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GLOBE TICKET COMPANY

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THE DANGER OF OVER-SIMPLIFICATION

In our industrial structure, particularly in its recording and control functions the need for simplification is ever present. We must bear in mind though that complexity itself is not bad. Sophisticated instrumentation in our modern world of weapons and industrial automated tools is complex and should of necessity be so. It is complexity out of proportion to the purpose



to be served that is bad. Design may err on the side of complexity, but we cannot lose sight of the fact that design or correction may also err on the other side, on the side of simplification. That can apply to the modern transit vehicle as well as the devices and methods that make it a tool of profitable operation.

"OVER-SIMPLIFICATION"

In recent years, in the search for economies in opera-

tion, a certain amount of attention has been given to printed forms and their use, among them transfers. This is desirable, and we have done our best in assisting transit companies to realize economies in that direction.

A while ago we took a good look at a large number of the transfer systems serving larger and medium size properties. Frankly that has made us a bit fearful that, perhaps, the all too commendable desire to economize may have caused some of us to end up with a transfer set-up that is no longer the effective system of transfer ride control which it is supposed to be and which, as a result has not become a source of economies but of additional cost through loss of fares.

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With the changes that have occurred over the years in the types of vehicles used, in the number of people employed on them and in the methods and principles of operation, there have also been corresponding changes in the methods of fare collection and fare control. Surely no sizable property could afford to operate with 1910 vintage vehicles, even though those vehicles could be bought at a great saving. Yet we know that considerations of economy may tempt properties to operate with a system of transfer control designed for vehicles, operation and traffic of that ancient vintage. There is the incipient danger that, while working toward a goal of more and more economical operation, and who would deny its good sense and reason, one could easily overlook the goal and purpose of a matter of such seemingly small import as

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transfers. Yet when it is remembered that transfer rides may easily represent one fourth of all rides granted it is easy to see that, with such a large portion of the daily volume controlled by the transfer system, this system can be the source of substantial losses in legitimate fares, if not set up properly and carried out with earnest regard for satisfactory results.

A practical transfer system of course consists not only of the identification check that we have all become accustomed to call a "transfer" but, and this is the more important part, of the methods, the training and the checking that make the system work and which insure as much as possible that the passenger to whom this identification check was issued uses it as intended and that no other person does so. Furthermore that such checks are issued as intended and recognized and honored as intended. That they are "issued as intended" is an important point. Just think of the difference in a transfer form on which date and line for instance are preindicated as against the form that seems like a blank check, on which the driver or anyone else who may have contrived to obtain single or quantities of transfers can punch in whatever date, time and possibly issuing line suits his purpose.

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BUSSES WITHOUT TIRES?

Assuming that, by strict slashing without regard for effectiveness of the system, one could save twenty cents per thousand transfers on their cost, yet, in the process, one might easily have crippled the system to a point where, for every one thousand transfers issued, not only one but a number of additional cash fares would be lost because of transfer abuse now more easily possible. The twenty cents saved is equivalent to one average fare. How many cash fares can you lose for each thousand transfers, in order to save that twenty cents?



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There is danger in over-simplification, meaning in simplification out of harmony with the end purpose. There are specific features in each transfer system, as it is tailored to the needs of an individual company, that are the ground and basis for its effectiveness. We are going to attempt, in the next several issues, to describe as clearly as we can the principles and features that make up effective systems for properties of various size. There have been a good many developments during the last several years in various features, in which you will be interested, and we feel that you will gain by going over these and check the points brought out against your own experience. No doubt you will want to make these issues available to those who concern themselves with matters related to your transfer handling and control. Write us please if you would like to have the issues go to others in your organization now not receiving them.

The issues will come out as a series. We would advise you to keep them, so that, at the termination of the series, you can have them stapled, bound or kept in a loose leaf binder for reference.

The first issue of the series will appear in about a month.



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