

Tech Tip Tuesday—December 9, 2014

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Zone rates – setting times

In addition to putting your rates your zone profiles, there is also a spot to put in the trip duration, travel time to the pickup (dwelling time), and travel time back from the drop off (block time).

When entering these in the zone to zone window, there is a separate place to put the rate and times for each direction.

For local trips, we generally recommend setting the dwelling and block to 0; however, for longer trips where there is significant travel time involved, we certainly recommend entering the travel time. This will make it more difficult for the dispatcher to schedule a trip for a chauffeur who is too far away to make the pickup.

In the following example, which shows a trip from the “Western Main Line” (a Philadelphia suburban area) to JFK Airport in NY, the actual trip time is shown to be 180 minutes. There is no dwelling time (since the pickup is considered local), but once the trip ends at JFK, a further 180 minutes is blocked off for the vehicle to make the trek back to the local service area.

WMAIN to JFK		JFK to WMAIN	
Rate / Time (Mins):	275 180	Rate / Time (Mins):	275 200
Distance (Miles):	0	Distance (Miles):	0
Dwelling:	0	Dwelling:	180
Block:	180	Block:	0
Override Hourly Rate:	0.00	Override Hourly Rate:	0.00
Driver Pay Rate:	0.00	Driver Pay Rate:	0.00
Driver Pct Of Std Gratuity:	0	Driver Pct Of Std Gratuity:	0
Max Passengers:	0	Addl Passenger Cost:	0

When you enter the Rate, the Time, and the Dwelling and Block times on the left portion of the box and click on the “Copy >>” button, it will copy the fields to the right side (but reverses the Dwelling and Block, since the trip is in the opposite direction).

Once copied, however, give careful thought to the time in the reverse direction, if it’s FROM an airport. Our recommendation is to add at least 15-20 minutes to this time. (In the example below, we added 20 minutes.)

The screenshot shows a software interface window titled "JFK to WMAIN". It contains two input fields. The first field is labeled "Rate / Time (Mins):" and has two values, "275" and "200", with "200" circled in red. The second field is labeled "Distance (Miles):" and has the value "0".

The reason for this is scheduling. If you have a client who schedules a pickup from his home or office at 3pm, the chances that the passenger gets into the car at or close to 3pm is fairly high.

However, if the client schedules the trip for a 3pm flight arrival, then the odds that the passenger is in the car at 3 is pretty slim—especially if you are using the Flightview integration that alerts you to changes in flight times. Flightview is reporting the plane arrival time (i.e. wheels down)...but depending on ground traffic, wind direction, gate location, it can take a non-trivial amount of time for the plane to actually get to the gate. Furthermore, even when the plane gets to the gate, and even if your client is one of those “Type-A” people who flies First Class and is first off the plane, it will still take him a few minutes to get to your waiting car, depending on how big the airport is and where you can pick him up.

By padding all trips from the airport with at least 15-20 minutes (you may want more or less), at least your drop-off estimate will be closer to reality...reducing the chance that your dispatcher will schedule the next trip a bit too tightly.

Another feature within the zone timing is the “Travel Ratio”. Since traffic patterns vary by time of day and time of week, you might want to allow extra time in a particular direction on a particular day of the week. For example, let’s suppose that, although the normal time to JFK is 180 minutes, when you leave on Mondays between 7 and 8am, it takes about 20% longer.

To have Livery Coach use the longer time, simply select the dropdown in the Monday 7A-8A slot, and change it to “1.2”. Now, when a new trip is entered from the Western Main Line to JFK with a pickup scheduled between 7am and 8am, the system will either schedule or offer to schedule the trip for 3 hours and 36 minutes (that is, 216 minutes, or 20% longer than the 180 standard).

Some important final notes:

- 1) This process is done when the trip is initially zoned. If you change the time of the pick up, for example, the system does not go back through and recalculate any of the times.
- 2) The process does not do any multiplication of the rate—this is for time only.
- 3) Whether the system prompts you to accept the zone times, or automatically uses them, is based on a setting in System Default Config, Default 2 tab. If you do not want to be prompted, make sure “Always Yes on ‘New Zone Transfer Time’ in Pickup/Dropoff Screen” is checked.

System Default Configuration

System Config | Company Info | Credit Card | Farm-In / Farm-Out | Special Program

Default 1 | **Default 2** | Group Invoice

- Display Incident Report (IN) Indicator with TripID in Dispatch Grid
- Change TripStatus to UnAssigned If No Driver or Vehicle
- Display all Vehicle Type Ordered Agreement
- Auto Show VehicleType Rates List on Hourly and No Rate Agreement
- Show Rate Agreement List At Payment Selection
- Do not store Payment Info as Contact for new Contact Profile
- Do not store Payment Info as Passenger for new Contact Profile
- Disable Reservation Pop-up Message Interval Setting
- Always Yes on 'New Zone Transfer Time' in Pickup/Dropoff Screen
- Set New Reservation Status To Pending
- Sales Rep Required On New Contact
- Sales Rep Required On Reservation