

# A Texas city's transit system needed an overhaul. Houston, we have a solution.

We gave the nation's fourth-largest city one of the world's first – and most innovative – online ticket purchasing and reloading services.



# For one of the nation's most extensive transit networks, we paved the way to an innovative, 100 percent contactless ticketing solution.

## The Challenge

With 1,300 buses and over 120 routes, the transit network in Houston, Texas, is one of the most extensive in the U.S. The County transit authority planned a massive, rapid transition to contactless ticketing. The goal: 70 percent of users purchasing "Q-card" season tickets or "Metro Money" disposable tickets within the first year.

In addition to improving traffic and guaranteeing safer fare collection, this new system uses less cash, reducing the corresponding investment and maintenance costs of onboard fare boxes.

## The Solution

We developed the entire solution and supplied all equipment: validators, ticket vending machines and a unique onboard reloading terminal. We also conducted marketing operations and set up a user help service.

The system is used to transmit onboard ticketing data to each bus depot. Information from the validators is combined with operating data and sent via Wi-Fi to the depot's automatic vehicle monitoring system. This is connected to an ACS hub that exchanges ticketing data between the central system and the equipment.

Houston's contactless ticket users benefit from one of the world's first online reloading services. The application – connected to a banking data protection center – communicates with the central ticketing server, which then sends reloading data to the validators. The employer program is called "Ride Sponsors" and employees use the autoload feature to reload their cards. Some 900 of Houston's buses are equipped with a Bus Banknote Reloading device, or BBR. The device includes a contactless ticket reader, banknote acceptor and LCD screen. Customers simply insert a banknote and present their card.

The Metropolitan Transit Authority of Harris County (MTAHC) opted for Mifare Ultralight technology for its disposable tickets. Five million precoded cards were distributed to retailers and ticket offices, and one million units were installed in the ticket vending machines.

## The Results

The MTAHC has deployed 100 percent contactless ticketing throughout the city's bus and light rail transit networks. In short, this solution offers one of the world's first – and most innovative – online purchasing and reloading services.

You can learn more about us at [www.acs-inc.com](http://www.acs-inc.com).



**Sector:** State and Local Government

**Solution:** Contactless ticketing solution and equipment

**Client:** The Metropolitan Transit Authority of Harris County (MTAHC)

**Challenge:** Expensive bus network; constant demand for onboard data

**Results:** 100 percent contactless ticketing; more than six million fare cards reloading on the go

## The Bottom Line

In Houston, Texas, the Metropolitan Transit Authority of Harris County (MTAHC) manages one of the nation's most extensive transit networks. With more than 1,300 buses, 30,000 parking spaces in 25 park-and-ride facilities and six million cards in circulation, Houston needed seamless,

timely management of onboard data. Our innovative solution and equipment provided 100 percent contactless ticketing to address demand. And because tickets can be purchased and reloaded on the bus, riders stay on the move.