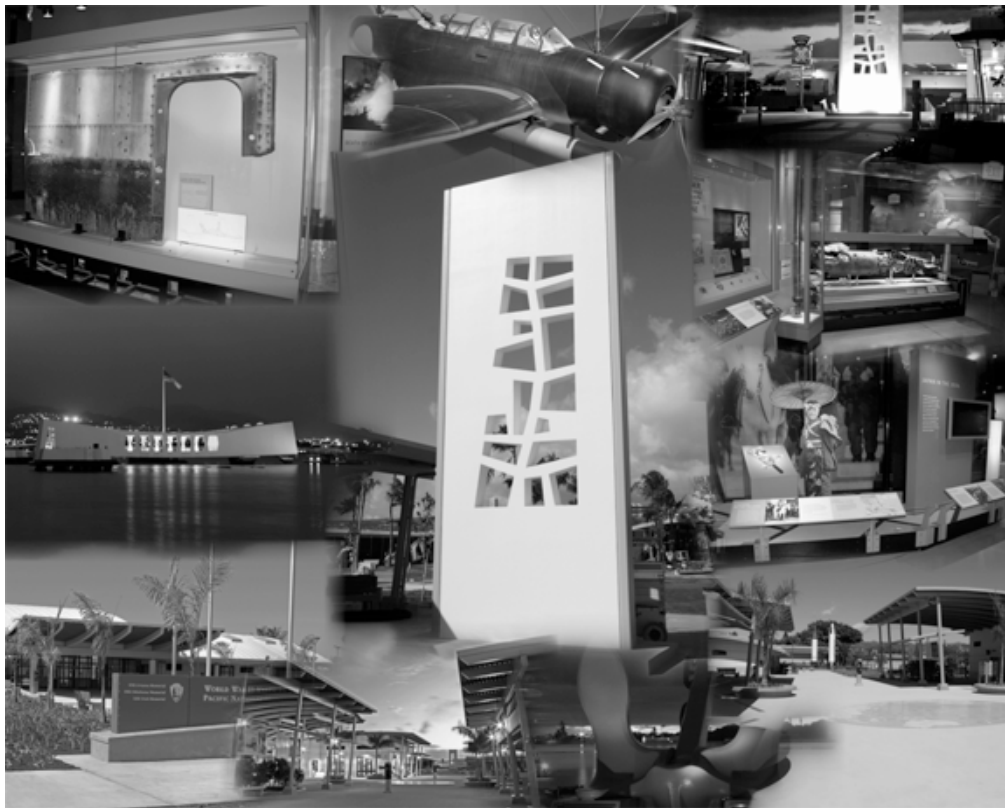




# World War II Valor in the Pacific National Monument Ticketing System Study

*Spring 2011*





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# **World War II Valor in the Pacific National Monument Ticketing System Study**

*Spring 2011*

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The National Park Service, Natural Resource Stewardship and Science office in Fort Collins, Colorado publishes a range of reports that address natural resource topics of interest and applicability to a broad audience in the National Park Service and others in natural resource management, including scientists, conservation and environmental constituencies, and the public.

Data in this report were collected and analyzed using methods based on established, peer-reviewed protocols and were analyzed and interpreted within the guidelines of the protocols.

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# Executive Summary

In March of 2011 the Park Studies Unit at the University of Idaho conducted a three-part study of the ticketing system at World War II Valor in the Pacific National Monument consisting of 1) a survey of 1,304 park visitors, 2) focus groups with commercial tour companies, and 3) a case study of ticketing systems at other recreational, cultural, and historical sites.

This report describes visitors to World War II Valor in the Pacific National Monument and their opinions on and use of its ticketing system, park partners' and commercial tour operators' opinions of and suggestions for the ticketing system, and other site managers' experiences with ticketing systems.

Highlights of the results include:

## 1. Visitor profile

- **Demographics:** Survey respondent ages ranged from 16 to 91 years. The majority (47%) were between 40 and 60 years old. Thirty-two percent of visitors came to the park with a commercial guided tour group. Most visitors (65%) were in family groups. Eighty percent of visitors were from the U.S., with 14% from California, 8% from Hawaii, 8% from Illinois, and smaller percentages from 48 other states. Of the 261 international visitors (5%) that spoke English, 53% were from Canada, 26% from Australia, and smaller percentages from 21 other countries.
- **Visit experience:** Forty-eight percent of visitors experienced waiting time in line to obtain tickets for a program that culminates in a visit of the USS Arizona Memorial. The wait time average was 2.4 minutes, with a maximum time of 60 minutes. Less than 1% rated the wait time as "unacceptable." Fifty-two percent of visitors experienced "dwell time" (the time between obtaining a ticket and the program start time) of 90 minutes or more. Most visitors (82%) experienced the same level of crowding as expected, or less crowding than expected.

## 2. Commercial tour operators

- Generally tour operators were satisfied with recent changes in the ticketing system, primarily the ability to obtain tickets in advance for their clients. Some issues remain for park management to address, such as equity between companies' access to advance tickets, clear communication regarding changes in park policies and procedures, the physical logistics of obtaining tickets, and relations between National Park Service staff and tour operators.
- Commercial operators supported an on-line system for obtaining advance tickets as a means of mitigating many issues. Tour operators offered suggestions for improving the visitors' experience, including improved handicap access, enhanced interpretive opportunities, and the quality of the experience at World War II Valor in the Pacific National Monument and on the USS Arizona Memorial.

### 3. Ticketing systems at other recreational, cultural, and historic sites

- Over half the sites studied (60%) offer advance ticket reservations via on-line reservation systems. Of these, five sites use their own system, five sites use Recreation.gov, and one site uses Extreme Tickets.
- Some advantages of using an on-line system for advance reservations included: convenience and flexibility for the visitor; less time waiting in line; obtaining visitor data for the park; improvements in accountability. Disadvantages included: misinformed ticket sales agents resulting in poor customer service; technology glitches and connectivity issues. Among companies that did not use online reservation systems, advantages included: flexibility; no additional cost to visitors; no issues with no-shows. Disadvantages were: increased wait time for visitors; accountability issues; multiple databases to handle.

### 4. Park partners

- Park partners are non-profit organizations that work alongside World War II Valor in the Pacific National Monument to preserve Pearl Harbor history and tell its story. They include the Battleship Missouri Memorial, the USS Bowfin Museum, the Pacific Aviation Museum, and the Pacific Historical Parks. Partners were supportive of recent changes to the World War II Valor in the Pacific National Monument ticketing system, as it resulted in shorter ticket lines, while acknowledging that lines still form on busy days and the park does run out of tickets.
- An on-line advance reservation system would allow visitors more flexibility and would generate useful data on visitor use, scheduling, circulation, etc. An on-line system would also help inform visitors as to partner sites and the availability of other Pearl Harbor activities.
- Suggestions were made regarding ways that the park and its partners could work more closely together, specifically, using technology to facilitate ticketing, information, marketing, donor opportunities, memberships, etc. The current system of two ticket windows – one for NPS and one for partners – could eventually be combined into one window, serving all sites.

This report, which demonstrates World War II Valor in the Pacific National Monument's continuing commitment to refine its ticketing system and improve the park visitor's experience, concludes with recommendations for further changes and improvement. Three alternatives are presented, with advantages and disadvantages of each. A ticket system that is efficient, accessible, and perceived as equitable to all stakeholders – visitors, tour companies, park partners, and NPS personnel – is a goal worthy of further efforts.

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# I. Introduction

The World War II Valor in the Pacific National Monument receives over a million visitors a year, despite physical limits to the number of visitors who can be accommodated at the monument's most popular site, the USS Arizona Memorial. With the dual mission of protecting resources while providing quality experiences for visitors, the National Park Service faces the challenge of balancing access with resource protection. To accomplish this balance, an innovative interpretive program has been developed for the USS Arizona Memorial that involves an orientation, a 23-minute documentary film, a shuttle boat ride to the USS Arizona and an exploration of the memorial. The shuttle boat system was specifically designed to accommodate the limited physical carrying capacity of the memorial.

During peak visitation, visitor demand to access the USS Arizona Memorial exceeds its carrying capacity. In such situations, access can be allocated using several different methods, including; 1) advance reservation; 2) lottery, 3) queuing (first-come-first serve); 4) pricing; and 5) merit (such as membership privileges, etc.). Federal legislation prohibiting a fee to visit the Memorial eliminated pricing as an option for allocating access. The most common systems in situations similar to World War II Valor in the Pacific National Monument involve reservations, queuing, or a hybrid of both systems.

A ticketing system that includes elements of both queuing and advance reservations was implemented to accommodate this demand in an equitable manner and to better distribute use. A primary goal of the ticketing system was that it improve the visitor experiences by reducing wait time and making it easier for visitors to schedule their experience..

This report describes the study of the ticketing system at the USS Arizona Memorial conducted at by the Park Studies Unit (PSU) at the University of Idaho. The overall objectives of the project were to:

- assess the current ticketing system at the park to identify areas that may need improvement;
- investigate other existing systems to understand the strengths and weaknesses of different systems;
- recommend improvements.

While there have been earlier attempts to assess the ticketing system, this was the first study conducted following the construction of the new visitor center complex. In addition, this study approaches the problem from a holistic viewpoint which takes into account multiple perspectives of the park's stakeholders including visitors, commercial tour operations, and park partners. In addition, the National Park Service dual mission is reflected throughout the study process.

Data were collected and triangulated through multiple qualitative and quantitative sources. The project includes three main components: 1) a visitor survey to obtain visitors' opinions about the current ticketing system; 2) focus group sessions with travel companies and park partners to obtain their perspectives; and 3) comparative analyses of other sites with similar settings to examine possible solutions/improvements to the park's ticketing system. Archived visitor comments from the park's

comment cards, a previous visitor study, and archived information from a previous study of ticketing system were utilized for triangulation.

This report includes a methods section that describes the study procedure. The results section describes findings of each component of the study. The recommendation section presents conclusions from study findings and recommendations of ways to improve the system. The appendix section includes 1) the survey questionnaire; 2) focus group transcripts.

## **II. Background**

The USS Arizona Memorial, dedicated in 1962 to commemorate military personnel killed in the Pearl Harbor attack on December 7, 1941, was managed by the U.S. Navy until 1980, when the National Park Service assumed management. On December 5, 2008, President Bush used powers granted by the Antiquities Act to designate World War II Valor in the Pacific National Monument. This new monument incorporates a diverse array of nine sites across three states, including five sites in Hawaii related to the battle of Pearl Harbor, three sites in Alaska related to battles in the Aleutian Islands, and one site in California related to the internment of Japanese Americans. The Hawaii sites include the USS Arizona Memorial, the USS Oklahoma Memorial, the USS Utah Memorial, six Chief Petty Office bungalows on Ford Island, and six mooring quays that once constituted part of Battleship Row in Pearl Harbor. The shuttle boats used to transport visitors from the park grounds to the USS Arizona Memorial are maintained and operated through a cooperative agreement between the National Park Service and the U.S. Navy.

Visitation to the park increased from 855,000 visitors 1981 to 1.4 million visitors in 2010. In order to visit the USS Arizona Memorial visitors must first obtain a ticket. The ticket is for a program that begins with an orientation video, followed by a shuttle boat ride to the memorial, a 15-30 minute self-guided tour on the memorial, and a return trip to the visitor center complex. A maximum of 300 people are allowed on the memorial at any given time. To accommodate this limit, shuttle boats with a capacity of 150 people are used to transport visitors to and from the memorial. After unloading a group at the memorial, the previous group boards the shuttle boat and returns to the visitor center dock. During the transition both incoming and out-going groups are briefly on the memorial at the same time. With 20 scheduled programs, a maximum of 3,000 people are able to visit the memorial in a day. During the busy season, the number of programs may increase to accommodate 4,500 visitors a day.

The ticketing system and policies have evolved over time with the increase in visitation and development of World War II Valor in the Pacific National Monument. To distribute use evenly and equitably, a date- and time-specific ticketing system was developed. Park staff, on a first-come, first-served basis, hand out tickets when the visitor center opens. The current system does not utilize automated ticket distribution such as on-site kiosks or web-based ticketing. Nor does the system allow the general public to make reservations in advance. Tickets are generally handed out in chronological order, with visitors receiving tickets for the next available program time. However, if a visitor requests a program time later in the day, the staff member accommodates the request.

Visitors are advised to arrive early to obtain a ticket, sometimes resulting in long waiting lines early in the morning. Visitors arriving later in the day may not be able to obtain tickets, especially during the busy summer months. A proportion of tickets are set aside to accommodate large groups such as commercial tours and educational groups. Group organizers may reserve these tickets by submitting a request in advance.



Photo 1: Park entrance in 2000



Photo 2: Park entrance in 2011

In December 2010, construction of the new visitor center complex - including ticket areas, museums, a gift shop, parking lots, and an overall upgrade of park grounds - was completed. The complex resulted in several significant improvements to the visitor experience. The wait time for tickets was reduced substantially by moving from a boat-number system to the current timed ticket system. Some modifications were applied to accommodate larger groups with the option of advance reservations, especially on days when cruise ships arrive. These changes have significantly improved the visitor experience by reducing wait time to obtain a ticket, and offering more engaging activities in which visitors may participate while waiting for their program to begin. Photos 1 and 2 above illustrate the situations in 2000 and 2011. The line of visitors waiting to obtain tickets today is significantly less than in 2000. In addition, the waiting line under the new system only occurs in the morning before 7:30 am, whereas in 2000 there was often a waiting line throughout the day.

Table 1 summarizes visitor comments from comment cards collected at the park from 2007 to 2010, before construction was completed. The comment cards were not distributed at random and therefore cannot be generalized to represent the opinions of all park visitors. In addition, some of the concerns were temporary problems related to construction (such as the ticket booth location). However, these comments are helpful for diagnosing potential problems the park could address in order to provide a better visitor experience and served as a starting point to identify areas of the current ticket system that need improvement. Table 1 summaries include comments specific to ticketing and related services. A complete list of comments can be found in the Table 13b.

In addition to the USS Arizona at World War II Valor in the Pacific National Monument, there are other sites that commemorate historic events of Pearl Harbor. These sites include the Battleship Missouri Memorial managed by the USS Missouri Memorial Association, the USS Bowfin Submarine Museum and Park managed as part of the Pacific Fleet Submarine Memorial Association, and the Pacific Aviation Museum Pearl Harbor on Ford Island. These organizations are park partners who play important roles in providing a complete story of the events at Pearl Harbor. In addition, the NPS maintains a partnership with Pacific Historic Parks, a non-profit organization that supports and funds educational materials, exhibits, and interpretive programs through donations, memberships and bookstore sales.

Table 1. Visitor comments regarding the ticket system 2007-2010

N=78 comments

Category	Specific comment	Number of times mentioned
Tickets - access	Ticket sales should be located where one does not have to walk around construction and then back to come to memorial.	9
	Put ticket office to USS Arizona at the USS Arizona Visitor Center.	2
	Ticket check-in at the Bowfin is inconvenient.	1
	Unable to visit memorial due to lack of tickets available.	1
Tickets - distribution	Issue tickets for certain times or for the next day.	1
	It would be helpful to obtain tickets online.	1
	Ticketing procedure very complicated and unorganized.	1
Tickets - paper	Tickets should be recycled for multiple uses.	1
Tickets - system	Need better information about obtaining tickets.	2
	Need separate line for obtaining tickets that require payment.	1
	New ticket system is terrible.	1
	Process of obtaining a ticket is very awkward.	1
Tickets - wording	I noticed that it says "Your America" on the ticket, however not all of us visiting here today are Americans - sounds exclusive, not inclusive.	1
	It was very confusing to have the ticket numbers go in reverse.	1
Waiting	Wait for tours was very long.	4
	Need information on what there is to do while waiting.	3
	Had to wait in line a long time and still did not get to visit memorial.	2
	Better information about having to have tickets and being able to watch video without having to have a ticket.	1

Table 1. Visitor comments regarding the ticket system 2007-2010 (continued)

Category	Specific comment	Number of times mentioned
Information	Positive comments	3
	Announce all tour numbers on public address system; we missed our show because our number was not called.	2
	A 10-minute warning call announcement would be helpful.	1
	Better information about having to have tickets and being able to watch video without having to have a ticket.	1
	It is extremely difficult to understand what is available and where tours are located. Written instructions, summaries, and prices would be helpful.	1
	Limiting and unorganized.	1
	Navy personnel need to be better acknowledged during boat ride.	1
	Need clear instruction about where to go to see the USS Arizona after getting tickets.	1
	Need information on what there is to do at the park.	1
	Print the rule of no bags/purses and diaper bag for the hotels.	1
	Provide information about the survivors that are interred on the Arizona, how it's performed and maybe a film clip of one of the ceremonies.	1
	Provide park brochures in German.	1
	Provide park brochures in Japanese.	1
	With the tickets for the memorial being gone by noon, visitors do not know to go to the Arizona Museum side for the museum and bookstore.	1
	Your PA system is poor or the person doing the announcements can't speak clearly.	1
Information/ orientation	Need better information about obtaining tickets.	3
	Need information on what there is to do at the park.	2
	I thought changing the tickets would be less confusing. Obviously, nothing has changed.	1
	More clear information and instruction about bag policy is needed.	1
	Need better instruction of when you can and can't take photos.	1
	Need information signs for those standing in line to get tickets. 1. How long the line is. 2. That the security gate is before the ticket booth.	1
Crowding	I was disappointed at how crowded the memorial was.	2
Tour	Positive comments	10
	I have been on this tour many times and this is the very worst.	1
	Tour group size should be smaller.	1
	Tour guide could not provide adequate information about park and its history.	1
	I was disappointed about how short the tour was.	1
Timing	Not enough time to visit the memorial - feel rushed.	1

The current USS Arizona Memorial program is approximately an hour long, beginning with an introductory film, followed by the shuttle boat ride to and from the memorial. At the visitor center complex, the park offers other interpretive opportunities including museums, outdoor exhibits, and an audio tour of the park. Park partners also have an area in the complex where tickets are sold for the other Pearl Harbor sites, a bookstore, and food concessions. “Dwell time,” or the time between when visitors receive their ticket and the program’s start time, is an important factor, as visitors can use this time to explore interpretive opportunities and enhance their park experience.

### **III. Methodology**

This study followed a single-case study design, a common social science research method based on an in-depth investigation of a single individual, group, or event (Yin, 2003). In this instance, the case is the ticketing system currently in place at the USS Arizona Memorial within World War II Valor in the Pacific National Monument. Single case study design can be useful as an evaluation tool for programs and services such as ticketing systems. It offers “stakeholders (those affected by the program) and other interested readers early evidence of program functions. By meeting the goal of case illumination, study results offer insights for the participants but they can also offer findings for program improvement” (Lapan & Quartaroli, 2009, pp.168). Use of multiple sources of data that triangulate on the problem or issue is the distinct characteristic of a case study design (Yin, 2003). By accumulating data from multiple sources and covering all stakeholders, the case study method can be used to develop a complete understanding of the current ticket system at the memorial. To understand multiple perspectives, data were collected from different sources and then triangulated to provide a complete picture. Different methods were applied to collect and generate data from different sources. This section describes the data collection methods applied for each source.

#### **1. Visitor Survey**

A visitor survey was administered at the park site from March 25-30, 2011. This time frame was selected because March is one of the busier months. According to the NPS Public Use Statistics Office, over 100,000 visitors typically visit during March. During the survey period, every fifth visitor to the USS Arizona Memorial was systematically selected and given a questionnaire. Questionnaires were distributed while visitors on the USS Arizona Memorial were waiting in line to return to the visitor center. Visitors over 16 years old were asked to complete the survey on the return boat ride to the visitor center, and to give the completed questionnaire to uniformed personnel at the dock. This survey location was selected because it captured the highest percentage of visitors who experienced the entire process of obtaining tickets and had completed the program. Visitors who declined the survey were asked their age, zip code, group type (tour group vs. independent traveler), and gender to check for non-response bias. Since the focus of this study is the ticketing system, other visitors who did not go through a ticketing process were excluded from the sampling frame.

Overall, 1,304 questionnaires were collected during the survey period. Based on an annual visitation of 1.3 million visitors, the sampling error was  $\pm 2.71\%$ . Less than 1% (12 visitors) declined to participate in the survey. With this low refusal rate, the non-response bias is not significant. However, the questionnaire was only available in English, which may have caused a coverage error (an error which occurs when not all subgroups of the sampling frame are sampled) by inadvertently excluding non-English speaking visitors. In addition, visitors who were not able to obtain a ticket were not included in the survey. However, as there was no shortage of tickets during the survey period, this situation was not encountered except for programs in the afternoon of March 26<sup>th</sup> that were cancelled because of high wind conditions. Since the unavailability of tickets was due to weather rather than an issue with the ticketing system itself, we do not consider this a coverage error. Some of the visitors from these canceled programs returned to visit the park on following days and thus were included in the survey. Some comments pertaining to this unusual condition may appear in the results.

The Park Studies Unit conducted a visitor survey at the USS Arizona Memorial from June 24-30, 2000. The questionnaires were presented in English, Chinese, and Japanese, thus covering a larger audience than the 2010 survey. Questionnaires were systematically distributed to visitors while they were waiting in line to obtain tickets. Visitors who accepted a questionnaire (addressed and postage-paid) were asked to complete it after their visit and mail it back. Although this survey was conducted in a different season and covered a broader sampling frame, the 2000 survey was used as a source to triangulate with current observations.

## **2. Focus Group**

Currently, 99 commercial tour companies operate at World War II Valor in the Pacific National Monument under a Commercial Use Authorization Contract (CUA), serving both packaged tour visitors and independent travelers. Packaged tour visitors book tours in advance from their point of origin and follow a fixed schedule. Independent travelers (referred to as Foreign Independent Travelers, or FITs in the tourism industry) often make a decision to visit local attractions after their arrival in Oahu. While tour companies do have advance information about their tour groups, they often lack information about the FITs until the night before a tour takes place. Since the USS Arizona Memorial is one of the most popular attractions in Hawaii, operation at the park greatly affects tourism business. At the same time, commercial tour companies play an important role at the park as they provide services to a large volume of park visitors. By transporting visitors by shuttle bus and van, the CUAs help to reduce parking pressure at the park. They also contribute to interpretive services by providing tour guides who speak a variety of languages. Scheduled tours also connect the park with other attractions in Hawaii. Because of this special relationship, it is mutually beneficial for the park and the CUAs to work together toward a more efficient ticketing system. Obtaining the CUAs' opinions is a significant aspect of this project as they are important stakeholders.

The 99 CUAs operating at World War II Valor in the Pacific National Monument are diverse in terms of size, services provided, and market segments served. Thus, they face different problems and challenges. In understanding these challenges, it is not appropriate to generalize problems facing the

CUAs. Rather, our goal was to understand and explore the range of problems and concerns from the tourism industry. Thus a qualitative method was deemed the most appropriate for this audience. Specifically, the focus group method was selected as the most applicable method to obtain data in a relatively short period of time and at a low cost.

The focus group approach has been widely adapted and proven beneficial in marketing, consumer, and social science research. This method is used to learn about how people feel about a certain topic and to find a range of opinions across several groups (Kreuger & Casey, 2000). Typically, six to twelve participants are invited to each focus group. The participants in each group can be diverse in demographic characteristics, but should be compatible enough to create a comfortable environment for open dialogue. In this environment the participants can freely express their opinions, ideas, and evaluations of a product, program, or service. We followed a guideline for focus group procedures by Kreuger & Casey (2000).

Letters of invitation to participate in a focus group at the park were sent to all 99 CUAs. The companies were asked to reply with a specific time that would be most convenient for a representative to participate. Email and phone calls were made to confirm time and date with all participants. The participants were also reminded by phone and email the day before the focus group sessions were held. Among 99 CUAs, 21 participants representing 18 CUAs attended four focus groups held between March 24 and March 30, 2011. Group sizes ranged from 2 to 8 participants. The focus groups lasted from 60 to 90 minutes, depending on the number of participants.

Upon arrival at the focus group meeting room at the park, participants were greeted and asked to fill out a name card. The procedures were explained, the OMB regulations and approval were presented, and permission to audio-record the sessions was given by all participants. Two moderators were present to guide the discussions and take notes. After four sessions, theoretical saturation was reached as no new ideas, concerns or problems emerged. One week after the focus group sessions, a follow-up letter was sent to all participants to thank them for their contribution and offer them an opportunity to provide any new ideas that were not addressed during the focus group session. No additional topics arose. The recordings were transcribed for analysis and code names were used to protect participants' privacy.

### **3. Comparative Case Analysis**

In order to formulate a solution for the ticketing system at World War II Valor in the Pacific National Monument, ticketing systems at other historical, cultural, and recreational sites were studied to identify the strengths and weakness of various ticketing strategies. The objectives of this component were not only to research what has been done at other sites but also to find out why certain systems were put in place. In-depth information about each system would not be appropriately obtained via a quantitative method such as a survey. For this reason, the in-depth interview was deemed a more effective method. This component comprised three steps.

1. Case selection: Organizations were identified as "cases." Cases were selected based on the following criteria:

- Relatively high volume of visitation compared with site capacity;



- No fee or a nominal fee charged for the ticket;
  - Accessibility - information about the site was available to researchers and a representative from the organization was available for an interview.
2. Identify interview participants: Emails were sent to all selected cases asking for an in-depth interview with a representative of the organization. The representative was identified as someone in a management position who had knowledge about the site's current ticketing system.
  3. Data collection: All information about the cases was collected through public venues (such as the site's website or press releases and government public information sites such as NPS Public Use Statistics) and tabulated to determine the eligibility of the case. A telephone interview was set up at the time most convenient for the participants. The interview was recorded upon participants' verbal consent.

Thirty-four sites were identified as either public or private entities that provided some sort of tour or program using a ticketing system. Several sites were omitted from the case selection because of their lack of similarity to World War II Valor in the Pacific National Monument. These included sites that charge high ticket fees as a strategy to reduce demand and crowding. Others did not have crowding issues, either because of a low volume of visitation, or because the site is physically able to accommodate high volumes. Of the remainder, 18 sites were identified that met the selection criteria. Among these sites, 15 were in the NPS system, one was a non-NPS federal site, and two were managed by non-profit organizations. The interviews with representatives were recorded and transcribed. The transcripts were then coded and analyzed.

#### **4. Interactive group meeting with park partners**

The Battleship Missouri Memorial managed by the USS Missouri Memorial Association, the USS Bowfin Submarine Museum and Park as a part of the Pacific Fleet Submarine Memorial Association, and the Pacific Aviation Museum Pearl Harbor on Ford Island are key partners in preserving cultural resources and telling the stories of the events at Pearl Harbor. In addition to these organizations World War II Valor in the Pacific National Monument also works closely with Pacific Historic Parks, a non-profit organization that supports and funds educational materials, exhibits, and interpretive programs. These organizations are important stakeholders in the ticketing process. As the USS Arizona Memorial is a focal point of many visitors' trips to Pearl Harbor, their experiences and the amount of time they spend at the park affects visitation to other sites.

There is an established working relationship between the park partners as well as with the NPS. The collective group regularly meets and exchanges information. One of these regular meetings was utilized to gather park partners' opinions about the current ticket system and how it affected their individual operations.

## IV. Results

This section describes findings from the four components of the project study.

### 1. Findings from the Visitor Survey

Data from the visitor survey were coded, entered and analyzed using SPSS® (Statistical Package for Social Science). Results from the 2000 survey were used as comparison for key variables.

#### Visitor demographics

##### Respondent age

Table 2. Respondent age

Age group	Frequency	Percent
20 or younger	66	5.2
21 to 30	194	15.2
31 to 40	219	17.1
41 to 50	349	27.3
51 to 60	265	20.7
61 to 70	149	11.6
71 and older	38	3.0
Total	1280	100.0

The average respondent in the 2011 survey was 45 years old (minimum 16 years, maximum 91 years) compared to the 2000 survey average respondent age of 44 years (minimum 17 years, maximum 82 years). The majority of respondents were between 40 and 60 years old (see Table 2).

##### Visitor group type

Table 3. Organized group type

Type of organized group	N	Frequency	Percent
Visitors with a commercial guided tour group	1128	362	32
Visitors with a school/educational group	866	34	4
Visitors with other organized groups	874	50	6
2000 results: visitors with a commercial guided tour group	465	74	16

This is a “yes/no” question to which visitors answered whether they were with one of three types of organized groups or not (see Table 3). The percentage represents those who indicated “yes.”

The results need to be interpreted with caution. For example, 32% of visitors indicated that they came to the park with a commercial guided tour group (travel/tour companies). This is a conservative estimate. Due to the possibility of coverage error that excluded non-English speakers, the actual percentage may be somewhat higher. However, compared with the 2000 survey when the questionnaires

were translated to other languages, it appeared that the percentage of commercial guided tour groups has increased.

Table 4. Visitors' personal group type

Type of personal group	2011 results		2000 results
	Frequency	Percent	Percent
Alone	59	5.0	4
Family	789	67.3	65
Friends	163	13.9	15
Family & friends	124	10.6	10
Other	37	3.2	5
Total	1172	100.0	

Compared to the 2000 survey results, the personal group type remained relatively stable with the majority of visitors in family groups (67%) or with friends (14%), as shown in Table 4.

## Respondent's place of residence

Table 5a. U.S. visitors

State	Frequency	Percent
California	143	13.9
Hawaii	85	8.3
Illinois	82	8
Washington	74	7.2
Minnesota	57	5.6
Colorado	41	4
Indiana	38	3.7
Ohio	35	3.4
Wisconsin	35	3.4
Michigan	30	2.9
Florida	27	2.6
Arizona	24	2.3
Pennsylvania	24	2.3
New York	23	2.2
Oregon	22	2.1
Texas	20	1.9
USA (unspecified)	19	1.9
Utah	19	1.9
Virginia	19	1.9
Maryland	15	1.5
Idaho	14	1.4
Iowa	13	1.3
Tennessee	13	1.3
Alaska	12	1.2
Massachusetts	11	1.1
New Jersey	11	1.1
Nevada	10	1
Alabama	9	0.9
Kansas	9	0.9
Missouri	8	0.8
South Carolina	8	0.8
New Mexico	7	0.7
North Carolina	7	0.7
Connecticut	6	0.6
Georgia	6	0.6
Montana	6	0.6
Arkansas	5	0.5
Kentucky	5	0.5
Louisiana	5	0.5
12 other states	29	2.8
Total	1026	100.3

Tables 5a and 5b show the distribution of visitors across the U.S. and internationally. Nearly 14% of U.S. visitors were from California, and among international visitors, Canada was the most well-represented country.

Note: Non-English speaking visitors were not included in the survey. The percentages in Table 5b only reflect those who were fluent in English. Some nationalities especially Chinese, Japanese, and Korean

were underrepresented. In the 2000 survey the highest proportion of international visitors were from Japan (42% of international visitors), followed by England (18%) and China (11%).

Table 5b. International visitors

Country	Frequency	Percent
Canada	139	53.3
Australia	68	26.1
United Kingdom	14	5.4
Japan	6	2.3
Germany	5	1.9
China	4	1.5
Norway	3	1.1
Sweden	3	1.1
France	2	.8
Korea	2	.8
New Zealand	2	.8
Switzerland	2	.8
Argentina	1	.4
Austria	1	.4
Costa Rica	1	.4
Denmark	1	.4
Gibraltar	1	.4
Ireland	1	.4
Italy	1	.4
Netherlands	1	.4
Philippines	1	.4
Singapore	1	.4
Spain	1	.4
Total	261	100.0

### Length of time waiting to obtain a ticket

Table 6. Length of wait

Length of wait	Frequency	Percent
No wait	657	52
10 minutes or less	564	45
11-20 minutes	21	2
21 minutes or more	16	1
Total*	1258	100.0

The average wait time to obtain a ticket was 2.4 minutes; mode 0 (no wait time); and median 0 (52% of visitors had no wait time, 48% had to wait).

