Minimizing No-Shows and Late Cancellations

Learning Objectives

At the end of this lesson you will be able to:

- Identify factors leading to no-shows/ late cancellations
- Explain how this impacts a transit agency cost
- Identify policies and procedures to manage no shows and late cancellations
- Calculate potential productivity increases or cost saving

Activity: Determine Factors Influenced by the Transit Agency or Patron

DRIVING FACTORS

No-Shows and Late Cancellations

- Why do they occur?
- What are the driving factors?
- What impacts do no-shows have on service?
- How can you prevent no-shows?
- Why does it matter?

- Please list!

Examples of Driving Factors

Transit Agency Influenced	Patron Influenced	
Preventable	**Preventable**	**Unpreventable**
Late pullout	Decided not to go	Ill or Emergency
Late time	Not ready	Attendant did not show
Late lost	Patron gave incorrect trip information	Mobility aide failure
Dispatcher did not record cancellation or remaining trips	Subscription trip not canceled on holiday	Transportation connection was late
Dispatcher transmitted incorrect information		
Reservation recorded incorrect information		
Dispatcher/ driver mistakenly canceled wrong trip		
Patron could not get through telephone line		

"THE SECRET OF CHANGE IS TO FOCUS ALL OF YOUR ENERGY, NOT ON FIGHTING THE OLD, BUT ON BUILDING THE NEW."

— SOCRATES

WHY MANAGING NO-SHOWS AND LATE CANCELLATIONS MATTER

Impact on Productivity and Cost

1. Dispatcher and driver spend time trying to find the patron, causing the driver to run late and decreasing the number of passengers the vehicle carries in the day
2. Scheduling of another pick up to transport the patron who initially no-showed

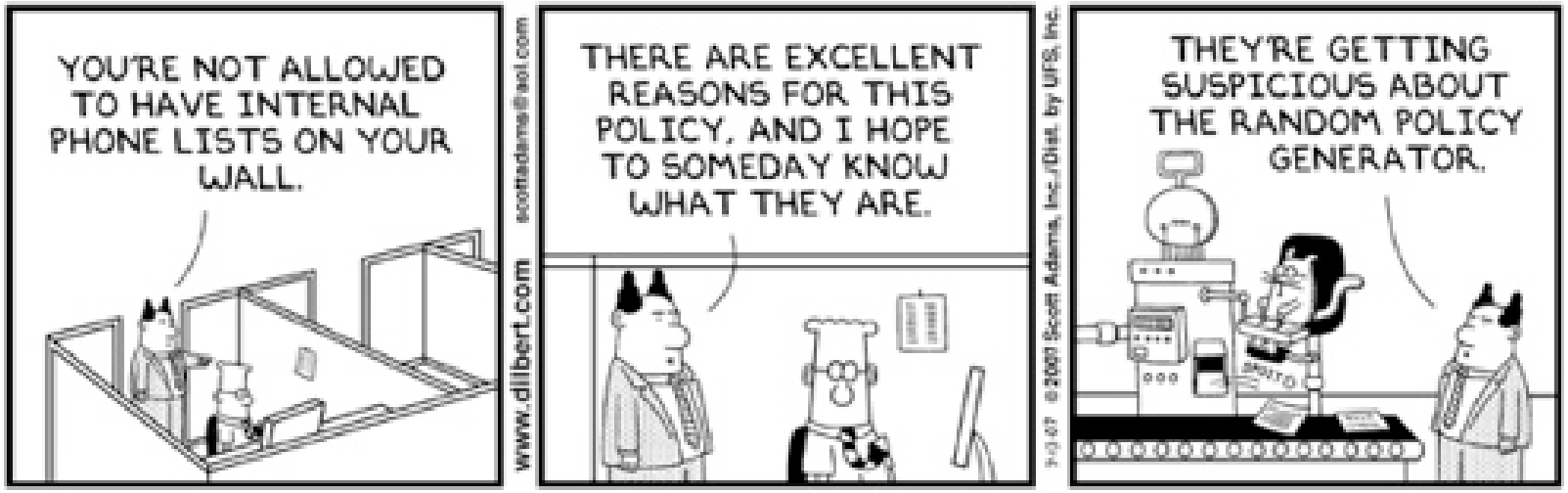
Results in: Decrease in passengers carried per hour of service, decline in on-time performance, impact to other patrons, and increase in the cost per passenger

Agencies that implemented and enforced written no-show and late-cancellation policies…

decreased no-show rates between 1 percent and 10 percent annually…

significantly improving productivity and service quality.

