

EasyBus Frequently Asked Questions

General Questions

1. Who is EasyBus?

EasyBus was conceived out of necessity to efficiently manage the maintenance, driver, and field trip records for a school district in upstate New York. When the broad appeal of a suite of software products designed solely for the bus transportation industry became apparent, we built the business of EasyBus, Inc. Our business philosophy is that specialized software solutions applied with friendly support and service will produce a win-win scenario for every client we support.

2. What type of software solutions does EasyBus provide?

Since 1997 we have been providing solutions for the school bus, charter and motorcoach industries covering preventative maintenance, field trips, and driver training.

Our maintenance software is the easiest to use on the market and includes inventory capabilities, powerful reporting features, and real-time warnings.

Our trip software is highly flexible with configurations that make it a perfect fit for school districts, private charter companies, and motorcoach operators. It is the most comprehensive field trip software on the market, allowing for internet-based requesting and approval, driver rotation, invoicing, and much more.

Our driver training software can be customized to meet any state or Canadian Province's requirements, and is the only software that prints on a California T-01 card as well as all New York State 19A forms. Our software products can be purchased as a suite, or individually.

3. Do I need to purchase all EasyBus software together, or can I purchase the programs individually?

The programs can each be purchased separately. Depending on the unique needs of a given operation, sometimes certain areas of improvement have a far greater priority than others. It is easy to implement the other programs "down the road", since they all have a similar user interface. Pricing is not guaranteed after 30 days of purchase however, and pricing specials cannot be applied to future purchases when only one program is purchased during a special pricing campaign.

4. What types of clients is EasyBus software a good fit for?

Like all software companies, we strive to be the best fit for every client who honors us with their business. Nevertheless, we must acknowledge a particular success with operations making the transition from "pencil and paper" to software. In many cases the office staff has little or no prior experience with

computers. We know that there are people who are "taking the leap" into transportation management software because they know they have to, not because they are "computer people".

The reason for our success with "non-computer" people is threefold:

- i. Our software is designed to be visual and intuitive for people in the bus industry: Clicking the mouse on an oil change presents the user with all possible options: Add a new oil change, edit the current information, or delete the oil change. We do not bury items in menus or use terms that are not in common English.
- ii. All of our software programs are written to be scalable. It is not necessary to use all or even most of the features of any of our programs to start with. Use the features that make your day easier, and when you are ready to take the next step, our software is ready to accommodate you.
- iii. Our people. At EasyBus we find that many prospective clients want to know about pricing or software features, but what can easily get overlooked is the competence of our friendly technical support staff. Our dedicated staff operates under the credo "Train and help our clients the way YOU would like to be trained and helped." If you know an EasyBus client, then you have probably heard about our excellent personal support.

I wrote my own program with an old buddy 15 years ago and we've since parted ways so I have no way to upgrade it from DOS, but it does everything exactly the way I require. Is your program going to be as good a fit for us as the one I am replacing?

The flexibility of EasyBus software often makes us a surprisingly good replacement for a "home grown" program. EasyBus software is designed to be as user-customizable as possible. That being said, for those who spent years tailoring software to their individual needs, there may well be some features that are unique to your old system. Some of these we may be able to duplicate with custom updates (which are billed at an hourly rate).

In the end, we are confident that on balance EasyBus® software can offer advantages even over a system written by the user. Two considerable advantages include our partnerships with other vendors, and the input of our client base:

- o Increasingly, partnerships such as the one between EasyBus® and Zonar®, or even loose integrations such that EasyBus® shares with Quickbooks®, Acc-Pak®, Gasboy®, etc., are key to future productivity gains. These are rare in home-grown development scenarios.
- o Our software is continuously being improved as more than 400 different clients offer us their collective suggestions. We are likely to make improvements that you haven't thought of, but would none-the-less find helpful (Regular updates are included at no extra charge as part of the annual support agreement).

Our staff does not have much computer experience-- How long does it take to get EasyBus up and running?

No matter how easy we try to make our software, when asked “how long does it take to get this up and running?” We must answer that it depends on several factors:

- . What programs do you wish to implement?

Personnel tracking (Easy Driver) and vehicle maintenance (Easy Bus) are the easiest to implement and usually take only a few days to get off the ground. There is a wide variance in how different companies process trips, and so the amount of time that it takes to get EasyTrip™ “up and running” can vary greatly from operation to operation as well. Following are some of the criteria to consider which may lengthen the implementation timetable:

- i. Online Request Module: When implementing this module, how many buildings, requestors, approvers need to be loaded in to the system? How complex is the approval process that needs to be accounted for by the system? Is tight integration between activities and budget codes required? If so, is a list of these activities and budget-codes in electronic format easy to come by? Depending on the answers to these questions, implementing the online trip request module can take from 1 week to 1 month to implement.

In cases where there is a long implementation path, we would assume that there is a large campus (50,000 + students?) with a complex multi-tiered approval process and tight integration of activities and budget codes (so that when a user selects “Kellog High School Volleyball” the budget code is automatically selected). Look past this involved and lengthy setup process to the end result: All requestors in the district can easily request field trips that automatically are coded correctly, sent to the appropriate approver, and are guaranteed not to conflict with a “blackout time” as determined by the bus garage. The efficiency gains that follow this initial investment of time are substantial.