Notes:

- The maximum wait time was 60 minutes. There were several cases where visitors indicated wait time over 60 minutes. After examining all variables, it was apparent that these respondents misunderstood the question and indicated dwell time between obtaining a ticket to the time they actually boarded the shuttle boat. These cases were omitted as outliers.
- Comparing organized groups and independent travelers: 66% of organized groups indicated no wait time while 45% of independent travelers indicated no wait time. However, the average wait time between the two groups was not significantly different (both at 2.4 minutes).
- \*Total percentage does not equal 100 due to rounding.

### Opinions about wait time

Table 7. Opinions about wait time

Rating	Frequency	Percent
Very unacceptable	9	.8
Unacceptable	0	0
Neither/neutral	30	2.5
Acceptable	123	10.5
Very acceptable	1177	86.2
Total	1339	100.0

Ratings of “very unacceptable” occurred at wait times of 15 minutes to 45 minutes. We suspect that in some cases, since “very unacceptable” was the first item in the scale presented on the questionnaire, the respondent may not have read the question carefully and marked the wrong answer choice. However, since less than 1% of respondents indicated their wait time length was “unacceptable,” we did not find that wait time to obtain tickets had a negative impact on visitors’ experience during the survey period.

### Dwell time

Dwell time is defined as the duration between the time visitors obtain a ticket to the time the program starts.

Table 8a. Dwell time

Dwell time	Frequency	Percent
Less than 1 hour	238	22.5
Between 60 and 89 minutes	267	25.3
Between 90 and 119 minutes	297	28.1
2 hours or more	255	24.1
Total	1057	100.0

Table 8b. Other sites visited while waiting for the program (dwell time)

Site	Frequency	Percent
Battleship Missouri Memorial	200	35
USS Bowfin Submarine and Museum	298	52
Pacific Aviation Museum	196	34
USS Oklahoma Memorial	90	16
Other	69	12

“Other” sites visited (n=69) while waiting for the program included the USS Utah, Punchbowl, the museum/exhibits, bookstore/gift shop, and the grounds outside the museum.

Table 8c. Sites visited at other times during this trip (before or after visiting the USS Arizona Memorial)

Site	Frequency	Percent
Battleship Missouri Memorial	451	78
USS Bowfin Submarine and Museum	244	42
Pacific Aviation Museum	213	37
USS Oklahoma Memorial	167	29
Other	47	8

“Other” sites visited (n=47) at other times during the trip included USS Utah, Punchbowl, Ford Island, aircraft carriers, the museum/exhibits, bookstore/gift shop, and the grounds outside the museum.

- Tables 8b and 8c show other Pearl Harbor Historic sites, in addition to the USS Arizona Memorial, visited on this trip. Overall, the most popular site was the Battleship Missouri Memorial followed by the USS Bowfin Submarine and Museum.
- It appears that dwell time has the most effect on visitation at the Battleship Missouri Memorial. While 35% of visitors visited the Battleship Missouri Memorial while waiting for the program at USS Arizona Memorial, an additional 43% visited the site after their USS Arizona Memorial visit. This implies that visitors have a perception that they need to allocate more time to visit the Battleship Missouri Memorial.
- Dwell time seems to have a positive impact on the USS Bowfin’s visitation. Fifty-two percent of USS Arizona Memorial visitors visited the USS Bowfin during dwell time while 42% visited the USS Bowfin as a separate visit from USS Arizona Memorial. This may be explained by the accessibility of the site.
- Dwell time does not seem to have a significant impact on the Pacific Aviation Museum’s visitation, with 34% visiting the site during dwell time and 37% visiting the site as separate from the USS Arizona Memorial visit.

## Combination tickets

Table 9. Interest in a combination ticket

Interested in a combination ticket to visit all Pearl Harbor sites?	Frequency	Percent
Yes	812	63.4
No	135	10.5
Not sure	333	26.0
Total	1280	100.0

- 63% of visitors indicated that they would be interested in a combined ticket to visit Pearl Harbor sites on a fixed schedule (see Table 9).
- While the statistics indicate that there is a potential demand in the market for a combination ticket, information from this survey alone is insufficient for making a decision to invest in such a ticketing system. With this information as a starting point, an additional cost/benefit and a market analysis are needed to conclude whether a combined ticket would be effective.

## Crowding

Table 10a. Perceptions about crowding - 2011 survey

Crowding perception	Frequency	Percent
Didn't know what to expect	103	8.0
More crowded than expected	118	9.2
About the same as expected	687	53.5
Less crowded than expected	376	29.3
Total	1284	100.0

Table 10b. Perceptions about crowding - 2000 survey

Crowding perception	Frequency	Percent
Extremely crowded	58	12.8
Very crowded	79	17.4
Crowded	163	36.0
Somewhat crowded	123	27.2
Not at all crowded	30	6.6
Total	453	100.0

Table 10c. Time of day visitors felt crowded - 2000 survey

Time of day	Frequency	Percent
8 - 11a.m.	118	32.9
11a.m. - 1p.m.	121	33.8
1p.m. - 4p.m.	112	31.3
Can't remember	7	2.0
Total	358	100



- Table 10a shows visitors' perceptions of crowding in the 2011 survey, with 9% of visitors indicating they felt more crowded than expected. Table 10b shows visitors' perceptions of crowding in the 2000 survey. The crowding question in 2000 used a different scale and thus the results are not directly comparable. However, under a conservative approach, taking into account only visitors who indicated that they felt "extremely crowded" or "very crowded," 30% of visitors in 2000 survey felt crowded.
- In the 2011 survey 100% of crowding perceptions occurred before 2p.m; among visitors who felt crowded, only 10% arrived at the site after 11a.m. This means 90% of crowding perceptions occurred before 11a.m. Table 10c shows times of day when visitors felt crowded in the 2000 survey. There was no significant difference at any time during the day.
- While the results of the two surveys are not directly comparable, it is plausible that the perception of crowding has decreased since the opening of the new facility. It is also noteworthy that the crowding perception only occurred in the morning during the 2011 survey while it was all day long in the 2000 survey.
- Although the proportion of visitors who felt crowded is relatively small, the majority of the occurrences were in the morning before 11am. This may be caused by a rush of morning visitors due to their perception that an early arrival would increase their chances of securing a ticket. We have a reason to believe this is a residual of the former ticketing system when visitors had to wait in line a long time to obtain the ticket. This perception may recede over time once a more efficient ticket system is in place.

### **Preferences regarding ticketing and tour time**

Table 11. Preference regarding ability to secure a ticket and tour time

Preference	Frequency	Percent
Securing a ticket is most important	446	35.2
Having a ticket at specific time is most important	358	28.3
Quality of experience is most important	462	36.5
Total	1266	100.0

- 28% of visitors indicated that they were on a prearranged, fixed schedule and that obtaining a ticket for tour time that worked for their schedule was the most important criterion. Thirty-five percent indicated that having a ticket was most important regardless of tour time or quality (see Table 11). 36.5% indicated that tour quality was most important and they would be willing to wait and change their schedule for a high quality tour.
- The results show there is a mix of user groups. There was not a dominant opinion regarding the ability to obtain a ticket. While getting a ticket was most important for some, other visitors placed more value on the quality of the experience and would be willing to tolerate a certain amount of wait time and rescheduling in exchange for a higher quality experience.

### Visitor recommendations to improve the current ticketing system

Visitors were asked “What would you do, if anything, to improve the current ticket system?” Sixty-three percent of visitors (n=829) responded to the question (see Table 12).

Table 12. Recommendations from visitor survey 2011 (Open ended)  
N=907 comments; some visitors made more than one comment.

Comment	Number of times mentioned
Fine as is	517
Tour/tickets were arranged by tour company/driver	74
On-line ticket reservations	61
Ticket reservations in advance	22
Combine ticket with other sites	20
Arrived early to get tickets	11
Wait time to board boat is too long	11
One ticket for all sites	10
More time on the Memorial	7
Less crowding	6
Provide self-ticketing kiosks/machines	6
Better notice about bag check policy	5
Clarify ticket lines/procedures	5
More information on Bowfin/USS Missouri and Aviation Museum transportation/cost/boarding	5
More information/instructions on ticket system	5
Signs/information about tickets prior to entrance	5
Increase parking	4
Ticket window staff could be more informative	4
Website needs more information	4
Charge for tickets	3
Free entrance to all sites for military/federal personnel	3
More frequent tours	3
More staff on site to provide information/history	3
Recycle the tickets	3
Advice on order of visit	2
Allow bags	2
Better/more signage	2
Don't give tickets during high wind advisories	2

Table 12. Recommendations from visitor survey 2011, continued

<b>Comment</b>	<b>Number of times mentioned</b>
Expected Bowfin to be included in ticket	2
Foreign language translations of movie	2
Informational map/signs prior to entrance	2
Not aware that video and USS Arizona were free	2
Signs displaying time currently being ticketed	2
Signs/information indicating cost for each battleship/memorial	2
Smaller tickets to reduce waste	2
Some system for advance information on cancellation due to high winds	2
Tickets to other sites too expensive	2
Tour companies should obtain tickets in advance	2
Unaware tickets can be had for later time	2
Website should post schedule/tour times	2
Would have liked to see the other ships	2
Allow visit to exhibits first, then to Memorial	1
Allow wheelchairs to board first	1
Appreciate free admission	1
Arrange system for giving away unused tickets	1
Better information on handicap access	1
Better signage to Memorial	1
Bus to Missouri took longer than expected	1
Clarify schedules	1
Conflicting information given in Honolulu	1
Do not become too commercial	1
Dress code should be more strict	1
Eliminate tour buses	1
Enjoyed the visit	1
Explain how much time is allowed on the memorial	1
Go Oahu card tickets should be given all at once	1
Group got split up because of ticket times	1
Guides were friendly	1
Hand stamps instead of tickets	1
Hats should be removed	1
Hotels need accurate information on ticket process	1
If sites were closer, visit would take less time	1
Improve parking	1
Increase number of ticket windows	1
Issue tickets in order so groups don't separate	1
Keep site open longer	1
Make sure tours are full	1
Misinformed by hotel regarding wait time	1
More advance information on cancellation due to high winds	1
More flexible time to see more exhibits	1
More food choices	1
More frequent shuttles between sites	1
More information on free options	1
More information on options	1
More information/instructions	1
More Japanese-speaking staff	1
More personnel at ticket window	1

Table 12. Recommendations from visitor survey 2011, continued

<b>Comment</b>	<b>Number of times mentioned</b>
More ticket sales people at American Express store	1
More videos/movies	1
Need clearer instructions from ticket window staff	1
Need more information in theater line	1
Nicer picture on ticket	1
No talking on the Memorial	1
Not aware of lag time between obtaining ticket and tour time	1
Offer family tickets	1
One boat trip for all sites	1
Open all sites at 7:00 am	1
Other sites should be free	1
Packaged tours were burdensome	1
Pass system to reduce time in line	1
Post boat schedule on line	1
Promote guided tour operators	1
Provide audio information	1
Provide flowers to visitors	1
Reverse tickets	1
Save some tickets for afternoon distribution	1
Shuttle was clean, maintained	1
Signs explaining battleship names	1
Something should be done for the handicapped	1
Survey should not be conducted on the Memorial - less talking	1
Tell visitors that flag room is not place to line up for return	1
Thought all sites were free	1
Ticket reservations in advance with fee	1
Ticket window staff could be more informative on procedures	1
Tickets should not be cash only	1
Tour companies reduce ticket availability for walk-in visitors	1
Tour guides need to speak louder	1
Tour guides should remain with visitors	1
Tourism brochures need more transportation information	1
Translators for Japanese tours	1
Use back of ticket for information in Japanese, Korean	1
Use recording for phone information	1
Used a power pass	1
Visit takes an entire day	1
Website should explain time between ticket purchase and start time	1
Website should provide parking information	1
Would like more unstructured time on the USS Missouri	1

Visitors were asked “Is there anything else you would like to tell us about your visit to WW II in the Pacific National Monument?” Sixty-two percent of visitors (n=810) responded to the question (see Table 13a).

Table 13a. Additional comments from visitor survey 2011 (Open-ended)  
N=1,168 comments; some visitors made more than one comment.

<b>Comment</b>	<b>Number of times mentioned</b>
<b>PERSONNEL (6%)</b>	
Knowledgeable staff	13
Friendly staff	10
Helpful staff	8
Professional staff	7
Excellent staff	7
Volunteer was helpful/informative	5
Presence of survivors/veterans was great	4
Courteous staff	2
Navy staff was excellent	2
NPS and Navy staff were excellent	2
Would like more time with volunteers on the Memorial	2
Employee at USS Arizona desk was grumpy	1
Enjoyed rangers' information on Memorial	1
Liked having Navy staff on the shuttle boat	1
More staff to answer questions	1
Navy staff should wear whites	1
Navy staff well dressed	1
Park ranger was fantastic	1
Ranger on Memorial talks too fast	1
<b>INTERPRETIVE SERVICES (18%)</b>	
Educational/informative/learning experience	101
Educational/informative movie	29
Excellent movie	26
Exhibits/museum were well done	25
Movie was well done	18
Enjoyed movie	10
Enjoyed tour	9
Movie was inspiring/moving	8
Enjoyed rangers' information on Memorial	6
Gained better understanding of WWII	6
Exhibits/museum are well balanced	3
Explain more about oil leakage	3
Gained better understanding of WWII history/US-Japan conflict	3
Would like underwater view of the USS Arizona	3
10-minute videos in the museum are effective	2
Add an exhibit of ships' positions when attacked	2
Confused by number of sites/logistics	2
Guides enhanced the experience	2
Have talk/presentation on shuttle boat	2

Table 13a. Additional comments from visitor survey 2011, continued

<b>Comment</b>	<b>Number of times mentioned</b>
<b>INTERPRETIVE SERVICES (continued)</b>	
Provide a hand-out explaining sites/opportunities/rules	2
Provide activity kit/materials for children	2
Translation headsets for video	2
Would like guided tour of the park	2
Add "army" names of troops who died	1
Add a "text for more info" option to tour	1
Appreciate French translation of audio tour	1
Brings historical events to life	1
Did not know length of visit time on Memorial	1
Enactment of gun-loading	1
Extend hours of program	1
Historical account is biased in favor of the Japanese	1
Honor veterans who are in the audience	1
More hands-on activities	1
More letters and personal effects from area residents	1
Movie did not mention importance of carriers in harbor to US	1
Movie got children interested	1
Movie should be online for those who cannot visit	1
Movie should mention Japanese internment camps and atomic bombing	1
New movie was less graphic	1
No mention of Doolittle Raid	1
No mention of necessity of bombing Japan	1
Offer night time tours	1
Provide more information on the Memorial	1
Should announce there are no restrooms on the Memorial	1
Similar bombing occurred in Darwin, Australia	1
Thank you for not translating in Spanish	1
Unable to ask questions	1
Website directions to site unclear	1
Would like more to see on the Memorial	1
Would like park brochure	1
<b>FACILITIES/MAINTENANCE (6%)</b>	
Memorial/facilities much improved	19
Park/facilities well maintained	11
Parking is limited	11
Park/facilities were clean	6
Additional benches needed	3
Parking was good	3
Grounds are well kept	2
Sites were easy to find/navigate	2
Better signs to museums	1
Clean up the oil	1
Improve bus stop signage	1
Improve stroller/wheelchair access for USS Arizona and USS Missouri	1
Keep the park clean	1
Parking is confusing	1

Table 13a. Additional comments from visitor survey 2011, continued

Comment	Number of times mentioned
<b>FACILITIES/MAINTENANCE (continued)</b>	
Restrooms were nice	1
Restrooms were not clean	1
Special parking for school busses	1
<b>POLICY/MANAGEMENT (15%)</b>	
Well organized	29
Memorial well run/managed	24
Wanted more time on the Memorial	11
Provide advance notice/signage regarding bag check	10
Felt rushed	7
Glad that tickets/entrance were free	7
Difficult to find from the highway	6
More direction/instructions on respectful behavior	6
Memorial was respectful	5
Request that hats be removed on the Memorial	5
Thank you for preserving this history	5
Request silence on the Memorial	3
Would prefer to have purse along	3
Appreciated low cost to visit	2
Did not feel crowded	2
Enjoyed boat ride	2
Good crowd control	2
Less crowded than in the past	2
No babies/young children on the Memorial	2
Should charge admission fee to USS Arizona	2
Thank you for the opportunity to pay respects	2
Time allowed on Memorial was appropriate	2
Too much talking on the Memorial	2
Allow easier access to BB-43	1
Allow taxis to line up on property	1
Appreciate deaf awareness	1
Appreciate discount for combination ticket	1
Bag check policy is inconvenient for purchasing gift shop items	1
Bag restrictions should be based on size	1
Combine tickets with other sites	1
Combine ticket for USS Arizona with USS Missouri	1
Disorganized and inefficient	1
Enjoyed gift shop	1
Glad that tickets indicates length of program	1
Group was too large	1
Instills pride in the National Park Service	1
Is bag policy necessary?	1
Keep crowd respectful	1
Keep crowds smaller	1
Less wait time in line	1
Like the no cell phone policy	1
Long wait for return shuttle	1
Memorial is too commercial	1
More frequent boats	1

Table 13a. Additional comments from visitor survey 2011, continued

<b>Comment</b>	<b>Number of times mentioned</b>
<b>POLICY/MANAGEMENT (continued)</b>	
More frequent buses from the USS Missouri	1
Nice pace for seniors	1
No effort made to shuttle despite winds	1
No need for two gift shops	1
Noticed lack of respect	1
People have forgotten - send message to colleges/universities	1
Reinstate short service with moment of silence	1
Started on time	1
Survey questions hard to understand	1
Thank you for the survey	1
Time allowed on Memorial was appropriate	1
When wind shuts down shuttle, alert visitors that are waiting	1
Why a boat tour instead of using the bridge?	1
Would like more time to see more	1
<b>CONCESSION SERVICES (1%)</b>	
More food options	9
Tour company did not allow enough time	2
Coffee was terrible	1
Tour bus driver was informative	1
<b>PARK PARTNERS (&lt;1%)</b>	
Other Pearl Harbor sites too expensive	3
Bowfin gift shop not well marked	1
Missed last USS Missouri tour of the day	1
Other Pearl Harbor sites should be free	1
USS Missouri should not charge admission	1
<b>GENERAL (43%)</b>	
Enjoyed visit	137
Experience was moving/emotional/memorable	86
Great experience	42
Good job/keep up the good work	31
Well done	22
Thank you	20
Excellent	18
Beautiful place/park	12
Memorial honors/remembers the dead	11
Beautiful tribute	9
Have visited before	8
Humbling experience	8
Should be experienced by all	7
Family member served in WWII	6
Family member was stationed here	6
Fantastic	6
Serene, solemn	6
Thank you for the memorial	6
Inspiring experience	4
Will return	4
Experience was worthwhile	3



Table 13a. Additional comments from visitor survey 2011, continued

Comment	Number of times mentioned
<b>GENERAL</b> (continued)	
Honor to be here	3
I am a retired veteran	3
Important for children to learn	3
Should be maintained forever	3
World peace is important	3
Brought back memories	2
Experience helped make the event more real	2
Experience was powerful	2
Family member served in Navy	2
Great opportunity	2
Surprised oil is still leaking	2
Experience was humbling	1
Gained greater appreciation for those who sacrificed	1
Have not seen park yet	1
History	1
I am a U.S. Navy veteran	1
Japanese grandfather not comfortable visiting	1
No shuttle due to winds	1
Proud to be an American	1
Remember war dog cemetery on Guam	1
Salute to men and women in service	1
Serve in VFW Ladies Auxiliary	1
Should be experienced by all Americans	1
Some people are rude	1
Surprise attacks are effective	1
USA always wins	1
Very windy	1
Visit often	1
Visiting from Illinois	1
Would be nice to hear navy song and 21-gun salute	1
Would recommend visit to others	1

Comment cards, filled out voluntarily by park visitors from 2007 – 2010, were collected from the park and summarized. Comments from these card that are particular to the ticketing system are shown in Table 1. Table 13b shows other comments made by visitors.

Table 13b. Additional comments from visitor comment cards 2007-2010  
N=805 comments

<b>Comment</b>	<b>Number of times mentioned</b>
<b>PERSONNEL (9%)</b>	
Park staff was helpful	24
Park staff was great	16
Park staff was rude	16
Park staff was professional	8
Park staff was friendly	3
Park staff was inattentive	3
Park staff did a good job	2
Tour operator was rude	2
Other comments	3
<b>INTERPRETIVE SERVICES (19%)</b>	
Enjoyed ranger presentation	12
Enjoyed audio tour	10
Enjoyed movie	8
Errors in exhibit text	8
Learned about history	7
Need better information about obtaining tickets	5
Lack of information regarding African Americans and their involvement	4
Need information on what there is to do at the park	4
Missed our show because our time was not announced	3
Enjoyed the exhibits	3
Good historical information	3
Minor errors in exhibit text	3
Bring back the Caribbean bells music	2
Closed captioning on movie is needed	2
Play "Amazing Grace" again	2
Save the mural	2
Translations needed for all visitors to understand	2
Would like assistance finding name of a survivor	2
Other comments	75
<b>FACILITIES/MAINTENANCE (7%)</b>	
Restrooms needed cleaning	6
More restroom facilities are needed	3
Park was very clean/well-maintained	3
Shaded areas needed while waiting in line for tickets	3
Appreciate construction/renovation	2
Fix broken pay phone	2
Paint the Arizona name on the mooring bollards	2
Please clean and beautify the sites	2
Put recycling bins near where people wait in line	2
Restrooms were clean	2
Women's restrooms were poorly lit	2
Other comments	24

Table 13b. Additional comments from visitor comment cards 2007-2010, continued

Comment	Number of times mentioned
<b>POLICIES/MANAGEMENT (40%)</b>	
Other visitors were disrespectful	42
Visitors should be reminded to be silent/respectful	42
Visitors should be required to remove hats at the USS Arizona Memorial	22
International visitors were disrespectful	21
Need clearer information and instructions about bag policy	17
Memorial is well run/managed	14
Communicate to international visitors the request to be silent/respectful	13
Not in favor of bag storage/policy	13
Memorial honors/pays tribute	12
Memorial is well run/managed	12
Families (parents/children) visiting park were loud/disrespectful	8
Appalled to see the American flag torn	6
Limits on personal items make it difficult for families to visit	6
Directional road signs need to be more clear	5
Fees for bag check are unnecessary	5
International visitors should be charged an entrance fee	5
Directional road signs on H1 need to be more clear	4
An age limit should be enforced	3
Angry to see a wreath memorializing a Japanese commander	3
Appreciated free entrance	3
Embarking and disembarking from the boat could be done more quietly	3
Feel very angry that I cannot visit the site due to regulations about military service members' uniforms	3
Need clear instruction about where to go to see the USS Arizona after getting tickets	3
Cut-off time for visiting the memorial is too early	2
I was disappointed in how crowded the memorial was	2
Memorial was respectful	2
Need clear signs to the park coming from town	2
Needs to be more places to sit	2
No mention of life jackets while on the boat	2
Same information about bag policy should be given to all visitors	2
Visitors should be required to remove hats before film begins	2
Was put off to observe park's preferential treatment of tour companies	2
Other comments	34

Table 13b. Additional comments from visitor comment card 2007-2010, continued

<b>Comment</b>	<b>Number of times mentioned</b>
<b>CONCESSIONS (1%)</b>	
Low quality food/drink	5
Need different food/drink options	3
Need to have a restaurant or snack bar	2
Need vegetarian food options	1
<b>GENERAL (21%)</b>	
Experience was moving/emotional/memorable	68
Thank you	36
Enjoyed visit	25
Great place	13
Enjoyed meeting survivors	7
Freedom is not free	3
God bless America	3
Keep up the good work	2
Pray for people on both sides who gave their lives	2
Other comments	14

## 2. Findings from the Focus Groups

Each focus group was recorded using a digital audio recorder. In addition, one of the moderators took brief notes. Within 24 hours of conducting the focus groups, recordings and written notes were reviewed for accuracy. The recordings were transcribed within ten days of the study's conclusion.

Comments were evaluated for their specificity (level of detail), and extensiveness (repetition by different individuals). Qualitative analysis software (NVivo®) was used to code the text in order to define topics, problems, and solutions related to the study objectives. A thematic coding scheme was applied to analyze the data. Since this is a pragmatic rather than a theory-based study, the operationalized themes include topic areas that relate to problems, issues, suggestions, and solutions about the current ticket system. The following are the major themes – problems/issues and solutions/suggestions - that emerged from the focus group discussions. Quotes in italics are directly from the transcripts. Complete transcripts can be found in Appendix 2.

### Focus group topic I. Obtaining tickets

#### *Problem/issue 1: obtaining tickets*

##### Description

- To get tickets for large groups, tour companies send an email or a fax to the park one day prior to their scheduled tour indicating the number of tickets needed. For cruise ship days, this can be done more than a day in advance. On the day of the tour a driver brings a manifest – a list of guests – to the visitor center and picks up the corresponding number of tickets. If additional tickets are needed, the driver stands in line on the morning of tour to get extra tickets. If there are fewer tickets needed, unused tickets must be returned an hour ahead of the program. Drivers must pick up the tickets one hour prior to the program.
- Problems arise because tour operators may not always have an exact guest count on the day prior to the tour. There are often last-minute additions or deletions, which may cause operators to make extra trips to the park to wait in line to pick up the extra tickets if needed. Some tour company operators order more tickets than needed to be sure they don't fall short. This is referred to as "padding the count" by tour operators.

*"...if we're filing our counts by 2:00, we're still open and taking reservations right up until 6:00 pm. So you either pad your count, and hope you come close, or somebody's got to stand in line the next morning and hope we can get tickets for the same time slots. Sometimes we don't, so you may have a bus where you have 60 people: 20 people have a 9:00 ticket, 20 people have a 9:15 ticket, and somebody else might end up with a 10:00. So because it's not as flexible as we'd like, every once in awhile I'm going to run in to where I've got one bus with three different times on it." (FG1, Participant 3)*

- If there is a significant time delay between getting tickets and the program time, a tour bus may leave the park to do other activities, then return to the park in time for the program.
- The requirement to present a manifest is perceived as burdensome and inefficient. There is a perception that the park does not check the manifests for accuracy or authenticity.

*“...the manifest list, which has to be hand-filled. This is ridiculous when you get to the groups of 50 people or more, when you need to have names – no one ever checks on those names, that’s a different issue. But you have to send someone in person – it’s not eco-friendly.” (FG5, Participant 3)*

#### Proposed solutions

- Use an on-line system for all ticket reservations. Last-minute changes can be made without extra trips to the park. Tour companies can work together to exchange needed tickets.
- Institute a permanent, daily block system for all companies – with allocation based on each company’s passenger capacity so that companies know their program times in advance and can schedule other activities accordingly. This could be applied to an on-line system.
- Allow reservations one day in advance for all companies, regardless of size. Companies with groups of 100 or more and cruise ship groups could make reservations more than one day in advance.
- Allow reservations by phone in advance, and allow ticket pick-up one hour before tour time, rather than requiring drivers to come in the morning for a later tour. This would help reduce traffic and save fuel.
- Eliminate the need to show a manifest, or allow manifests to be faxed, or provide an electronic manifest form to which guest names can be copied.

*“...please, implement a fax line where I can fax the handwritten manifest in the morning, so I don’t have to burn gas, people time, and clog the already clogged H-1 freeway...” (FG5, Participant 3)*

## *Problem/issue 2: disadvantages to small companies*

### Description

- Smaller companies send drivers to the park in the morning to stand in line with a guest manifest and pick up the tickets needed for the day's tours. Companies arrange that day's activities based on the delay time between obtaining the tickets and the program time. Or, the driver and guests come to the park early in the morning to pick up tickets. Groups that are escorted by a driver/guide may be given preference over drivers without guests in line (manifest list only).
- Small companies are at a disadvantage when larger companies are allowed to reserve a portion of tickets, especially on cruise ship days. Small companies may lack available staff to come to the park ahead of time to pick up tickets, so when their drivers arrive with a manifest, the more desirable (earlier) tickets are gone.

*"...when we drop off the group, the driver or the group leader goes to the group ticket office to secure the tickets. Unfortunately with the current system, because of the bigger companies, with the dedicated staff that comes here - they come early, with the name list, they get it ahead of time - especially the cruise market - so they get the early tickets. And so when we come, our group waits three or four hours here..." (FG2, Participant 1)*

- Large companies may be taking more tickets than they need, either to ensure they have enough tickets, and/or for use on following days.

*"There have been games that have been played, because I've been doing this for 20 years, every couple months or so, this tour company is pulling tickets. They say they have 50 in their group and they actually have 20 and they're using those tickets for the same time the next day." (FG2, Participant 2)*

### Proposed solutions

- Use an on-line advance reservation system for all companies.
- Return to first-come, first-served system for all companies.
- Print the date and time on tickets.

### *Problem/issue 3: disadvantages to independent travellers*

- Some companies provide transportation only – drivers bring guests to the park and guests obtain their own tickets. These drivers commonly work with travel agencies and hotel concierges to obtain clients. Visitor that are independent travellers are on their own standing in line for tickets, may have a long wait on busy days, and may experience significant delay time between the time tickets are obtained and program times.

### Proposed solutions

- An on-line ticket reservation system would allow visitors and travel agencies to plan ahead.

## **Focus group topic II. Relations between NPS and tour companies**

### *Problem/issue 1: park policies and communication*

#### Description

- Tour company representatives have different levels of understanding as to how the ticket reservation system operates. For example, some are not aware that tickets can be reserved in advance for any day (not just for cruise ship days) based on group size, and that reservations for cruise ship groups can be made in advance of one day.

*“As far as clarification, that’s why Participant 2 said I’m a little confused. I was a little confused...if tour companies are able to get pulled tickets for the next day, when there is no cruise ship...” (FG3, Participant 4)*

- Representatives have different understandings on how and when to contact the park to reserve tickets and whether or not a manifest is required.
- Some representatives are not aware of changes to the system until they observe other tour companies operating differently. This can cause friction between companies and between individual drivers.

*“More communication when things change and not word-of-mouth. There have been changes that we were not aware of until we see another company doing things.” (FG3, Participant 2)*

- There are different perceptions regarding the purpose of manifest lists, how they are to be presented to park staff, and how the park staff uses them.

*“[Regarding manifest list] I don’t want to start enforcing or checking anybody on it, but if they don’t, why do they ask me for the particular names? What if I*



*know that I have a family of eight, but it was too late to collect all the names?  
It's just ridiculous. Especially with being not [sic] enforcement on it..." (FG3,  
Participant 1)*

#### Proposed solutions

- The park can develop operating procedures that specifically define ticket policies, and send regular updates to all tour companies when policies and procedures change.
- Tour companies could form an association in order to collect input and communicate with the park in a unified manner.
- Regular meetings could be held by the park and attended by any tour company representative. Minutes from such meetings could be disseminated to all tour companies.
- The park could design a website specifically for and accessible exclusively to tour companies, where policies, procedures, meeting minutes, weather conditions, etc. would be posted and routinely updated.

#### *Problem/issue 2: park staff relations with tour companies*

##### Description

- There is a perception that park personnel feel that visitors on tours have an unfair advantage over independent visitors.

*"They find it a burden, they don't think it's fair, the way things are going, and they don't like to have to count out tickets for all of the people and deal with that in the morning. And we hear about it on a daily basis." (FG5, Participant 5)*

- Company representatives reported that on some occasions park personnel treat drivers poorly and that some staff members appear uninterested in or burdened by working with tour company operators.

*"We deal with some of the park service people that are less than kind and I don't have the patience like some of our people have the patience to deal with it." (FG3,  
Participant 4)*

#### Proposed solutions

- Staff training can include protocol on how to work with tour companies.
- Staff can develop a better understanding of how tour companies operate.
- Ticket administration, currently handled by the interpretive staff, could be handled by a different park division, thus allowing interpreters to focus on information, orientation, and education.

### *Problem/issue 3: communications regarding ticket reservations*

#### Description

- Miscommunications between tour companies and the park ticket reservation personnel result in reserved tickets either not being set aside, or an incorrect number set aside, thus tickets are unavailable when drivers come to pick them up.

*"I've come in here looking for tickets, I'm missing a whole tour time, one packet that we should of got 50 we got 16 tickets. How that happened, I have no idea. It happens. That's the only thing that would encourage me to go to a reservation system, because it's human nature and we all make mistakes..." (FG3, Participant 2)*

#### Proposed solution

- An on-line reservation system would standardize procedures and eliminate errors due to miscommunication.

