

# NYC Customer Service Newsletter

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## NYCertified Language Assessment and Training Program Receives Prestigious Award

**NYCertified**, a program developed by the Mayor's Office which tests and trains bilingual employees to provide language services for the city, received Harvard University's Ash Center for Democratic Governance and Innovation's *Bright Ideas* award. *Bright Ideas* recognizes creative and promising government programs that work to address public concerns.

**NYCertified** was one

of only ten programs from New York State to receive a *Bright Ideas* award.

We hope that **NYCertified** can be used as an example by other cities or municipalities looking to meet the need for efficient language assistance policies, promote volunteerism, and provide quality customer service to limited English proficient customers.

**NYCertified** is

highlighted on the Ash Center's Government Innovators Network portal at [www.innovations.harvard.edu](http://www.innovations.harvard.edu), an online marketplace of ideas and examples of government innovation for policymakers and practitioners.

For more information on how you can get certified in translation or interpretation and join this nationally awarded program, please visit the NYCertified CityShare page: <http://Cityshare.nycnet/nycertified>.

## Introducing the "MADE IN NY" Vendor Discount Mobile App

The "Made in NY" Discount Card Mobile Application created for the Office of Film, Theater and Broadcasting helps users find vendors who participate in the "Made in NY" Discount Program. With around 1,000 vendors participating in the program, "Made in NY" cardholders can use this app to easily find the right vendor for their needs.

The application features:

- Easy finding & contact of vendors
- Search by current location or zip code
- Filter by category and distance
- Around 1,000 vendors in database
- View of vendor details, web site, discounts and more.

The "Made in NY" Discount Card provides discounts and special offers to entertainment professionals involved in bona fide film, television and theatre productions in New York City. Over 30,000 cards have been handed out. The mobile application is available for use on iPod touch, iPhone, iPad, and Android platforms.





**DoITT Agency Relationship Managers Jeff Krupski and Dan Starobin**

## **DoITT's Agency Relations Managers Talk Customer Service**

DoITT recently introduced a new position within its Project Management Services Division – Agency Relations Managers, referred to as the Agency's 'ARMs.' Each DoITT ARM has a designated portfolio of agencies, for which they act as the single point of contact on current and prospective IT initiatives. The ARMS provide guidance and assistance, and advocate on behalf of their agencies. To better understand DoITT's new customer service providers, we sat down with ARMs Jeff Krupski and Dan Starobin, and asked about their mission, objectives, and customer service strategy.

**Q: Tell us, what is an ARM? And what are your goals?**

JK: Well, we are the single point of contact for 'everything DoITT' for agencies and their CIOs – or Chief Information Officers. Need to know who the right person to get you more info on an Enterprise License Agreement is? Who is the person at CITIServ that will be able to steer you in the right direction with scheduling a 'deep-dive assessment'? How can I get a project kicked off, and what's the best way to go about completing an intake form? All of these questions (and endless more) can be answered by your Agency Relations Manager.

DS: If DoITT is a

complex machine, think of ARMs as the machine oil. Our primary charge is to facilitate communications between our client agencies and DoITT's many internal groups. And, if there is ever a question that an ARM can't answer on the spot, you can be assured he/she will get you an answer in a reasonable timeframe.

**Q: What do you like most about working with your agency customers?**

DS: What's particularly enjoyable is learning about the wide range of technology projects in which City agencies are engaged, including the technologies themselves. I also enjoy working closely with CIOs, and it's been great to have the opportunity to identify common technology needs and similar projects across agencies as candidates for citywide enterprise solutions.

JK: I also really enjoy learning when an agency implements a creative solution to a complex problem at a cost savings to taxpayers. And, of course, it feels great to be able to provide our customers with the attention and service they require.

**Q: Any words of advice for other customer service providers across the City?**

JK: Sure. Never, never underestimate the real

value of going the extra mile to provide superior customer service. While I cannot personally install a VoIP phone or migrate your servers over a weekend – I am very aware of business needs and am here to get a better sense of an agency's priorities via an open dialogue. If I were in charge of running a business, I would make customer service one of the paramount aspects of the company. Business models such as these should be no different for local governments - where the customers are citizens and fellow city agencies.

DS: Customer relations isn't only about understanding your customers' needs and your agency's capabilities. It also has to do with understanding personalities—not just those of your customers and those within your organization, but also your own. Over the past few years I've learned that effective communication should be concerned with three things: the message, the clarity with which the message is conveyed and the *style* in which the message is presented. A client's reaction to a message can be greatly influenced by presentation style. It's good to know how your personality affects your presentation style and how your style fits (or maybe doesn't fit) the personality of your client.

For more information contact [agencyrelations@doitt.nyc.gov](mailto:agencyrelations@doitt.nyc.gov).

## Donuts at the Door –Part Deux

Part Deux is a sequel to DOT's customer satisfaction survey conducted at Permit Management Central Office at 55 Water Street, Manhattan. For the second year in a row DOT distributed 125 NYC Feedback Cards at this site. This year Customers completed 114 or 92% of the cards, a 22% increase in the response rate. A special effort was made to provide healthy food alternatives such as fresh fruit and water as well as to target LEP (Limited in English Proficiency) customers.