- ii. Custom Reports

It is not uncommon for clients to pay for custom reports for everything from price quotes to driver itineraries and invoices. Our experience is that this is not due to a lack of reporting on our end, (EasyTrip offers hundreds of reports to choose from) but rather from the need that some clients have for information formatted “exactly” to their specification. It often takes EasyBus 4-6 weeks to complete custom reports from the date of purchase. We enjoy working to achieve “perfection” with many faxes, phone calls, and tweaks to take each custom report from “hey that’s pretty good” to “That is EXACTLY what we need” to “just to let you know, our clients are raving about how clear and informative our price quotes are now, and the drivers love how the new itinerary is laid out.”

- iii. Data Import

Some customers have a list of destinations, clients, vehicles, drivers, or budget codes that they wish to import into the software. It can take anywhere from 1-2 weeks to get all data imported depending on the complexity of the import. Currently the

ability of the software to import raw data in any format are limited: The careful hand of an EasyBus trained data technician is required to insure the integrity of imported data in the new system.

- i. Are you able to provide a quiet opportunity for your personnel to train?

Training is actually the easiest hurdle to achieve in the implementation process, but only if the timing of the training is appropriate. Training employees during a busy time of year while they still have office duties such as answering the phones is usually not a good idea. Also, it is best to have multiple follow-up sessions online in a short period (2 weeks) to make sure that users can quickly build on their knowledge base and have their questions answered.

Our philosophy is that training is a process that happens over time and usually as a combination of instruction, “playing” with the software, and answering questions. The idea that in a couple of days a trainer can hand over the complete knowledge of the system like a baton from a relay runner, is un-realistic. Still, we maintain that the architecture of our system, and the patience and thorough character of our trainers make for the fastest learning curve achievable in this business.

- ii. How standardized is your current system?

Having been on location with hundreds of bus operators we realize that for many, their systems have evolved with a few long-time trusted employees who have put together a highly detailed and non-standard approach to managing client data. In a non-standard system, the logic of how information relates makes more sense to those who developed the system than to someone trying to understand things from the outside. One way to know if you are such a client is ask yourself this question—if your head mechanic, top field trip dispatcher, or accounts receivable person quit tomorrow, how easy would it be to train someone off the street to take over? If the answer is “I wouldn’t get out of bed to find out” then you probably have a non-standard system.

For many clients, they take the natural breaking point of shifting to a new software program as an opportunity to assess “why do we do things the way we do, and how could we be more efficient”. Our experienced staff can be counted on not to rush you or your staff to conclusions or try to take shortcuts. None-the-less, this valuable review and evolution of processes can push back the implementation date of the software.

- iii. What time of year are you purchasing?

The majority of clients purchase technology over the summer with the idea of implementing in the fall. Very few of our clients purchase software between Thanksgiving and April. The laws of supply and demand mean that it is harder to turn around custom reports (when required), schedule training, etc. during our busiest time of year. It is easiest for us to quickly accommodate the varied needs of new clients between November and April.

What is the EasyBus approach to technical support?

Technical support is best accomplished by people, not answering machines. At EasyBus, we pledge to continuously hire the best people available to guarantee that our growing client base will always have a person to say "How may I help you today?"

Technical support must be friendly. Having a question or a problem is a vulnerable position that can be stressful for the person who needs assistance. At EasyBus we are committed to treating each caller with patience and respect. We are confident that our tech support personnel are the friendliest that you will encounter.

Technical support must be effective. Each support representative at EasyBus is rigorously trained by accompanying an experienced support team leader in the field for several months of "on site" experience. All support staff are instructed to escalate customer support issues as soon as necessary, so that no client has to wait unnecessarily when there is someone in our office who has an immediate answer.

As the owner of the company, I am committed to being daily briefed on all support issues of consequence, and I hold weekly meetings with my support staff to discuss the status of the most serious support issues and ensure a rapid, successful conclusion for each client.

[My Favorite True Story About Technical Support](#), by Michael Hinckley

Why does EasyBus charge an annual support fee and what does this include?

The hallmark of the modern business era is the use of technology to increase worker productivity and efficiency. The end result is that companies implementing technology such as EasyBus® are willing to "take the plunge" in the great hope of seeing a dramatic increase in output with fewer resources.

At EasyBus we consider it naïve to think that technology achieves this productivity gain completely in an instant. Rather, the goal to do more with less is a constant journey that is marked with innovations that build on innovations.

We believe that in a successful technology implementation, anyone looking back 5 years later will say "we never dreamed when we started 5 years ago, that we would end up achieving what we have today."

This perspective puts a tremendous burden on a software company that strives for productivity excellence: We must continuously listen to our clients, think about their challenges, envision the future, and then take each client to the maximum productivity gains that can be imagined through perpetual development, training, and advancing partnerships with other vendors who can add value to our product.

Consequently, at EasyBus we embrace a business model that is centered on the ongoing relationship with our client and which puts financial pressure on us to annually earn our client's approval with our achievements.

The annual support fee covers all updates and upgrades to our software (other

than custom updates or reports) as well as unlimited online technical support and unlimited online or phone training. Simply, we have a worry-free policy that insures that you will always have the full support of EasyBus by your side as your needs change and your use of our software grows.

Our support fee allows us to budget for continually hiring new people to make sure that whenever you call EasyBus for help, you have our undivided, personal attention. It also allows us to build an infrastructure of support to enable you to have all of the most current tools for learning how to best apply our software to meet your needs.

We realize that our business model is not the perfect fit for every client, and so we do not expect to achieve sales with perspective clients who do not find value in a continued relationship with a software vendor, and a continuously evolving software product.

For those who share our view of software support and development, we think you will find our annual fee to be fair and competitive with other quality software companies. We cannot compete on price with "one-man" operations who only need to charge a minimal amount since they have the advantage of no employees or office space.