### *Problem/issue 4: ticket lines*

#### Description

- At times there is confusion as to how ticket lines form for different clients, i.e., independent visitors, tour operators with guests, and tour operators without guests getting tickets for later in the day.
- Ticket window staff may not have a standard method of organizing ticket lines which can cause confusion, misunderstanding, and in some cases friction between various parties.

*"For some it's difficult because there are people there with multiple manifests and they go. So while our groups are moving slowly into the facility, they'll go get a set of tickets for later in the day - they'll get back in line and get tickets for later in the day. And then you'll get up there and you'll be trying to sort through who is who. If they actually had 3 lines, that might be helpful....1) People who are arriving on their own; 2) tour guides that have groups of people on-site; and then 3) those that are trying to get tickets for later in the day....there needs to be a little more supervision from the rangers at the start of the day because everybody is anxious to get their tickets. And for some tour guides that are specialists in other languages, sometimes it's confusing for them, especially if they don't speak English that well and their tour guide is telling other tour guides to get out of the way. And it can be ugly." (FG3, Participant 5)*

### Proposed solutions

- Tour company representatives with advance reservations could pick up tickets at a location other than the ticket window used by independent visitors.
- Representatives without advance reservations could also use an alternate location for ticket pick-up, which would require communication between the two locations. Using an on-line reservation system would circumvent this issue.

## **Focus group topic III. Tour scheduling**

### *Problems/issues: schedule constraints*

#### Description

- Tour companies typically begin their tour at Pearl Harbor, owing primarily to the fact that standing in line first thing in the morning may be the only secure way to get tickets.

*“I think that [lining up early] started off from the old days where basically, because everybody tried to get up here as early as possible, then fit everything else in afterwards. Now, if it was a permanent block system, all of us could adjust our tours where, especially with the ships – ‘Oh, let’s do the city portion first, we’re right there to begin with,’ it’d make it easy just to start that portion off, and then they could come later in the morning.” (FG1, Participant 2)*

- Some tour companies pick up visitors at the airport and begin their tour at the park due to the park’s proximity to the airport.
- Tour operators do not know when a program is cancelled due to inclement weather until their arrival at the park.

### Proposed solutions

- An advance reservation system would give tour companies the flexibility to plan their tour schedule in a variety of ways and better meet their customers’ needs
- A website designed for tour operators with updates on weather conditions and closures would be time-saving and would allow for advance planning.

## Focus group topic IV. Visitors' needs

### *Problem/issue 1: inclement weather*

#### Description

- When it is windy, rainy, or very warm, tour operators do not like to make their guests stand and wait for tickets. This is a particularly sensitive issue with some Asian visitors who are accustomed to being taken care of and who perceive the situation as a lack of hospitality.

*"It's a factor – the rain, the wind. There's nothing, and you just have to stand out there in the rain with your customers.... we've had many customers completely drenched, right straight through. No alternative. You have that on the non-block days, they have no alternative but to stand in the rain." (FG1, Participant 2)*

*"...the Japanese specifically, is if you quote something in the brochure, you have to fulfill that, or they can turn around and sue your company for it." (FG1, Participant 1)*

#### Proposed solution

- A reservation system would eliminate the need for visitors to wait in line.

### *Problem/issue 2: handicap access*

#### Description

- Handicapped visitors and senior citizens have difficulty walking from the parking lot to the theater and onto the shuttle boat. While some drivers understand that they are not allowed to stop at the front entrance to drop off handicapped visitors, others are under the impression that this is allowed.

*"There are a lot of older people who really have a difficult time making it from where the handicap drop-off area is now to the front entrance. And then when they get to the front entrance they realize they have to walk a long way to get to the museum and the main theater, so they look at me and say 'this is too hard' and 'can I wait here'." (FG3, Participant 5)*

- Security personnel vary in their understanding of where drivers can drop off visitors.

*"They've told me that I can park there, let people out, then I take the vehicle over and I park it. I dropped them in front once, and he was like, 'No, you can't do that.' But then my guy came out with a crutch and he was like, 'okay'." (FG 3, Participant 6)*

- Some security personnel lack professionalism in dealing with drivers who make accommodations for their handicapped clients.

*“...it is embarrassing to be talked to by security guards and yelled at in front of your people. I’ve also seen them yell at WWII veterans...” (FG 3, Participant 3)*

#### Proposed solutions

- Drivers and security personnel can be educated as to the park’s handicap drop-off policy.
- The park can provide better access to the front entrance.
- Tour companies can be encouraged to carry wheelchairs on their vehicles
- The park can have wheelchairs for loan or rent.

#### *Problem/issue 3: early morning wake-up*

##### Description

- Visitors from other cultures and those accustomed to different time zones do not want to leave their hotels at 6:00 am in order to secure tickets.

*“...you’re telling him that he has to wake up at 5:30 in the morning to go to Pearl Harbor, come on; if you’re American, you might have your [patriotic] feelings and you do it because you feel it. But if you’re coming from Russia, from Italy, ‘No, you know what, I’m not going to Pearl Harbor today’ ....They want to see it too, but they’re not going to sacrifice the mood, the vacation lifestyle that they have ....We all know what to say, like we say, ‘We do this, because it’s better’ ....we all have our speech, we know the speech we do, to sell it. “ (FG5, Participants 3)*

#### Proposed solutions

- A reservation system would eliminate the need for visitors to arrive at the park early in order to secure tickets for the day.

### 3. Findings from Interactive Group Meeting with Park Partners

An interactive group discussion was held with the superintendent of World War II Valor in the Pacific National Monument and representatives from the following four park partners: the Battleship Missouri Memorial, the USS Bowfin Museum, the Pacific Aviation Museum, and the Pacific Historical Parks. These partners are non-profit entities that are accessed via the park's entrance. They share a common goal with the park – to protect historic resources, tell the Pearl Harbor story, and provide visitors with a quality experience. The discussion was attended by seven participants from five organizations. It lasted about 90 minutes and was audio-recorded. Participants were asked to introduce themselves, and answer the following questions:

1. Please comment on the park's current ticket system: what works and doesn't work, from the visitor's perspective and from yours?
2. In your opinion, what is the NPS doing to encourage visitors to visit your site?
3. What should the NPS do to encourage visitors to visit your site?
4. Is there anything that you could do for each other to encourage visitation at each other's sites, with NPS help?

Qualitative analysis software (NVivo®) was used to code the text in order to define topics, and categorize comments related to the study objectives. A thematic coding scheme was applied to analyze the data. The following section presents the topics that emerged and summaries of participants' comments.

#### **Park partner topic I. Ticketing system for the USS Arizona Memorial**

##### ***What's working***

- It's efficient – guests don't wait in line.
- Transportation companies seem happy with it.
- It's an improvement over the former system.
- Printing times on the ticket to allow people to take a later tour was very helpful, allowing visitors to plan ahead.

##### ***What's not working***

- The park runs out of tickets on busy days.
- People still stand in line when it's busy.
- There's not a good way to track data about visitors. It would be good to know more about visitor circulation on an hourly, weekly, monthly basis. Having data would help with scheduling and timing.
- It's important to take care of the transportation companies, to avoid long lines.
- The ticket pick-up by tour companies could be done more discreetly.

### ***On-line/advance reservations***

- People would appreciate being able to make advance reservations via phone or on-line, to plan their day. Half of the visitors decide what to do upon arrival at Pearl Harbor, based on their waiting time for the USS Arizona.
- There are groups, particularly educational groups, who would like to reserve ahead.
- An on-line reservation system would give us the data we need for the park and partner sites, and would help inform visitors about all the Pearl Harbor sites. It would be ideal for the group of partners, for combined ticketing.
- Important data to capture would be reservation time and ticket pick-up time.
- People are used to booking on-line.
- If there were a reservation system, it shouldn't sell all the seats.
- A reservation system was proposed years ago. We [park partner] offered to do it for free. But there was an NPS system already in place.
- Tickets would need to have a confirmation number or bar code.

### **Park partner topic II. How park partners and NPS can work together**

- Visitors use the time on their USS Arizona ticket for deciding how to plan the rest of their visit. If there were more flexibility in deciding when to tour the USS Arizona, planning would be facilitated for the other Pearl Harbor sites. The message can be communicated verbally (by ticket booth personnel) but it's not always easy to do.
- We [partner site] receive calls about the USS Arizona and answer questions about ticket availability, waiting lines, etc.
- Technology could be used to facilitate, not only ticketing, but also information, marketing, memberships, donors, discounts, sales, visitor data, etc., across all five venues.
- There is a need for a good system to disseminate information.
- There is interest in and benefits from working together, as a "hui" (a movement that comes together in mindfulness).
- The park has been helpful and cooperative [with partners], such as allowing brochure distribution, "ambassadors" at the park entrance.
- The two current ticket windows could be combined into one, and any employee, whether from NPS, partners or the cooperating association, can answer questions, provide information, and sell or hand out tickets.
- Combining ticket windows would work as long as visitors did not have to wait too long in line.
- Currently, NPS rangers do not handle money, but they could in the future.
- The USS Arizona is the draw to Pearl Harbor. Capturing/penetrating that market is the goal of the partners. There is no need to bring more visitors from Waikiki – they are already coming here.
- NPS and park partners are close to the same mission statement, and close to the same goal. There is mutual respect and appreciation for what each of the groups bring to the table.

## 4. Findings from Comparative Case Analysis

This section contains summaries of the results of the comparative case analysis. Table 14 shows the cases studied and selected characteristics of each site's ticketing system.

**Table 14.** Summary of case study interviews

Site	Type of site	Volume - visitors per day and/or per tour	Size	Purpose of ticket	Significant number of groups?	Can groups reserve?	Can individuals reserve?	How tickets are obtained	Who manages reservations?	Ticket price
Mammoth Caves NP	NPS	3500 visitors/day; 5-6 tours/day.	large	To take cave tour	Yes - spring/fall school groups	Yes	Yes	On-line, phone, in-person	Recreation.gov	\$4-\$48
Independence NHP	NPS	2400 visitors/day; 32 tours/day	large	Tour of Independence Hall	Yes	Yes	Yes	On-line, phone, in-person	Recreation.gov	Free (+ reservation fee)
Washington Monument	NPS	1700 visitors/day; elevator every 4 minutes	large	To tour monument	Yes	Yes	Yes	On-line, phone, in-person	Recreation.gov	Free (+ reservation fee)
Voyageurs NP	NPS	69 visitors/day	small	To ride tour boats	No	n/a	Yes	On-line, phone, in-person	Recreation.gov	\$25-\$50
Home of FDR NHS	NPS	600-800 visitors/day; 12 tours/day.	medium	To take home tour and museum	Yes - spring/fall school groups	Yes	Yes	On-line, phone, in-person	Recreation.gov	\$14
Mount Vernon	Private	8000/day; 13 concurrent tours	large	For general admission	Yes	Yes	Yes	On-line, phone, in-person	In-park	\$15
WWII Valor in the Pacific NM	NPS	2300 visitors/day 150 programs/day	large	To access USS Arizona	Yes	Yes	No	Walk-up first-come first served	In-park	Free
Mesa Verde NP	NPS	2100 visitors/day; 40 tours/day	large	Tour cliff dwellings	No	No	No	Walk-up first-come first served	In-park	\$3
Cape Hatteras NS	NPS	1440 visitors/day; 48 tours/day	large	To access lighthouse climb	No	Yes	No	Walk-up first-come first served	In-park	\$7



**Table 14.** Summary of case study interviews, continued

Site	Type of site	Volume - visitors per day and/or per tour	Size	Purpose of ticket	Significant number of groups?	Can groups reserve?	Can individuals reserve?	How tickets are obtained	Who manages reservations?	Ticket price
National Holocaust Museum (permanent collection)	Federal	5,000 visitors/day	large	To enter permanent collection	Yes	Yes	Yes	On-line	Extreme Tickets	Free (+ reservation fee)
Colonial Williamsburg	Private non-profit	1.4 million tickets/year 1300 visitors/day; 30 tours/day	large	For general admission	Yes	Yes	Yes	On-line or in-person	In-park	\$35
Wind Cave NP	NPS	To take cave tour	large	To take cave tour	No	Yes	No	Walk-up first-come first served	In-park	\$7-\$23
Lincoln Home NHS	NPS	900 visitors/day; 60 tours/day	medium	To tour Lincoln Home	Yes - spring/fall school groups	Yes	No	Walk-up first-come first served	In-park	Free (+ reservation fee)
Jewel Cave NM	NPS	858 visitors/day; 34 tours/day	medium	To take cave tour	No	Yes	Yes	Phone or in-person	In-park	\$4-\$8
Steamtown NHS	NPS	370 visitors/day	medium	To ride longer train tours	No	No	Yes	Phone or in-person reservation	In-park	\$24-\$54
Cape Lookout Lighthouse NS	NPS	300 visitors/day	medium	To access lighthouse climb	No	No	Yes	Phone or in-person	In-park	\$8/adult
Minute Man NHS	NPS	60 visitors/day; 6 tours/day	small	For Wayside House tour	No	No	Yes	Walk-up first-come first served	In-park	\$5
Isle Royale NP	NPS	256 visitors/week	small	To ride ferry to Isle Royale	Yes - spring/fall school groups	Yes	Yes	On-line	In-park	\$100-\$120

## **Strengths and weaknesses of ticketing systems**

- Most of the sites studied receive a high volume of visitation during their peak season, and/or a high concentration of visitors at the activity for which tickets are issued. The most common reasons for using ticketing systems are: 1) to limit the number of visitors on/to a particular tour/transportation system/venue; 2) to minimize crowding in order preserve the quality of the visitor experience and protect the resource; and 3) to generate revenue.
- At seven of the study sites, at least a third of visitation consists of organized groups, while three sites received 20% to 30% groups and six sites receive less than 20%. Over two-thirds of sites use some type of reservation system for organized groups.
- Regarding reservations for individuals, over half the sites (60%) offer advance ticket reservations via an on-line reservation system. Of these, five sites use their own system, five sites use Recreation.gov, and one site uses Extreme Tickets. It is common for sites with reservation systems to block off a portion of tickets for various purposes such as organized groups, same-day (walk-up) visitors, special programs, and so on. One site uses Recreation.gov only for handling group reservations, and does not offer advance reservations to individuals.

Tables 15 and 16 show a comparison of the strengths and weaknesses of different systems. Table 15 includes comments from sites that use an on-line reservation system and Table 16 shows comments from sites that do not use an on-line system.

Table 15. Comments from sites that use an on-line reservation system

Strengths	Weaknesses
<p>“Having the ticket gives visitor comfort. Allows for staff planning. Good customer service from the ticketing company.”</p> <p>“Visitors can plan ahead.”</p> <p>“Takes the money out of our hands. Benefit to visitor: can be guaranteed a seat. Requires less personnel.”</p> <p>“People don’t have to wait in line. People can pick up multiple tickets. More flexible for visitor (less wait time). Able to control flow. Better visitor experience. Nice to have it handled by outside agency because they handle the money.”</p> <p>“Works well.”</p> <p>“Ticket sales personnel like the advance reservation system.”</p> <p>“The system provides us with visitor data.”</p> <p>“The system is flexible. Flaws are minor, easy to fix.”</p> <p>“Accountability has improved – system provides a fee report.”</p>	<p>“Visitors are ‘tied’ to ticket times. Only one area of the site requires a ticket – it’s hard to get visitors to go to other areas.”</p> <p>“Uncertainties with weather, phone lines go down. No-shows are a problem.”</p> <p>“Poor customer service (with ticketing agency). 30-minute hold times for phone reservations.”</p> <p>“Can be slow – gets bogged-down when demand is high. Customer service agents have huge learning curve - have ‘must-read’ information from the park. Some misinformation and/or lack of information.”</p> <p>“Some web navigation issues.”</p> <p>“Technology glitches, website design issues. Printers are old. Poor customer service (with ticketing agency). Hard to get the word out that tickets are needed and can be reserved.”</p> <p>“Customer service agents not always knowledgeable. Website not up-to-date.”</p> <p>“Website lacks integration between all the different tickets/venues.”</p> <p>“Getting technical help can be slow. Still needs work.”</p> <p>“Small issues – mostly technology.”</p>

Table 16. Sites that do not use an on-line reservation system

Strengths	Weaknesses
<p>“Allows flexibility for different needs. Basic, easy-to-use.”</p> <p>“Allows us to handle current visitation. Do not have no-shows. It works.”</p> <p>“Good system. Not turning anyone away, yet.”</p> <p>“Unified system. Clean, easy, quick.”</p> <p>“Visitors still wait in line, but with groups able to reserve ahead, there’s less wait time.”</p> <p>“There is no additional cost to the visitor. If we had a reservation, the tickets would cost more.”</p>	<p>“Too many databases to manage (one for each day).”</p> <p>“Tour companies would like a real block system (instead of first-come, first-served).”</p> <p>“System failures - computer crashes. The ticket system is not integrated with credit card system - more difficult for accounting.”</p> <p>“Lack of ticket printer. Currently, the ticket is a cash register receipt and GPO printed ticket. Would like to have integrated system to print ticket upon sale.”</p> <p>“Can be cumbersome. An on-line system would be better.”</p>

- Sites with advance reservations have various methods for handling situations in which ticket-holders fail to appear for the program or tour for which they were scheduled. Most sites require visitors to be present at the site within a certain time period prior to the beginning of the program. All but one site has a refund or exchange/re-issue policy, however refunds do not cover reservation fees if one has been charged. Similarly, sites that do not use advance reservations also have refund policies for tickets purchased but not used.

## Cost comparison

- There are no conclusive results regarding the cost of ticketing systems, as they vary widely between sites. The cost of ticket systems for sites that do not offer advance reservations amount to the cost of park personnel selling the tickets and the cost of printing tickets.
- Sites with advance reservations contract with a ticketing agency such as Recreation.gov or Extreme Tickets, or in some cases contract with a software developer to create custom-made systems managed on-site with park personnel.

## **V. Assessments**

Assessments of data gathered from visitor studies, tour companies and park partners reveal that improvements have been made to arrive at the current ticketing system at World War II in the Pacific National Memorial, but there remain issues to address.

### **Improvements since 2000**

- Perceived crowding decreased significantly from the 2000 to 2011, according to the visitor studies. The visitor study in 2000 showed that visitors felt crowded at all hours of the day, while in the 2011 study, crowding only occurred before 11 am. This could be the result of changes in the ticketing system, as well as the new visitor center complex, which created a more open-space atmosphere. The upgraded museums and park grounds help disperse visitors to different activities and decreases concentration in a single area.
- Visitor surveys and comments from tour companies revealed a significant decrease in time spent waiting in the ticket line. Ticket lines occur only in the early morning. Tour companies commented that since the park began allowing them to make some advance reservations, they no longer need to have their customers wait in line early in the morning. Since the tour company customers account for a large volume of park visitors, this resulted in a shorter waiting line to obtain tickets (2000 and 2011 survey results).
- The change from the boat-number ticket system to a timed ticket system helped reduce the confusion of program timing and created a smoother operation (focus group results). It also allowed visitors to obtain a ticket for a later time of day, which facilitates planning.

### **Remaining issues**

- Although the wait time has been reduced, there is still a bottleneck in the morning with waiting time up to 1 hour (2011 visitor survey results). During the busy season, tickets may still run out by mid-morning, and there is not an option to get tickets for following days.
- Crowding was observed in the morning hours (2011 visitor survey results).
- Even though there are different lines for tour companies and independent travelers, these lines are not clearly defined nor systematically followed. This causes conflicts between tour guides and at times disorderly behavior is displayed. Some independent travelers, observing tour company representatives obtaining multiple tickets, perceive this as “unfair” treatment in favor of tour companies (open-ended questions from visitor survey results and focus group).
- There is an official system to handle ticket reservations for tour companies. A single staff person makes all reservations manually. Miscommunications occasionally occur between organized groups and the park staff, and between ticket personnel and rangers handling tickets at the window. Since there is no flexibility in the system, ticket companies may ask for more tickets than needed in case of unforeseen increases in tour group sizes (called “padding the count” in focus group results). Some companies inflate the number and keep the extra tickets to redistribute

illegally to the next group or on following days. These accusations, raised by focus group participants, were confirmed through observations during the survey period: an extra group of visitors participated in a program that was already full. Park staff have also observed illegal ticket distribution of tickets in tourist areas (personal communication).

- Visitors' "dwell time," the time between obtaining a ticket and the program start time, is difficult to plan, and underutilized.

## **VI. Recommendations**

### **Alternative 1. Retain status quo with a block system for organized groups**

#### **Description**

- Independent travelers obtain tickets on a first-come, first-serve basis only. A proportion of each tour can be blocked for organized groups – tour companies and educational or military groups. The blocks can be applied at the park's discretion. Blocks do not necessarily apply to every tour; for example, the park could assign all morning programs to independent travelers and some programs later in the day for organized groups or vice versa.
- Organized groups (e.g., more than 10) are required to reserve in advance. Deadlines for tour reservations can vary according to program time. For example, a request for an 8:00 am tour is submitted by noon the day before while later tours such as 1:00 pm is submitted by 4:00 pm the day before, or later tours would be submitted after the hour, etc. The current system for reserving tickets on cruise ship days remains the same.
- All organized groups are required to be present at the park at least 90 minutes prior to reserved program time to receive their tickets at a "will-call" location. This location should be separate from the general public ticketing area. Any no-shows within an hour prior to the program will be released to the general public. If this rule is strictly enforced without exceptions, it will help to create enough dwell time for visitors to utilize informational and interpretive resources on park grounds before attending the program. It will also help to solve "no-show" problems.
- To be eligible for this block system, commercial companies must be approved under the CUA. All other organizations (schools, military groups, historical society clubs, etc.) need to submit requests with their organization's official letterhead document. These requests should be sent via fax or email. To avoid situations in which CUAs requiring large numbers of tickets use up all the tickets, the park will need to devise an equitable policy for giving access to all companies (such as a first-come, first-served system).
- Separate the ticketing function from the interpretive function within the park operation. This would prevent any miscommunication between the two divisions and provide visitors with more interpretive opportunities with a ranger.

- Print the tour time and date on the ticket to prevent CUAs from hoarding tickets and using them on other days. If a date is not printed on the ticket, tickets should be collected at the beginning of the program to avoid illegal redistribution or re-use.

### **Advantages**

- No set-up cost.
- Minimum change in park operations other than establishing separate divisions for ticketing and interpretation.
- Resolves some conflicts between organized groups and independent travelers.
- Allows some flexibility (unforeseen changes in group size) to tour companies.

### **Disadvantages**

- This is still a manual system with very limited flexibility to adjust to changes, and subjective to high error rate.
- Independent travelers are not provided with a reservation option, which may result in long waiting lines and morning crowding.
- It is a static system that does not account for any potential increases in visitation in the near future.
- Minimum or no return on investment. The operating costs of ticketing for independent travelers remain the same while there may be increases in operating costs of ticketing for organized groups. However, these costs can be offset by CUA permit fees.
- No added connections or opportunities for cooperation with other partners.
- No added opportunities for visitors to plan ahead and make better use of dwell time.
- No added opportunities to collect visitor use data.

## **Alternative 2. Online reservations using a preexisting system through a vendor such as Recreation.gov or Extreme Tickets**

### **Description**

- Allocate a proportion of tickets from each tour to be reserved online through a vendor such as Recreation.gov with a “convenience fee.” The fee proposed by Recreation.gov in 2005 was \$1.50 per ticket. This fee is non-refundable regardless of weather conditions or any other unforeseen circumstances. Visitors could reserve tickets up to 1 year in advance or the park could limit this window to a desired length of time. The number of reserved tickets can be adjusted for cruise ship days and can vary between program times (such as more tickets for the morning programs and fewer for the afternoon or vice versa). Visitors would reserve tickets online in advance and receive a confirmation number. All visitors are required to be at the park 90 minutes before the reserved program time to pick up tickets at a “will-call” window. Program time and date will be

printed on the ticket. “No-show” tickets due to failure to comply with the time requirement will be released to general public.

- Of the remaining tickets, allocate a proportion (with the exception of cruise ship days) for organized groups. The organized group reservation pick-up location should be separate from the general ticketing location, and follow a procedure as described in Alternative 1. The reservation procedures used by the CUAs and other organizations could be combined with the reservation system above.
- The remainder of the tickets are made available to the general public at the ticket window on a first-come, first-served basis, and free of charge. Independent travelers thus have two options: 1) reserve in advance and secure a ticket with a service fee; or 2) come to the park on a first-come, first-served basis, free of charge, but without the guarantee of obtaining a ticket.
- Educational, military, historical society, and other organized groups can obtain free tickets in advance via a formal application process or via the same process as independent travelers.
- Commercial tour companies pay a fixed annual service fee to use the reservation system. The fee amount could vary according to the company's volume. This could be combined with or in addition to other fees such as parking. Smaller companies (with 10 visitors to the site a day or less) could choose to utilize the CUA system or use the online reservation system and pay a per ticket fee as would the independent travelers.
- There is also an option of using group sale service provided by the vendor. The percentage can be determined by the park but the vendor will handle the reservation and financial aspects. The tour companies will have to pay a negotiable fee per ticket with the vendor.
- Support for setting the proportion of tickets per type of user group (online reservation, tour groups and walk-ins) can be found in the Findings from the Visitor Survey (p. 10). The proportions can be adjusted if the demand for on-line reservations increases.
- A kiosk may also be used for visitors to print out their own ticket at the park. Currently, this alternative is not very popular within the NPS system due to technological limitations and relatively high installation and maintenance costs.
- For partner sites that hold a binding agreement with the park, the vendor could provide combined tickets. Currently, this type of system is in place at two NPS sites, but is commonly used in the U.S. Forest Service with their concessioners.

### **Advantages**

- Affords visitors flexibility and alternatives, which facilitates trip planning.
- Eliminates visitors' wait time, allowing opportunities to convert that into dwell time whereby visitors can utilize the park's interpretive facilities and park partner sites.
- A third party handles online reservations and reservation fees; with at least one third of the tickets handled outside the park, burden on park staff is reduced.
- Gives park the flexibility to handle group tickets separately from general ticketing.



- Reduces crowding as visitors arrive throughout the day according to their reserved time.
- Low cost of printing tickets can be a return on investment from the service fee.
- Vendors are ticketing specialists and have an established procedure for system implementation and training, thus the transition period is minimized and the system can operational in a short period of time.
- Visitor use and demographic data can be collected.

#### **Disadvantages**

- Requires some set up costs (from 2005 estimate by Recreation.gov).
- Customer support may not be satisfactory. This is a common critique of sites that use Recreation.gov for ticketing. Customer service personnel often don't have sufficient knowledge of the site and can't answer site-specific questions nor provide incorrect information.
- Park does not have complete control of the system, given the geographical location. Off- site technical support and trouble-shooting could pose problems.
- Partner sites' ticketing systems are not easily incorporated into the park's system.
- Park Studies Unit visitor surveys indicate that awareness of NPS park websites is still relatively low. Interviews with other NPS sites that utilize online ticketing vendors show that parks have difficulty in promoting their online ticketing systems.
- Ticketing for large groups is still handled manually. Although this may not be a problem once a procedure is set up, manual systems are more subject to error and have limited flexibility to accommodate future developments.
- If ticketing for large groups were handled through a vendor, flexibility may be an issue, especially for companies that serve FITs and need varying numbers of tickets on a daily basis. Similar NPS sites, such as Independence National Historical Park, chose to handle group ticketing at the park rather than through the vendor.

### **Alternative 3. Online reservation system custom-made for World War II Valor in the Pacific National Monument**

#### **Description**

- This alternative is similar to Alternative 2 with the following modifications.
  - System is custom-made for the park rather than using an existing vendor. The system developer would be recruited through a public bidding mechanism, preferably a local company.
  - In addition to the online option, tickets can also be obtained in advance at locations such as at park partner's sites and booths or kiosks set up in tourist areas (such as Waikiki) in conjunction with the chamber of commerce or travel and tourist bureaus.

- A quota should be set for different types of visitors, for example: 1) advanced reservations for independent travelers with a fee; 2) walk-in visitors on first-come, first-serve basis and free of charge; and 3) group reservations with an annual fee or advanced approval. In addition, group reservations can also be set up as an online procedure rather than a manual system. This would allow a smoother transition of tickets among blocks.

### **Advantages**

- Provides maximum flexibility to incorporate park partners into the ticket system.
- Allows flexibility to quickly adjust to fluctuations in visitation.
- In contracting with a local company rather than an off-site vendor, park's public image is enhanced by supporting the local economy.
- Technical support will be conveniently located and accessible.
- Affords visitors flexibility and alternatives, which facilitate trip planning.
- Eliminates visitors' wait time, allowing opportunities to convert that into dwell time whereby visitors can utilize the park's interpretive facilities and park partner sites.
- Provides park with total control of the system and customer support.
- Customer service personnel would be local residents. On-site and on-going training could be provided as needed.
- Flexibility for future development of other media/venues such as cell phone apps.
- Visitor use and demographic data can be collected.
- Ticketing for large groups could be handled by the same system, thereby reducing the potential for errors.
- Visitor awareness will take less time because of marketing and advertising opportunities through local channels.

### **Disadvantages**

- High start up costs will take a longer time to gain return on investment.
- System has not been tested. The quality of the service will directly depend on the quality of the vendor.
- Vendor may lack experience, resulting in longer start-up time.
- System will improve through testing, trial and error, user feedback, which will take time.
- Visitors need to be made aware of the system's availability.
- The park must comply with requirements of the Privacy Act for collecting visitor data using an electronic system. This procedure could be time-consuming and costly.

## Other considerations

1. Combine or connect the World War II Valor in the Pacific National Monument and park partner ticket windows.
2. Provide a ticket pick-up location for tour companies and other organized groups separate from the general public ticket window.
3. Establish separate queues for will-call tickets and walk-up tickets at the general public ticket window.
4. Consider using automated kiosks for ticketing and a separate ranger information desk/kiosk for visitors seeking information
5. Cooperate with park partners to provide visitors with information and strategies on how to plan a whole day at Pearl Harbor.
6. Institute a method for communicating with all tour companies on pertinent issues, including policies, procedures, operational changes, handicap access policies, weather conditions, meetings.
7. Establish regular meetings with tour company representatives and make meeting minutes available.
8. Develop a training program for commercial tour guides, covering basic historical information, safety information, and other pertinent information, and require guides to complete the training prior to leading tours at World War II Valor in the Pacific National Monument.
9. Provide clear notification of the bag checking policy in the parking lots so visitors are aware prior to entering the park.
10. Offer a movie-only option (once or twice a day) to visitors and groups that would like to learn about the USS Arizona Memorial but not visit it.
11. Offer one “special tour” per day in which visitors can expect specific decorum and behavior, i.e., minimal conversation, no cell phones, no young children, no hats, etc.
12. Offer additional interpretive activities and programs throughout World War II Valor in the Pacific National Monument.

VII. Appendices

Appendix 1. The questionnaire

13. What would you recommend, if anything, to improve the current ticket system?

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14. Is there anything else you would like to tell us about your visit to WW II Valor in the Pacific National Monument?

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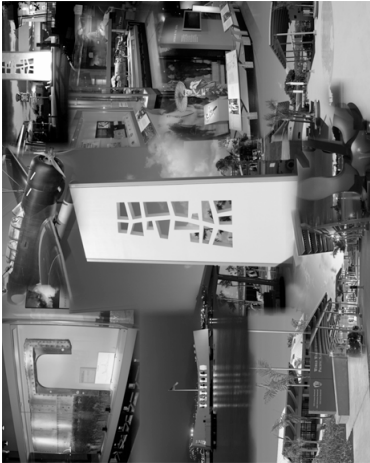
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OMB Approval 1024-0216  
Expiration date: 6/31/2011

**World War II Valor in the Pacific National Monument Visitor Study**



*Thank you for your help! Please return this questionnaire to a uniformed employee.*

**Paperwork Reduction Act Statement:** The Paperwork Reduction Act requires us to tell you why we are collecting this information, how we will use it, and whether or not you have to respond. This information will be used by the National Park Service as authorized by 16 U.S.C. 1a-7. We will use this information to evaluate visitor services cooperatively managed by the World War II Valor in the Pacific National Monument. Your response is voluntary. At the completion of this collection all personal information will be destroyed and in no way be connected with the results of this survey. A Federal agency may not conduct or sponsor and you are not required to respond to a collection of information unless it displays a currently valid OMB Control Number. We estimate that it will take an average of 10 minutes to complete the survey associated with this collection of information. You may send comments concerning the burden estimates or any aspect of this information collection to Margaret Littlejohn, NPS Visitor Services Project, College of Natural Resources, University of Idaho, P.O. Box 441139, Moscow, ID, 83844-1139; email: [littlej@uidaho.edu](mailto:littlej@uidaho.edu).