DOT Customer Service provided NYC Feedback

Cards in English as well as in Spanish, Russian, Chinese, Korean, Haitian Creole, and Italian. Five cards were filled out in other languages (2) Chinese, (1) Haitian – Creole, (1) Italian and (1) Spanish.

Customers now look forward to this annual special event. One customer said: "Thanks for the food, it was good. Why do we have to wait so long for the next survey?", and another said, "I suggest having this event every month."

Permit Management has an 18% improvement in their overall Customer Satisfaction. Increases in

customer satisfaction can be attributed to operational changes such as:

- Updated cell phone service in the waiting area for permit transaction-related calls
- Increased office hours to open earlier
- Great Service, Great City customer service training
- Great Service, Great City posters in six languages to promote LEP services and cultural sensitivity.



NYC Feedback Cards in English and translated in the six languages.



Treats provided for customers.

## 311 Welcomes the World

NYC311 hosted a delegation from the People's Republic of China on December 17, bringing the total of visiting groups to 38 for the year. Recognized world-wide as a model for government delivering customer service, NYC311 hosts municipalities across the nation and delegations from numerous countries all interested in understanding the NYC model of Great Service, Great City.

In addition to China, this year NYC311 hosted delegates from Australia, Brazil, Canada, Costa Rica, Denmark, Finland, Kenya, Netherlands, Pakistan, Romania, and Sweden. Domestic visits included 311 contingents from Boston and Philadelphia, New

Jersey 211, and the US State Department.

Since it was launched in 2003, NYC311 has hosted 335 visits, with 30 countries spanning every continent and every major US city. Visits typically consist of a presentation overview on the Bloomberg Administration commitment to customer service, 311 history and evolution, and performance results, followed by a tour of the 311 call center. Visitors get a first-hand look at 311 representatives answering customer inquiries while navigating systems and observe various work groups and employee satisfaction programs throughout the call center. Tom DiGiulio, 311 Project Manager and Customer Advocate conducted over 140 tours in the past three

years and notes most visitors are "impressed with the City's commitment to customer service".

Visitors are frequently surprised at the volume of calls and the vast breadth of services provided by NYC Agencies. Most are also fascinated with the habits of New Yorkers as expressed by top call inquiries including the quintessential NYC alternate side parking status-checkers, the number of noise complaint categories, weather-driven calls and the variety of unusual calls. While not yet in the same category as the Statue of Liberty, Empire State Building or Rockefeller Center, NYC311 is emerging as a "must-see" stop for visitors to the greatest city in the world.



**NYCHA employee assists a resident at the Sixth Annual Senior Benefit and Entitlement Fair.**

## Senior Residents “Expand Their World” at Annual Senior Benefit & Entitlement Fair

More than 1,500 senior citizens living in public housing enjoyed a beautiful day at Riverbank State Park in Manhattan on September 21 at NYCHA’s Sixth Annual Senior Benefit and Entitlement Fair. Focusing on the theme of “Expand Your World,” the Authority placed special emphasis this year on the role new technologies can play in improving the quality of life for seniors.

In addition to providing access to new technology, there also

were workshops on preventing identity theft, using social networking websites, shopping on-line and digital photography. Other stations at the fair included financial counseling, social services, crime safety, MTA Access-a-Ride, Social Security, volunteering and NYCHA’s gardening program.

The fair also continued its traditional focus on health services, including screenings for blood pressure, glaucoma and glucose

and foot care. Booths were set up to showcase products that seniors may need, such as orthopedic gear, shoes and blood pressure monitors.

For additional information, please contact: Richard Greene, Director, Resident Support Services, [richard.greene@nycha.nyc.gov](mailto:richard.greene@nycha.nyc.gov)

Website: [www.nyc.gov/nycha](http://www.nyc.gov/nycha)

### Plan to Preserve Public Housing Telephone Survey

1,088 Public Housing residents and 612 Section 8 tenants completed the anonymous phone survey.

The survey consisted of 61 questions and took about 15 minutes to complete.

Questions that were asked included customer satisfaction questions, such as:

- How satisfied are you with the overall condition of your apartment, building and development (if applicable)?
- How satisfied are you with NYCHA staff?
- How satisfied are you with the quality of repairs?

Survey results are being analyzed by the City University of New York’s Baruch College. The final report will be released later this year.

## Resident Input Helps to Shape NYCHA's Five Year Plan

Working to set NYCHA’s agenda for the next five years, the Plan to Preserve Public Housing (the Plan) is not possible without resident input. Independent researchers conducted anonymous 15-minute phone surveys to inquire about the issues that affect our residents’ homes and communities, beginning in October. The surveys were modeled after well-regarded satisfaction surveys used by other government organizations.