We encourage perspective clients to ask our competitors 3 questions:

- **What is your ratio of clients-to-support representatives? In other words, if someone has a low maintenance fee, but they are supporting 400 clients with 1 representative, it is unrealistic to expect a return phone call in less than a few days when you need support.**

At EasyBus we maintain a ratio of one support representative for each 100 clients that we have signed on for support. We find that this ratio ensures that half of our support calls will be answered directly by a support representative and most of those that aren't will be returned within a couple of hours at the most. We virtually never fail to return a call on the same day.

- i. **How often do you update your software and what updates have you done recently?**

At EasyBus, all our software receives updates no less than quarterly (every ninety days) and many times, monthly. Give us a call and let us tell you "what we have done lately"

- ii. **Can we have a list of client references?**

At EasyBus, we recently received a lead from a company that was ready to purchase a competing product. However, when they called two of the references, both said "don't buy this product, you need EasyBus!" Many of our clients are passionate about our commitment to them and we would be honored to provide you with some references in your area.

What happens if I need a custom update or report?

We are pleased to continually receive input from our clients as to how we can improve the software, and excel at implementing these ideas whenever possible to continually enhance the software. We do not charge anything for these updates, as they are part of the yearly support agreement. However, if a client requires an update to be developed within a particular time frame or to an exact specification, this would be considered a custom update. EasyBus development staff must first approve all such updates, and there is an hourly fee to any update that needs to be finished by a certain deadline.

Why should I sit through a "hands-on" demo with an EasyBus representative?

Is the software easy enough to demo on your own? Yes it is. But due to the wide variety in needs from one operation to another, there are many settings which can quickly be configured so that the interface and features match your unique way of managing information.

In EasyTrip™ for example, there can be 5 fields to fill in, or 50 fields. If a client expecting to see a robust user interface sees only 5 fields they might say "This software is too simplistic, it can't handle our needs!" However, a client who is expecting a simple user interface with only a few options who opens a screen with 50 fields to fill in might say "This software has far more than I need." Our EasyBus sales representatives are trained to listen to your needs before they do anything else. After determining your unique needs, they will configure the settings so that you see exactly the fields that you require.

Trips and Charters

School Districts

1. Can EasyTrip™ print a Trip Log to replace our current "Bible" of trips going out for the day (or week, month, etc.)?

Replacing the trip log that is the heart and soul of every dispatch office is central to what we do at EasyBus®. The once vital paper logbook needs to be replaced because only one person can use it at a time. Things get messy when multiple changes are made to it over time, and it can be inaccurate if it is not immediately updated in "real time". While EasyTrip™ can print a log, this is often not necessary as the opening screen is designed to simulate the log. This screen can be customized for each user on the system, and unlike a paper report, it is updated in real time as changes are made to the days trips. Furthermore, the opening screen filter can be set to show trips for a single day, a range of dates, for all clients, a particular client, or almost any other criteria imaginable.

2. How does EasyTrip™ handle a trip with two different drivers doing different parts of one trip?

EasyTrip™ allows for an unlimited number of drivers using the same or different vehicles to all have a portion of the same trip without conflict. Other software programs require you to create a new trip for each driver that has unique information (pickup time, hours, salary, etc.) EasyTrip™ Software can handle any scenario you can think of regarding multiple drivers or vehicles on a trip.

3. Can I copy a trip from one day to the next?

Easy Trip allows a single trip to be copied to one or many days, saving the time of re-entering the same trip over and over again.

4. Can I see what drivers or buses are available for a trip when entering a booking?

Yes! EasyTrip™ Software displays driver and bus availability on an easy-to-use screen that ensures you won't over book your resources even under the most hectic circumstances.

5. Can our school submit trip requests on line?

Yes! Your school can use our online request software to allow all requestors to request trips on line. These trips can be approved online and the requestors can then check their status online. The transportation department only needs to import approved trips into EasyTrip™ Software to save the time that it takes to gather paperwork from the entire campus and manually enter trips into the software.

6. Can I print account summaries in EasyTrip™ for all of the groups that we charge for Field Trips?

Yes! Many bus garages print reports for all of the trips from a building, grouped by budget code or activity. Easy Trip makes this effortless. Trips can be printed with all relevant information (mileage charge, hourly rate, pickup time, etc.) grouped and subtotaled by budget code, activity, campus, requestor, or nearly any other field imaginable.

School Bus Contractor / Motorcoach Operator

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3. Can I enter shuttle runs with EasyTrip™ Field Trip Software?

Yes, EasyTrip™ is flexible, allowing for an unlimited number of pickup or drop-off destinations. This is an area that we have noticed truly sets Easy Trip™ apart from nearly all competitors. Most field trip or charter software programs have a set number of locations (4 to be exact): Pickup, Arrive, Leave, and Return. This may work for some of your trips, but with EasyTrip™ Software, you can create your own templates of pickup times: Some of our clients have shuttle runs with 15 pickup segments, and 15 drop-off segments. Using templates allows you to choose just the right number of stops for each trip you are dispatching.

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Yes! EasyTrip™ Software displays driver and bus availability on an easy-to-use screen that ensures you won't over book your resources even under the most hectic circumstances.

6. Can EasyTrip™ print a quote, confirmation, and invoice?

Absolutely! Easy Trip can print and email all of the paperwork needed to keep your school trip or charter operation running smoothly. For a small programming fee, we can develop custom documents with a company letterhead and designed with address information to fit envelopes etc. While some clients choose this option, many are impressed with the wide array of customizable options that allow you to change the information that appears on our reports.