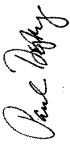
Dear Park Visitor,

Thank you for participating in this important study. We would like to hear about your experience at the World War II Valor in the Pacific National Monument, and learn about your opinions on this visit. This information will assist me and my staff to better serve you.

This questionnaire is only being given to a select number of visitors, so your participation is important and appreciated. It should only take about 10 minutes to complete.

We appreciate your help.

Sincerely,



Paul DePrey  
Superintendent

Please turn to the next page →

1. What time did you obtain your ticket? \_\_\_\_\_

2. How long did you have to wait in line to obtain the ticket? \_\_\_\_\_ Time in minutes

3. How acceptable was it to wait this amount of time to obtain a ticket?  
Please mark (●) **one**.

Very unacceptable

Unacceptable

Neither acceptable nor unacceptable

Acceptable

Very acceptable

☐
☐
☐
☐
☐

4. What time did you board the shuttle boat to the Memorial? \_\_\_\_\_

5. Which other Pearl Harbor sites have you visited, or might you visit during this trip?

a) While waiting to board shuttle boat

Mark (●) all that apply

b) At other times during this trip

Mark (●) all that apply

Site	Mark (●) all that apply
Battleship Missouri Memorial	<input type="radio"/>
USS Bowfin Submarine and Museum	<input type="radio"/>
Pacific Aviation Museum	<input type="radio"/>
USS Oklahoma Memorial	<input type="radio"/>
Other (please specify)	<input type="radio"/>

a) \_\_\_\_\_ b) \_\_\_\_\_

6. If there were a combination ticket to visit your choice of several Pearl Harbor sites on a fixed schedule, would you be interested in obtaining such ticket?  
Please mark (●) **one**.

☐ Yes
 ☐ No
 ☐ Not sure

7. Compared to what you expected, how crowded did you feel while visiting the Memorial? Please mark (●) **one**.

Didn't know what to expect
 ☐

More crowded than expected
 ☐

About what was expected
 ☐

Less crowded than expected
 ☐

8. Which one of the following best describes your situation on this visit to the Memorial? Please mark (●) **one**.

☐ As long as I can secure any ticket, tour times and crowding are not a problem.
 ☐ Being able to secure a ticket at a specific time is very important to me because I am on a fixed schedule.
 ☐ I am willing to wait for a tour time in order to have a quality experience (less crowded, more time on the Memorial).

9. On this visit, were you and your personal group part of the following types of organized groups? Please mark (●) **one** for each.

a) Commercial guided tour group

☐ Yes ☐ No

b) School/educational group

☐ Yes ☐ No

c) Other (scouts, work, church, etc.)

☐ Yes ☐ No

d) If you were with one of these organized groups, how many people, including yourself, were in this organized group?  
\_\_\_\_\_ Number of people in organized group

10. a) On this visit, what kind of personal group (not guided tour/school/other organized group) were you with? Please mark (●) **one**.

☐ Alone
 ☐ Friends
 ☐ Family
 ☐ Family and friends
 ☐ Other (Please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

b) On this visit, how many people were in your personal group, including yourself?  
\_\_\_\_\_ Number of people in personal group

11. What is your age? \_\_\_\_\_

12. What is your zip code or country? \_\_\_\_\_

*Please continue on the other side →*

## Appendix 2. Focus group transcripts

### Transcription Focus Group 1

This focus group consisted of four participants.

Participant 1 - I guess I'm the first one. My name is Participant 1, and I've been in the travel business for about fifteen years; and about five years ago I started my own business. And, of course, everything is under construction the past few years. But I heard the program right now is doing a survey; but, to me, because my customer is from the West Coast, East Coast, the majority is Chinese, and occasionally we do have some Americans that somehow end up in our company. But we don't have lots of groups that come in like maybe Roberts Hawaii or other big companies. And to me – right now they have the system – it depends who you ask. It's not good, it's not perfect - nothing is perfect – but it depends. Because sometimes – let's say right now the system has, you can email or fax how many, maybe 30 or more packages and you get a confirmation that you've reserved your tickets. But the thing is certainly, as a group it's not individual. And somehow they don't like to come. Maybe they want to change their mind, do something else. But I think with Pearl Harbor, if you're not showing up, and you get the ticket, but you left – because you can see the boat was empty, yeah? So the theater, they will penalize your company. But it's something that's hard to predict, what the customer wants. After they get the ticket, they'll just say "Oh, I don't want to go. I'm too tired. I want to go back to the hotel and take a nap." So it's somewhat easy and Pearl Harbor will penalize your company, because you take all the tickets and the theater's empty. And the individual customer has free leisure, like most Americans will rent a car and get here by themselves, "I don't have tickets." And there's no perfect solution for it.

Moderator 2/Moderator 1 - Hold that thought, we'll get back to that later. Continue with introductions, we'll get to your individual problems later.

Participant 2 - I'm Participant 2, I go by my initials; I'm with \_\_\_\_\_, I've been with them twenty-six years, about sixteen years of which I drove full-time, ten years in the marketing department, and as of a year. I'm officially manager of the drivers. So if anybody communicates things to the drivers, it's me, or if there are any complaints, it comes to me directly. So, that's me.

Moderator 1 - Can you tell us a little bit about your clients? Describe them?

Participant 2 - The vast majority of our clientele would be westbound market; the age category between 45 and 80 or so. We get more of the older clientele-type. We do get younger as well with children and infants, but we're all mini-coach vehicles, 25-passenger vehicles. We have no motorcoach. On average, we have about six to eight tours coming out here per day, in non-peak periods of course. Once summer comes, we can almost double that during the summer months. That's about sixty percent of our business.

Moderator 1 - When you say westbound, meaning they're...?

Participant 2 - Americans. Americans, primarily.

Participant 3- I'm Participant 3, I'm with \_\_\_\_\_. I've been there about four years. I'm the reservations manager. Our clientele are westbound, eastbound – which is primarily the Japanese market, and also Chinese and Korean. And cruise ships.

Moderator 1 - And so your average tour size – would you say it's small, medium, large?

Participant 3- Large. Medium to large, anywhere... say for instance tomorrow, the smallest group might be 21 people, the biggest group, 160.

Moderator 1 - Okay, so we'll call that medium to large. And Participant 2, would you call yourself medium, based on that?

## Transcription Focus Group 1, continued

Participant 2 - Well, we wouldn't go as low as 20 people. Medium, definitely.

Moderator 1 - And Participant 1, your client/group size?

Participant 1 - Well our group is different, because the majority – well, we book all kinds of things, like...

Moderator 1 - So it's variable.

Participant 1 - Yeah.

Participant 4 - My name is Participant 4, I work for \_\_\_\_\_; been there nine years, started off as a dispatcher the first four years. I've been operations manager for the past two years. Our clientele is mostly westbound and east – Japan. Our size is very small, it's about 10 to 20 a day.

Moderator 1 - Okay. Could you describe a normal tour work day? How do you operate a tour day-to-day? How the ticket system works well or not work well for you?

Participant 1 - It's hard to tell, because the system our company has is charters. Sometimes we book through Royal, too, and Roberts Hawaii too, and also there is leisure activity. But certainly, we have some FIT and suddenly, they want a charter, even though it's 2 packs or 3 packs, they want to charter a whole vehicle. Because, basis, it's people from mainland China, they spend a lot. And sometimes, it will totally break down. Let's say for example, I have 14 guests tomorrow coming in, and I send an email for just one driver and 14 tickets, but suddenly I have 4 guests who want to charter a vehicle and another driver, but the tickets were on pre-sale at 9 am, and the other 4 persons want to attend. So I'm not sure if there's any conflict of it, because it's hard - we have to please all the customers nowadays, because, I think, they're my boss, so.

Moderator 1 - So what you're saying is that you don't have the flexibility – suddenly, if you have more people, it's too late to make the change.

Participant 1 - Yeah, It depends, maybe some companies have 30 packs sometimes, if there's a motorcoach that comes in. Suddenly there's 10 people that want a different time. But the company already booked at 9 am, and the other 10 people want 11 am. So when the driver shows up to pick up the 9 am tickets, I only have 20 people, and I'm not sure if [why?] there's a penalty for it, in case something happens like that we cannot control.

Moderator 2 - So, let me get this straight. Because I think what you're saying is that you don't get the ticket for your customer, but you actually try to through somebody else, like Roberts, for example.

Participant 1 - No, we have our own vehicle. It's just like, the other 10 people want to separate from the other 30 people, and they want to get their own vehicle and charter and have everything chartered. Because everything is last minute, so the ticket system right now is we email or fax it over to pick it up tomorrow – so at the last minute, it's 8 pm tonight, and they want to get a charter, what can you do? But it's hard to call Patty or someone else, if there's a minor change. And you get in more trouble. And then my driver shows up to pick up 20 tickets, and they ask you, "What happened to the other 10?"

Participant 2 - I know in the morning currently, what you do is you can come in in the morning, and stand in line like everybody else for those extra 6 or 8 tickets. But I know where you're coming from, in the sense that you want to be able to schedule your time for the tour. With a block, it really makes it easy; whereas, when, much like he says, a lot of times our reservations come in as late as 8 pm, and everything over here is closed already for the next day, and we couldn't possibly get the information to them until the next morning, which at that point is too late already. So I understand where he's coming from in many ways – if there's a later group that wants to book, you're not going to turn away people that are feeding you when they're trying to book a vehicle itself, so, it makes perfect sense.

## Transcription Focus Group 1, continued

Moderator 2 - How often does that happen – does it happen every day?

Participant 1 - Well, nowadays it happens a lot, especially – here's the thing is people exit - I notice there's a visa problem between Korea and China, even though it's a free visa waiver in Korean market.

But the thing is if suddenly you cancel and suddenly just enter in Hawaii, what I will notice, because the Internet is open nowadays, and they will compare the prices most of the time, and when they landed in Hawaii, "oh okay, I want to book a tour in Hawaii" and it's an easier position when people are just working for the state, they clock to get out anytime they wanted, but in our position as working people, we cannot start yelling at customers and turn them away. We cannot do that, because our reputation is the most important thing in our business.

Moderator 1 - Let's move on and get a different perspective here.

Participant 3 - I actually pretty much have the same perspective, because we do have, if we're filing our counts by 2:00, we're still open and taking reservations right up until 6 - 00. So you either pad your count, and hope you come close, or somebody's got to stand in line the next morning and hope we can get tickets for the same time slots. Sometimes we don't, so you may have a bus where you have 60 people: 20 people have a 9 - 00 ticket, 20 people have a 9:15 ticket, and somebody else might end up with a 10 - 00. So because it's not as flexible as we'd like, every once in awhile I'm going to run in to where I've got one bus with three different times on it.

Participant 1 - And the labor cost is expensive.

Moderator 1 - Participant 2, you added to Participant 1, let's get your perspective.

Participant 2 - Okay, very similar situation. And many of our drivers are finding ways to – I hate to say it, but – work around the system. It's gotten to the point now, I know where they want the tickets back an hour in advance, but in the early morning tours, doing the pickups in Waikiki – yeah, we have a schedule, 6:15-6:35 – but a lot of times they're there all the way until 7:30, 7:45, because they're missing people along the way, so we can't give those tickets back to them in advance; so what's happening? The drivers just aren't returning them, period, because somebody over here is going to yell and scream at them. And it's not like we're doing it deliberately, it's just something that's beyond the control of the company as a whole. I mean, ultimately we're doing customer service, and the agents know right away, "You left my customers behind! I know they were late, but you had no right to leave them behind." Now we have an agent p\*\*\*ed off at us that doesn't want to book us anymore, so it's a very sensitive thing. We need, as

Participant 3 says, a little bit of flexibility returning tickets, for example. I think that's probably one of our biggest issues there. A lot of drivers do come in later in the morning, and we're fortunate where we can get the tickets back in time. I know they want us to give specific numbers, and, you know what? We just max out every vehicle, and we just hope that we're going to be able to fill everything, and then whatever's left in the morning, then we'll return the rest of them.

Moderator 1 - Who are the agents you're talking about?

Participant 2 - The travel agents in Waikiki. The travel agents, concierge desk, and sometimes its private reservations, online or they call in. It would be perfect if everything fit into a little box here, but it doesn't.

Participant 4 - Us, dealing with small counts, we don't take the reservations until the bus leaves. You know, we're only dealing with 15 to 20 people a day, so we don't usually utilize the pre-order system. We send somebody out here in the morning, and they'll get the tickets themselves. [Someone from his company] We come out in the morning with the manifest, get the tickets, give them to the driver, and go. Participant 2 - Just to clarify with us, that what we're discussing is block days specifically, not non-ship days, right? [Moderator 1 - Yes.] Because there's very different scenarios between ship days and non-ship days.



## **Transcription Focus Group 1, continued**

Participant 4 - Ship days, you just push everything back 2 hours, 3 hours.

Moderator 1 - That changes for you also on cruise ship days?

Participant 4 - We get later tickets, yes.

Moderator 2 - So what happens on cruise ship days?

Participant 4 - They're all booked up. From first ticket until 10 - 00-on, it's booked up.

Participant 1 - The system you have now is considered better than before. But my company doesn't take as many clients as other companies, mostly we do in-bounds and we do ticketing sometimes, just ticket only, but I notice that some companies will take advantage of it. I don't have to mention who. But they notice how many people come in, and suddenly they've got a bunch of tickets, but especially in the Asian market, and suddenly the ticket is empty right there. And they hold on to about 20 tickets. It happens often, I notice that. But we don't have too much customers here except in summer time and at Christmas time, but it happened, and then we saw some driver just walk away with the tickets, just gone. And even though we notice that because our driver talked to their driver and always trying to get tickets, just waiting to come and if they don't come, they take the tickets away. So it's no better solution for it. There's always a company that will take advantage of the system you have. But not the majority.

Participant 2 - It's just a few.

[Participant 1 - Yeah.]

Moderator 2 - So let me make sure I understand you right: the majority of people are honest, working people, that's not a problem. Some companies have an hedging problem, I guess? You would say?

Participant 1 - Well I know some other companies do that. My drivers say why are they getting all those tickets? Only 15 people, and getting 50 tickets. Well, I don't know, I'm not here, it's something to report to whoever staff is, you know. But of course, a cultural thing, they won't say it directly to the officers who are working that day, because it's not our culture to stab someone's back, but. I just bring up the concern that some companies take advantage of it. But it's only like one or two companies that do that. Because the system you have, no system is perfect. And they notice that, they realize the tickets are not given.

Moderator 1 - That's why we're here, to make it better.

Participant 3 - There's definitely room for improvement. This might be true for you guys also: we double. Because we're blocking off tickets ahead of time, we're looking at historically around this period of time with this particular ship, how many people do I normally have? So, if I underestimate, somebody's standing in line in the morning. If I overestimate, then I'm holding tickets that somebody else could have used. Which, we get them returned in an hour, but if you needed those tickets [speaking to someone else at table], that messes up his routing, or his routing, you know, somebody's schedule. If I overestimate, I'm hurting somebody else. If I underestimate, I'm now hurting my customer who has to wait, or the driver, who has three or four different ticket times on his bus. So, room for improvement, definitely; because we know we have to get the tickets back, because the tickets are tight, we tend to be conservative. But then I have had days where somebody's standing down here in line, trying to get 3 or 4 or 5 more tickets, which, on a cruise ship day, that's not going to happen.

Participant 2 - Not in a reasonable time at least. 3:00 is available for you!

Moderator 2 - On a cruise ship day, they use up all the tickets for the cruise ship?

Participant 4 - The first portions, yeah.

## Transcription Focus Group 1, continued

Participant 2 - The vast majority of the cruise ships come in early in the morning is what it is. And overall, we all know out here it gets very slow late in the afternoon. But of course, the vast majority of the cruise ship clientele, in particular, have to be in and out and back on the ship by a specific time, that they try to come to Pearl Harbor first thing in the morning just to get it out of the way so they can do the rest of the things while they're here on Oahu itself. So E Noa Tours, specifically, we're very fortunate that we do get some clientele from the ships, but not much. I mean, these guys deal a lot more with the cruise ships than what we do. But we're affected because they've got large motorcoaches that fit up to 200 people come in on a busload or two – what's that, four busloads right there? – and that was something that – boom – suddenly you're two hours later in the program, itself. So that's why for us at least, with the block system, it really helps us out.

Moderator 1 - If you could change one thing to improve the current ticket system, what would it be?

Participant 2 - Flexibility. Flexibility, for me. Exactly what Participant 3 said, being able to adjust things. If we're going to add some more tickets – and I've been told by Patty, "Just come out here, and if you come out here and your manifest has already been set the day before, if you have a few, just ask the rangers and they'll give you a few extra tickets." But if I suddenly have a reservation of 20, now I've got a problem. Now I suddenly have to figure out, okay, now I have to send the bus out for the next morning early, and hopefully get the tickets for them at a decent time and everything.

Moderator 1 - How can the park help with that?

Participant 2 - That's tough. That's the whole thing. And I understand the park rangers can't hand out tickets left and right. They have a specific number on each ship and each theater program, that they have to try to max them out, preferably. I don't know how to answer that question, it's a tough one.

Participant 3 - Flexibility. I'm of two minds about an online booking, where we'd be able to see what tickets were available and plan accordingly. I don't know if it would work, or how feasible it is. But, one of the problems I run into is I call, and I say, "So I have this many people, what do you have with blocks, or what times do you have so I can slot these people there. Because if I have to split them up over three times, then that changes how things are going to run for me. If I can't get them all in one time slot, then it changes the routing. So maybe we do the city tour first, and then we come to Pearl Harbor. But if I can get them all in one time in the morning, then we come to Pearl Harbor first, then we go. So flexibility for me makes a difference in how it's going to run the next day. I'm doing today for tomorrow. So it means drivers, it means letting dispatch know what's going to happen, and I'm controlling tickets for the cruise ships, any ad hoc groups that come in, and our independent travelers – people who just book online, or call us and book over the phone. So I've got people all over the place.

Moderator 1 - If you were the manager, how would you be more flexible for a company like yours?

Participant 3 - I would look at an online ticketing system.

Participant 2 - I like that. You know how the airlines, you basically, when you book a ticket, a lot of times you can pick your seat, choose your seats, specifically.

Moderator 1 - So X number of tickets could be reserved by the company or an individual coming in...

Participant 2 - Yeah, because I know currently what they're doing, it was, 100 tickets were supposed to be for the larger companies, 25 I think were for the smaller companies, and the rest were supposed to be [for sale] in the morning hours, if I heard it right. I know for some of our tours, we could actually push them into the afternoon, simply because of the routing. We have a Pearl Harbor island tour for example. We would love to come out later in the afternoon but we'd have to have a block guaranteeing that those tickets are going to be there for us. Not something like, "Tell your people you're going to have a 3:00 show" and "Oh, sorry, all those tickets are passed out." Or worst of all, "Oh, the ship's been cancelled

## Transcription Focus Group 1, continued

because of strong winds. Now, people are going to start asking for refunds and they've gone all the way around the island... you're losing out, the whole tour. There goes all your profitability.

Moderator 1 - What if there was a fee associated with the online registration – it wasn't the cost of the tour, but a nominal fee to pay for the reservation system?

Participant 2 - For our company, I think that would work, I mean – the question is, what's a nominal fee?

Participant 3 - Yeah, define nominal.

Participant 4 - It depends on the customer.

Participant 2 - Is it every time you make a reservation, or a flat fee per month, or something like that? If it were a flat fee, I think everybody as a whole, if it was a reasonable amount... something that would definitely be worthwhile. Because we come out here seven days a week, 365 – well, not 365, because a few holidays, they're closed. But it's something that, for us, I think we could... well, we'll do it if we have to...

Participant 1 - But if you set a fee for it, you might get in trouble, because it's a national park. You can charge a parking fee for it, but you're not charging a fee for reservations for tickets, or, you might end up in a lawsuit again. I think if you're checking online, you're not supposed to charge for things like that. Plus the system you have, it should have, just like an airline system. Because the employees are federal and they have to clock out, let's say by 5 or 6, and most of the time, they don't have time because to do it, there's no way you can keep track of it. And the system is different from an airline because with airlines, you book it, you have it, you don't have it. But here, if they went at that last minute, and let's say the customer is asking at 3 pm, "I want to book 100 people going to Pearl Harbor tomorrow morning," but the staff here is only finished at 5 and they can tell you up until 5, but after 5 you cannot confirm the group tickets. Back in the old days, people just walked in here to get some tickets. Because you reserve the tickets for all the travel agencies, and let's say they do have an independent, individual customer driving out, and why is there no ticket times at 5:30, 6:30 in the morning, and I know early in the morning less people come in, and the tour companies come in a lot. Maybe you can set up – because each boat time has 150 seats – maybe you set up 30 tickets for people who just walk in, and 120 for the travel agencies. So that way, I think, they know it – how many groups will have how many tickets. Because in the morning time, early, it's only us, regular customers, or the people who pick it up by 6 or 6:30, right? Individual customers just drive up whenever they'd like. So, it seems less people come in the morning. The travelers in a tour come in a lot, so.

Participant 2 - A vast majority – probably all of us – will take reservations right up to the minimum when we're in Waikiki doing our pickups, so we don't have a definite number until they're checking out specifically from Waikiki. That morning, 30 minutes before they get here, is basically the final time we have a final count. I'm not whether that, with the online reservation, at least we could type it in – "Okay, this is the actual number that's coming out today, specifically, and then they would know at least half an hour before, and then "Oh, this bus had 5 cancellations, okay, we can throw that back to the pool itself." Whereas waiting until the driver gets out here, at that point, trying to get tickets if they're running behind schedule, it's too late to go find 5 people walking through the facility who want to go on the earlier show, at that point.

Participant 4 - I only have personally used the advanced system only twice. And it worked out fine for me at that point. I've never had to deal with returning any tickets – do you guys actually have to come up and bring reserved tickets back?

Participant 2 - They require us – and according to Patty, she wants it one hour in advance of the actual scheduled tour

## **Transcription Focus Group 1, continued**

Participant 4 - Yeah, that really wouldn't work. Maybe doing it online, or something, you know, when the bus is rolling, that would be easier, rather than having somebody come back here and give back the tickets. That's the only problem I can see with that. Yeah, the times that I've used it, it worked fine.

Moderator 1 - So for you it works for your size, your needs, the ticketing system is fine.

Participant 4 - Yeah, pretty much.

Moderator 2 - So as far as schedules go, does it work better for you to schedule a day tour for customers if they go here first thing in the morning and doing something else in town in the afternoon? Or would that work better the other way around, time-wise?

Participant 4 - Typically they'll hit Pearl Harbor first and then do a city tour or something else afterwards – that's the typical thing.

Participant 2 - But I think that started off from the old days where basically, because everybody tried to get up here as early as possible, then fit everything else in afterwards. Now, if it was a permanent block system, all of us could adjust our tours where, especially with the ships – “Oh, let's do the city portion first, we're right there to begin with,” it'd make it easy just to start that portion off, and then they could come later in the morning. Our tour, for example, does Pearl Harbor/Circle Island; we could finish off with Pearl Harbor about 3:00 in the afternoon, and then get back to Waikiki later. We don't even bother with the crowds out here in the morning hours. I hear many times in the afternoon out here—

Participant 3 - It's empty.

Participant 2 - They cancel ships because it's slow.

Moderator 1 - Would that work for your company, Participant 3?

Participant 3 - Depends on the customer. The cruise ships would be hard. The only thing about doing it in the afternoon is most people will do the tour, turn around and do a dinner cruise or Germain's, which starts picking up I think at 3 - 45. So we would have to look at the routing and think about how we would time everything. Cruise ships, I know, like, Tuesday morning, I got later tickets. So that means on the curve. And we don't get a final count until the ship's docked and we start loading people. We don't know how many we've got until right about then. So you know, at that point I'm saying, the first five buses do Pearl Harbor, the second five buses do the city first, because we can't jam everybody up here all at one time. And they leave that same day, usually. So the timing is tight.

Participant 1 - If the system you have right now is making sure how many people come in, that's something that you cannot control, yeah? So maybe you can set aside 20 tickets for people who come in the morning, driving out, and for the tour group there's 130 left. And it's better maybe to pack in all these 100 people bring, and just the driver takes 20 people head-count and get a ticket that day? I'm not sure what is the best way. The ticket is a minor thing because the gates sometimes they open exactly at 7 - 25, 7:30, and the windy days, we're in big trouble. Because of course, each travel company doesn't make that much profit as it seems, because all the labor costs, everything went up. But I cannot buy every umbrella or windcoat for customers, for windy days, they don't open the gate—

Participant 2 - Yeah, there's no place for shade or protection out there. That's always an issue.

Participant 1 - It's always exactly 7 - 30, or whatever the time is. And the thing is, right now we're promoting Hawaii as a best destination for tourists—

Moderator 1 - To the Chinese, right?

## Transcription Focus Group 1, continued

Participant 1 - Well, actually, everywhere. But the thing is, there's no hospitality for it. And some conditions, with rainy days, you should just open the gate maybe 5 minutes earlier. Sometimes my customers come directly from China, and they think Hawaii is the best destination, but those kinds of things are unacceptable in most places in Asia. And it's not a normal thing, most people understand, but the rain, it's not a few drops, now.

Moderator 1 - Have you had that experience also?

Participant 2 - It's a factor – the rain, the wind. There's nothing, and you just have to stand out there in the rain with your customers. Like he says, we don't have umbrellas or raincoats for everybody – it's a huge expense for the companies, right there – and ultimately, we've had many customers completely drenched, right straight through. No alternative. You have that on the non-block days, they have no alternative but to stand in the rain.

Participant 1 - And we're told it's a policy of the national park, but sometimes you can change your mind on things. Policy is policy, but with people working you can change it. And it doesn't hurt if you open five minutes earlier. I don't think it hurts. And I'm getting so frustrated from the airline too, because it's the same thing when people are working as a union, or like the federal, in my personal opinion, they take advantage of the system, the law. "I don't care, you cannot sue me for it." If I could file it, I'd sue them. And that's what happens is, I respect the state law, even though it takes forever. But I think why the economy is not good is the service. I think it's the way the service is not updated. If you go to Japan, people are fast with the service and everything. And if something improves, besides the structure here, I think it's the personality here. Because English is my second language, so besides my driver, there's kind of a barrier. I don't mean to say it the way I say it, but it's the way I interpret from Chinese to English, and some people hear it and feel offended. And here's the thing, sometimes a customer is, we try to control them speaking too loud in certain places, but they won't listen. I think Americans are better because they're well educated, if we tell them, "this is a federal law," they understand, but if you tell Chinese [people], they don't care. You tell Japanese, they're fine; they're well educated. It takes at least about twenty years to educate the people coming out from China now. We try to work more things out with the language.

Participant 2 - What he's talking about, as well as the Japanese specifically, is if you quote something in the brochure, you have to fulfill that, or they can turn around and sue your company for it. They can sue us for it, so we're adamant about being forward – you have to do this, for that simple reason.

Moderator 2 - So what happens for a tour day like today, where it says, "no tour today, too windy." And you can't go out. What happens?

Participant 2 - For us, what we do is we usually notify the clients – I'm not sure, were they operating this morning, by chance? [Multiple people: Until 9 - 15.] Two of our tours would have been cut off. So at that point, we would have told the customers before we even left Waikiki that because the ship has been cancelled. So tell us now whether you want to go out or not, because we're not going to be doing refunds for everybody. If you don't, we'll do a refund right now.

Moderator 1 - So you have a window of opportunity to say, oops...

Participant 4 - So before you pick the people up, you can do it right there at the bus.

Participant 2 - Yep. Or, you don't know until you get out here already. At that point, you've already done a complete tour, basically, and you're out here expecting something and everybody's showing up at your door, "Oh, the ship's been cancelled," ... oh! You pick up everything and get ready to prepare for everybody. And I know it's nature, you can't control nature, I know that part.

Moderator 1 - But then you have to communicate that to your customers.

## Transcription Focus Group 1, continued

Participant 2 - Yep. We basically end up having to take them back to Waikiki, either re-set the tours up for other days, or just do refunds and everything. And that's a huge expense for the company right there.

Participant 1 - That's complimentary from Hawaii tourism, free of charge. [joking]

Participant 4 - Because they're looking at the tour, and if they don't get the Arizona park – because this is the park that they came for – they want the full refund. And they're very adamant about it.

Moderator 2 - Do you have a lot of people come out here just for the Arizona?

Participant 3 - Yes.

Participant 3 - It's one of the highlights, I think, for a lot of people, so if they don't make it out there, they're upset.

Moderator 2 - They will be really mad.

Participant 3 - Yeah. It's not too bad if they're going to be here a couple more days, we can rebook them, reschedule the tour. [Participant 4 agrees.] But if they're leaving tomorrow...

Participant 4 - Yeah, it's tough.

Moderator 2, Moderator 1 - Anything else you want to communicate?

Participant 4 - Only thing I've come upon - wheelchairs, maybe renting of wheelchairs. There's elderly people who come out here, and they don't need a wheelchair, but it's kind of a far walk for them, and I have an old grandma with me. And [we ask the park] "Do you guys have a wheelchair we can borrow?" "No, there's no wheelchair here."

Participant 2 - So I'm not sure if you're familiar with the bus parking lot, but from there – if somebody's on a walker, imagine, that's a huge distance, and we get balled off for trying to drop off here right in the front. And we don't do it just for anybody; we only do it if we've got ADA clients, and they say "Well that's just the way it is, you just have to put up with it," and it's like, where's the ADA laws coming into effect, here? It's like they're under a different exception over here. Allowing people to walk 100 yards from the parking lot all the way over here... yeah. I'm glad you brought that up. I also wanted to thank the national parks for starting the block system, because since they started the block on the ship days, especially, we take a big sigh of relief, because we know things are set now. We're not all scrambling. And I really want to thank the national parks, Patty Brown specifically, because she's the one that spearheaded this whole project. And I know the national parks don't really want additional tasks as it is, because I mean, their budget is... \$0, practically; but I really think the national parks needs to be complimented on that for at least understanding the situation of the companies here, where a lot of us end up losing money because "sorry, all tickets are sold out," now you have to refund everybody.

Moderator 1 - So the block system, you mean blocking out for the tourists, not just ship days.

Participant 2 - Well currently, I don't know. They only do blocks for ship days, right? [Participant 3 - Right.] Only for ship days, not for the rest of the... yep.

Moderator 1 - So when you said "block" I thought you meant blocking out X number for tours...

Participant 2 - That's only on cruise ship days.

Participant 3 - So on a regular day, we print out the manifest, somebody comes down here, stands in line and gets the tickets.

## Transcription Focus Group 1, continued

Moderator 1 - So they still have a strict amount set aside?

Participant 2 - No, then it's a first-come, first-serve the rest of the week.

