

## **6. INFORMATION DELIVERY**

Efficient information delivery is the ultimate goal of all simulcasting operations. This information can pertain to racing, mutuels, accounting, legal, PR, etc. Information can be broken down into two broad areas, Track to Track and Track to Patron.

### ***Track To Track Information Delivery***

Host and Guest Tracks must have open lines of communications with the designated contact persons at each site. This network is utilized for processing necessary paperwork, contracts, approvals, and Information Sheets.

The Host track must recognize the relationship of Guest tracks as clients requiring the same timely information as on-track departments and patrons. The Guest track is an extension of the Host's information network and must be treated as a vital component.

The Simulcast Coordinators for both the Host and Guest tracks must be responsible to follow up on all paperwork, including contracts, decoders, press information, and post times for races.

### **Pre-race Day Information**

Certain information should be dispensed well in advance of event(s) taking place:

- A directory of simulcast contacts, listing the specific person to contact for each area of responsibility. This directory should include direct extension numbers and should be updated every time a change is made. The TRA and Equibase have developed a directory that is available on the Internet (see Internet Section) at [www.tra-online.com/simdir.html](http://www.tra-online.com/simdir.html).
- Stakes nominations should be updated daily and sent to prospective sites for consideration and scheduling of event.
- Post times should be issued to simulcast outlets in a timely fashion.
- Satellite coordinates and decoder requirements.
- Program/Past Performance information transmitted via database files (Equibase or related service). Program pages should always include the date of the race as a safeguard.
- PR/Marketing stats and information on races transmitted via pc, fax or general mailing. Guest tracks should receive jockey/trainer/driver stats at least weekly. Those using Equibase can download this information, otherwise it should be sent by the Host.

### **Race Day Information**

Race day information pertains primarily to changes in races since the printing of the programs. The collection and dissemination of race day information should be done at a central location by a specifically designated person. The Host track should have all preliminary changes either

sent or made available to its Guests at least one hour before its first post. The Simulcast Coordinator should make the disseminator of this information aware of any special requirements for race day information, such as specific requirements of the Guest's Racing Commission. Race day changes include:

- Any carryovers
- Post times
- Scratches
- Jockey changes
- Track condition
- Overweights
- Weather
- Late workouts
- Medications
- Changes of equipment

To facilitate the immediate and widespread dissemination of this information throughout the day, TRA and Equibase established the Track Changes Page ([www.equibase.com/scratch/index.cfm](http://www.equibase.com/scratch/index.cfm)) on the Internet. Changes are listed track-by-track and also chronologically. On faxes, any updated changes should be highlighted in some manner. When a hub is involved, the host should notify the hub and the hub should notify all of its satellites. This is extremely important to those satellites using separate pool wagering that do not have a direct contact to the Host. Post time changes should be sent immediately.

Any scheduling changes such as cancellations and racing day changes need to be communicated as soon as they happen. Simulcast calendars must be kept current.

## **Results/Charts**

Race results and charts should be made available to simulcast outlets for media needs via pc or central collection point (Equibase, et al.). Any corrections to said results/charts should also be made available to simulcast outlets, along with any pertinent news releases.

## ***Track to Patron***

The patron is the lifeblood of both Host and Guest sites. Effective customer service mandates up-to-date information delivery to patrons. By definition, information delivery requires the information be relayed to patrons, not just made available. Patrons should be supplied with past performances, race change information, and any other information which would help them handicap and/or wager, including a simulcast schedule at multiple product outlets. Most of the information comes from the track-to-track delivery of information outlined in the previous section.

As a minimum, the Host video production should include a crawl providing all race changes, which should be included with the video as much as possible.

All Guests should have convenient areas to view all changes at one time. It must be kept current with updates as they are furnished by the Host.

Exotic probables and will-pays should be made as accessible as possible to patrons. This could be part of the Host's video feed or a separate graphic.

### **Programs/Past Performance Information**

The primary purpose of developing standardized procedures for the drawing of races, preparation of program information, and the printing of programs and other past performance carriers (*Daily Racing Form*) is to get this information to the bettors as soon as possible. Many tracks are operating on a 72 hour/no scratch time policy so programs can be available to patrons in the smaller satellite locations at least by the morning of the day before the races.

### **Race Day Information - Changes and Condition Updates**

Regular bettors have done most of their handicapping by the time they get to the track or betting outlet. At this point, they need weather and track conditions, scratches, jockey changes, and other racing updates. If possible, this information should be given by the track announcer as well as displayed on TV monitors.

If the simulcast involves a small number of events, changes should be given throughout the day, along with live race changes. If multiple cards are being simulcast, changes should be repeated on those monitors dedicated to a specific simulcast card.

### **Handicapping Information/Selections**

A pre-race handicapping show can be very helpful to patrons. The same is true of any late workout information, which should be announced or posted. When a Guest site is only simulcasting, the handicapping show can be part of the video feed from the Host track.

### **Results and Payoffs**

Results and payoffs need to be posted as soon as possible. This usually is not a problem when individual races are simulcast, but can get more complicated when multiple cards are being presented.

Immediate payoffs increase the "churn" on subsequent races and have a positive effect on customer relations. It is particularly important for timely results and payoffs for special wagers such as the Breeders' Cup Pick-6, which may attract bettors who will not be returning in the immediate future and want to collect their winnings the same day.

Bettors also need "Will Pay" prices for Daily Doubles, Pick-3s, and Pick-4s, as applicable.