7. Can EasyTrip™ Charter Software track Accounts Receivable and print an AR Aging Report?

Yes, EasyTrip™ allows each individual payment to be logged against an invoice, including check #, description, and notes. Multiple payments against an invoice are as easy as 1-2-3! Our AR Aging report lets you pick the intervals you would like to display outstanding invoices. Also, it is easy to print a report that displays all invoices per client with payments.

8. Can EasyTrip™ keep track of my profit or loss per trip?

Yes! EasyTrip™ now has the ability to separate driver pay and vehicle cost for the company from the charges to the client, allowing for the profit or loss to be calculated for each trip. Included in this calculation is a payroll multiplier for benefits. This means that a driver who works 4 hours at 10.00 per hour, with a 30% coefficient for benefits will be counted as \$52.00 towards expenditures for the company. EasyTrip™ also can display the revenues per vehicle in a vehicle utilization summary, allowing for an overview of which vehicles make the most money.

9. I have a very complicated model for how I charge for trips, how will EasyTrip™ calculate the charge to my clients?

With as many charter operations as we have using our software, we have incorporated a large number of scenarios for price calculation. Sometimes, it is

useful to have the computer "do all the work," but other times there is an art form to charging for a trip that requires the end user to enter the price directly. EasyTrip™ can accommodate either case, and our trainers specialize in working with private bus companies to build the most effective strategy possible for charging and billing your trips.

10. Will EasyTrip™ integrate with my accounting software?

EasyTrip™ Software exports to the current windows version of Acc Pac™, Simply Accounting® and QuickBooks®. We are working diligently to have it work with as many accounting software products as possible. Contact EasyBus® today to see if your accounting package is able to receive an export from our trip software.

Canadian Operator

1. Why is EasyBus®, an upstate New York software company, so committed to selling software to Canadians?

Three words... Tim Horton's® Coffee! In all seriousness, the challenges facing Canadian operators and their U.S. counterparts bare many similarities. When we first started attracting the interest of some highly respected Ontario bus companies, we were encouraged by their enthusiastic support of our product.

Over the years, many good friendships across the border have been built, and all of us at EasyBus® feel a special pride in working with our neighbors to the North.

2. Will EasyBus software products use Canadian standards (SIN#, KM, L, Postal Code, etc.)?

Absolutely, EasyBus® software does not require the use of American standards. Canadian labels can be used at any point in our software and reports.

3. Will EasyBus® software correctly calculate GST and PST where necessary?

Whether your bus company invoices for maintenance done to other vehicles (requiring GST and PST), or whether your trip/charter operation uses GST alone on invoices, EasyBus® software is fully capable of accommodating the different tax scenarios in a Canadian billing environment.

4. Do Driver sheets printed in EasyTrip™ meet the Ontario Provincial standards?

Provincial Law may prescribe what must be on the driver itinerary in the event that a bus is pulled over and paperwork inspected. EasyTrip software can print various customizable versions of this itinerary so that all of the paperwork we generate is in full compliance with the province of Ontario.

5. Will EasyTrip™ integrate with my accounting software?

EasyTrip™ Software exports to the current windows version of Acc Pac™, Simply Accounting® and QuickBooks®. We are working diligently to have it work with as many accounting software products as possible. Contact EasyBus® today to see if your accounting package is able to receive an export from our trip software.

Online Trip Request

1. What is the difference between EasyTrip™ Online Request Software and the competition?

- o Fully customizable web page:

Easy Trip Request is currently the only solution that offers a completely customizable web page. It is not hard for any competitor to say they offer an online trip request system. We have spent years perfecting a process that lets you create your own web page and approval model (and different pages for different groups if need be).

- o The end-user is the requestor, not the building.

In many schools, there is one liaison between transportation and the requestors in that building. Usually the secretary to the principal, this person is responsible for gathering together all of the requests in the building and passing them along the approval chain to transportation.

It is understandable that for most of our competitors, whose focus is on routing and not trips, duplicating this system was the easiest way develop a solution.

In such a system, where there may be a school with 500 teachers and 10 buildings, there would be 10 requestors, one for each building. The advantages are obvious:

- a. It's easy to set up: Setting up and administering 10 users is much easier than 500.
- b. It's familiar: "If it ain't broke—why fix it?"

The problem is, from the perspective of efficiency, this is a broken system:

- With no way to differentiate between individual users, this means that users can all see each other's trips, as well as change or delete each other's trips.
- It is impossible to establish a personal communication system so that when trips require additional information, or are denied, there is no way to effectively communicate this on an individual basis.
- It is impossible for users to customize their environment. When all users share a log in, they must all see the same default trips in the same format.
- Lists such as activities and budget codes must be very long and cumbersome since there is no way to filter the list by who is requesting the trip.

EasyBus is designed to allow each end-user to enter requests, which then may be approved by a department or building level approver on their way to transportation:

- Users log in with their email address, and can create themselves online or be imported from a spreadsheet.

- Users can have multiple roles, so a teacher in one building who coaches sports in a different building can select which type of trip they are requesting. This then sets the options for the online form, and the list of available activities.
- Multiple levels of approvers may be configured, and communication can be achieved between requestors and approvers and/or transportation, eliminating phone calls and saving time.
- Users can save requests as favorites to re-use, saving a tremendous amount of time.
- Approvers can “batch select” large numbers of requests and approve them instantly, saving a great deal of time.
- Blackout dates and times may be applied to users or groups of users to prevent them from requesting trips during times where transportation is unavailable.

Another difference with many of our competitors is that we host the web server as opposed to forcing our clients to purchase and maintain their own web server. This allows us to instantly diagnose and fix any problems that may arise, and to update all of our clients simultaneously during off hours.