Participant 1 - But I think they have it. Like back last year around Christmas time, I didn't know that you could email or fax it over and you can reserve a ticket. So at Christmas time, it's so crowded, I sometimes used Royal VIPs 55-passenger coach. And the driver stopped by about 6, and I asked the driver to go pick the tickets up first. But, he went over at six, and the first gate is open, tried to pick up the first tickets by 9, no more. And I ended up losing about another 6 hours to pay for the bus hour. Because we don't have a 55-passenger bus, so we always went through Roberts and Royal and [?]. The system they have, what I heard is, back in November or December, they have it. That's what I heard. They have email or fax, you can reserve a ticket. I think lately, they're doing the same thing. Or by email from Patty. She sent it in an email, she said any group more than 30, you can email or fax it to us. Once you emailed or faxed it, and sometimes it's very slow, I just go home by 5. And sometimes when I go home I don't check email, because it's all day stress already. And we're not sure if it's okay or not, it's not confirmed yet. I'm not sure how many staff Patty has doing that particular position, if she has extra staff we can do it. You can maybe try the best you can, [make it] mandatory to maybe email or fax by 3 pm, and I will reply to you before 5. But that way we know if we have a 2 hour waiting list. As long as you reply back to me by 5 then I know what to tell my customers. And I can release it too. Say I booked it for 50, and suddenly before 5 I want to cancel 25, I can email back to Patty – I know she is working during that time – so I can cancel 25 tickets.

Participant 2 - I know they do it for school groups, and specific groups or large charters. They will set aside a block for that particular event. But whether they will do it every day – because we almost have the same amount of vehicles coming out every single day – until summer hits. And that's the thing there where I'm beginning to get a little worried. Once summer hits they get swamped out here. And what's going to happen at that point. Because with the numbers we're quoting now, we're going to have to increase those blocks. And I'm worried. To say the least, I'm worried come this summer, and that's only a month and a half away from now, after May. From that point on, it's going to get really busy out here.

Moderator 2 - Did I hear you say they can reserve it in advance, though?

Participant 2 - Yes, but what's going to happen is we're all going to ask for larger blocks now, come summertime. Because currently what we're quoting... [Participant 3: smaller counts] yeah, smaller counts right now. Actually right now it's a little bit busier because of spring break, we get the spring break crowd this time of year. But come summer, it'll blow away the spring breakers right off the bat.

Moderator 1 - So it's like every day's a ship day?

Participant 3 - Yeah, that's what it'll feel like.

Participant 2 - Yeah, so those are the times that they pass out all the tickets.

Moderator 1 - What do you suggest they do this summer? What would you like them to do?

Participant 2 - Prepare for bigger numbers...? I wish we could find ways to... I mean I wish we could increase the numbers, period, but ultimately, we're not going to know until summer comes. Again with the scare of the nuclear plant in Japan and we just don't know what's going to happen, come this summer. I know the Japanese market, right away, it's going to be down 45% next month already.

Moderator 1 - What's a typical summer?

Participant 2 - Typical summer, almost every day they run out of tickets. And that's just with the busloads coming in and everything. We're going to, I would say, probably close to double what we're currently asking for right now, in the summer months.

## **Transcription Focus Group 1, continued**

Participant 3 - Which is a lot of tickets, when you figure out what all of us ask for.

Participant 2 - The good thing, fortunately, is that there's very few ship days during the summer months. They all head up to Alaska that time of year.

Participant 3 - And pick up again around September. Not as bad as what it's been the last three or four months.

Moderator 2 - Cruise ships would be during this time of the year, spring, and the winter? But in the summer what you have is those people down at Waikiki...

Participant 2 - So American crews, Hawaii, and Seattle that comes through. Showing my years, here.

Participant 3 - Not as many ships during the summer, except for Pride of America is every Saturday. And some Carnival ships.

Participant 1 - What's the usual pickup time on the ships, when they load it?

Participant 3 - It depends on when they dock. If they come in at 7, we try to get off the pier by 8. So 9:00 here, 9:15, 9:30.

Participant 1 - Because usually what happens is, we hardly do any charters, but once in awhile we do. And we do have individuals that come in FIT in the morning. So we pick them up by 6:30 at the earliest, the last pickup stop would be 6:40 am or 6:50, so we should be here about 7:30. I think about 95% of the time we don't have trouble with other big companies, because we only bring a maximum of two separate vehicles in. And that's only about 28 people. So I don't have much of a problem [with the cruise lines] when they have about 1000 people.

Moderator 1 - Participant 4, do you have issues in the summer?

Participant 4 - Not as much, but our ticket times usually get bumped back a little.

Moderator 1 - Same thing in the summer in terms of busyness? Busier mornings, slower afternoons...

Participant 2 - Summertime, they'll still pass out tickets—usually by about 11 all the tickets have been passed out for the entire day.

Participant 3 - I think, like what you were saying earlier, I think if we had set blocks, it would allow us to change the routing. Like if you knew you could get a 2:00, 3 - 00 every day? Then the routing would change on the tours [Participant 2 agrees]. If I knew for my cruise ship days, I have a block of 12:00, 12:20, 12:40, it would change the way we routed; which means we'd do city first, or he'll do his Circle Island first, and then we'd come to Pearl Harbor.

Moderator 1 - It sounds like the flexibility issue and the block issue – more blocking [...]

Participant 3: The flexibility primarily because the nature of our business is the counts change. And you get down to Waikiki and what you thought was 5 people is 15.

Participant 2 - And we have a lot of secret people that show up with vouchers, that ... oh, okay...

Participant 3 - We didn't redeem that voucher...

Participant 2 - I shouldn't say a lot, but we...

Participant 1 - Once or twice a week?



### **Transcription Focus Group 1, continued**

Participant 2 - About once or twice a week, it's like, but they have a number there, and it's not in our system, but they've got a voucher written out for it, so we want to accommodate them, of course. So those are things that are beyond our control. I mean, you hate to turn away customers, basically. We all know that's our livelihood, in the sense that you don't want to turn anyone away, if possible.

## Transcription Focus Group 2

This focus group consisted of two participants.

Participant 1 - My name is Participant 1. Been with the company for approximately 15 years, been in the industry much longer, in fact more years than I want to admit. The clientele that we serve is a mixed market - from mainland US, Canada, Asian market too. As far as the Asian market, we do not unfortunately handle the market from Korea and China. At this point it's mainly from Japan and of course the US market. Our company size is not even considered medium-size. We're considered a small tour bus company, tour/shuttle bus company. It's a full-size motor coach company. We do have a limited amount of mini buses.

Participant 2 - Hi, I'm Participant 2. I'm in the business about 10 years. We operate with the westbound which is American, Canadian, Australian. We are small, we operate three mini bus - 25 seats/passengers.

Participant 1 - Our typical work day starts at 7 in the morning, mainly involving the foreign arrival area. When we do, which we do quite often, handle the cruise ship clientele, 99% elect to charter our motor coach. Our type of business is exclusive charters. The individual, is what is called F.I.T. The pluses and minuses as far as the current system - I think that the recent change is better than it was before. Initially, it was on a first-come basis. Groups. F.I.T.'s individuals as they call it... [interrupted by cell phone call] The current system allows what is referred to as advanced tickets. I think it's a disadvantage for small to medium companies, like ours, because it favors the large companies, in particular the cruise ship transportation companies. The reason why is the larger companies can afford to dedicate a staff to come to Arizona to pick up the pre-arranged tickets whereas smaller companies like ours - we cannot afford to have a dedicated staff. So, the current system we are not in favor of. However our voice is very small for lodging any complaints or dissatisfaction. A suggestion would be, is, if considerations could be made similar to the Polynesian Cultural Center, even the luau's. Let's use Polynesian Cultural Center as an example. They control all the issuance of tickets. In the past it used to be they issued blocks to individual companies, transportation companies, but many years ago they discontinued that. So what we're suggesting is that the National Park Service or Pacific Historic Parks control all tickets and do not issue it in advance - do not issue blocks. If they do, have the agents, not the transportation companies secure the tickets in advance, directly with the Arizona Memorial. So, that's my opinion - if the agents would deal directly and make their own reservations, mainly because we're a transportation company and they charter our buses. They get the reservation and they charter our bus. And comparing that to Polynesian Cultural Center - the same goes there. They get the tickets direct and they charter our bus or mini bus for that service. So maybe I'll think of more and I'll add on later.

Moderator 1 - So let me be sure I understand how your company works: tourists come to you and they find your name in an ad, or Yellow Pages, web site, and they say they say they want to go on the USS Arizona - how do you get tickets for those visitors?

Participant 1 - The big difference is, with our company, compared to other companies, is that, with our company, Mr. or Mrs. Jones will not book with us, because we're strictly on an exclusive charter basis. So it may be a group of 20, 40 or even 50.

Moderator 1 - So they're already in a group.

Participant 1 - That's right.

Moderator 1 - And for that group to get tickets for each person, they come to you already with tickets from another agency? How do they get their tickets?

## Transcription Focus Group 2, continued

Participant 1 - They come here. And with the new system, they are told to provide them [VALR] with the name list, Arizona Memorial name list. So we're having them complete that. And when we drop off the group, the driver or the group leader goes to the group ticket office to secure the tickets. Unfortunately with the current system, because of the bigger companies, with the dedicated staff that comes here - they come early, with the name list, they get it ahead of time - especially the cruise market - so they get the early tickets. And so when we come, our group waits three or four hours here, until they're finished. So I think that's a disadvantage. Now if the agent books it direct, on a reservation basis with Arizona Memorial, Arizona Memorial will tell this group, in this case we'll say XYZ group, you have 40 people, your tour will start at 11:00, then they would come to us and order accordingly. So it would be less expensive for them. Because as long as our bus sits here, the clock is still running.

Moderator 1 - Okay. Could you describe a typical tour day, and how you get your visitors on to the Memorial?

Participant 2 - *This participant is difficult to understand - his English vocabulary is limited. Some of his comments have been paraphrased and/or summarized.*

There are two different ticket systems originally. Like Participant 1 mentions about no advance booking, or no staff pick up the tickets (without visitors). Do not let the staff come ahead of time - which leaves an undesirable times to whoever is behind. So that is what I understand Opinion A - similar to what I am about to say. My opinion is that opinion A is pretty much correct about the fairness. That companies with extra staff can come early. The way I see the ticketing right now is the public is on one side, and the tour companies is on one side to pick up the ticket. Hopefully the VALR is leaning towards the tour company on a first-come first-serve basis, and the remaining to the general public. Because the public has a choice of when to come. If the general public has to wait a little bit, it's ok because there are other things to do. It costs the tour companies to wait, but not the general public.

Moderator 1 - Participant 2, how do you get tickets for your guests?

Participant 2 - we advertise to promote with additional tours and activities combined with a visit to Pearl Harbor, so we can organize them - see the day at Pearl Harbor, do a dinner cruise at night in a package. We advertise in directly in Waikiki publications.

Moderator 1 - and then do you come ahead with your list, and get tickets the day before, or how do you get tickets?

Participant 2 - They book at least one or two days in advance, and when we bring them here we have the name list. It's a first-come first-serve, no reservations, but the operating size is small - below 25 per day. The time we come is about 9:00. If first-come first-serve is used, there's lots of room for everybody - no advance reservation. The current ticketing system right now is good (tour company leader/driver brings manifest and gets tickets for his group.) But not letting the larger companies getting tickets ahead - and use up tickets.

Moderator 1 [to Participant 1]: Do you have anything to add to that?

Participant 1 - Participant 2's operation is a little different than ours. I agree with what he's saying , however, the bigger companies are circumventing the current policy. Because what's happening is: say 200 people - the current policy limits advance tickets for no more than 50 per group. So they prepare a manifest: 50 on one sheet, 50 on the second sheet, etc. So they're circumventing the policy. That's all we're talking about - it's unfair. It's unfortunate - we don't know the politics involved, or the policies, that mandate why it's free, number 1. Number 2 is if the Arizona Memorial does change the ticket policy - no advance tickets, but for group size 20 or more they may consider advance tickets. The current or past policy, they were issuing advance tickets for educational groups. That was a sound policy. And it expanded to what it is now. What Participant 2 is saying, and what's occurring - we have the same

## Transcription Focus Group 2, continued

problem. We come here and we have to wait so long because our driver or group leader presents the manifest but because all the early morning tickets are taken up by the big companies, we have to wait so long. So, I still say, the F.I.T. - that should continue. The individuals go and stand in line to get their tickets. But then some consideration should be made. Participant 2 and Participant 1 are different. We deal with groups. They deal with groups and individuals. SO they have a unique program - it's a little different than ours. What I'm going to say wouldn't be good for Participant 2 but maybe Arizona Memorial should consider assessing a fee - entrance fee. For us, it wouldn't impact us, because we don't package it. Participant 2 does package it, so that would impact them. They could even charge a parking fee - parking is free here. A lot of things could be considered, but the main one we're talking about is a reservation system. If it could be adjusted, again, we think it might be a little fairer for small, medium, and even a large company.

Moderator 1: So, if you were the park superintendent, and you change the system in a way that improved it for you, and others, what would work a lot better for everybody?

Participant 2 - Sooner or later there will be a fee assessment on all the activities. There is a funding problem. Everybody understands that - it will come sooner or later. There has been no fee before. If there is a fee, then yes a fee - nobody can get avoid it. How we make the thing become fair - that's the focus. How we can attain fairness. All the people come together, everyone come to the table, have the same piece of pie, same cup of tea. Hopefully the voice we share with you today, will bring to the table slowly. As long as you listen to our voice, as long as you adopt fairness, eliminate all the - we don't say "politics" - but how to reduce the politics, how to reduce the big guy and the little guy gets to breathe a little bit.

Participant 1 - Our opinion would be not to go back to the original system, where everyone is on a first-come first-served basis. The major reason for that is that Arizona Memorial is such a popular site, despite the fact that it's free, and the massive amount of people that come here, not only on tour vehicles, but may rental cars. As far as we're concerned, I think most in the industry compare Arizona Memorial with an attraction like Polynesian Culture Center. As I mentioned at the beginning, a system similar to what they have established - they gave us no choice. Prior to that, we were block-holders, many block holders. What they did was, because the seating capacity - I'm guessing 2,000 seats or 1,500 seats - the block holders rotated those seat selections to be fair. Then they discontinued that, without getting any opinion. Right now, transportation companies like us, we do not have access to getting those blocks. If you're a travel agent, which Participant 2 maybe is in that classification, so they can get PCC tickets. Our company, we cannot. So in effect the agent has to secure the tickets direct. In short, that is what we are recommending the Arizona do. For groups - maybe F.I.T's 1 to 20, you stand in the individual lines. Anything beyond that, maybe consider advance tickets. Advance tickets in the sense that you go to a different line - let's say the driver comes. Then I think you eliminate the big boys from getting the choice tickets. The recent change - maybe in the last year, maybe a little longer... in the past we could bring the groups here, and get the tickets, and if the ticket was for 11:30 - because we picked up at 7:30 - we had time to do a short city tour before it started - and I'm talking about before this new renovation. Now we cannot do that. Because the experience is so huge, and the lines are so much longer - and again we're talking about the big boys getting the advance tickets - it's taking at least three hours.

Moderator 1 - Can you imagine a system where anyone can get a ticket?

Participant 2 - No, I don't have an opinion about that.

Participant 1 - I wouldn't recommend something like that. Too much work. The burden for the Arizona Memorial would be tremendous.

Moderator 1 - What if the USS Arizona didn't handle it? It's handled by an outside agency, on-line.

## **Transcription Focus Group 2, continued**

Participant 1 - Good idea. The problem would be solved. But again, that would impact companies like Participant 2. Because when you package a tour, then your package price gets higher, and I think that the combo, the Arizona Memorial tour with, say, a city tour, for a given price... but that's the operator's problem. I think it's going to happen - the industry is waiting for it to happen, though we hope it doesn't because that would increase the price. Like the parking fee. The big companies can afford it - they have the volume. But companies like me, it would be hard.

Moderator 1 - Anything else you want to add?

Participant 2 - No, I think that good.

Participant 1 - We appreciate the chance to participate and share our opinions - it's a refreshing opportunity have that chance to speak up. Whether they listen or not, but we thank you for that.

### Transcription Focus Group 3

This focus group consisted of 9 participants

Participant 1 - with this company for four years; we currently doing an in-bound China tour from China and continental US and Canada. I think our company tour size is medium; usually the tour is between 10-20 people.

Participant 2 - I've been with my company in this position for five years; we service everything, everything. We are basically a charter business, so we do group sizes from 30-10,000. We service cruise ships, that's one of our main concerns. And, we're definitely a large company.

Participant 3 - I'm with \_\_\_\_\_. I've been with the company since I was, gosh, 2 years old, 3 years old, so I kind of got the easy way in. I started doing tours back in 2005 and I'd say we probably cater towards kind of an older demographic, probably with a lot of WWII veterans. It's a very historical tour, very in-depth, so it's a lot of history buffs as well. As far as the age range goes, I'd say from 30 to 80. We're fortunate with the WWII veterans to be getting on board with us. As far as tour group size goes, I'd say, you know, from 10 people to upwards of 50. We also work the cruise ships, but we rent out larger buses and those can range up to 120 people in a single day.

I'm Participant 4 with \_\_\_\_\_. I started this program back in 1991, so we've been doing this about 20 years. And, as Participant 3 just mentioned, most of our business used to be WWII veterans, but because they're getting up in age, now we're getting a lot of families and grandkids of WWII veterans that are coming back and we have, well I'll let Participant 5 introduce himself. But as Participant 3 just mentioned, as far as our demographic, we get a lot of people from the Halekua Hotel, so a large military, both active and retired, as well as the cruise ships and the tour based. I would like to say our company is a small company, but then when we have the cruise ships we become a medium to a large size company, just a few days a month when they come in.

Participant 5 - I'm Participant 5. I'm lead historian for the company. Done this for almost 12 years, and, yeah, we're probably fit in the small category for most days of the year and then occasionally tour groups from ships would boost us into a medium to large business. But, mostly we bring about 15-20 a day down here, at this time. When the economy was better it would sometimes be 20-30. We specialize in the historic side of it, so more than just sightseeing. So we do a lot of narration in our tour and that's the demographic we get are the people who are interested in the detailed history.

Participant 6 - I'm Participant 6. I'm one of the owners and president of \_\_\_\_\_, a limousine company. We hardly come to Pearl Harbor; we don't sell Pearl Harbor. We service the hotels. If you got small, I would be under small. Within a year's time, if I bring 12 people, I mean, I come here 12 times in the year, that's lucky, because we don't push it. We just service the client who wants to come here and drop them off. I'm like a cab, but yet I'm being charged while a cab isn't and that's one of my complaints. [The clients] could be anybody. The hotel will book it, but they don't charge it, I don't charge it. I just drop them off.

Participant 7 - My name is Participant 7. I'm with \_\_\_\_\_. Been with the company since 1996, but at the current title, sales manager, I've been in this position for about 2.5 years. The majority of our clientele is from Japan. Mostly all. Our business is from sedans to all the way up to 25-passenger minibus. We have a total fleet of 19 vehicles, including sedans, vans, limousines. Small to medium.

Participant 8 - I'm Participant 8. I'm also with \_\_\_\_\_. As we mentioned earlier, we're a transportation company. Like he said, we provide, um. I'm doing dispatch, supervisor for dispatch, which is I move the vehicles related to the schedules. What we do is basically whatever ordered from the company we provide their movement. At least we're not directly connected to this type of movement...Pearl Harbor...I think what he's trying to say, something I do want to say, is that we're somewhere in the middle of a transportation. Right now we're situated in Pearl Harbor. There are probably transportation coming into Pearl Harbor....some clauses, we're kind of hurting.

### Transcription Focus Group 3, continued

Participant 9 – I've been with the company 4 days. We're a small company. We pick up, we do transportation down here twice a week. We do a tour out here and we do ad hoc groups, which are groups that want to do Pearl Harbor. That's basically the size of our groups....

... My clients are picked up from the Illani and from...mostly your FIT traveler. We do groups, which has a little bit of a different emphasis. For example, if you have a convention in house, then you may have a couple of buses that are rolling because they want to go to Pearl Harbor. On a scale of where do we fit in in the market, I think we are on the lower end of the spectrum, as far as pricing. We make our market typically in that niche. We have talks, we're on the internet.

Participant 1 – Pearl Harbor is the one place where we must come with our tour, so upon arrival, usually if they take the international flight, after arrival we'll send them here, because it's very close. Save the transportation. But if they came on the late flight, they come the next day. We have two tours they have to do – one is the Pearl Harbor. So, the ticket system, what we usually do is the tour guide will come with the tour and pick up the tickets; it depends on how long they have to wait. If they need to wait 2 or more hours, they probably will go on the bus, tour the island and come back. But usually, if we have a big group, like 200 people, 300 people, we will send an email to Patty Brown (tour company) and ask her to reserve some tickets for us and then we'll have to send someone to pick up the tickets first - the day before or early in the morning. And then, the tour comes and don't need to wait. That's usually what we do.

Actually, it depends, if there is a lot of visitors, probably it's a bad day because we have to wait a long time or either our tickets are out. Probably they have to wait. If it's very slow, then it's easy for us to get the tickets.

Participant 2 – Our company works as a travel agent, so basically, we have desks all over Waikiki and our own sales team. Reservations come in the day before we final. We break down all the different tours that people are purchasing, whether it's Pearl Harbor by itself or Harbor USS Missouri. Once we get the finals, we go through our scheduling and we set up for the next day. Currently, the way we do our tours allows some flexibility with the ticketing. Of course, the way it is now, with us having to come in with the manifest, with the people, grab our tickets. It becomes a little cumbersome because a lot of people have – they come in with the mentality that they're going to get on a bus, come to Pearl Harbor, get onto the Arizona and it's a nice good day, but that's just not the way it works with the ticketing system as it is now without us getting the tickets the day before. So, it becomes more of a real customer service type of thing. So, we don't want to take them off the buses because we don't want them to walk from commercial vehicles to the ticketing just to find out that they're tour is 3-4 hours later. So, we take them back, get them back on the bus and we do other things on tour and bring them back. That's the downside of any typical day. We can run anywhere from 3-8 vehicles of the multiple Pearl Harbor/Arizona Memorial tours. On a slow day it's not a problem. We have our mid-63 is a 6:30 pick-up in the morning, so we're normally here no later than 7:30-7:45, not too bad. But tours that we start at 9, we wait for flights coming from the outer islands, now we're at 9:30. So, by the time we get here, yes we'll get tickets in the later afternoon. We have to kind of pacify them. We try and teach our agents to let them know that they've got to be flexible on their schedule, but with a new system we can get the tickets in advance and that's something different. Our guides can go into the day knowing what they can do. They're not going to come immediately here now. They can go and do Punch Bowl, they can do city tour and then they can come and do the Arizona. If you're talking about the current ticketing system, you're talking about getting them before hand or the one...to my knowledge; the current ticketing system is still the same. You don't get the tickets the day before. We do on cruise ship days. Right now there's a difference, unless someone can tell me otherwise. To my knowledge, we don't ask for our tickets the day before, unless it's a cruise ship day because that's our high volume day. On a standard day, our Polynesian Adventures seed in buses range 3-8, but if you're going to add a cruise ship to that you can easily add maybe 8 more cruise ship buses to that 3-8. So, we can run anywhere from 11-16 now. So it all depends on what the day is. We were told getting the tickets beforehand was only on cruise ship days. There's no cruise ship tomorrow, today we're not picking up tickets for tomorrow. We'll bring in our tours tomorrow like we normally would without getting any tickets today. That's a normal day to us. That was another

### Transcription Focus Group 3, continued

thing we wanted to clarify because, with the exception of knowing, we do have large DMC companies and they could come in with a group, part of a convention, and so I'd like to do Pearl Harbor and I need 8 buses. And that's not a cruise ship day in our minds, so we will plan ahead, email Patty, let her know we've got this large group that doesn't have anything to do with the cruise ship, nothing to do with my seed ins, it's just this one group in addition to everything else. We want to try and work on a customer service level and make sure we've got that set. A standard day to us is still bring manifest, bring people, come here, get your tickets, and hope you get something that's in a nice timing that works with your tour. But on a cruise ship day, we can come in the day before and we request with Patty some time for the next day and then we'll come and get them beforehand.

Participant 5 - Typical day, we arrive in the commercial parking lot and if I have handicapped people, then it becomes a problem because the handicapped drop off is only about 25 yards away from where you park the bus, which really isn't much of a benefit for the handicapped people, especially those on crutches. So, we hobble in slowly if we have handicapped people and that has been a problem for some of our people who are aging. And there are a lot of older people who really have a difficult time making it from where the handicap drop-off area is now to the front entrance. And then when they get to the front entrance they realize they have to walk a long way to get to the museum and the main theater, so they look at me and say this is too hard and can I wait here. Yes you can, I'll come back for you. But then, when we enter the facility, there's a line for people who are coming on their own to receive tickets, there's a line for tour guides to receive tickets, but there are people who come that don't have tour groups that will also like to be collecting tickets for groups that are coming later in the day. The rangers try to organize them, but even this morning there was a problem from a company that's not represented here today. One of their tour guides didn't know, even though he didn't have passengers, he was supposed to let those who had passengers on-site receive their tickets first. There have been issues in that regard when the rangers were not sure who had people and who didn't. There have been some words exchanged between tour guides; it's not pleasant in front of the guests who are coming in on their own. I don't know what the park service can do about that, but sometimes it works out, sometimes it doesn't. But when a person that gets their tickets, and they want to get tickets for another group, they have to go to the back of the line. But the tour guides bring people into the facility and are with their group until they enter. Then you have to send your group somewhere while you go get tickets. I sometimes send mine into the gift shop. I say – if you want to take a look see at what's for sale, go ahead and do that, and I'll meet you at the front entrance of the gift shop in a few minutes when I get your tickets. Then I'll issue your tickets outside the gift shop. That's what I do personally. For some it's difficult because there are people there with multiple manifests and they go. So while our groups are moving slowly into the facility, they'll go get a set of tickets for later in the day. They'll get back in line and get tickets for later in the day. And then you'll get up there and you'll be trying to sort through who is who. If they actually had 3 lines, that might be helpful. I don't know. People who are arriving on their own, tour guides that have groups of people on-site, and then those that are trying to get tickets for later in the day. That might work, I don't know. I do know that there needs to be a little more supervision from the rangers at the start of the day because everybody is anxious to get their tickets. And for some tour guides that are specialists in other languages, sometimes it's confusing for them, especially if they don't speak English that well and their tour guide is telling other tour guides to get out of the way. And it can be ugly. That plus the handicap are my biggest issues with the park service. Personally if I, or any of us, had been asked to help design this facility, we would have put the entrance closer to where the commercial parking lot was. And, we would have built a handicap drop-off area right in front of the entrance. The security guards are somewhat over jealous sometimes and they have pounced on tour guides dropping off handicapped people in the past, which was closer, and some of them are not trained in social skills, to put it lightly. I had two groups of handicapped that I was picking up one time, and I had the wife of one of the handicapped men, but he was still coming, I was only there about 4-5 minutes, the security guard got on the bus and said, *"You ought to know better!"* Better than what? *"You can't park here."* I'm not parking here; I'm picking up handicap. *"I don't want you here. You shouldn't be here. You know you shouldn't be here."* But sir, I've got a handicapped guy coming. He's in the distance. I can see him coming. "GGGRRRRRR." In front of our people, it's very unprofessional. I don't know if the security guards do get training in customer relations, or even if the rangers do. There are some rangers that are better at it



### Transcription Focus Group 3, continued

than others. So that might be another thing for them to work on, the park service and the security forces. I'll hand it back to you because I have to go, sorry.

Participant 4 - I want Participant 3 to address those concerns

Participant 3 - As a tour guide, I pick up my people at 6am. That's our first pick up time in Waikiki. As a tour company, we always like to be one of the first tour groups to get you down and out onto the memorial bright and early. That's why we get everybody up so darn early, 6am a lot of people are grumbling, but when they get down there they see the line, they say 'OK', we're so excited we beat all these crowds in. I have situations before where I'll have a full line, I'll have maybe 5-6 of the public, the people that know to get up so early, and they'll be waiting in line. And I'll be that first tour group down there in the line. I'll watch as other tour guides walk to the front of the line, completely bypassing my group in my line, which I'm talking to customer service wise, telling stories and stuff like that, and they'll just completely bypass, not even eye contact, walk to the front of the line. So that when I get into the facility with all my tourists I've already got 5-6 tour guides in front getting their tickets. As a tour guide, we pride ourselves on being the first ones there. That's why we get up so early in the morning. It's really hard to explain to your people why you got a third shuttle boat time – at 8:30 or 8:45, when you should've had the 8:00 or 8:15. I know in some circumstances I've seen other tour groups get tickets for other people and pass them out to other tour guides. More recently I haven't been seeing that go on. I don't know if they cracked down on it, which is a good thing, but it's just really hard as a tour guide seeing these other tour guides go completely around you and I don't know if that's because I'm young and they feel like they've been doing it for a longer time being down here and that's an age thing, but it's really hard as a tour guide seeing that happen. And, especially walking up and finding yourself in a situation where, as our tour, we only have an allotted amount of time for the day. You're trying to explain to your people – I told you I'm going to get you back to Waikiki about 2:00, now we're looking about 3:15-3:30. And they say, "well I'm going to the Polynesia Cultural Center. How is that going to work?" Then, that's when you start scrambling, saying, "well we'll cut down on this time." But when you say you'll cut down on this time, they flip out about it. That's a concern. The handicap problem – I have been lectured by security guards and I hope that all this construction out there will help to alleviate some of that. But, it is embarrassing to be talked to by security guards and yelled at in front of your people. I've also seen them yell at WWII veterans, which is another thing that is interesting because these guys are coming down here to their old stomping grounds and to see them say, "let's go, speed up," it's like, no, take your time. You'll get there when you get there. That's my 2 cents.

Participant 4 - When we started the program in '91 it was geared toward the WWII veterans, so our group has always been catered to a larger crowd, but now we get young kids during the summer, so it's all ages. One of their concerns is just the whole respect thing of how they're treated. The drivers are treated as second-class citizens, who bring these guests down that are in wheelchairs and so on. That is a big concern of ours. With the new facility – we love the new facility – it's fantastic. So much nicer, ten times the size, whereas the other – it was a first come first serve at the other facility, which it still is kind of now. There have been games that have been played, because I've been doing this for 20 years, every couple months or so, this tour company is pulling tickets. They say they have 50 in their group and they actually have 20 and they're using those tickets for the same time the next day. Because we've been doing this so long, we know the little games that are constantly being played. And it's the same thing now, even though the park service has hired Patty Brown, who has been fantastic, to come up with a way to deal with the cruise ships. When we get involved with the cruise ships, which was a huge concern because our tour program is not just the Arizona and Missouri. What's nice for other tour companies that are doing an Arizona and Missouri tour is that they would get down here and say, "oh wow, I got 11:00 program." Say they got down here at 7:30, they'll go do the Missouri first. Our program, we visit the Arizona first in the morning, we bug out of here by 9:15-9:20 at the latest because we go to Wheeler Field, Schofield, Fort Shafter, Punch Bowl and we have our own private WWII museum, so it's very critical that we get our people in and out. With the cruise ships, what we do is, if we can't get a time in the morning we'll ask for a time in the afternoon – a 1:00 program and we'll reverse it. We'll go up to Wheeler, Schofield, and so on and so on. In that regard, we're able to kind of work around it. Where we

### Transcription Focus Group 3, continued

get totally screwed is when we get down here and are told that “we don’t have your name on the list” – we’ve emailed our number of tickets that we need and they say “we don’t have you on the list, we can give you a 10:00 program.” We’re done. Now what do we do? We go to Punch Bowl, Wheeler, then come back. And the people have paid top dollar for our tour program. It’s sold as the Pearl Harbor VIP tour. We have the historian guys. Not to take away from any of the other tour companies here. Everyone does a fantastic job, but these people are paying premium dollar and it makes the park service look like a bunch of ding dongs when we come down here and they say we don’t have tickets for you. It’s like, reservations were made for the cruise ships. One of the biggest beefs, too, that the guides have just what Participant 3 said, and Participant 5, because he’s older and because he’s been doing it quite a bit longer than Participant 3, Participant 3 just kind of takes it and allows it to happen – some of the other tour guides going around him, pulling tickets. What’s going on? And he’ll call me. Participant 5 will scream and yell, “No. We were here.” And he’ll deal with it with the park service. Customer service wise, I agree with Participant 5. We deal with some of the park service people that are less than kind and I don’t have the patience like some of our people have the patience to deal with it because I’ll just say let me talk to Patty Brown. Just the way some of the things are handled. The first come first serve program always worked for us in the past, because that’s why we got the people up at 6 in the morning. Everyday we’d have people ask, “why do you get us up so early?” You’ll see. We come down there and we’d be normally at the front of the line and then everyone else in the back. Now I understand how it’s worked for the other companies that are picking up a later time in the morning. One of the other things I’ll toss in the mix, too, is when Patty...I had a meeting with Patty and some of the other rangers about doing...one of the problems they brought up was, “Hey Participant 4 - we want to say you’re making money by bringing people coming down to the Arizona Memorial. You’re making a living off this. What about the people that are regular visitors that are coming down here, FIT (free individual travel) visitors, foreigners that come down here a little later. They didn’t know to get down here. And you’ve taken all the tickets and you’re making money off it. That’s where I got very upset and I said, “No, we’ve provided a service for these people in Waikiki that are the same as the FIT, the people that are driving down, have paid us to do a full 8 hour narrated guided tour and what she was saying is that the people have preference that are driving down on their own over the people that have paid top dollar to come down through our company, or Robert’s, or Poly Ad, or these other tour companies. We were kind of looked at as the bad guys that, because you’re making money, these other people are going to take preference over getting tickets first. I said, “wow, hold the phone. I work with the Halekua Hotel and different military commands on the island and they have paid. If they wanted to come down on their own, they can, but they spent the money to come on a narrated guided tour through these various tour companies, ours included. They shouldn’t be treated any better than the FIT, but not any worse. Does that make sense? They’re all the same. We want the visitor experience, everyone that comes to Hawaii, to be wonderful. When they built this new facility, it’s built for 10 times more people, but you’re still locked in that they can’t service any more people because it’s the same movie theater, it’s the same boat. Then, in the people’s perspective, if I don’t get to board the Arizona Memorial I want my money back. They don’t realize it’s just a small percentage of the day and we’ll get that. If the winds are up and the waves, then we’ll cancel. Then I want my money back because I didn’t get to take the 45 minute trip back and forth. That’s already done as far as how the thing is built.

