

# i-technology

## Transit Tracker by Text Message

### TriMet option first in nation

TriMet riders have a new way to receive real-time arrival information for buses and MAX:

text message. This arrival information option, one of the first in the nation, is useful for mobile phone users who have text message service plans but not more expensive mobile web service plans.

The text message option provides riders with an arrival time trip tool for any of TriMet's 7,000 bus stops or 84 MAX stations and can be easily used in environments with a lot of background noise such as high-traffic streets. Those who have tested the new tool report that the speed is a great benefit to them, that the results come back

in seconds, taking less time than calling TriMet's TransitTracker by phone or pulling up an app on a smartphone.

Riders wanting to receive TransitTracker arrival times by text message can text a Stop ID Number to 27299. The service will send back the arrival times for the buses or trains that serve that stop. Adding the line number or MAX line to the Stop ID texted to 27299 generates arrival times for that particular line.

Examples: Text 3633 for the next arrivals at Madison & Grand; Text 3633 14 for only the

next 14-Hawthorne arrivals at Madison & Grand; Text 8377 red for only the next Red Line arrivals at Rose Quarter MAX Station.

Stop ID Numbers are posted at just over half of TriMet's bus stops and all of its MAX and WES stations. TriMet is posting more and more Stop ID Numbers at bus stops all the time. All Stop ID Numbers are available at [trimet.org](http://trimet.org) using the Stops & Stations tool or at the agency's mobile site, [m.trimet.org](http://m.trimet.org).

TriMet is also working to make Service Alerts available by text message.

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## Pay-TV Viewers Dwindle

With more than 100 million subscribers dutifully paying their bills each month, the big cable, satellite and telco TV carriers still have plenty of viewers to call their own. Last quarter, however, the total number of pay-TV subscribers saw an overall drop — the first time that's ever happened, according to a recent report.

The numbers from the research firm of SNL Kagan show that about 216,000 pay-TV subscribers bailed during the second quarter of 2010, compared with 378,000 couch potatoes gained over the same period last year.

While satellite providers like Dish and DirecTV and telecommunications-based TV carriers like AT&T's U-verse and Verizon FiOS garnered 81,000 and 414,000 new subscribers, respectively, cable TV operators lost about 711,000 customers, for a net loss of 216,000 subscribers.

The SNL Kagan researchers say most of the loss is attributable to the lousy economy, as well as the fact that the second quarter of the year is "seasonally slow" due to factors like college students switching off their accounts for the summer.