Finally, our software is written on a powerful SQL Server database that is designed for heavy traffic and thousands of simultaneous connections. Many of our competitors use Microsoft Access, which is not capable of handling dozens of simultaneous hits on a web-server.

Our school is developing our own web trip system, why should we buy yours?

The role of IT in a school district has historically been the purchasing and managing of technology. In desperation, many schools have asked this over-taxed group to write an online trip request system for their district. In working with many bright and creative IT professionals at our client schools, we know they love a challenge and probably take great pride in developing a system that meets the current needs of the district.

In the vast majority of schools, however, these professionals are not programmers by trade, but network specialists who can also program. Almost none of them have experience in transportation, so such a project is wholly dependent on the administration of the school laying out the project parameters so they not only satisfy the principals, coaches, and teachers, but the transportation department with its myriad of special needs as well.

Finally, a well-qualified programmer in ASP.net can fetch a high salary. Since this normally isn't within a public school budget, it is likely that anyone capable of writing a high end scalable web-based system will likely be leaving the school in favor of more lucrative employment in the private sector.

In all our conversations with schools engaged in such an endeavor, when we pose the question: "What happens when your programmer leaves in 2 years for the private sector?" We have yet to receive a confident response.

Developing new applications is best left to an outside vendor with years of experience and a stable veteran staff that is guaranteed to support the product for as long as it is in use. Although an outside vendor charges a yearly support fee, this guarantees an interest in maintaining and improving the product for years to come. Conversely, a bright programmer who works for the school on salary is unlikely to offer to support the product for its lifetime.

Any school undertaking an in-house web-based product should ask the following questions:

Will the product be written in a scalable manner so that future upgrades and enhancements will be easy to implement?

Will the product be written to integrate with powerful back end field trip software in transportation so that trips will not have to be re-entered by the transportation office once they make it through the online system?

Will the product be written according to industry standards so that when the current staff leaves for more lucrative work, the next employees will be able to continue to support and enhance the product?

Is the investment into maintaining one local server for email, database, web server, and user accounts worth the investment, when a third party vendor who specializes in this service could provide the server capability as part of the overall subscription?

How important is it to have a product that has been tested in schools all over the continent so that the implementation will be smooth at the outset?

Do the taxpayers of the district know that their students, teachers, and administrators are going to be beta testers for a homegrown software product with no guarantee of future support when an affordable time-tested online trip request system is available on the market?

How much does it cost to customize the online request form in Easy Trip so that only the fields that our school uses are shown?

It is free and easy! Without the help of EasyBus® trainers, each client can customize the web form to include or exclude, rename, or require any field. This field-by-field flexibility is unique to the Easy Online Field Trip Request and truly puts us in a class by ourselves.

Can I make certain fields required for an online request form?

Unlike our competition, EasyTrip™ allows for any field on the online trip request form to be required. Once this is done, the days of receiving incomplete trip requests are gone for good! All of these required fields can be set by YOU and do not require any special programming from EasyBus®.

Can I force users to request a trip 10 days in advance?

Yes. Settings can be customized to force requestors to request their trip any number of days in advance. This can also be set differently any number of groups. For a charter company, one school might have a 10-day limit, while another may have no limit right up to the day of the trip! Within a school, the athletic department may only be required to request 3 days in advance, while teachers might be required to request trips 14 days in advance. All of these

settings can be determined by YOU and do not require any special programming from EasyBus.

Our school has mostly Mac computers, does your online trip request product work on Apple's Safari®?

Yes! Our web-based field trip request product has been rigorously tested and works on Apple Safari®, Mozilla Firefox®, and Internet Explorer®.

Can we have blackout times so that trips can not be requested during certain times?

EasyTrip 2.1 which was made available on Dec 30, 2007 offers the most sophisticated blackout system available, with the ability to offer blackouts that are limited in scope to certain users or groups of users. The blackouts can include caveats such as "You cannot request a trip between 2 PM and 5 PM on Thursdays unless you agree to drive your own bus"

What happens to "Last Minute Trips" if I force requestors to use our online system 10 days in advance, won't that just create more last minute work for me to enter the old fashion way?

In working with our clients, we have developed a system for handling tardy requestors. In response to client feedback, we have allowed the option of exempting the approvers from the minimum required days. This way, a requestor can go to their local administrator and ask to request a trip on their behalf. Ideally the administrator will encourage them to request within the required parameters next time, to avoid the need for future assistance.

We have 3,000 requestors in our school district. Do I have to enter them ALL into the online request system before it can be used?

No. Requestors can create themselves online! Using our unique technology, each requestor uses their email address to log in. Users can then change their password, or other personal settings (except their email address). However, it is usually easiest to import all the users from the list of email addresses in the district maintained by the IT department. EasyBus support staff are experienced at importing users from email lists and are happy to assist with this process.

Fleet Maintenance and Inventory

1. Will your maintenance program warn me in advance when my Preventative maintenance is coming due?

Yes. Easy Bus maintenance software allows you to create as many Preventative Maintenance (PM) categories as you like, and to set the intervals for overdue and warning levels. These intervals may be miles, kilometers, hours, days, or a combination of these intervals. For some garages, different vehicles require different intervals. On a 66-passenger school bus, an oil change may be every 60 days or 2000 miles, on a van; perhaps the interval is 30 days or 1000 miles. EasyBus lets you define a schedule for each type of vehicle in your shop. Warning intervals are also totally customizable so whether you want 2 weeks, 2 miles or 2 month's warning-it's totally up to you! The warning / overdue report will give you a concise printout of all vehicles that require your attention.

2. The last software we bought required us to enter lots of complicated codes for everything. I just want our mechanics to record what they did. How complicated is the set-up of EasyBus?