Participant 6 - Like I said, my company doesn’t come that often. I don’t come that often. Only when we’re requested by the hotel. With our tickets, I cannot complain how it’s been. I liked the way it was before because I could come a day before. You could set up your client. By the next day you get your ticket – the hours you’re going to come in and you go right in. That was beautiful. But now it’s a little different. I don’t have a big complaint about how it’s being run. I only bring in 2-6 people if I come on whatever day I do come. It’s not that big of a hassle. I’d like to go back to what Participant 4 - n was saying in regards to everybody making money off selling Pearl Harbor tours. I don’t. My complaint has to do with I’m like a taxi cab and taxi cabs are dual, but because when I came back from finding this, the lawyers and everything, the biggest thing they mentioned was PUC (public utilities commission). And because I’m PUC, doesn’t mean I’m making money from Pearl Harbor, so why do you classify me with all PUC companies, tour companies, and not like a cab? Because a cab will pick somebody up and drop them off – that’s what I’m doing. My driver can get their tickets. With the people right there, he can go

### Transcription Focus Group 3, continued

and get the tickets. Not in advance. If you're going to service the hotel, you want to provide a service, so you want you client to go wait in line and do it, the driver will go do it. Or maybe he'll come down early and say my client wants to come in at 10:30 or 10:45 and he'll pick up the tickets then. So when he grabs the client and bring them down, they can go right in to see their show. PUC controls all the tours. You have the public utilities, which is the state, and the taxis come under the city. But some get dual. They're both. How can a cab come here with PUC and not have to pay anything, while my company comes here 12 times in a year's time and I gotta pay \$300 and \$150 for every car I have. I don't think that's right. I don't have any problems with the tickets because it's just so small. I'm not like these big guys here. We come here once in a while. We've done a tour of the whole island, I'll tell them ahead of time that it's going to affect their tour. Are you sure you want to go? They'll say we'll skip Pearl Harbor and go someplace else. The hotel makes the arrangements. The client sends in what they want to do. The hotel sends me, the day before that, this is what the client wants to do on this particular day. One of the stops is going to be Pearl Harbor. Sometimes the driver will wait and take them on a tour. If they just want to come to Pearl Harbor, we'll drop them off and come back at a later time, like a cab will do, and pick them up. Before this came about, I submitted a big letter explaining that. They said, I can agree with you, but when it went to the lawyers everything that came back was, well because you're PUC...what does that have to do with it? I'm not making money off of it. That's my company.

Participant 9 - We don't have any issues as far as booking the tickets. We book them in advance and pick them up the day before, so we are set. We don't have the type of issue that Poly Ad has where you don't know your final count until...we can stop selling and say, OK, here's where we're going to fill the bus. We'll come to you guys based on that. It's very simple in that regard. I think the commentary I've heard about the issues with park service, I believe that's the same with my drivers. I am very concerned on the ADA issues, because all of us here understand that when you're handling ADA guests, there is a need for extra precaution in loading and unloading these guests, because if you don't load and unload them correctly, they can get injured. So there's a liability issue as well as with the park service. Rushing them does not do service to us or to the park service. That is a huge issue for us. Otherwise, the relationship I have...the drivers I have are very few that do this run and they're very familiar with the park service, so I don't have commentary for here. I'm not sure if my guys are the ones that cut in line. I'll find out. My apologies if they are. I'll let you guys know, but as far as our perspective on the way we operate, I am quite happy at the size we operate. There is the ability for us to increase, but I don't think we'll ever be the size of some of the groups here. That being said, our issues have worked out. The National Park Service in Alaska...understand the ticketing system with Aramark. I understand the goals that the park service has in servicing the general public. I'm not sure that it's evenly weighted. This park is wonderful and that's what we want to showcase to the rest of the world. Wherever we can work together with the park service to achieve that goal, we're there.

Participant 7 - I'm going to let Participant 8 speak, but I would like to comment regarding the boat size. I think one of the main issues with the tickets is the boat size. Some of the staff has addressed how I don't think the ticket issue will be resolved. My personal feeling is that the whole system could work a little better it seems. Like Participant 4 mentioned, first come first served basis. You know there are people waiting there for tickets to see it, so we don't have this issue with people coming in and out like you see here. That's my opinion about that.

Participant 8 - Basically, ours is on a strictly driver/guide, so most of the time we have to do – whoever comes here, they have to park and then they gotta go to the ticket line. I think it's the same for you folks, right? Our same problem is our clients are Japanese. You get a little bit more hectic due to the point that the driver has to go with them to the boat. That kind of puts insecurity to our vehicle. Basically because of the language. They want our driver to go with the boat because in case something happens it can be explained. We don't leave the car out there unprotected. I've see some cases where the cars are broken-in with all the security going around, which doesn't make sense because, like you said, some

### Transcription Focus Group 3, continued

people get hassled by the security guards for loading and unloading some people. You can see them being loaded, you can see them being unloaded, yet they come and try to make you rush things up. Which is unsafe for our clients and doesn't look too good, especially for the Japanese people who are used to being catered to more than usual. As for us using the Missouri and the Pearl Harbor, sometimes we have a case where we have to have people go to the memorial in the afternoon when they want to go to the Missouri. Because of this time table, and the first run, we get the boat ride to the Missouri. I think your problem is a timing problem. Our client, not too often, they want to go to the memorial, they want to just see the museum for a few minutes stop and go on. Second problem we have is, I think Participant 7 was explaining it to me, you have that umbrella insurance that you have to have, right? The NPS requests that. What's happening now is that some of our clients are going to come, they cannot provide for. Due to the point some of our outside drivers to independent. A single person that had one car cannot do that – cover that umbrella coverage. If that happens, we have to decline that person to come to Pearl Harbor because cannot always cover the...the last minute and we're afraid to put them in a car and have a charter they want to go. All of a sudden they want to go to Pearl Harbor in the middle, but can we do it? You're just going to say no. That is kind of getting into some problems, like the PUC, we have to have insurance. Sometimes a taxi can come in, but they cannot because of that. Taxi can drop the people off and go, but ours, because of PUC, we have to have the umbrella coverage for the national park. The individual drivers could be doing it, they just don't. They won't be getting that service and it cannot be used. It's kind of hurting us too because that's also overall picture to service the clients. They're on the road and the next thing you know is that they want to go to Pearl Harbor, just want to see the museum. We can't bring them in because individual drivers cannot afford to cover that insurance.

Participant 7 - Let me clarify, because we do tend to farm out some of our work. When we farm out, we farm it out to individual contractors. Usually they have PUCs, but they won't be allowed to come in if they're not covered with this insurance. It's kind of hard for us to farm out that tour or charter – that charter includes Pearl Harbor visitor center.

Participant 8 - They won't let us go down. They get harassed basically by the security.

Participant 7 - We have all our vehicles insured and we pay the NPS's fee. Even we have a sedan, limousines, minibuses, and vans all insured. And, of course, we have all these cars paying the fees because we don't know what vehicle we'll be using. It might be a couple, it might be for a family, or it might be for a group. So it's kind of hard to logistically schedule vehicles and to farm out those tours to individual contractors because they don't want to get insurance just for that. They don't know when they're going to have their business come up – maybe twice a year, maybe three times a year, maybe five times a year.

Participant 4 - Just a note on what Participant 7 is saying, this is something new that they just added. I'm on Willy's side too on this. We have 3 vehicles. I'm only using 1. The economics – the last 3 years have just been devastating to a lot of the tour companies like the smaller tour companies like us. We're just barely hanging on with our fingernails, so where I got a little uptight was where they said, "*You're making all this money bringing people down.*" Well now the liability insurance, the umbrella insurance has cost us a small fortune, especially for the little guy. Per vehicle. Is it \$150 per vehicle? That may not sound like a lot, but if you have a whole bunch of vehicles and you're only using them once or twice a year...we have a 15-passenger van that we've used once this whole year and we may not even use it again. But in order to use that vehicle on a particular day, well, we lost money by insuring it. I have to have those vehicle insured, right Participant 7?

Participant 7 - Exactly

Participant 4 - We have to keep those things covered in order to be able to come down here. So, Participant 6, I feel your pain. If you're just coming down a few times and they're saying, "*PUC, you need...*" It's not worth it. It's better for him to say, "*sorry we don't do Pearl Harbor anymore.*"

### Transcription Focus Group 3, continued

Participant 7 - One car is my Escalade. My other problem is I just bought a new car to replace the one I had. Now, do I, I ripped the sticker off. I don't know if they got a number to go back and see. Do I gotta turn that one in? I don't know how they do it at the airport. Turn that one in or resubmit a whole new thing on the new car with the license number and the vin number? I have to do that, yet. It's not worth putting in 3 or 4 cars. We've got to carry a million dollar+ insurance no matter what in my business.

Participant 4 - One more note, too. When you look at it from the outside, when you look at the price of our tour company, as well as most of the other tour companies who bring folks down here, they're paying a 30-40% commission to the travel agent that's been booking your tour, as well as to the hotel and all these agencies. So when people say, "*oh, he's killing it. He's bringing down 10 people in that van.*" No – take 30-40% commission off that. When they say you're making all of this money, it's not really true. To be able to nickel and dime off the fees. And what is it different that we're getting from the additional fees that they're paying to come to the park service. We have a brand new facility and that's wonderful, but in order to increase our ticket pricing, already we're maxed out in the economy. Gas prices went up.

Participant 7 - They're killing us.

Participant 8 - We're getting bigger buses, so....ha ha ha ha. [Getting tickets] – Ours is hard because sometimes it is the last minute. It could be that day they want to go. We just take a chance, take them here, wait in the line and get it. We didn't know that they could get advanced ticketing. Is it the size of the group?

Participant 2 - Just based on what I'm hearing, it doesn't mean it has to be cruise ship days.

Participant 7 - But there are some switches in that procedure. Originally it was for full ride only and now they're saying that they can tickets prior to that.

Participant 3 - I don't know about that either.

Participant 8 - We do need a manifest, if I'm not mistaken?

Participant 2 - Yes.

Participant 8 - What happens if it's a last minute order for a group of 5, it's only one van and they want to go to the memorial last minute on the tour? We have no manifest. How do we do it on those cases? Just as an individual only?

Participant 2 - No, no. The manifest works in regards to groups, so if you're a tour escort that's bringing anyone, even if it's 6 people, we'll create a manifest, but that's pre-organized.

Participant 8 - Ok.

Participant 2 - As far as an independent person, you would probably benefit from just, anyone, standing in the regular line. I'm probably getting a better ticket. But this is purely if you have something that's last minute and you're probably booking 2-4 people. If you're trying to get 50 people, then yeah, good luck.

Participant 8 - Usually our side – it's easier for us to do it. I know this one thing – 1:30. We get on the thing in the morning. I think you understand what I'm talking about. Because early morning, like you said, first come first serve. Even in line you end up in the 3<sup>rd</sup> one. We, ourselves, like to recommend buying tickets in the last minute in the afternoon. After 1:30, come here and you might be the first one on the boat. Sometimes they do want to come, but if they don't want to wake up early, they want to leave at 9:00. We keep telling them it's going to take forever, but still. Which is kind of – they pay for our charter; they want to go here, there, plus here. That's where we get to the part of being in line, getting the tickets.

### Transcription Focus Group 3, continued

Our problem is, we get the order from our client; we're the vendor to them. So if they don't do it, we cannot provide that service because we get the list the day before and it's kind of late. Our order comes in the day before for the next day. So for instance, if ours was prearranged from Japan about a week ago, but their office knows about it, but they never book a group, all of a sudden we get stuck with a group trying to get in over here. And last minute that day before, I don't know if we could get the tickets. That's the kind of problem that we do have, especially providing a chance for our company. Because we're a vendor in a sense. Everybody else is transportation, we're a vendor. Ours usually becomes final the day before. It's not like we prepared one week ahead to go about this. We don't know until that morning you come into work and find out, wow, we got this.

Participant 2 - If I could interject real quick...What, according to you [Nancy and Lena] as the person that's doing this, what is your understanding of what the current ticketing system is?

Participant 4 - I'm confused at what it is now.

Participant 2 - So, what is my understanding of the current ticket system now?

Participant 1 - I prefer to prearrange mine if possible. That means we can get the tickets in advance. Just a little before, probably one day before. That would help us, because we have a scheduled tour every week. So we know each tour has to come here and we know which day they will be here. So, we can call or something, arrange and then we pick up the tickets. That's what would be easy. Phone call is better, because anyone can call to say I need certain tickets and then can I pick them up at what time. That will be easier. Like we booked a tour, we have a group of 30 people at 10:00, can we save the seats? When we come we can get, yeah...

Participant 2 - First off, coming to the previous meetings with Patty and other transportation companies, my understanding was that it is a first come, first serve basis everyday. What they allowed us to do was, as a tour company, was, we understand that it becomes very difficult if all of our 10 buses are going to come rolling in here at one time, because that's their objective – to get to Pearl Harbor, to get the Arizona launch. So they're all going to come at one time, then it causes mayhem out there. What they agreed to was if you have people that are present, because you get up at 6-6:30, you're given preference over the escorts that are just coming with a manifest and says, *"Hi, I'd like 50 tickets. I'll pick up my group in about an hour, so give me something 3 hours from now."* Or whatever it might be. It's a first, come first serve basis. Patty then allowed, when it is a high volume day based on just out of the normal, which was cruise ship days, that is when the program of getting the tickets the day before could be implemented. Only on cruise ship days. Every other day it was supposed to be a first come, first served. We get our finals the day before, we create our manifest, we do the manifest from Patty, the one she provided us, our driver will pick up the people with their manifest, come in, stand in the tour guide line, not the independent line – the FIT line, give the manifest, get their tickets. And they'll base their day from there. I prefer the day before with stipulations of when you can make your arrangements and a cutoff time. Because we just learned the other day that it was a non-cruise ship day and, well technically it was a cruise ship day, it was one of our ships that we were servicing, but it was a very low volume. Even though they bought 10 buses, they went in on one bus. The one bus only had 30 people, but it's still a cruise ship day, so of course our operations manager thought cruise ship day, so let me go ahead and submit for tickets. She submitted for tickets for not even the earliest tour, maybe 9:30, 12:00, they were already sold out, they were totally out. Then it became a – I thought we were servicing the cruise ship, we ran out of tickets, what's going on? We found that people were ordering before then. I like the day before thing. They've always opened it to transportation companies or tour companies to come and join because we were actually trying for allotted times. Like here, at Polynesian Adventures, you can get this one, knowing that you have to share with everyone else. There was never someone who could inundate a program. That was always a no-no. Of a launch of 150, and in regards to the launch thing, I think they'll do that only because of the whole...you get out to the memorial, you can't have 200-250-300 people on that thing.

### Transcription Focus Group 3, continued

150 seems right. You cannot give any one program to all the tour companies. That's where they say it's not fair to the independent. We have thought if you could, of every single tour time, if there was an allotment given to all the different transportation companies, but who gets the pick of the times? That's very difficult because you can sit at a table and only 5 companies come, the same 5 companies. Then you have the other companies that say we didn't know about that, we'd like to be a part of that, but that was, of course, left up to Patty to try and regulate, not the other transportation companies. But, I do like the one of the day before. It allows our drivers to be so much more flexible. And it is very customer service oriented, because you're not all rushing to get here, all thinking, ok, and then you find out you got a tour 5 hours later. There are times that you can manipulate it, with the Missouri or something like that. We make it work. But, we've been put in the position of – sorry, it looks like we're supposed to be back at 2, but it looks like 3. No, no, no, I've got a luau I was picking up. Our drivers then go back and forth to service the customer. They've even to the point and said, *"well how many have another tour at the end of the day? I've got luau."* They'll take the 10, they'll return the 10 from their original pick up line, take the 10 to the individual line, grab an early ticket, leave them here, say, *"you know what, you go and do stuff."* And they go and they now do a double run. They'll leave the 10 to do an early program, take the rest and do a city thing, bring them back, take the other group they left that did the earlier one, drove back up, do the Punch Bowl and city, take them to Waikiki, come back for the rest of the group. We do what we have to to serve the people, but the day before just works so much better. When we're told, *"sorry, Participant 2, we're out of that ticket."* Now we have to reroute, but the day before allows us to reroute without inundating the customer. We've done it numerous times. Can I get 20 on this one, 50 on this one? Sorry that one's out, that one's out. Ok, let me go a half an hour before or a half an hour later. But it allows us the time to manipulate the ticket. I don't know about the call in thing, we like a lot of back up. So when we submit something via email, we get something back via email. We've had to bring it down a few times. We've got the, *"hi, I'm here for a ticket."* *"Well, we have no tickets for you."*

Participant 4 - Participant 2, are we just talking about a cruise ship?

Participant 2 - If they could implement the day before for everyday, I think it would be great because, even our FITs... We're not looking at...because we give our agents a cut-off time, even if it's a matter of working out a system where everyone's on the same table, you get your finals at 12, you get your finals at 2, etc. Alright, everybody needs to submit and just remember, the later you get, the less chances of the ideal ticket times, but it allows us to change things up. Eventually, as you're continuing the program, you'll find...like your tour, is very important to your tour to operate that you get an early ticket. Because of coming to the table with other transportation companies, we don't touch any tour time before 9:00, at all. We will never submit for a tour guide because we know there are other tour companies that make this portion that important to their tour. It's important to us, but we're a little bit more flexible. We're right here. Pearl Harbor, city, Punch Bowl – we're not going out to Schofield, we're not going to other places. Then we have Inoa; they do a circle island with Pearl Harbor. It's very important they get an early one.

When we find there's a higher need from another company to do that, we're not going to, because we have volume, but we have different products. I would never compare Home of the Brave to a number 2 on Poly Ad. We just don't offer the same type of value to our package. We might have volume, but the package itself...you have more quality. We try and work with all the other transportation partners. This is the first time, I think, I've seen, met everyone on the table for all the ticketing that we've been doing. The day before, I think, allows everyone to plan ahead, know what they're going to do. And if it runs out, you're even more prepared. You reroute your tour. Hey, number 2 driver – it looks like you're going to do this in the afternoon and this in the morning. It allows us the time to change it up and not have the customer feel the burden of the delay.

Participant 4 - And then, on top of that, if you make the reservations, let's say with the cruise ships like we're doing now, one of the beefs that we have is you have to pick up your ticket between 3:30 and 4:30 the day before. Maybe a larger company, if you have staff, they can send someone down. It's me, and if I'm at my museum I can't get down. What do we do? Sometimes they're not as sticky on that point and we'll say, *"is there any way we can pick them up the morning of when we get down there with our group?"*

### Transcription Focus Group 3, continued

Participant 2 - That would be great. If you're getting it pre-arranged, then it becomes a will call versus a you must call. Because once you've made the reservation, I would think that picking it up is just the afterthought. The object is obtaining the tickets. So if we're going to say, on a day-to-day basis, if we could call in with our counts the day before and say I need this much, this much and this much, does it make a difference that I pick it up between 3:30 and 4:30, or should I just be making the reservation?

Participant 1 - I agree with him. I think the manpower is the problem because you send someone to pick up the tickets. So that's what I'm saying. We make the reservation for the option tour. We can make the reservations, we reserve the seats for the 8:15. You can call to reserve the seats, like 30 seats for the 8:15. If you have it you can reserve it for me. Then, we can bring the group back and we can pick up the tickets at the same time. We don't need to come a day early. That would save manpower. You can still penalize. If we have a reservation for a certain time and there's "no-shows," like we wasted the ticket, then you can blacklist us or something like that.

EVERYONE: Ha, ha, ha...that's extreme!

Participant 1 - That's what makes the people discipline.

Participant 8 - Will call, I think, is a good idea. Between 30 minutes to the time of the pick up. For instance, 10:00 you're supposed to be there. If you don't show by 10:15, that ticket is gone. Your customer loses it for the day. It's not going to be...penalize the whole company, blacklist from that. If you continuously do that, maybe, but...

Participant 1 - I'm not saying the one time, but if you did this for several times, they can blacklist that it won't affect others. Some people, they want to have this.

Participant 8 - You do from arrival?

Participant 1- Yeah.

Participant 8 - International arrival, right? There are two things: for the will call situation you said the day they arrive you do Pearl Harbor? Now, your flight delays by one hour. At that point, you should be calling here, changing your time of reservation if possible. If you have will call, a 10:00 set up, you have to have that liberty of flexibility. If you don't have that day, for some reason, the time you want, maybe they might tell you could have it at 1:00. Maybe you could adjust your tour to the back and come into Pearl Harbor later. If you have a will call, especially for international arrival, it takes some time from...some people come out in half an hour, sometime takes forever to come out. If you know the flight is delayed at that point, maybe change your will call time for that day to another time.

Participant 1 - We don't need to do it immediately upon arrival. We can do some city tours. Then we can schedule them late. As long as we have play.

Participant 8 - The thing is, it's going to be working both ways. Our side, we got to say we're going to be late. We're not going to make it this time, but what is your next time that we could take this many people? Will call – you could open up to the public that area because we don't go early enough.

Participant 9 - Instead of going to will call and all of that, we have a logistical issue of moving as many bodies as we possible can through the multiple channels that we're bringing them in. Airlines have the same issue – they book online. Why shouldn't we be able to book online and see the seating arrangements, and if we released block we can print up our tickets with a scan code/bar code that could go through. Then we could get an accurate count of how many go through what companies coming through the gates. Nobody has to run down and get a capture. You save money on ticket costs because you're not printing tickets. And you actually see who's in what. Now, if we have to release ahead of time,



### Transcription Focus Group 3, continued

park service can immediately (?). I can see a challenge coming of if you're cancelling last minute. The objective is getting as many people into see the memorial as possible. Cancelling last minute, it's opening seats up for the public. The other part, just like with the airlines, what they do is they reserve seats so that they can assign people as they come in at the last minute, so families can sit together, and what not. So, we already know we've got 'X' amount of entrances going, right? Ticket times you got 150 that you can move. You could just say, ok, reserve 80 or 70 for general public, this is open for tour groups. Then we, as tour companies, negotiate in between. This also gives us the ability, as I look online I can see the seating arrangement, and I can say, ok, Poly Ad's got 60 tickets. If the tickets turn, whatever, orange (I use this as an example because they have a group that's getting delayed), and I know they've got those tickets available, I can call up and say, "*Margaret, I see you've got tickets available. Can I switch times with you?*" It gives us the ability to bargain behind the scenes, and, yet, still get our people in without having to go through the headache. If you went online, it saves us from having to run down here. If we print out our tickets from home and when our guys go through, they scan and capture all the information of who's going in and at what time. So we know if there's abuse of people, if people are going in and ordering 50 extra tickets. You will see who the abusers are. They can be dropped down to number 20 in line. You may not get into any of these because you're abusing it. It allows you that ability.

Participant 9 - I like Participant 2's idea of will call. When we pick up ours for our buses...if you have an account with just the National Park Service, you should have a will call service where you could pick up the tickets on the day of the event, but we do the day prior. If there's any changes in the number of packs, passengers, or customers, maybe you order 10, but you only need 8, those two go back to the general pool for that time frame. They can be sold or given to the FIT section or to another group. I think that idea is the most workable.

Participant 2 - The will call was purely for manpower – if you cannot come in the day before. We, on the other hand, have drivers all over the place, that's why we can pick up, but I didn't mean it to be a will call where all of these arrangements that you're talking about is to be made. When you have something like a delayed flight, and so forth, I...and maybe were looking at the perfect world, but knowing parks, they're not trying to make it. They're just trying to work smarter and not harder. To have on that morning a call saying "*I've got this tour ticket time, I want you to change this ticket time to...*" They're not looking to do that, personally speaking. What I'm saying about the will call is just giving the flexibility. Currently, the manifest is supposed to be turned in at least one hour. I come in, I'm a driver on a standard day, I come in with my manifest, I have the proof to say I've got 50 people, I need 50 tickets for a 10:00 tour time. My pick up's at 8:00. I'm here at 7:00am. I go out to Waikiki, I pick up my people, I do a city tour. I'm supposed to be on property by 9:00am with my manifest to turn into the ranger. Because you turn it in with your program if you're outside of the window. 7:00-10:00 – I'm not turning in a manifest just yet. I'm just requesting, I have the proof, I've got 50 people, I need 50 tickets. I go out, I get the people, I bring them back. I'm supposed to bring that manifest back 1 hour before the program. At that point, if I go to Waikiki and a family tells me that they're not feeling well and I'll be missing 4 people, I will then bring my 4 tickets, my manifest and say delete these 4 people from my listing. Someone that can't come in the day before being here at 7:00am, maybe there's a different time that can be worked out, whether it's 7:00am, 9:00am, whatever works for the group. All I know is if we're given the one hour time before, with the exception of cancelling the whole bloody tour time, the one hour works well.

Participant 9 - That'll be the responsibility of the tour company.

Participant 2 - Correct. It's the tour company's responsibility to know that my tickets are sitting there. I should be flexible with my time to say that I can get them at 7:00am tomorrow morning, without being concerned that they went back into the general pool because I was not here at 3:30-4:00 the day before to get the tickets. I don't see them working out a whole day program, like if you have a 1:00 you can come in at 11:00 tomorrow. I don't see that happening either because they want to be giving these tickets out if you're not coming to get them. But, maybe having two separate times the day before, and maybe the morning of. Not all times during the day, just make it a window of opportunity for someone to

### **Transcription Focus Group 3, continued**

come and get those tickets because then the rangers have to monitor that much more. You're here between 3:30 and 4:30 the day before to get your tickets, or you're here when doors open. I don't know. I don't know if that works for you guys. I'm not sure if that works for anyone else, but being a little bit more flexible on pick up times, that should be taken into consideration. Because not that many people may be available.

Participant 9 - If I could interject...if you have an account with the National Park Service, obviously we have insurance and we have an account. So, if we begin to manipulate the system, then they should be able to track down the person/account and reprimand them. All the group people have accounts with the NPS. That way the will call system will work.

Participant 2 - Their checks and balances is your manifest. That's their checks and balance. So the day before, if I'm requesting 200 tickets, equal to 5 buses, there should be 5 manifests from Polynesian Adventure – equating to the exact amount of people. You can't really say exact, because if 2 people choose to sit on this bench and miss their launch, the rangers will not know otherwise why 2 people are missing. But there should be something...checks and balances with the manifest, which should match the fact that I requested 250 tickets the day before. You're going to be off on a few counts, and we understand that, just...we're just thinking of the customer. That's our main objective. I think a better clarification of what the ticketing system is, eventually, after this research is done and implemented, definitely a lot more awareness. Even though we don't come to this, I don't know if you can put notices up, or whatever it might be to say – if you are a tour company, ensure...I know they like to put it in the hands of them to come here...unless you're someone that's going to go after them and say I want to meet with you and I want to do this, they're not going to be hunting you down. This is our facility, if you'd like to visit it, come and see what the rules are. That's just the guidelines they have, and we just adhere to whatever the guidelines are and we do what we have to. But we still want to service our customers; that's our main focus.

Participant 4 - I think we just covered it – being able to pick up the tickets for the groups and the first come-first served program always worked for us, but that's because we're a smaller company that starts at 6:00am.

Participant 3 - In a perfect world I'd be able to make a phone call at 8pm with my counts and say, tomorrow morning I want my tickets at 8am, thanks. But that's a perfect world. It's not going to happen.

Participant 4 - You're limited on the number of people that you can take across. You have this beautiful, big facility like we talked about, but you're still at the same number as far as how many you can process in the old program.

Participant 7 - Nancy was mentioning reach for the sky. I'm going to comment on that. Increasing the volume of the ships, not per ship rate. When the boat/cruise ship days...I know logistically it is probably impossible when you have Navy ships involved and having another ship always available when a cruise ship comes in, but, as you said, reach for the sky. That's a possibility – increasing the volume on the ship that's going out to the memorial.

Participant 8 – Less time on the memorial. Edit the film to lesser time, to compress it a little bit, to give more time for them to [visit the] memorial. You don't want to cut them from staying there too long. That's what the main thing is. I don't think the film itself, but they want to be there. If they can do it other ways, something different...what I'm saying is, maybe some people have already seen those. It's not always changing, but they kind of know they want to be at the memorial, not too much of the history. They want a simple history, be there, and be back. I don't know if to have long or short film before they go. I don't know if you want it, or if you want to keep it the way it is and shorten the other side to get your timetables. It might increase for another trip, instead of having the same amount of trips. Instead of adding one more trip.

### Transcription Focus Group 3, continued

Participant 3 - Or you, and I'm just thinking off the top of my head, what if you were to have another boat where you gave them an option and said, *"this boat is going to take you out onto the memorial, this one's going to take you on a circle tour of Ford Island."* So now you've got two divisions of people going either left or right, both of them the same amount of time. I have people who were like, *"I've been out to the Arizona Memorial. I've been there and done that. Do I have to take the shuttle boat?"* No you don't. You have that option. That way, you have people that want to take the boat tour of Ford Island and I think they do that on Thursdays. It's, what, the Admiral's Launch?

Participant 4 - Yeah, but that's for military.

Participant 3 - That's for military only, but if you were to do something like that and have it circle around Ford Island, that's another boat.

Participant 4 - Or a bridge from Ford Island – build a bridge from Ford Island to the Arizona and just walk across.

Participant 8 - Walking bridge, huh?

Participant 4 - We never had a problem, but there again, when the cruise ships, if it's a first come-first served and we're picking the people up down at Laha Tower at 8:30, Holly and Mary come in at 8:30 and I would say, *"yeah, let's do first come-first served."* Guess what? We're going to get down here and where are your tickets? We've been doing the cruise ships even before this new ticketing. So what we would do is, we would get down there and it was a first come-first served. Here's your next ticket for 10:00 and then, prior to them allowing us to take a later time, before they never even would allow that. They'd say, *"here's your 10:00."* Okay, let's go up to Wheeler, Schofield, come back down here and then hope those other tickets haven't been handed out. It's usually not a problem until the summer months. When it's summer, that makes a whole big huge difference, too, because if it's summer and you come down to first come-first served, if you come down here past 7:00, man, *"here's your 11:00, here's your 12:30 program."* And we're screwed up. What was nice was when they allowed us to take a later time. When we first started working with the cruise ships, prior to all this pre-arranged ticketing, we'd come down and they'd say, *"what time do you want?"* *"Well, give us 1:00."* Park service was happy because they'd say, *"You're going to get all of these 100 people not meshed in with the rest of the people."* They were thrilled to do that. And that's where, I think, this pre-book ticketing whole thing came about. It's working a lot better, I think, for the larger groups in the cruise ships.

