efficiencies — absolutely — as we implement."

*John Reynolds,
Senior Director of Transportation, SEPTA*

"We're looking to save audit time because we have a lot of manual operations to record attendance deviation, in two separate systems, and then payroll, so we need to streamline those," Reynolds said.

Solutions: SEPTA recently implemented Sign-In Terminal, a module part of their Trapeze OPS workforce management solution. Now, all operators sign in by swiping a magnetic strip card instead of a dispatcher using a check-off sheet. The tool also allows managers to send their employees messages, so when they sign in, they immediately will see "manager wants to talk to you about xyz" on the confirmed sign-in slip that prints out.

When an operator is sick or doesn't sign in for the shift, Trapeze OPS automatically opens up that work so others can auto-bid for the shift. This eliminates the need to call and find replacements, saving dispatchers a significant amount of time and effort, while providing efficient tracking of who is on the job and where.

Results: Now, managing attendance is a proactive process. Sign-In Terminal creates an instant record when operators swipe in, employees are alerted to communication notes, and sign-in syncs with automated scheduling. "Our drivers have been receptive," Reynolds said, which is a big win when you introduce new technology. "It was an adjustment. We had to get operators' passes all checked to make sure the magnetic strips worked, coordinating with IT, and service planning. But it's been a big benefit."