TCRP Report 124



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NO-SHOW AND LATE CANCELLATION POLICIES

Policy - Key Items to Include

- Define no-shows and late cancellations
- Determine a value for “the number of excessive events” when consequences apply
  - Can you give examples?
- Establish penalties for consumers with excessive patterns of no-shows and late cancellations
  - Can you give examples?

Policy Specific Considerations

- Specify threshold before pick-up consumer must call to cancel or be labeled a “late cancellation”
- Let patron know that agency is tracking no-shows and late cancellations
- Set threshold for the number of allowable no-shows and late cancellations
- Call before infractions reach the penalty threshold to remind of the policy
- Establish progressive disciplinary policy for repeat offenders

Other Policy Considerations to Encourage On-Time Behavior

- Fine or charge for no-shows/late cancellations
- Rewarding responsible patrons with a free trip or other reward
- Require patrons with a history of no-shows or late cancellations to confirm their trips with dispatch
- Contact patrons with problematic history a day prior to a trip to confirm

No One Right Answer

Consumer Behavior	Include Suspensions	Include Fines	No Fines or Suspensions
Excessive No-Shows	90.2%	20.3%	7.3%
Excessive Late Cancellations	56.2%	13.2%	40.5%

TCRP Synthesis 60

NO-SHOW AND LATE CANCELLATION PROGRAM PROCEDURES

What to Include in a Program

- Realistic expectations
- Consistently applied and monitored
- Means to cancel far in advance
- Good documentation
- Effective computer programs
- System to send letters
- Effective determination of fault
- Public outreach for input and communication

Driver Procedures

- Direct drivers to:
  - Contact dispatch to confirm trip information
  - Await instruction
  - Attempt contact with patron (if appropriate)
  - Confirm the no-show before proceeding (or wait until specified time)

Dispatcher/Reservationist Procedures

- Record information and repeat back
- Make same-day changes immediately
- Make future changes when convenient
- Trip-change form to record later changes
- Form to record changes to standing order trips
- If paper manifest, require drivers to use a form to record trip changes/added trips
- Train dispatchers to dispense trip information in a standard format

Dispatch Procedures (When No-Show Occurs)

- Direct dispatchers to:
  - Attempt to contact patron to verify a return trip for that day
  - Call patrons who no-show on first trip of the day to determine if long-term issue
  - Cancel remaining trips for the day (or by policy)
  - Record circumstances using standardized form

Tracking/Monitoring Procedures

- Direct staff tracking/managing no-shows to:
  - Determine whether the patron was at fault
  - Investigate locations causing no-shows and be proactive in canceling trips in advance (workshop holidays)
  - Mail postcards or letters to consumers advising them of the apparent no-show
  - Maintain record of circumstances of the event, recording arrival time, contact attempt, departure time

Example Analysis

Category: Range of Weekly Trips Scheduled per Patron	Total No. of Patrons	Total No. of Trips Scheduled	Avg. No. of Trips Scheduled per Patron	Category No-Show Rate
10 Trips or More	20	259	13.0	9%
5 to 9 Trips	51	325	6.4	11%
3 to 4 Trips	42	151	3.6	18%
1 to 2 Trips	68	118	1.7	18%
Total	181	853	4.7	12%
No. of Patrons w/ at least one No-Show	58			
% of Patrons w/ at least one No-Show	32%			

http://recombo.com/wp-content/uploads/2013/02/photodune-4107448-reduce-costs-xs.jpg

POTENTIAL COST SAVINGS

Decreased No-Shows to Increase Productivity

	Current Service	Service with Reduction in No-Shows
Scheduled Passenger Trips	45,455	45,455
Actual Passenger Trips	40,000	42,728
No-Shows	**5,455**	**2,728**
No-Show Rate	**12%**	**6%**
Revenue Hours	20,000	20,000
Passengers per Hour	2.00	2.14
Operating Cost	$1,000,000	$1,000,000
Cost per Passenger Trip	**$25.00**	**$23.40**

Decreased No-Shows to Reduce Service

	Transit Agency
No-Show Reduction	**2,728**
Passengers per Hour	2.00
Estimated Revenue Hour Reduction	1,364
Cost per Hour	$50.00
Estimated Savings	$68,200

Review

- What factors lead to no-shows/late cancellations?
- How do no-shows impact a transit agency's cost?
- What are no-show incentives and disincentives?
- Share examples of managing no-shows.
- How much can you save managing no-shows?

Review: Learning Objectives

Now that we are at the end of this lesson, you should be able to:

- Identify factors leading to no-shows/ late cancellations
- Explain how this impacts a transit agency's cost
- Identify policies and procedures for managing
- Calculate potential productivity increases or cost saving

Remember, fill out the session review form.
We need to know how we can improve, too!

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QUESTIONS? COMMENTS?