Participant 2 - It is.

Participant 4 - As far as clarification, that's why when Participant 2 said I'm a little confused. I was a little confused when, if tour companies are able to get pulled tickets for the next day, and there is no cruise ship...

Participant 3 - Why aren't we doing that?

Participant 4 - That's one of the beefs that one of our guides said. *"Hey, I know one of the tour companies is down here. They're saying they're with a cruise ship."* That's BS because he watched those buses pull out of Waikiki. They got down at 7:00 and there is no way that cruise ship has even dropped yet. And they've got an 8:00 ticket. Does that make sense? They have 8:00 tickets – that cruise ship didn't dock until 8:30, so there is no way...One of the other tour companies had said they have a cruise ship they need boom, boom, boom. Well he was just pulling tickets for their FIT market.

Participant 2 - And that's not acceptable. Well, I think it's not acceptable.

Participant 4 - Exactly. So, then we get up in line and, like, *"how did these people, that we've been..."*

### Transcription Focus Group 3, continued

Participant 2 - That was my knowledge [that cruise ships, alone, could get advanced tickets] of how the system works. Until we found out that there were other companies getting tickets the day before on a non-cruise ship day. We're not even talking about a ship not it. It was a non-cruise ship day.

Participant 4 - Not even large groups. When you talked about incentive groups, okay I have 100 people. I don't have a problem with that, that's like a cruise ship, but the 10, 20, 30, 40 people that they're trying to work the system. Oh yeah, there's a cruise ship...

Participant 2 - We try and plan it as best as we can. Patty gets the copy of the ship calendar and it's not just myself, to my knowledge, all the companies whose understanding of what cruise ships are in port, we all send her a calendar. They all match; they all match the harbor schedule. It's not that that we're making up a calendar. We have even given her the website to look at the Oahu Harbor's [schedule], to see who was here. She, herself, is not taking advantage of it because she is not educated on when cruise ships come, how long they stay – some stay 3 days, some stay 1 day, some stay 2. But, it's still the process. The process of the day before, I think, is in everyone's benefit to serve the customer. And as partners, ideally it would be...I think we're all in it together to say we just want to be here for the customers. So if I know that there is a company that goes out in the morning because of the type of tour they have, I would think that we are cordial enough to say, let's not touch those tickets. And if something did come up, if submitted, just be done in a timely manner. If we were to a pre-arranged thing for cruise ships, I could give her something to the end of the year, right now. I could sit and order 350 tickets for every cruise ship day that we have until the end of the year, but that's not right of us to do something like that because everybody should be given the opportunity to pull times in an orderly manner. Because, again, Sunday was a cruise ship day and it was not a high volume, and yet, tickets were out when we were emailing at 8:30am the day before. We didn't understand how the tickets would be out when, technically, we were the cruise operator. Everybody talks to each other. There's always someone who talks to each other. Then you learn certain things and it becomes...maybe we just have to get better guidelines because we're all thinking we're following the guidelines and that's all we want to do as partners. All we're trying to do is service the customer.

Participant 9 - I think having an online...when you go buy a seat to a show you can see exactly where you're going to sit. If you had that opportunity to look at each seat – 150 seats – we can see, ok, this color is Poly Ad, this color is whichever company. You can see whose got what seats.

Participant 2 - You're talking about a reservation system within the transportation companies/tour companies...? Or in general?

Participant 9 - This is an internet driven system that the park service would own that we would all have access to by being part of the program that we're already a part of. It really would, I think, make the park service's headaches go away, because for us this is a unique challenge that they have here, in that we all sell into the same program. But, it's no different of a logistical problem than airlines have. When they're booking, they have large groups that they have to book, and they have to make seat availability to make sure that they can handle that. Same with us. We're booking our groups. You made a good point about sharing times, because in reality all we really want to do is to have, as tour operators, what we're really trying to achieve is to say, *"hey, I want to sell a tour and I know what exact time my people will be there."* We have so much flexibility going on here that we have to accommodate. But if my time is always going to be this time, it's always going to take this time, and we all agree that this is what we'll do...then every 6 months we'll change it around. As a group of transportation, we have the opportunity to book and set our times on the ship times. Like anything, because the park service controls it, they can control how many seats get sold per sailing that goes out to us. So, once those seats are gone you've got to go onto the next grouping, and to the next grouping. We can, as a committee or as an association, sit down and say, *"ok, here's how we're going to arrange this. We need to get our specifics, like Olav's tour has to be early, ergo can we give him priority so I can catch 30 seats on these days that I conduct my tours?"* And same with us. Reality for us can be a little flexible. The beauty of it is that if I know I can catch these ticket times every time, it makes my life easier because I can control my tour.

### **Transcription Focus Group 3, continued**

Participant 8 - I have to look at it, not only on our side, but from the point of view of the public. Now, who's going to give the limits for how many goes out each day?

Participant 9 - Park service, because they already do. When we operated up in Alaska we did the same thing as here. We reserved seats and even though we could fill every single bus, and roll them up to the entrance...

Participant 8 - The problem that that leads up to is, we're a small company, we might be able to book everyday...or medium size, but we only have small clients who want to come here. Do we count as an individual side or do we count with the tour side? Because we're not getting any slots. We're just going to come and go. How do we entertain our side of the business? Yours is set up – sometimes to 100, 200. You might be set up, too. You have daily, I don't know how many times a week you come, but ours is maybe once a month. Just because we're on the tour side; do we go into that slot, or do we go in the FIT side?

Participant 9 - Any of us that are paying additional insurance to pull down vehicles are treated as a tour company, have been made availability (?). Just like in the booking system; when you go online it's first come-first served. You're not standing there, you're going in there and it's what the park service releases.

Participant 8 - So, maybe it's like you're already set up with so many, but there are still going to be empty slots open that might be able to be used.

Participant 9 - Correct.

Participant 8 - How do we differentiate: tour side and a basic public side? That's going to be park service decision, but can I be greedy and say we're going to bring everything, so we need the spot? At the same time, we need the spot, so can you give a spot?

Participant 2 - The block system we have that's running right now is a tour operator can only take 100 tickets. No one tour operator can take more than 100 tickets. No one company can take more than 100 tickets. It leaves 50 on each launch, or each tour, for the independent travelers. I take that back...one operator is not supposed to take more than 65 tickets. And how that worked out is, based on the transportation companies, who had the largest vehicle? That would be us – 65-seater. And it was only the fact that everyone, big company or not, we're all trying to maximize our vehicles. If we have a 65-seater and 63 people, we're not going to run 2 vehicles for 63 people. We're going to pull out a 65-seater and get those 63 people going on one vehicle. Should I be splitting it in half? So, nothing should be going over 65 tickets for one given tour time, but of that given time, that only allows 35 more tickets someone else to get, as a tour operator, of the 100. Should this nice, little reservation system happen, I like reservations, then it only allows all of the PUC carriers that got the correct permits under NPS to go into the system and choose from the 100. In all honesty, even on a ship day, there are always openings. There is never not an opening. That's where the day before helps, because it allows you to plan your day. We have a standard clause for Pearl Harbor and that clause is about the bags, about the safety, about the security, and being flexible on our tour time. Literally, we tell the people that our whole day is guided based on our tour time. It's a standard clause we have now in every Pearl Harbor tour we have. That's just to cover ourselves, so our people are not under the misguided thought they are going straight to the memorial, the minute we hit Pearl Harbor.

Participant 1 - When we book we...we had a group that came about a month ago...we had 300 people, but they only gave us 50 tickets – you cannot block the whole thing. [Comment on online system] We email Patty and she told me she could only give me 50 for each one.

Participant 9 - This is easy technology. It's already out there. There're packages like Ticket Savers that PCC uses. It's software that already out there. It's not that complex. The other beauty of it is that you

### Transcription Focus Group 3, continued

also can get very efficient with your tickets. Let's say, for example, you have a party of 10 that cancels. Your dispatch can go online and release the 10 tickets – shoot an email out to the park service, but they'll see those tickets come back online and they can release those to the general public. So, we're not missing seats because, at the end of the day, we all have the ability to print and not have to run down. We just print our tickets out from home, they have a bar code so we know what the utilization is as people go through. We can go online and release tickets. If a vehicle is delayed or if an airline comes in late, then you can call Poly Ad up and say, *"hey, you guys got extra tickets for this?"*

Participant 4 - I think on the cruise ship days...for us on a daily basis, like Participant 5 had 21 yesterday...for the small groups, because my wife and I are running the reservation system, we don't have staff that does all of that. Now it's a whole other thing. On the cruise ship days, or for large groups, I would say that I like that idea. I don't know if I like the idea of printing up 100 tickets. If there was a barcode or something that the guy could scan. I understand the ticketing because it's a control thing. Otherwise, everyone's just going to run in and...So if you have a sticker, or I don't know what it is that I could say/you could identify. But, there again, when you have 100 people coming off a couple motor coaches/cruise ships, and everyone else is down here, you don't know who your people are. They would actually need something in their hand to...

Participant 8 - Like a confirmation number on the ticket, like will call, at the counter, for the group – 30 tickets. You could back that up by the confirmation number by printing it out from the website that Participant 9 was just mentioning.

Participant 4 - It would be the same thing, just printing up...

Participant 9 - What I'm trying to do is...the real issue here is two-fold: one is the lining up, standing in line, watching people bypass you. That's always frustrating. So if you already pre-printed, even though it takes a little more on our side, it saves the park service. But, we know our time, we have our tickets, we can go straight and do a city tour or whatever else we need to do. And, they're not standing in line with you waiting to get to the front of the line. That's the beauty of it.

Participant 4 - I like everything, except printing the tickets. You get the time slot and then go right to the desk to get your tickets.

Participant 8 - The car that you have is unchartered in the daytime. And all of a sudden another charter comes in and says, *"I want to go to Pearl Harbor."* He doesn't have time to come back to the base to pick up that ticket that we got reserved. How is he going to do that? That barcode thing - it works well, but the confirmation number...it's one line for people just coming to pick up their ticket if they have one, instead of just individuals lined up. Or, confirmation line, which is just come with the confirmation number and go through. The concept is good, but it's hard to print. It's not the part of the cost; it's also the time your vehicles are out on the road. Then you get a last minute charter that comes in and they want to come

here. We cannot be printing that thing to get the driver to come back. How are we going to get in here? It's going to be the same thing to get in anyway. So, I'd rather have some kind of confirming, like Missouri has a confirmation system, right? To come from a tour on the other end they have a confirmation number. It's not ticketing, but the tour package you have on Missouri can use this confirmation number.

Participant 7 - Why is a ticket needed to get in the movie theater?

Participant 2 - The ticket is how it counts everyone going into the movie onto the (?).

Participant 7 - That means the ticket will exist, right? It's got to.

Participant 2 - It's got to exist.

### Transcription Focus Group 3, continued

Participant 4 - And with a specific time, because people will try to get in, *"oh, I have an 8:15. Let's go to the 8:00 time..."*

Participant 7 - If it has to exist, I guess the confirmation system might work a little better. At least reserve 30 tickets and here's the confirmation number for that particular group at this time. Pick up the tickets and off you go. If you have 10 left over, just return them.

*Courtesy fee to implement online system*

Participant 3 - Isn't that what the PUC, the umbrella, isn't that what our costs are going to? It's more money. It doesn't make any sense.

Participant 4 - And for us, could we just use that system on cruise ship days? And all the other days we're down here early, which are usually not an issue.

Participant 2 - It's almost like ticket master. You get a ticket, then you get a fee. You don't get tickets, you don't get fees. On a cruise ship day that you're actually going in to reserve, that's the day you're going to get a fee. I'm not saying it should be done, but that's when you would get a fee.

Participant 4 - That's when we have to tack on that cost additional to the cruise ships. The other thing that I'm a little unclear of is, and Participant 2, maybe you can help me with this, is when – we have a cruise ship this Friday and we got a count from the cruise ship to hold 2 buses and 150 seats. So we just call yesterday afternoon that they were at 93. When can you call in that reservation for the 93 tickets? I know it's – they're still on the high seas and they may go up to 150 or up to 125, but I have that preliminary count. When is it that you are able to call in to reserve those seats? Because, in the past, I've done the, *"oh, shoot, I forgot. We've got a cruise ship tomorrow. I better call in."* And all of a sudden, because all the other tour companies have called in and reserved all these times, Patty will say that she doesn't have this, but I have this. Most importantly, if you do it the day in advance, we can even bounce around. We'll go to Wheeler, Schofield, or we've even done Punch Bowl first thing in the morning if it's a later pick up. The day prior, that's critical for us knowing what time, so it's not a surprise to come down here. How many days do you understand that you can make reservations for a cruise ship?

Participant 2 - My understanding? The day before. That is why we were caught off guard. 2:00 deadline the day before. It is my understanding of the deadline. We have a double ship this Saturday. We've got Holland in, we've got Zaandam, and America. On Friday, we would be submitting our tickets. Two weeks ago, when we had the double ship, again with the Holland and the America, we actually tried 2 days before and they were out of tickets. That is the wondering why and how tickets had already been taken, when we were actually the operator. Because, it was supposed to be the corresponding cruise ship – that's the operator that gets preference. Not always, because we understand that tickets run out and the people are submitting, but literally, I was taking 8 tickets from one tour time, combining it with another set of 25 from another tour time and another 10 from another tour time. I've never had to do that before and I was on a double ship day. But I was grabbing whatever tickets I could because everything else was gone. And we're talking 2 days prior. But, to my knowledge, it's always been the day before. The day before thing works for me, but there's got to be a guideline. I'm not sure if it's happening, but I think people are ordering far in advance. I'm not ordering for two weeks from now because I don't know my counts two weeks from now. But I will order closer to the day that comes up. We have a standard that we block on every cruise ship just based on history, based on what we know we operate off the ship. So, I know I've got to run 250 off my Pearl Harbor city and my Pearl Harbor mole; I've got that in my mind. But I'm not ordering anything with Patty because I don't know what the ship is going to sell. The day before, that's when I will be submitting my counts. I'll either be told, *"Sorry, that time is out. What other time would you want?"* If it's a 15-minute difference, sometimes she'll just move it for me. *"Sorry, Participant 2, no 10:30, but I've got 50 in the 10:45."* That still works for me. But if there's nothing within the half hour, she'll start asking, *"Sorry, your 11:00 is not available. The next one's not until 12:00, or you can take a 9:00."*

### Transcription Focus Group 3, continued

Participant 4 - How do you say, at 12:00, when all the other tour companies are going real quick get in line. The day prior. Let's say 12-noon.

Participant 2 - Are you talking about reservations, this reservation idea, or what I do now?

Participant 4 - No, like what we do now.

Participant 2 - What I do is I've got an excel form that shows every single launch time. I look at the numbers. I project it maybe two days out, just to kind of look at what kind of counts I'm getting. And I'll start plugging in some times. But, history tells me what tour times she's kind of been telling me always, *"no, that's not available."* I modify to match what my knowledge is, what I've based all my other tour days from. As of right now, it's working ok, and I don't inundate. I never touch anything before 9:00am. In fact, maybe not even before 9:30. I never touch those because I know of other companies that have a higher demand for it.

Participant 4 - So, if I email Patty right now and I say, *"I need 100 tickets for Friday."* I should get an email back saying that I need to submit that on Thursday. Is that correct? Is that how it's supposed to work?

Participant 2 - I'm not sure, because I've never emailed it one day before the cruise ships.

Participant 1 - I don't think so. You can email her and tell her the certain day you need the tickets. She'll get back with you. Because we have a group in Chinese New Year, we have a lot of people here, we give her the tickets we need each day, about a week [prior]. She arranged it for us.

Participant 9 - So, it's not necessarily a reservation, as she just tries to help and accommodate?

Participant 2 - She's just trying to accommodate anyone, any tour or travel company that feels there is a demand because of our high volume.

Participant 1 - When you pick up the ticket you don't need to show the manifest.

Participant 2 - You don't really have to. You could email Patty and say, *"I've got a large group coming in. Can I please get tours: 50 at 8:00, 50 at 8:15?"* She's going to come back and say, *"Not a problem."* Or, your day might fall on a day when Participant 1 submitted something and she'll say, *"Oh, sorry, those times are out. How about this time and this time?"* I believe now that she is doing that, because my knowledge was that it was only on cruise ship days. But I am finding that if you have a large group she will be flexible, and she'll go ahead and accommodate you, if you have a demand for it.

Participant 9 - The thing we need to hold in perspective is, the park service doesn't differentiate between cruise ship days. Public is public. Whether it's my people or your people, except you're bringing in a large volume and she's trying to accommodate you.

Participant 2 - Yeah, no. The meetings that we have had, is because of cruise ship days. She actually called a meeting with the companies that she thought were the bigger players, specifically on cruise ship days, because she found the problems that were happening here. If you have a double ship of two competing transportation companies, it is not a nice place to be here. It is not a nice place, because they're all fighting for the same spot. They're objective is, *I want to bring my people. I want to do the Arizona. I want to be off property to do whatever else I need to do with the people.* That was the objective of every single driver, Poly Ad included. That's where we were coming into the problems. She noticed the pattern. It was cruise ship days, because everyone's got the same mentality. Double cruise ship days, it doesn't matter. She saw the pattern of it being cruise ship days. That's when she started the, *Ok, everyone. All players to the table. We need to work this out because this is unacceptable*



### Transcription Focus Group 3, continued

*behavior of the drivers, the escorts in giving the customers the tours.* So, that's where it all started, to my knowledge. The pre-booking started. Then it became the demand of the ad hoc groups. They'll come in and say, *"I've got a group."* We did it ourselves. This was a group of 300. Not a cruise ship day. And it wasn't even on top of the FITs, because the FITs, we knew, to each his own. You do the same thing you do every day – first come-first served. Get your people, get over here. But, in giving us the manifest, and giving us the right to come in at 8:00, or 7:00, to get a 12:00 tour time, when they allowed that, even that helped alleviate a lot of that. Again, it's about the drivers. We just want to find a system that allows the drivers to do the tours and make the customers that come here happy. That's the only thing Patty and them are looking at. They don't like the fact that our escorts are bumping heads or being rude and doing things that are not set as a program. The reservation idea is a great idea. It can only benefit us knowing, but the components that we don't see are the last minutes. Hardly ever are we going to have an ad hoc that comes and says, *"Hi, I have 50 people and I need transportation today."* We don't move one or two people.

Participant 8 - It's not going to hurt us too much. We come and we just have to base it on the time that they might get their ticket.

Participant 2 - And there's always space.

Participant 8 - Bigger companies are the ones that have the major problem, or the ones that operate Pearl Harbor, I should say. We don't operate Pearl Harbor tours. We don't have that specificity of just Pearl Harbor. We the island and they might want to come to the memorial. The majority of the time, like I said, ours is not the boat. It's usually the museum and an area. Maybe Bowfin, but the thing is, that's it. So, for us, it doesn't hurt. Another small company that might be doing Pearl Harbor may want to be open. But, for our side, it's usually last minute to the memorial. But a majority of our program is based on coming to Pearl Harbor Museum.

Participant 9 - A system that works and is consistent.

Participant 2 - Consistency: the day before, guided timelines.

Participant 8 - Not only would it be the size of the group that you're going to bring in that they're going to limit you to give you that slot. The minimum, if it's 100 or 50 or whatever, a minimum that could get you a slot, meaning hold a slot, whereas, if you have less than that you are on your own. That kind of situation might be needed. We may be running two minibuses, but we have a group of 40 with two cars running. My question is can that be able to get a particular day/time slot? Or, does it just kind of line up. The scary part about lining up with the two minibuses is you might get two separate times. It might not be handled as one group.

Participant 2 - Whether you're running one motor coach or two buses, if going for the minimum, they've always been flexible with that. They really have.

Participant 8 - With cruise ships now, with the situation, it seems to me that she is gradually moving into a big group. To be able to pre-book it.

Participant 2 - Besides the reservations, do they have the manpower? Because I've already seen it as it is. I've come in here looking for tickets, I'm missing a whole tour time, one packet that we should of got 50 we got 16 tickets. How that happened, I have no idea. It happens. That's why the only thing that would encourage me to go to a reservation system, because it's human nature and we all make mistakes, we get that, but when we're, as tour operators, trying to get our tickets and we're missing three tour times and now I have nothing. And when I try to come here the day, even if that happens, we're like, *"Ok, let's see what the driver can do first thing tomorrow morning."* And we'll send a driver out here at 7:00am saying they had missed tickets, but what can they get? Then, we just gauge it from the day. It happens. I just think the day before is good, with guidelines.

### Transcription Focus Group 3, continued

Participant 9 - I agree with that. I like the concept of the internet stuff, but for me, what she says is the ideal thing. My driver can come down any time the day before, get the tickets and service the client at that point. The other thing I wanted to say is that when I introduced myself I never said how many years I had in the company, but I have 19 years.

Participant 7 - A question before, kind of off on a tangent, was about fees – charging a fee for the system. I'm not quite sure, maybe it's a charter (?) that the Arizona was built upon, but I think that most people who come to the Arizona would be more than happy to pay a small fee, and this is the highest attended place of anywhere in Hawaii. The highest attendance as far as anyplace in the city, so I think that funding would be well worth it's (?) into the system to fund anything and everything needed to upkeep and run the system. That's why I say, not just a fee for the system, but a small fee, in general, \$1, \$2, which will roll into...It would be easy for us as operators to include that in our price, like we do in Maui, then it is for us to charge a fee just because we're working online. Instead, if you have one set fee, we can just say it's a park service fee, people who know the Arizona, who want to see the Arizona will come and pay that fee because they know it's open.

Participant 8 - I'll be on the record – I don't wish to have a fee because I think we already pay that money in CUA, which I thought was part of the administration costs to cover expenses.

Participant 3 - I agree with that one. I think technology nowadays, we're already at a point where a system like that will cost some money to implement, but as far as keeping it up, it shouldn't be that expensive.

Participant 7 - My thing is that's not where the fee should come from. The fee should be everybody paying the same amount, whether you walk up or go through us; you pay a \$2 fee or a \$1 fee. That would create a large reserve that could be used in perpetuity to keep this memorial going.

Participant 4 - I think they've talked about doing that, ever since I've been down here, for 20 years. I don't what it is, government regulation. It's something that they said, *no, we can't do it*.

## Transcription Focus Group 4

This focus group consisted of six participants

Participant 1 - My name is Participant 1 I'm with \_\_\_\_\_. We cater the Spanish, Portuguese and Italian market, charters, and I'm considered a small company for the tours. We have charters that come on an FIT basis, and also groups.

Moderator 1 - and how long have you been working in this position?

Participant 1 - Eleven years.

Participant 2 - Same as Participant 1, but, Russian.

Moderator 1 - and how long have you been working in this position?

Participant 2 - same, about 10 years.

Moderator 1 - and the size of your company?

Participant 2 - small

Participant 3 - I'm Participant 3. I'm operations manager for two companies, both cater to the eastern European market, I've been doing this for five years. Also FIT groups. Small companies.

Participant 4 - my name's Participant 4, I've been in this position for 13 years. We do English-speaking tours, and all FIT. Australia, Canada, and mostly United States. We're a small company, but I think in terms of volume, to the park, we're very large.

Participant 5 - my name is Participant 4, with Dragon Tours. This company has been in Hawaii for 25 years. [Visitors] mostly coming from all over the world - Chinese language, and English. Chartered tours, also FIT's. I'm working in that company for 5 years.

Participant 6 - my name is Participant 6 I'm with \_\_\_\_\_. I've been with the company about 2 years but I do a lot of the Pearl Harbor tours, so they tapped me to come down and do the meeting today. We primarily have American tourists, or Canadian, Australian - anyone who's English-speaking. We do have a few bilingual guides, but we don't specialize in anything else but essentially English-speaking tourists. Essentially FIT but we do have some groups that come and book through us. They really like our professionalism and the expertise of our guides, so they'll come seek us out.

Participant 1 - We have a fleet of 14-passenger vans, and on a regular day the tours that we do on an FIT basis.... since we are a wholesaler tour for hotels and other services, we do packages that we sell, in the different countries. So most of my clients, I would say 80% of the clients I bring to Pearl Harbor, pre-contract the tour from the country they are coming from. And then we have a circulation of magazine, at the airports and in Waikiki, where I get the other 30% of the customers I bring to Pearl Harbor. And so far, the first-come first-serve basis

works for groups up to 14 passengers - a full van. Now, when there are groups of 20, 50, 100s or more, that's when it gets complicated, because when there are large numbers of people coming, the best for me would be to know the time that these people are going to the movie and the Memorial, so I can bring them and don't let them wait forever, so I can bring them in time for that specific function. That would be ideal for me. But FIT's on a first-come first-served service, it's fine with me, up to 14 passengers.

## **Transcription Focus Group 4, continued**

Participant 2 - it's pretty much the same. We get Russian-language customers, so we get them from everywhere.

Moderator 1 - How do they find out about you?

Participant 2 - We seek them, they seek us. We advertise - papers, agents, in Russia, word-of-mouth.

Moderator 1 - so they might hear of you when you're still in Russia?

Participant 2 - In Russia, in US, in here already, through concierge, through internet.

Moderator 1 - so then how do you get them into the Memorial?

Participant 2 - we are small, so our capacity is 13 people for the 15-passenger van and the first-come system works okay for us because it is small. But if you want to know my opinion, how best to do it - in my mind, since you thought of it or the Memorial thought of it, started charging money for parking - it's a lot of money for the small company. So, we pay money and we pay taxes, so my idea is that the companies should have some preference, since we generate revenue for the state - paying taxes, also paying the Memorial this fee. It's hard, of course, to work out the system, but, what would be the best in my mind, probably - and it's easy to implement - there's not a lot of companies that have the permit now. I believe 50 or something, maybe even less than that. So you know exactly what the capacity of each company is, or you can find it: our capacity is 13 people, their capacity is 14 people, others, 25 people. Robert's - ok, let's say they fill 2 buses a day, maybe 3. Give them 150. So, each day, there should be a certain cut-off time, let's say 7 a.m. So most tours, people don't go on the same day with us; o at least a day in advance. We know, today, that we're going to go tomorrow, so that's why the morning time. The morning time, cut-off time 7:00, and you allocate to each company according to their capacity a number of tickets. So Participant 1 calls and says "Ok, tomorrow my allocation is 13 and he knows that he has 10. Robert's Hawaii same thing: so if they know they're going to have less, if they don't call before 7 a.m. they lose their hundred tickets. So if they have through the day - for example somebody calls them at 10:00, I don't know, that's different. But at least this way, according to capacity, we have already our allocation. So the general public can be moved a little bit backward. So if nobody claims the tickets from the companies that are participating in the permit, you can go ahead and do the public. Something like that. I'm not sure. Other than that, we can implement the automatic reservation system in using some computer - it's easy to do. I mean, even for the small money, even I can do it. Anybody - it's not much money. There could be an easy internet system where you can set up according to the capacity of each company. So somebody from the company at 6:00 can go to the internet, just click a couple times with the mouse, and "here you go" and you know exactly what the system is. So, something like that. It would be nice to have. At least we know that our tickets are there and you don't have to come beforehand to collect, because sometimes it's important, and even for our small companies. So rather than doing this, we have to come first thing in the morning to collect the tickets to go later because we want to be sure people who paid in advance, especially for our company, and Participant 1. Robert's Hawaii, the bigger companies, most of their tourists are already here - first-come, first-served. They advertise heavily in Waikiki, but for us there's an advance purchase, sometimes. And those groups are important - they have to have their tickets.

Moderator 1 - Let's move on to Participant 3 - we're going to come back to that.

Moderator 2 - Let me just clarify: so, you send the guy out here early in the morning to get the tickets for people. Is that how you do it? Or you line people up?

Participant 2 - Sometimes. When we want to be 100% sure, you know. Especially on the cruise days. We know when the cruise days are. So cruise ships come, and little capacity.

Moderator 1 - Otherwise, you bring your passengers and they wait while you get the tickets?

## **Transcription Focus Group 4, continued**

Participant 2 – Yeah. They wait, or otherwise we have to get to the boat.

Participant 3 – I'm sure you're familiar with the modus operandum here. Until two years ago, there was no way of having tickets for park tour or time reserved in any way. So the fact that they allow us to drive here and come in person at 7 am, wait in the line with a whole bunch of the general public to collect tickets for the program and tour, three hours, this is already an improvement. But for a national monument, for a place like this, this could be improved a little bit more. This could be facilitated for everyone.

Moderator 1 – Let's step back a little bit Participant 3. Tell us how your tour operates. And then how the ticket system works.

Participant 3 – As a small company, when we have FITs, it's very spontaneous. Sometimes we don't know that the tour's going to happen until the late evening the day before. So, there should be – there is a need – there are many companies like mine, like Participant 2's tours, there are Chinese, Korean – there are maybe hundreds of companies, I don't know how many, I don't have the permits – that operate in a very spontaneous way. And those clients, there should be a way for everyone to call in the morning and call some office and tell them, "I have 15 confirmed, I guarantee I have 15. I need to have tickets reserved for the park tour and time."

Moderator 1 – And how do you get tickets for you passengers now?

Participant 3 – When I want to get tickets, I have to send someone in person to stand in the line before 7 am, and walk up to the counter with a handwritten, filled-out form with all the names, which is ridiculous –

Participant 4 – The manifest list?

Participant 3 – Yes, the manifest list, which has to be hand-filled. This is ridiculous when you get to the groups of 50 people or more, when you need to have names – no one ever checks on those names, that's a different issue. But you have to send someone in person – it's not eco-friendly. You know, this place tries to be eco-friendly and you're asking people to drive – sometimes a van, because there's no other company vehicle to be driven – to drive out here from Waikiki or wherever the office is located, and collect the 10, 15, sometimes 50 tickets for the group that you have already lined up. There needs to be a smarter way to do it – implementing some sort of online reservation, blocking space system. It cannot be that difficult; it cannot be that expensive. If there's no budget for it, I'm willing to pay. I'm willing to pay for parking, I'm willing to pay some reasonable amount of money for guaranteeing the time for my customers, instead of wasting time, gas, and people time. I would like to pay a dollar or two for him to guarantee program time. It can be paid by being charged for parking space, being charged just for a reservation in the system. There are hundreds of reasonable and, I believe, easy to implement and infer ways to do it. This is the Twenty-first Century, so online would be the best, because that would not even require extra staffing. If you do it over the phone, there needs to be someone answering the phones early in the morning- probably more expensive. Like Participant 2, making a system like this, it's nothing new. It's existing and functioning in every commercially operated activity place around the world and on this island.

Moderator 1 – Let's move on to Participant 4, thank you very much. Your operation, how it works, and how the ticket system's working.

Moderator 2 – Do you bring people here, or do you have tickets for them, or reserve in advance?

Participant 4 – We have people here in the morning, every morning anyway. So we have drivers here with a group of people in the morning anyway, so they often have to get in line, get their tickets – and they get to move to the front of the line, which is a good system—

Participant 6 – Yeah, they divide the line between general public and tour guides.

## **Transcription Focus Group 4, continued**

Participant 4 – No, they also then divide the tour guides between people who have their group with them, and then people who don't, who just came to pick up tickets for later in the day. So we usually have the people with us, so we get to the front of the line, but then we bring a group later in the day, or another guide has a group; so we have to get back into the end of the line while our group waits for that guide to get those tickets. So now the group stands there waiting for 20-25 minutes or so while they count up tickets.

Moderator 1 – So what works well for you in that system?

Participant 4 – Well, the days that there the cruise ships, they have the log, and that works really well; and they really should be doing that every day, and that would probably be the simplest way to make the system work well. Because there's enough consistency on a regular day of how many people bring groups that it would take care of most issues.

Moderator 1 – And do you service the cruise ships?

Participant 4 – Occasionally, but that's not our main business.

Moderator 1 – Okay. Participant 4?

Participant 5 – So my company is doing the same thing. So, every morning, like you. My company has been here over 25 years, they have many locations around the world; in Hawaii; Shanghai, China; also in Taipei, Taiwan; they also have the same company in L.A., so we have different customers around the world.

Moderator 1 – And you know a day ahead of time how many you have?