The Plan will set forth

the agency’s vision and ambitious goals for 2011-2015, with an emphasis on ensuring fiscal stability, maximizing the value of NYCHA’s assets in a way that preserves public housing and increases the number of affordable units, promoting environmental sustainability, improving quality of life and enhancing self-sufficiency for residents, and ensuring a productive and safe working environment that encourages growth and development.

In developing the Plan, NYCHA will employ a

transparent and inclusive process to engage key stakeholders including leadership, staff, residents, funders, elected officials, community partners, thought leaders, and other supporters of public and affordable housing.

For additional information, please contact: Jenna Lawrence, Deputy Director, Office of Strategic Planning & Change Management, [jenna.lawrence@nycha.nyc.gov](mailto:jenna.lawrence@nycha.nyc.gov)

Website: [www.nyc.gov/nycha](http://www.nyc.gov/nycha)

## DOT Updates Documents Available in Other Languages

The Department of Transportation recently issued updated translated documents and brochures to assist non-English speaking customers. The documents include: the 2011 Alternate Side Parking Schedule (pictured below, in part); the Bike Smart Brochure, which includes tips for New Yorkers to ride their bikes safely; and, the Parkways Brochure for Truck Drivers, for truck drivers to understand the restrictions that apply to trucks on New York's parkways. These brochures are available at the following links:

Alternate Side Parking 2011 Calendar: <http://www.nyc.gov/html/dot/html/motorist/scriintro.shtml>

Bike Smart Brochure: <http://www.nyc.gov/html/dot/html/bicyclists/biketips.shtml>

Parkways Brochure for Truck Drivers: <http://www.nyc.gov/html/dot/html/motorist/commvehicle.shtml>.

### ASP Disposizioni sul parcheggio e 2011 Sospensione del calendario

Capodanno	1 gennaio, sab.
Compleanno di Martin Luther King Jr.	17 gennaio, lun.
Capodanno lunare asiatico	3 febbraio, giov.
Compleanno di Lincoln	12 febbraio, sab.
Compleanno di Washington (prima del Festival)	21 febbraio, lun.
Mercoledì delle Ceneri	9 marzo, mer.
Purim	20 marzo, dom.
Pasqua ebraica (1° e 2° giorno)	19-20 aprile, mar. - mer.
Giovedì Santo	21 aprile, giov.
Giovedì Santo (prebossa)	21 aprile, giov.
Venerdì Santo	22 aprile, ven.
Venerdì Santo (prebossa)	22 aprile, ven.
Pasqua ebraica (7° e 8° giorno)	25-26 aprile, lun. - mar.
Giornata dei Caduti* (Memorial Day)	30 maggio, lun.
Solennità dell'Ascensione	2 giugno, giov.
Shavuot (Festa della Settimana 2 giorni)	8-9 giugno, mer. - giov.
Giorno dell'Indipendenza* (in dipendenza del Day)	4 luglio, lun.
Festa dell'Assunzione	15 agosto, lun.
	20 agosto, 1 settembre

#### INFORMAZIONI

Le disposizioni sul parcheggio al sospiere saltuariamente a causa dalla neve, dalle condizioni mete o da altre emergenze. Siete pregi all'indirizzo [www.nyc.gov/dot](http://www.nyc.gov/dot) o 311 per ulteriori informazioni.

DTS per sordi o udiolesi: chiami (212) 504-4115.

#### NE ERAVATE A CONC

Che cosa contiene un nome? Era differenza di significato contenut parcheggio?

	NON FERMARSI (NO STOPPING)
Posso fermarmi per far scendere o salire un passeggero?	No
Posso fermarmi per scaricare o caricare un pacco o della merce lungo il marciapiede?	No

## New Parks Department Signs

As part of the citywide language access initiative, Parks has begun an extensive program to introduce multi-lingual signs to sites citywide. Posted at the perimeters and inside outdoor parks, beaches, ball-fields and playgrounds, these signs will be among the most visible steps in the citywide language access program. Parks has already posted nearly 3,000 signs and is continuing to develop and fabricate new formats and additional signs.

Parks has matched the

three languages in the signs to the most commonly spoken languages in different community districts. Parks also keeps a section of universal symbols for each sign, and has introduced some creative signs in multiple languages to encourage responsible barbecuing and removal of waste into litter baskets. Three to five language signs have also been posted at walk in facilities including recreation centers and marinas.

In the last year, Parks also began a complete

revamp of its citywide signs catalogue to support the language access initiative, and continues to look at new ways to post clear, attractive and multi-lingual signs. Parks' citywide sign shop is located at the 5-Boro Operations and Technical Services facility on Randalls Island. In an average year, the sign shop, along with contractor assistance, fabricates 20,000 signs and engravings.

### Customer Service Group Mayor's Office of Operations

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Elizabeth Weinstein  
Director  
Office of Operations

### About the Customer Service Group

The Customer Service Group (CSG) was established by Mayor Bloomberg's Executive Order 115 to support and implement the mandates of the order. CSG is part of the Mayor's Office of Operations.



New multi-lingual Parks sign