## POLICY ADVOCATED BY NTRA SIMULCAST TASK FORCE

### MUTUEL PRICING

A source of confusion that was identified in meetings with simulcast patrons was the way payoffs for wagers are displayed by different tracks.

While some states regulate how payoffs are displayed (e.g. California by minimum available wager) the Simulcast Task Force has adopted the following standard:

- Payoffs for all wagers should be displayed based upon a \$2 wager.
- For those tracks unable to meet this standard, all payoffs should be preceded by the amount of the wager the payoff represents.

## *Modes of Information Delivery*

Given the advancement of technology, there are several modes of transmitting race/simulcast information listed as follows:

### **Equibase Track Changes Page**

The Equibase Track Changes Page is available on the Internet as a hot link from the Equibase web site ([www.equibase.com/scratch/index.cfm](http://www.equibase.com/scratch/index.cfm)). Host tracks can access the page with a password assigned by Equibase to post the latest changes and updates to their racing card as they occur. The changes are listed on a track-by-track basis as well as chronologically. Guest sites, fans, and anyone else with Internet access can view the posted changes. The Changes Page is the most effective mode of transmitting updated race/mutuel/simulcast information.

### **Fax/Phone**

Although the industry is migrating towards making the Equibase Track Changes Page the standard mode of transmitting information, the current standard is via fax. Information can be sent from the Host to several Guests quickly and efficiently.

- The level of efficiency of faxing information is directly dependent upon the accuracy of the fax telephone list. Guest sites need to make sure the Hosts have the correct contact person and fax number. The contact person is directly responsible for distributing information to the appropriate departments.
- **Broadcast Fax** - When faxes need to be sent to a large number of locations simultaneously, it may be more time and cost efficient to employ a broadcast fax service, which can send a fax to 100 or more locations within a few minutes. This is the best medium for sending out late changes on race day. It is expensive, but can be cost effective if used properly.
- **Fax on Demand** - This method is commonly used by Host sites with numerous Guests. Guests are responsible for initiating information requests, while Hosts are

responsible for having the data available at a pre-arranged time. This works well for non-time sensitive information such as press releases, overnights, program pages, and pre-race day changes. Using fax on demand for late changes or scratches on race day, however, doesn't guarantee the information will be received by the Guest in a timely fashion.



#### **POLICY ADVOCATED BY NTRA SIMULCAST TASK FORCE**

##### **RACE DAY CHANGES**

With many tracks and off-track wagering facilities conducting whole card simulcasting, the posting and distribution of race day changes is a priority. Often, posted fax copies are of poor quality making it difficult to view crucial information. The Simulcast Task Force reviewed samples and fax-tested possible formats and fonts before adopting the format presented at the end of this chapter. The format is available in both Lotus and Excel spreadsheet formats or can be recreated in the software format of your choice.

## ***800 & 900 Numbers***

Some tracks and wagering outlets use 800 or 900 numbers for changes and race results. Unless the site is simulcasting only, these numbers are usually reserved primarily for information on live races. They are being used more and more frequently, particularly in jurisdictions allowing telephone betting.

## ***The Internet***

A user-friendly web site that includes all pertinent simulcast information can be an efficient mode of information delivery. It can be used to send simulcast information packages, contracts, and laser quality program pages. The internet provides a reasonable degree of security using account names and passwords, which allows more sensitive data to be sent over phone lines.

Many racetracks have their own web sites on the Internet. The TRA web site ([www.tra-online.com](http://www.tra-online.com)) is a central location for information, track data, and other industry resources. The TRA web site contains subscription information about the TRA-L email list for predominantly simulcasting issues, a directory of simulcast contacts, the Standardized Simulcast Agreement and, along with the Equibase web page, hotlinks to individual tracks' web sites. To subscribe to the TRA-L email list, complete a simple sign-up form available from [www.tra-online.com/tra-l.html](http://www.tra-online.com/tra-l.html).

Web sites should include:

- Post Times/Race(s) Numbers (weekday, weekend, & special)
- Wagering Information
- Contact Information/Phone Numbers

- Results/Charts
- Racing Dates
- Scratches and Changes
- General Information and Racing Updates

Equibase also posts entries and results, but the completeness and timeliness of this information is dependent on individual tracks sending their data.

In addition to the Equibase Track Changes page, the TRA has created a National Directory of Simulcast Contacts which provides the names, phone, and fax numbers of key simulcast personnel at wagering facilities. This information is posted on the TRA internet site, [www.tra-online.com/simdir.html](http://www.tra-online.com/simdir.html), for instant availability.

### ***Tote to Tote Transmissions***

The key to using this mode is the development and adoption of ITSP Version 5.14 and higher, which allows standardized tote settlement files, as referenced in Chapter 5, page 5.3.



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RACE DAY FORMAT

**Churchill Downs**

Program Changes

Date:	November 19, 1998
Day:	Thursday
Weather:	Cloudy, 61°
Forecast:	Cloudy, Mid 60's
Track Condition:	Fast
Turf Condition:	Firm

**Pick-Six**

**Carryover:**

Race	Scratches	Overweights	Jockey & Equipment Changes	Post Times
1			#4 – Mike Morgan	1:05
2	#4 – Lt. Red	#10 +1		1:34
3				2:02
4	#7 – La War #12 – Tanners Creek #13 – Luftikus			2:32
5	#11 – Super Clemente #12 – Ingenius #13 – Sunshine Noble		#2 – John Court	3:02
6				3:32
7	#5 – Stormn Hanna #11 – B K's dancer #12 – Second Degree			4:02
8		#6 +2		4:31
9				4:59

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