Many maintenance software programs were designed for large fleets with complex needs and a full-time computer operator. EasyBus was designed for small and large bus fleets with operators that have little or no computer experience. With no special codes to enter and an intuitive user interface that requires "just the facts", we guarantee that your staff will be up and running in one week with our software.

3. Can EasyBus do electronic work orders for a 'paperless shop'?

Yes. Although EasyBus does not require the use of electronic work orders: they are available so that all the work can be assigned to a mechanic from one central location, then the mechanics can view and finalize their work using a computer in the shop itself.

4. We invoice a lot of outside work at our shop... can we use EasyBus for retail work?

Yes. Easy Bus allows you to store your own cost for work, and a retail charge for parts and labor. Using the invoice module you can create and track invoices for an unlimited number of clients. Be sure to purchase a license of Easy Bus that will accommodate the total number of vehicles that you will service. If you only have 50 vehicles, but you will use EasyBus to track work for 200 outside vehicles, then you need a different license.

5. Can I set rights for different users so a mechanic can add parts and view work orders, but NOT delete or change old information?

Yes. Easy Bus allows a master user to create accounts and control access. The system can be set to require a log in so that all users' rights can be administered from one central location.

6. Will EasyBus work with my automated fueling system?

EasyBus Maintenance Software will import from current windows versions of Gas Boy™, Fuelmaster®, and Petrovend™ fueling systems. If you have a system not included in this group, we can very likely write an import function for that system on a fee-for-service basis.

7. Can I keep inventory so that when I use a part in EasyBus it is debited from the Inventory?

Absolutely. The Easy Inventory module allows for a complete list of parts with unlimited cross-referencing and multiple vendors per part. When a part is used in Easy Bus, that it is debited from Easy Inventory, and when the quantity hits the user-defined minimum, the part is flagged as in need of ordering. Orders can be created to track the history of part orders over time.

8. What is the Zonar® systems Electronic Vehicle Inspection Report (EVIR®)?

For official documentation, please visit the Zonar website:
<http://www.zonarsystems.com/pdf/EVIR.pdf>

In summary, the EVIR consists of a handheld reader which allows drivers to complete their pre-trip and post-trip inspections using a handheld reader. Any defects can be recorded using the reader, along with a condition (Such as "Missing, Leaking or Loose), and a status flag of "Fit for Duty" (Which can be true or false). All inspections are stored on the Zonar website and can be accessed by the transportation department over the Internet.

In the event that a pre-trip results in a defect that is flagged "NOT Fit for Duty", Zonar can be configured to notify personnel such as the head mechanic and/or transportation supervisor through email, pager, or phone to insure that the bus does not go out with any other driver. When the defect is repaired, a work order must be entered by the mechanic on the Zonar website to reset the flag and allow the bus to be used again.

9. Does EasyBus integrate with Zonar systems EVIR?

As of February 1, 2008 we are proud to announce that EasyBus® maintenance software will integrate with the Zonar EVIR®. The result of this integration is that when a driver scans a bus using Zonar's handheld reader, any defects reported will cause a work order to be created automatically in EasyBus® software. Mechanics can then complete the work order, and upon finalizing it, EasyBus will automatically update the Zonar system online, relieving any flags associated with the work order that would have prevented the bus from being used.

Personnel Record-Keeping

General Questions

1. How is EasyDriver™ software going to help me manage our personnel?

EasyDriver software has 7 main functions:

- i. Store and report on all basic driver data such as address, phone, picture, emergency contact, date of hire etc.
- ii. Requirements for training, physicals, testing, etc. EasyDriver software is designed to allow the user to set warning and overdue intervals for each requirement, so that reports can be generated showing all drivers near or past their due dates. Recurring requirements are stored historically any time they occur, allowing for a complete history to be accessed and printed at the user's discretion. This differentiates EasyDriver from most routing software programs which only store 1 due date for each requirement—not a history.
- iii. Infractions. EasyDriver™ software allows each driving infraction™ to be stored along with grievance, resolution, and important deadlines (such as when a response is due). When a deadline is passed, EasyDriver™ adds the deadline to the overdue/warning report for requirements, so that the personnel manager is notified.
- iv. Attendance. When drivers are out, the dates, times, and reasons of their absence can be stored. Also, a drivers missing runs (AM, Noon, PM) can be registered, and subs assigned. This allows for a report which shows all

drivers missing on a given day and all runs that still need to be covered. Other reports include the ability to show how many times each driver was absent on each day of the week.

- v. New York State 19A tracking. All 19A requirements can be tracked, and requirements scheduled for warning / overdue status report. All 19A forms can be printed using the software, one at a time, or en masse for multiple drivers
- vi. California operations may use our system for entering T-02 data, and then printing the aggregate summaries on a T-01 card. EasyDriver™ is the only system that aggregates the T-02 data and prints on an actual T-01 card. All other systems require a new T-01 card to be printed each year—Easy Driver can print on the same card each year allowing even cards that have some years filled in by hand to have the remainder filled in using the system. T-03 proficiency reports can also be printed using the software.
- vii. Storing miscellaneous data such as drug tests, accidents, commendations, referrals, etc. Anything with a description and a date can be stored in its own category.

We have many users, can we use security to restrict certain logins from viewing some data or changing, deleting, etc.

Yes, there are many security restrictions that can be applied on a user-by-user basis to protect data and insure integrity.

We have multiple sites, can we group our drivers by site?

