

A Checklist of
ELECTRONIC TICKET MACHINE
ISSUING POINTS
on British Railway
and Light Rail Systems

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INTRODUCTION

When the first railways opened, tickets were simply slips of paper with all the details written in by hand. Thomas Edmondson, at the time, working on the Newcastle and Carlisle Railway, devised a more efficient system that consisted of small pieces of card, each pre-printed with all the journey details and stored in racks. This system was very popular with railways around the world and continued for many years. A disadvantage was that there were many ticket types and numerous stations which took up much space. A method to speed up ticket issue would be to have a machine in the ticket office. Tickets would be printed on demand and so reduce the number of different tickets held in stock.

Way back in 1911, the Great Western Railway experimented with Regina machines which used blank edmondson cards. The pre-nationalisation companies tried a few machines, in particular Rapidprinter type tickets printed on a blank roll.

British Railways' first real attempt at mechanisation was around 1955 with the Ultimatic. This machine issued and dated a ticket at a press of a lever. Although pre-printed and basically of the same layout as the edmondson ticket, the advantage here was speed of issue. The Multiprinter and Flexiprinter, printed on blank edmondson cards after the required printing plate was selected. The Omniprinter was used at small stations, particularly on the Midland region, and by conductors on trains. Stations were shown as numbered codes which were identified by a list of stations printed by the machine. Additionally, a pre-printed list was sometimes shown on the reverse. The Handiprinter again issued tickets from a roll but station names were printed instead of codes. The NCR type 51 used large cards with the destination pre-printed, the ticket was inserted in the machine where the issuing station, date, fare and ticket type were printed.

The Southern region continued with the edmondson, but printed vertically, and used NCR type 21 machines that were similar to the NCR51 but printed just the fare and date. This system did not save space, since printed stocks were still required for each station as well as the numerous types. The saving here being on the accounting side, where the machine kept a record of the cash taken. The Rapidprinter was widely used on London Transport, with machines in the ticket office and coin-operated machines for passenger use.

During the 1980's, the computerised ticket machine was a possibility. Machines could be linked to a central computer system, allowing data to be retrieved from machines in the ticket office, as well as updating machines with the latest fares, etc. Dot matrix printers allow the use of variable styles of print. Also dispensing with the need to replace printing plates due to fare increases etc.

As a result of Privatisation, British Rail has been split into a number of separate Train Operating Companies (TOC's) the whole is now referred to as National Railways. However, apart from revised conditions, this has had little impact on tickets.

This publication lists the issuing points of electronic or computer based ticket issuing machines on National rail network, London Underground and other light railway systems. The lists show the window number or machine identity, station name as shown on tickets including variations and the first day of use at each station, where known. Except for the prototype machines, machine numbers for APTIS, PORTIS, SPORTIS and Tribute have not been included due to the frequent movements between windows and stations.

Since December 1998, some station names have been suffixed by a dot. These have been seen on tickets issued from APTIS, SPORTIS, Tribute and Ascom B8050 machines. These are not listed under the specific machine listings, but an appendix lists the stations known.

Note: An "*" following a machine location indicates that the machine number or station name has changed or the machine has been removed.