

Total Computer Group's Electronic Citation Solution: *Improving Accuracy, Saving Time, Improving Officer Safety and Recapturing Lost Revenue*

Electronic Citations (eCitations), also known as Electronic Ticketing (eTicketing), allow public safety officers to enter most of the required citation information into an electronic form automatically, thereby automating the citation process. This is done by either scanning the bar code or magnetic stripe on the violator's driver's license, or through a connection to the state's DMV or NCIC databases. Total's citation software greatly simplifies the data entry process and helps prevent errors, ensuring data accuracy. Vehicle information and violation details are quickly populated, as drop down menus assist the officer with completing the citation. Total's solution makes it simple to collect information and maintain consistency with paper-based procedures, making it extremely easy for users to adopt the new system. Once all of the violator data is collected and entered in the mobile computer, the information is saved and a citation is printed. Multiple instances of the same citation can be printed with multiple infractions compiled from a single citation entry. The resulting citation(s) is/are neat, accurate and completely legible. Improved legibility, consistency and accuracy eliminate discrepancies that can lead to contested citations being waived or overturned.

Benefits

Improves Accuracy

Approximately 10 percent of all citations received by courts contain at least one error, according to a University of Pittsburgh School of Law study that concluded "Electronic ticketing has the ability to eliminate most, if not all, of these types of errors...". When officers issue citations manually, names can be misspelled, addresses can be entered incorrectly and the wrong statute can be entered. Even correct information can be written illegibly by an officer writing on a pad at the side of a car. Errors can still occur after the citation has been issued, as clerks must now enter that same handwritten information into a variety of records systems.

Saves Time

Electronic Citations enable an officer to clear traffic stops three to five times faster. Electronic systems allow officers to issue a citation in just 2 to 3 minutes, compared to manual systems taking up to 10 to 15 minutes. In addition to the time saved in the field, there is also no need for clerks or officers to transcribe and re-enter records into a separate computer system, which provides a tremendous amount of time and labor savings, and minimizes any chance of new errors. With Total's electronic citation system, information is recorded once - in the field. There is never a need for additional manual processing, and the information is quickly available to everyone with access to the records system.

Improves Officer Safety

Electronic Citation systems enable law enforcement agencies to meet ever-growing data collection and reporting requirements without compromising officer safety or effectiveness. Completing the citation process in less time increases officer safety, as the third leading cause of death for on-duty officers is being struck by a vehicle. The preferred approach is to return to the vehicle to complete the citation, as is the process for electronic citations. Officers who write tickets outside of the vehicle are *400% more likely to be killed* at the scene than an officer who is inside the vehicle.

Recaptures Lost Revenue

In addition to the productivity boosts translating to dollars saved, electronic citation systems also recapture potentially lost revenue by reducing error rates and improving enforcement and collection. Studies have found error rates ranging from 5 to 20 percent in handwritten citations. These prevailing error rates encourage offenders to contest citations, which puts a burden on police and courts and reduces the revenue collected. By implementing an electronic citation solution, agencies can recapture a significant percentage of that lost revenue.

Summary

Operational policing requirements for law enforcement agencies continue to grow, even if budgets don't. Electronic citation systems are the practical choice for efficiently meeting new administrative requirements while improving safety and accuracy in the field. An additional benefit is the financial impact an electronic citation system has on an agency. When you consider the productivity gains of officers in the field as well as the elimination of most of the clerical activity associated with citation processing, electronic citations systems often pay for themselves quickly and continue to provide significant financial benefits long after the system has been paid for and fully deployed.