Yes, drivers can be grouped in multiple tiers including site and classification. So for example, there may be three sites: River Road, Martin County, and Anderson Lake with many classifications such as “bus driver”, “charter driver”, “mechanic”, etc. A given person John Smith could be assigned to River Road site, and mechanic classification. Each person can only be assigned to one site and one classification at one time. All reports can be filtered to show any subset of one or more sites and/or classifications.

Can you import our current driving records into EasyDriver™ software?

Most likely, yes. If your data can be exported into a format such as CSV, Access, or Excel we can likely import a flat file of driver information (but not relational data such as accidents or infractions). Typical data that we import would include: Name, address, emergency contact, hire date, phone #, etc. We currently charge a small fee for importing data.

Does EasyDriver™ software integrate with your EasyTrip™ field trip software?

Yes, when drivers are marked absent, this immediately flags EasyTrip, so that if dispatch attempts to assign a driver to a trip during a time of absence, they will be warned (but not prevented from assigning him). Adding or changing driver information in EasyDriver software can automatically update the EasyTrip™ software as well.

Will EasyDriver™ software integrate with our personnel, and/or payroll software?

While there is always the possibility of a custom integration on a fee per service basis, currently EasyDriver™ does not integrate with any third party products.

When driver's are taken out of service, can we export them out so they don't clutter our reports, then import them at a later date if they come back to work for us?

Currently we do not need an export/import utility since there is a means in EasyDriver™ software to flag a driver as inactive, which assures that they will not be put on reports or show up needing requirements to be met.

Can Easy Driver™ be used to track personnel requirements for people who are not drivers?

Absolutely! Mechanics, office staff, or any other type of person can be stored in EasyDriver software. This program is very flexible and allows for most all labels and categories to be customized to accommodate the needs of non-driving personnel types.

Then why do you call it EasyDriver™ software?

It has a nice ring to it—"Easy Personnel" sounds very cold, and most of our clients are bus operators, so it seems appropriate.

New York State 19-A

1. I am currently using "pencil and paper" to track my 19A compliance, why should I purchase EasyDriver™?

EasyDriver™ can print out all of your 19A forms with the driver's basic information, and your company information merged onto the forms! Imagine printing out physical exam forms for 40 drivers in less than one minute!

EasyDriver allows you to create any category for everything from Biennial exams to blood pressure and diabetes checkups. You can set warnings so that you will never have to worry about "who we need to take care of this month". EasyDriver™ keeps you ahead of the curve.

2. I am currently using a spreadsheet for my 19A compliance, why should I purchase Easy Driver™?

A spreadsheet is a helpful tool for organizing driver records, but spreadsheets have a few major drawbacks:

Spreadsheets tend to be used only to store future dates. EasyDriver™ will not only provide you with warning of upcoming events, but it stores the entire history of all prior events, including attendance, accidents, and referrals.

Spreadsheet data and formulas can be deleted with the click of a button. EasyDriver provides safeguards and warnings that insure data cannot be deleted in one quick stroke.

Spreadsheets are not easy to share between users. If you have more than one person responsible for driver training, you dare not network your spreadsheet and let multiple people use it at once. With EasyDriver you can have as many simultaneous users as necessary. Rights can be assigned to users so that one person could be given the ability to view data only, not to add or delete.

EasyDriver™ can print out all of your 19A forms with the driver's basic information, and your company information merged onto the forms! Imagine printing out physical exam forms for 40 drivers in less than one minute!

3. I am currently using my routing software for my 19A compliance, why should I purchase EasyDriver™?

After the success of our EasyDriver™ release in 1998, many routing companies added a simplistic driver information sheet to their software. Some even provided the capability of printing 19A forms merging this information. To our knowledge, none of them can do the following:

- Store a history of 19A compliance. Like a spreadsheet, routing software only allows for future due dates!
- Track accidents.
- Track attendance and trip coverage for absent drivers.
- Allow for unlimited custom fields or unlimited custom categories.
- Integrate warnings into the software so that pop-ups warn of upcoming compliance without printing a report.

Driver disciplinary incidents, awards, and commendations

California T-01

1. Will EasyDriver™ Driver Training Software allow me to enter T-02 information and total it automatically for a T-01?

Yes! EasyDriver™ Software allows the trainer to enter T-02 information for each driver (or for all drivers in a class at the same time!) and then correctly total the hours for each month, accounting for split months such as birthday or makeup hours.

2. Will EasyDriver™ print the hours on the T-01 for me?

Easy Driver is the only program that will correctly print the hours for each month on a T-01 card. It is important that any T-01 software print directly on the T-01 card to enable the same card to be run through the printer multiple times (once for each training period). This way, the driver only needs to sign the card once for each new training period added to the form. EasyDriver™ Personnel Management Software can print the hours on the top and bottom of each month, allowing for two entries when birthdays or makeup hours require it.

3. What if my T-01 is already filled in for some years, can EasyDriver™ Software fill in just the training periods I want?

Yes! Believe it or not, EasyDriver™ is capable of printing right onto your T-01 card for the training periods you select. It is expected that when installing

EasyDriver™, each client will have various T-01 cards already filled in for anywhere from one to four training periods. IT IS NOT NECESSARY TO RE-ENTER THIS INFORMATION IN EASYDRIVER™. Simply enter the current training period, and click which year of the T-01 card that it should print on. Your current T-01 card can be run through the printer each year, so that drivers do not have to sign the card again and again.

4. Will EasyDriver™ split the months for Birthdays or Makeup hours?

EasyDriver™ includes the ability to split each month for makeup hours or birthday hours. It will put the makeup hours on the bottom of the cell, with an "M" for "Makeup".

5. If I have a group of Drivers all taking a class, can I select them and enter the T-02 training information in one stroke instead of updating drivers one at a time?

Yes, this powerful feature allows each trainer to update T-02 hours for all drivers in a class at one time. Sometimes, a couple of drivers have to leave early. No problem; simply add them with the class for training, and then go back and individually change their hours so they only get credit for the hours of their attendance.

6. Will EasyDriver™ track instructor hours and print an instructor T-01?

Yes, EasyDriver™ tracks all of the instructor hours and prints a T-01 card that summarizes all instructor training. When instructors teach a class, the hours will be updated for each driver, but the instructor will correctly be credited only once with the hours of the class.

7. Can I customize the T-02 codes for training?

Yes, EasyDriver™ allows you to add, change, or delete the codes for Behind-The-Wheel, In-Service, or Classroom training. It even prints a report of all codes for reference.

8. Can EasyDriver™ print a T-02 history report?

Yes, Easy Driver™ can print a T-02 history report that coincides with the training periods of each driver's T-01 Card. As with all reports, it can be customized to any driver for any dates.

9. Can Easy Driver™ print a T-03 proficiency report?

Yes, Easy Driver™ can take the T-02 information entered and track proficiency by vehicle or by vehicle type for each driver.

10. What is the difference between Easy Driver and other programs such as the State of California web site, regarding T-01 capability?

There is no other program we know of that will allow a trainer to enter raw T-02 training data and then, with the push of a button, correctly print out on to a T-01 form based on that data.

Simply enter the training hours and EasyDriver™ does the addition, splits the

makeup and birthday hours, and prints ALL OF IT onto your T-01 form. It took us two years to accomplish this very complex task, and we are very proud of the end result.

Technical Information

1. Can EasyBus be networked?

Yes. The software needs to be installed on the hard drive of each computer using EasyBus programs (except in a Terminal Server environment), but the databases can be shared between users. The best way to accomplish this is by placing the databases on the hard drive of a dedicated server. EasyBus, however, will also support a "peer-to-peer" network; where one machine in a local office shares its hard drive with other machines. It is no problem for multiple users to access the database simultaneously. Please click here for our technical requirements.

2. Can EasyBus software work on a Terminal Server?

EasyBus® software can be easily run in a Terminal Server or Citrix® environment. This requires the purchase of a site license from EasyBus. Terminal Server is the preferred way to connect multiple sites that must share the database from different geographic locations. This configuration also allows for one software update to update all users.

3. Why is EasyBus converting all software from the Microsoft® Access database platform to Microsoft® SQL Server?

In the late 1990's EasyBus® software was originally designed around the needs of small to mid-sized school districts, many of whom had simple technology infrastructures. Microsoft® Access allowed us a database that was free to distribute and easy to install and manage. However, Access has many limitations:

- It does not scale well; as the size of the database approaches 100MB it slows down, and becomes prone to corruption (which means all data can be lost).
- Access is not designed to handle more than 10 simultaneous users, and rarely handles more than a half dozen users well. Some of our competitors are still trying to make Access work on a web server. This is doomed to fail.

Consider the following quote directly from the Microsoft website:

"Access isn't designed to create Web sites. The Data Access Pages are of limited use in intranets, but not on the Internet. The underlying Jet engine is also not useful, except when the number of simultaneous users is low. Access is optimized for Windows, and not for the Web."

<http://www.microsoft.com/sql/solutions/migration/access/sql-or-access.mspx>

- When networked, Access uses a very large amount of network bandwidth, slowing down the software and slowing down other programs that share

the network. SQL Server is very efficient and relatively non-demanding of the network.

- o Access databases have no means of internally backing themselves up. SQL Server can be set to periodically backup each transaction so that in the unlikely event of a mid-day crash, the database can theoretically be restored to just minutes before the crash.

Consequently, in 2004 we converted our web server from Access to SQL Server, and in 2007 we released EasyTrip Enterprise™ software which is a SQL Server replacement for both EasyTrip™ and EasyInvoice™ software. We are working to achieve our goal of 100% conversion to SQL Server-based software by 2009, giving us a strong platform for growth for years to come.

4. What is the Microsoft .NET Framework?

Microsoft .NET Framework is a set of tools provided by Microsoft that includes highly advanced features that can be included in software packages such as EasyBus Maintenance, EasyDriver, and EasyTrip Enterprise.

5. Is the Microsoft .NET Framework already on my computer?

Go to our [Verify](#) page with Microsoft Internet Explorer to determine if you have the .Net framework and which version you have. (Firefox, Netscape, or any browser other than Microsoft Internet Explorer will not perform this check.)

6. Will the Microsoft .NET Framework work on my computer?

Microsoft .NET 3.5 SP1 works with Windows XP and Vista, but not with Windows 95, 98, NT, or 2000.

7. Is the Microsoft .NET Framework required?

Workstations that run EasyBus Maintenance, EasyDriver, or EasyTrip Enterprise require Microsoft .NET Framework 3.5 SP1 or higher. EasyTrip Request users (online requestors and approvers) do not need the Microsoft .NET Framework.

Remote Desktop and Citrix server installations require Microsoft .NET Framework 3.5 SP1 or higher on the server hosting the remote environment. User workstations that simply connect remotely to the terminal server do not require the Microsoft .NET Framework.

8. What version of the Microsoft .NET Framework is required?

EasyBus Maintenance, EasyDriver, and EasyTrip Enterprise require Microsoft .NET Framework 3.5 SP1 or higher.

9. How do I get the Microsoft .NET Framework 3.5 SP1?

The Microsoft .NET Framework 3.5 SP1 can be download from Microsoft [here](#).