Participant 5 – Sometimes it's hard, because when they fly here, sometimes they have early morning, so we have to make sure to get a ticket before they get here. So it's a little bit hard, just like what the gentlemen was talking about earlier.

Moderator 2 – What percentage do you think you have pre-booking, and what do you have FIT?

Participant 5 – I'd say the pre-booking is a better way.

Moderator 2 – So you have mostly pre-book, people from somewhere else, or do you have FIT, what's the majority?

Participant 5 – Mostly it's the big groups coming from mainland China, Taiwan, and Asian countries.

Moderator 1 – So you already know in advance?

Participant 5 – Mostly, yeah, we already know how many people here, so we can get that early information of, we need to get a ticket earlier, so we can buy the tickets.

Moderator 2 – Do you take people directly from the airport here, after they fly from China, for example? Or before they go to the airport? Or is it one thing they do in between?

Participant 5 – We just see... Hawaii is the last stop. They can fly to New York first, so the last stop is in Hawaii, or they can stop first in Hawaii, and go traveling all over mainland America. So they sometimes go to Canada. They want to see, in 13 days, they can see many cities of America. So it's sometimes hard, when we don't get a ticket for them, they just missed it because they only have a one day or two day stay in Hawaii.

## **Transcription Focus Group 4, continued**

Moderator 1 – And do you pick them up at the airport in Honolulu?

Participant 5 – Yeah.

Participant 4 – So you get them from the airport and bring them right here?

Participant 5 – No, because, sometimes it works with their flight time. So with most hotels in Hawaii, I'd say 100% of hotels, check-in time is 3:00. So often your flight time is in the morning time, so you have to bring the sightseeing folk early then. If send them to the hotel, they just relax on the sofas, so they [the hotel staff] get mad.

Participant 1 – Especially with the Japanese market, most of our flights arrive at 7:00 am.

Moderator 1 – And they want to go straight to the memorial... [joking]

Participant 5 – Sometimes the flight here is early, sometimes 6:00 in the morning!

Participant 3 – It's better to go on the tour than to go sleep in the lobby.

Moderator 1 – Thank you Participant 4.

Participant 6 – We are smaller – we're 13-passenger vans and we do have 25-passenger mini-coaches. But so far, with our experience at Pearl Harbor, we never saw a 13-passenger van yet. So for me, it sounds bad, but the way you guys have it now works just fine. I can come right in – and our tour goes from 6 am to 12 noon. And we kind of do it that early to make sure – first in line, everything's there, my passengers are behind me. I walk right to the front of the line, because I have my passengers on-premises, and I get 2, 5, 10 tickets, whatever I have for that day. And we open here at 7, so we actually pick up our passengers at 6 am. So at 6 am I'm picking up passengers, by 6:30 I have everybody, I race out here. I usually get out here about 6:35. And then we hang out in the line with everybody else, talking story. But I can show them a lot of stuff, and we come right in, I get the 8:00 tickets, we're done by 9:00 and they'll spend another two hours here perusing all the displays. So for us it works really well. But then, we're not big...

Participant 3 – Those hikers, you can get up at 6 am [joking, someone else agrees]... If I could comment on this – this would work, but it forces you to make the tour at the very early morning.

Participant 2 – But that's for the hikers!

Participant 6 – No, it's not for the hikers. We actually do this tour for the non-hikers. The reason why we do Pearl Harbor, North Shore, Iolani Palace, is because people want to go there. We currently do hiking tours, yes, but now we're actually 50/50, regular tours –

Participant 3 – Your name might be profiling your client a little bit. But that's obviously just a joke. The thing is, it forces you to make the tour part of your time.

Participant 6 – Yeah, we adopted our time based upon what was going on here. And if I get here early, I get the tickets early, it's all done early. It's all fine. But if we had customers who wanted to come later... I tell my customers, it's good to come early, because it becomes very crowded. This is Hawaii's most popular attraction. So I always tell them to go early.

Participant 3 – Participant 6, you've been doing this for two years?

Participant 6 – Yeah.

#### **Transcription Focus Group 4, continued**

Participant 3 – Do you remember times before when they allowed us to pick up tickets in the morning, and all the companies were doing what you're doing, and the line's a mile long almost, wrapping around, spiraling; because all the companies would try to do the same trick, coming early morning, getting in line before the thing opened. And it got to the point where it was so ridiculous that half an hour before the gates opened, there was already a line with 300 people. And the person who had arrived 15 minutes before the gate opened wouldn't get a ticket for the program for 11:00 or noon. Or sometimes – it happened several times on the cruise ship day – that the tickets would be actually given away for the people in the line before the gate opened. This is ridiculous. It forces you to do what you're doing, and it shouldn't be like this, it's ridiculous.

Participant 1 – And besides, we are here to discuss a system that works better to make Hawaii a better experience –

Participant 3 – For *everyone*! For every visitor.

Participant 1 – For everyone, and you're telling him that he has to wake up at 5:30 in the morning to go to Pearl Harbor, come in; if you're American, you might have your feelings and you do it because you feel it. But if you're coming from Russia, from Italy, "No, you know what, I'm not going to Pearl Harbor today."

Participant 3 – They want to see it too, but they're not going to sacrifice the mood, the vacation lifestyle that they have.

Participant 1 – Exactly. Everybody's like, "Oh, that early?" We all know what to say, like we say, "We do this, because it's better, blah blah blah," and what you say, we all have our speech, we know the speech we do, to sell it.

Moderator 1 – I'm going to interrupt you just a minute and start again – hold on – the second question and last question is what you want to say right now. [Second Question]

Participant 1, how would you improve it?

Participant 1 – Probably by a system where you can tell the park how many people you're going to bring in advance, so the park can organize it. What they've proposed, I think that's a good idea. But what concerns me the most is when we have big groups, to make sure I get the tickets for the time that I need it. And I'm not saying to cover, I know that 150 people get into the movie, right? I'm not saying I'm getting 150 tickets. But at least, if I had 150 people, at least in three or four boat rides. But I just want to make sure I get those tickets when I ask for them. Because that's a lot of stress when you don't have them, and you have to come here and see when you're going to get them. When you don't know what's going to happen and you have 150 people that are your responsibility...

Moderator 1 – How would you do that? How would you suggest the Park Service do this?

Participant 1 – Well, calling before, and saying, "Hey, tomorrow," obviously not way in advance, because for instance I know that July 10<sup>th</sup> I'm bringing 250 people here, so I can tell you and you block it, whatever. Or you can do, the website would be the same. We don't need to pay, Participant 3, like you say, because I will offer to do it. [laughs]

Participant 2 – Yeah, it's difficult, because there are so many stakeholders for everybody to be satisfied. But the question is, I'm not sure if you know how many general public comes to the memorial and how many are brought by tours. If you know this roughly, these statistics; so another idea might be

Participant 5 – It's a little under a third, isn't it?

Moderator 2/Moderator 1: I don't know.



## Transcription Focus Group 4, continued

Participant 5 – You haven't looked at the number? It's a little under a third is general public. Most are the tour companies.

Participant 2 – Okay, then another idea might be to divide the day. Let's say morning time, you do 7 to 11 o'clock, general public, or 7 to 10 general public, the rest of the day for the tour companies. That suits us perfectly. As long as we know the time – 2, 3 o'clock, 1 o'clock, it's okay for us. Any times. [Others protest] No no, I know it's difficult because we have a tour also, it's nice for us to go in the morning, but at least, we can tweak our tours and fit in the schedule as long as we know. So maybe it's just an idea, dividing the day between the general public and the tour companies.

Moderator 1 – Kind of a block system but by time.

Participant 2 – Yeah. General public goes from this time to this time, so the rest of the day to tour companies, and again, for tour companies it's difficult because the cruise ships are very important and they demand tickets. So for them, I don't know what to say; maybe give them conditions too, they have to sacrifice something too, the cruise ships, why not? People going on the cruise, they are traveling to Hawaii beforehand and a lot of cruise passengers, they plan ahead. They have their schedule up, and they have the description of the tours up ahead. So you can tell the cruise companies, "Okay, three or four days in advance, that's the cutoff time." So if you want to go to Pearl Harbor once the cruise has come already, yeah. So it's first come, first served. There are tickets to the place. So that's what I would say.

Participant 3 – I would have one big suggestion, and three smaller suggestions. The big one is to have a guaranteed time for tickets, for the entry program and reservation system, preferably online and available to everyone. Not only to tour companies. Why general public would be disadvantaged in the way that they cannot have a guaranteed time? One more time, I think it's fair to pay for this comfort and this peace of mind that you have a guaranteed time, pay a reasonable amount just to cover the cost of implementing and maintaining the system. There probably should be some space for each of the programs – let's say 30 or 25% reserved for the first-come first-served basis, some that cannot be pre-blocked, so that there is a small operation for people that still show up with no pre-arrangement. Other than that, there should be a way for everyone to have a guaranteed time for their ticket. There should be a deadline for the ticket pickup, maybe ½ hour or 45 minutes before the program, so that if it's not to be used, the space doesn't get wasted and the general public can use it. Just really basic, common things that I use, and every such thing around the world. That's the big idea. The smaller ideas: please, implement a fax line where I can fax the handwritten manifest in the morning, so I don't have to burn gas, people time, and clog the already clogged H-1 freeway from Waikiki to here, because that is an environmental issue. This place wants to be environmentally friendly; please keep that in mind. Second small suggestion: You have very smart people in the office, please make that form online, computer-friendly so I don't have to handwrite it every time. I am really bad at handwriting. And it would save me so much time if I could copy and paste it from the rooming list or something. Why not? This is really easy for the smart people they have in the office – the handwriting requirement...

Participant 1 – I think, why do they ask for those names? I mean, what would it be if I say his name is Juan Perez or Fernando Garcia? It's all the same.

Participant 5 – Their point is to eliminate duplicates, but... I mean, if you write the same one every time, they're going to see it.

Participant 1 – You do not have to put your passport number or anything like that, just the name.

Moderator 1 – Let's get back to this, what's your number three, then we'll move on to Participant 4.

Participant 3 – Number three is exactly what Participant 1 is saying, I don't want to start enforcing or checking anybody on it, but if they don't, why do they ask me for the particular names? What if I know that

#### **Transcription Focus Group 4, continued**

I have a family of eight, but it was too late to collect all the names? It's just ridiculous. Especially with being not enforcement on it, just please, give up. That's number three and final, thank you.

Participant 5 – I think honestly they meant to do it in a preventative way, to keep people from cheating, and if you think they might check you at some time –

Participant 3 – They don't have a way to penalize, or –

Participant 5 – Yeah, they do. They can kick you out. They will.

Participant 3 – They don't enforce that.

Participant 5 – They probably could...

Participant 1 – They do that just to check if they have a certain amount of people.

Participant 5 – No, they'll check to see if you have the same names over and over again, that you're just copying the same thing, or making up names. That was what they told us, when we said the same thing. It isn't effective, but that was their reasoning, when I asked the same question. It's ridiculous.

Moderator 1 – How would you change the system?

Participant 5 – Listen, I don't know how you can possibly do this without looking at the numbers. You have to look at the numbers of who's coming in here on tour groups, who's coming in here on their own; you have to look at which companies are bringing the people who are coming here, what time they're showing up; if you don't have that, you can't even do your job.

Moderator 1 – They may; we don't know.

Participant 5 – Oh, you need to do it. I mean, you can't do this without finding out who's bringing what, because that's a big deal. And the reason I'll tell you that is because I got together in August with the companies that are bringing about 90% of the people here, and made a proposal saying, look, if you take of the people bringing 90% of the people here, it'll work out for those, that you'll give a lot less work to the rangers, and then the other 10% will have plenty of tickets.

Moderator 1 – Okay, let's assume that the National Park Service here does know that.

Participant 5 – They do, you can go look at the same sheets that he's filling out.

Moderator 1 – Right, the two of us are just visiting.

Participant 5 – You're not allowed to look at that?

Moderator 2 – We are, but at this time –

Participant 5 – Well I'm telling you you need to, or you can't really do this.

Moderator 2 – At this time, what we're trying to do, we're trying not to look at them, so we have a clean slate, so we are not biased to anybody. The small company has the same voice as a big company at this point.

Participant 5 – No, I know that. But at the same time, they are here to solve the problem, and the problem is that it's not working perfectly for everybody, so –

## Transcription Focus Group 4, continued

Moderator 1 – So what's the most important thing?

Participant 5 – The idea is that you've got 90% of the people coming from 4 or 5 companies. And if those companies are bringing in people consistently, if you take care of just that consistently, then – okay, let's say this. If you have 150 in each program, put 110 to the tour companies, which, tour companies use more than that, probably, but that's fair to the general public; give 75 of those tickets to the 90% in a block system and then you'll have 35 left for anybody else. And most of the other ones are coming in advance for each program. And those companies that have the 75 won't use all those 75 every day. Then you check and you see that out of those 75, we need 50 every day. If you're coming in on an average of using less than 50, close to 40, say 20% or so, then you say, "Sorry, we can't keep giving you 50 if you're not using all those tickets, because you return them an hour beforehand, but we'd rather give those back into the pile for smaller companies that are needing them." So then, returning them an hour before the program like you're doing now, that's reasonable and I understand the point of that is to get more business into the concessions here. And it makes sure people go to the museum and things like that instead of just going to the movie and getting on the boat. The tickets could be picked up the same day. It doesn't make sense if the tickets are the same time, if you show up an hour beforehand to pick up those tickets. It doesn't make sense to come the day before, unless you're not on the block system and you make a reservation. Then what I'm suggesting for all the other companies, is that they make a reservation, but the only way, really, to be fair in that reservation is to come here at noon the day before and the reason for that is, it helps you to decide who gets those tickets. If everybody wants an 8:15 ticket, you're going to run out. So what's the fair way, so that this company gets it instead of that company? If they have to be here first. And that's the same reason that in the morning, we line up. And if somebody wants it really badly, they'll show up at 4:30 in the morning, and that was happening at one point; because if you fax it, who knows if it's fair. Did this fax come before that one? With the line busy, did your fax machine break and was it my fault and did I actually have my fax in before that? It's hard otherwise to do that. So, it may require another trip out here, but we may be here anyway, doing the tours from the day before. But I think the data shows that you would have to look at the block utilization and keep it at a percentage; that's how the airlines do it, for those of us who work with the airlines. They look at it and say, "We're going to give you a block of 20 seats every day of the week, but if you're only using 10 of them, we're going to change your block to 10." And it should be the same here. I think a computer reservation system – I understand the big problem here is rangers, and even though it sounds nice, that they wouldn't be able to handle that, and wouldn't want to; because they're already not interested in working with tour companies, it seems.

Moderator 2 – How so?

Participant 5 – They find it a burden, they don't think it's fair, the way things are going, and they don't like to have to count out tickets for all of the people and deal with that in the morning. And we hear about it on a daily basis.

Participant 1 – Maybe because they wake up early.

Participant 4 – I also agree on Participant 3's saying about all the names, because every company, my company has 700 people, or 400 people, so there's a lot of things to do for us, write all the names out. So it's difficult for us.

Moderator 1 – In Chinese.

Participant 4 – Yeah, in Chinese.

Moderator 1 – And what would you suggest the best way to improve the system?

Participant 4 – The best is the day before so we can give you guys all the information, what time, so we can get exactly the time for the tickets.

## **Transcription Focus Group 4, continued**

Participant 1 – Just the day before, or...?

Participant 4 – Yeah, the day before or, maybe we already know what day they'll be in Hawaii, so we can send it earlier.

Participant 1 – The people with my company, a lot of the customers pre-book from home. So when in the past, when I got to do that to them...

Moderator 2 – How soon is soon enough, a week, a month?

Participant 1 – Sometimes it could be several months, sometimes it could be a year.

Participant 5 – Are you talking about groups or FIT?

Participant 1 – Everything.

Participant 5 – But with the FIT you'd know weeks or months in advance?

Participant 1 – Yeah. They would book for several days, for Pearl Harbor, and then go back that same day, if they make a reservation four months ahead.

Participant 5 – Right, but then you would add two more people and then two more people if it's FIT, right? So you don't really know your count until the day before.

Participant 1 – I might have 30% that it would come on a [?], so it would come the day before, or two days before. But again, I guess if we can do the reservation ahead, it would be great.

Moderator 1 – So Participant 6, I guess everything's hunky-dory with him, but after this discussion...

Participant 6 – I feel their pain. If I had 50 people coming on a tour bus, I'd be singing a different tune. But because we're so small it works fine for me. And what I do with the manifest list is I just tell people, hey, send this back and legibly print your names because this is what the Park Service wants. And then I tell them, okay, only a cell phone, a camera and a wallet. No bags, no fanny packs. I give them the whole spiel coming out here about what the park does and does not allow. And I tell them, be respectful. It's a national park, it's a cemetery out there on the Arizona. So I've actually told them, people will be prohibited from going out there because of the clothes they're wearing, and stuff like that. So I just fill them all in so it's easy for us. Because we're small and we get our travelers FIT. We take reservations; I know the night before exactly what my count is; I go out there at 6 am to pick everybody up, so it works for us. But then, we're small. If we had more in numbers like some of you guys, I'd probably be singing a different tune.

Moderator 1 – As Participant 3 said though, the system has created your system, and you're just mirroring what it allows you. Would there be a way that you would prefer to do it?

Participant 6 – I can go out and talk to the office and see. It sounds like it would be easier if we had a set time that we could count on. But, to be honest, most of our passengers are coming from the US mainland. So their biological clocks are all 3 to 5 hours ahead of time anyway – they're all getting up at 4 am and rearing to go. I've had my girlfriend's father visiting from Boston for a week and he's up at 4 am every day, like "Let's go someplace!" And, dude, it's still pitch black.

Moderator 1 – That actually is the crux of what we wanted to hear from you – now it's open for anything else you'd like to tell us and the Park Service, via us, about anything related to getting on the USS Arizona or the Pearl Harbor experience.

#### **Transcription Focus Group 4, continued**

Moderator 2 – Actually I wanted to ask about cruise ship days first. On cruise ship days do you get to reserve in advance or not?

Participant 5 – Yes.

Moderator 2 – You do? Because you have a larger tour, don't you? 50, 65?

Participant 5 – We actually have a few hundred per day.

Moderator 2 – But per bus?

Participant 5 – No, we have 25.

Moderator 2 – So you get to reserve the day before. Any other people get to reserve the day before on cruise ship days?

Participant 1 – No.

Participant 3 – No, it's reserved by the big companies mostly, and it's a rather interesting question why the big companies are representing everybody...

Participant 5 – I've been to more than one meeting, this is just one little meeting with us here...

Participant 3 – Oh, is it?

Moderator 1 – Oh, we've sent emails to everybody, and they just chose their times, so we had some of the big companies. So they've all come. This is when you've happened to be able to come. So you do, on cruise ship days, operate a little differently?

Participant 5 – No, we don't really, but what happens is because we bring so many people, if Roberts and Poly who promote cruise ships, came on that day and took all those tickets, we wouldn't have any at all. So we're in that little group of people that bring more than 100 people a day here, so they give the block so that we don't disrupt a few hundred people who signed up to go on that day.

Moderator 1 – And then how does that work, how do you get them?

Participant 5 – We send an email the day before, before 2 pm, and then they send us a confirmation saying, "Okay, you can't have the 8:00, but we can give you the 8:15; you can't have the 1:00 but we can give you the 1:30." And we come between 3:30 and 4:30 to pick up the tickets.

Moderator 1 – That same day?

Participant 5 – That same day, which is kind of a pain, actually.

Participant 3 – In the morning?

Participant 5 – No, in the afternoon, about 3:30 in the afternoon. So, for us, we're usually here, but it doesn't always work out perfectly to do that.

Moderator 2 – Do you get to reserve the day before on cruise ship day?

Participant 4 – Yeah, the same as Participant 4.

## Transcription Focus Group 4, continued

Participant 5 – I don't know what the size restrictions are. What we proposed to them was anybody over 100 a day, because that would really disrupt things, if suddenly we came, those guys had all the tickets and we're taking everything that's left over. So part of the idea is for them to know what they've got the next day. If they know that these companies took a percentage of all the tour company things. With those blocks we're not taking all of the seats for tour companies – that was one of the big things. She said, "We need to leave at least 25 per program for everybody else." So if they're giving 75 seats to tour companies, we can only take 50. And then 25 are left at 8:00 for whoever shows up in the morning.

Moderator 1 – So the size is per day, not per bus. Okay.

Participant 5 – Yeah, I believe that's what the cutoff was. They actually didn't say that. That was what we put in our proposal. So what they did was they took the proposal and did everything we suggested, except they only did it for cruise ship days, not for every day of the week. And if it was every day of the week, it would probably run smoother – in fact, I think all the people doing it would prefer it every day of the week because it does work well on those days. You have your tickets in advance; the driver shows up. If he's missing a couple people, he's here an hour early, giving those tickets back so some other tour or FIT can use them. It really works very well, actually. It's really nice to have your tickets the day beforehand, because if you've got a group and you're worried, "Am I going to get them in time?" If they have to catch a flight back to Maui that same day or something like that, you've got them and you know everything's set.

Participant 4 – We do have tours from Maui, too.

Participant 5 – We also do tours at 9:00 in the morning and then 11:00 in the morning too, so every day we're bringing about 70 people or so after 7 am.

Participant 3 – And sometimes you probably do the same as we do; you come down here and you get the tickets for, 3 hours ahead? And you drive back to downtown. You just messed up the schedule of the whole tour, you make an additional 30 miles on the freeway, you waste an additional one hour of driving, just shuttling them back downtown to Honolulu to show them around, and then you bring them back for the tour.

Participant 1 – Well now that the park is finished, if you have a wait, it's not as bad as it used to be [others agree]. For the last two years or a year and a half, since everything is closed, it was hard to sell Pearl Harbor. I'm not saying nobody wants to come to Pearl Harbor, but, people get disappointed, because there was no museum, and the movie was in a tent.

Participant 5 – Yeah, you were here for an hour and people said, "Oh, it took forever!" But one other thing about the reservation system, you have to keep in mind, if you have a computer reservation system, and you're paying per person, or if you're paying for it in some way, and you have a cancellation – I don't know how the rangers handle that, but that's just a mess, I'm sure. If suddenly you have 4 or 5 people who don't show up, or you have a breakdown and your whole bus is stopped for an extra 20 minutes and you miss the program, what do you do in that case?

Participant 6 – See, that's where it gets too complicated of a system. How can you just keep it simple? I can understand big groups want reservations, but.

Participant 1 – For me the issue is first-come, first-served leaving a block for agencies, it works, because when you get an hour wait, our tour guides are trained to do a tour inside the museum. So it's good to have an hour, hour and a half wait so you can show the people around and give them more information to make a better experience. But the problem I have is the days that we have big groups. If we can make the reservation ahead, and make sure we got it at this time... to make wait 13 people is not too much of an issue, but to make wait 200 or 150, it's a mess. It's a mess for everybody.

#### **Transcription Focus Group 4, continued**

Participant 5 – Do you guys bring people every day?

Participant 1 – Not every day. Three times a week, average.

Moderator 1 – How about you, how many times a week?

Participant 2 – Sometimes, I don't bring them at all.

Moderator 1 – So not every day. And Participant 3?

Participant 3 – Average two times a week, but it's very – between two companies, it would be an average of five times a week. But it's very spontaneous.

Participant 4 – We have a slow season and a busy season. Sometimes in the busy season, we have 7 or 10 groups a day. They have different times of flight here, so they have different times to come to Pearl Harbor.

Moderator 1 – So you two are the ones who give tours more than once a day.

Participant 4 – Yes, more than once.

Participant 5 – So you need two solutions, you need one for the daily, consistent, Sunday through Saturday kind of stuff, every single day we have a pretty consistent amount of people. And then we need, if these guys have a group of 500 or 50 or something like that, a way to solve that for them, or a cruise ship. Those are the abnormal days. There's two solutions necessary. And then there's summer, which is really, actually just busy every day.

Moderator 2 – Everybody's busy, yeah.

Moderator 1 – Is there anything else about the operation, aside from the ticket system, that you think the Park Service should know, any other operational, infrastructure, or logistics that you think they should fix?

Participant 5 – There's huge improvements in the last year, because before, we weren't allowed to take people into the museum or even on the boat or anything of that, and now they're – I think – forcing some companies who do foreign language to have a guide go with them, but not allowed to talk, which is kind of disturbing...

Participant 4 – Before this year, they weren't allowed – for a long time ago, they did allow someone to narrate what they're looking at. And they said, no. So you couldn't give a guided tour inside the museum. That was kind of an inconvenience, especially for the tours in another language. And now, I guess, you can do it again –

Participant 5 – They're encouraging it, which is really the smart thing. People who come with tour groups are better off than people who come on their own, and people who come with tour groups who have a guide who can take them and show them things are better off. So the park should be encouraging that, really.

Participant 3 – It's enriching the experience.

Participant 5 – Absolutely.

Participant 1 – It's a different experience than if you come on your own.

Participant 2 – We charge money, and we add value.

## **Transcription Focus Group 4, continued**

Moderator 1 – Sure. Especially with the language thing.

Participant 5 – Is there a proposal that's out there already, to solve the ticketing problem?

Moderator 1 – To change it? This is what this is all about.

Participant 5 – So there isn't anything proposed?

Moderator 2 – Not yet, they're waiting to hear all this.

Moderator 1 – Just so you know, Moderator 2 and I have also distributed 1300 questionnaires to visitors on the boat the last 5 days, and they have been tour group and FIT and cruise ship people and non-cruise ship people, so we have a lot of data from the visitors now, from you all, and we even spoke to the park partners, we interviewed the superintendent. So we're just gathering lots of input from all angles to see what might work. And you're part of the equation.

Participant 1 – I'm glad that you guys are doing this. It will improve it.

Participant 5 – Have you done this for other parks?

Moderator 2 – Yes.

Participant 1 – Haleakala is doing this UA study...

Participant 5 – For the last 5 years...

Participant 3 – I won't comment.

Participant 5 – Yeah, me too.

Participant 1 – It's been forever.

Participant 3 – Keeping the monopoly of several companies.

Participant 1 – At a time when everybody's struggling, there are no jobs.

Participant 3 – It's foolish.

Participant 1 – They don't allow you to generate business.

Moderator 1 – They should send us there!

Participant 1 – It's on Maui.

Participant 6 – I have a comment. When tour groups are here and I'm with my crew, it's a small crew. So I can walk around and talk in a regular voice. But I would be annoyed if I'm in the museum and there's some guy from Botswana yelling at his whole tour group from Botswana, and I'd be like, you know, "Shut up! I want to know what the video says, I don't want to hear your background booming voice talking to your 30 people. So if you want to talk to your people, do it outside, but not in the museum, not in the movie, and not at the memorial." And I actually have one of the rangers here that annoys me, because he'll be out at the memorial, talking a story to everybody, and I'm like, it shouldn't be that way. If someone asks him a question, he should talk to them in a personal voice. But there's one guy that talks about BB



#### **Transcription Focus Group 4, continued**

chains, ashes, and the Utah, and all this kind of stuff – I don't want to name names. I mean he's a cool guy, all the rangers work hard, but I don't want to hear about BB chains, ashes, and the Utah, and he's sort of telling everybody, because he's an important guy and he's smart, and I'm like, just shut up. Let the people experience the memorial for themselves. I take some people out there, they're crying. They have tears in their eyes. They have a tear in their eye from the movie, and they have a lump in their throat all the way out there, and they have a lump in their throat coming back. They're moved, they're touched. So I don't want someone in a booming voice talking about anything. I want those people to experience it in a soft, wonderful kind of manner. That would be my one comment.

Moderator 1 – Good, okay.

Participant 6 – Do you guys feel the same way?

Participant 5 – Yeah, I don't think people should be talking at the memorial. If it's in the museum it's not the end of the world, but...

Participant 6 – Not, like, conversation, but that's upsetting. That's what I mean. I go with my crew the whole way. I take them to the movie, I take them to the boat, so if they have questions, they ask me. So in a soft voice I'm like, yeah, that's the oil still leaking out from the ship. I'm not like THAT'S THE OIL STILL LEAKING OUT FROM THE SHIP! I just want to say, shut up!

Participant 1 – That is the ranger's job, you know.

Participant 3 – They should start enforcing the atmosphere, again, because they used to do it. I've been doing this for four years, and when I first came here, I remember people actually whispering there. For me, the changed has happened over the last couple of years; that the whole atmosphere of the spiritual experience there has kind of disappeared. No one enforces, no one penalizes you anymore, when you...

Participant 6 – Act out, carry on. No "turn off your cell phones" or anything.

Participant 5 – Yeah, they used to say it.

Participant 6 – I tell my customers, "Hey, it's a respectful place, it's the Arlington of the Pacific, if you will. It's hallowed ground." And they get the hint.

Participant 5 – That's another good reason to have tour guides, encouraging more visitors on tours.

Participant 1 – Also, one thing that would help, for us, it's the audio. The audio helped a lot.

Participant 6 – Yeah, I've had Italian people on my tour who saw the Spanish, or whatever it was, and they didn't have Italian, so they rented the whole thing.

Participant 1 – Yeah, they don't have it anymore. For Spanish, for us, it's Spanish.

Participant 6 – We have French people coming there, and they really love the fact that they have an international – put the thing in and do the whole thing.

Participant 1 – Well that's like any museum in the world, you have headphones and all.

Moderator 1 – Anything else about infrastructure, logistics?

Participant 5 – Well, they already know because we've talked to the superintendent, but this whole thing with handicapped people is really absurd, how poorly we're treating them. We have to park in the commercial bus parking lot, and they have to hobble all the way over here if they don't have a wheelchair.

#### **Transcription Focus Group 4, continued**

So somebody who has trouble walking, not even just handicapped. So if you're elderly, to walk the distances you have to walk right now is a bit much.

Participant 6 – How big of a vehicle do you guys have?

Participant 5 – 25 passenger. But even if you have a van you're not allowed to pull up into the front.

Participant 6 – No, no. Because in that pedestrian zone, the common lot on the right-hand side there, there's that little zone for that purpose. The guys told me to park there.

Participant 5 – No, that's only for taxis. They've said if you use that, you'll get a ticket.

Participant 6 – Oh okay. They've told me that I can park there, let people out, then I take the vehicle over and I park it. I dropped them in front once, and he was like, "No, you can't do that." But then my guy came out with a crutch and he was like, okay.

Participant 5 – That might be an exception, but I'll tell you, they've warned us, do not use that, that's a taxi area. So yeah, it's poorly designed in that sense, and unless there's some change made to that, it's just going to upset people.

Participant 1 – The taxis are always going to be through this entrance, right?

Moderator 1 – Right. Oh, are you asking me?

Participant 6 – She's just gathering data. These two aren't decision makers, they're not managers, they're just gathering data. No offense.

Participant 5 – There have been so many improvements in the last year that it's hard to complain, because it was so bad before that. So just obvious things that people are talking about, lines and things like that.

Participant 1 – For the last two years when we were selling it, trying to sell it ahead to a group, I'd have the group experiencing that Pearl Harbor is not as good as it used to be. They are working to make it better so I'm glad that we got to that. I don't want to have to go through that again.

Participant 6 – I'll just make a little fact real fast here for you mathematicians: the bottom line is time, 7 am to 7 pm; the top line here is how many people are coming into the park. Management here needs to know how much is FIT, how much is tour group, and what the demographics are – who's coming at what times, so they can kind of plan accordingly.

Participant 5 – There's another big issue based on that, since we bring people here at 1:00 in the afternoon, and you've said in the last few days they cancelled the boats a few times?

Moderator 1 – Yes, for the wind.

Participant 5 – I don't know, I mean, put that into something, that they need to come up with a better way to deal with wind. It's just wind!

Participant 6 – Yeah, like, "Going out to the Arizona Memorial, weather permitting." Just so we understand.

Participant 5 – What I'm saying is that it's going to be hard to convince a lot of people to come out in the afternoon; I know that they're afraid to come in the afternoon because of closure – cancelling the boat. It

#### **Transcription Focus Group 4, continued**

throws off the whole tour. So I don't know what you can do about that, but it's going to keep people coming in the morning, unless they can come up with a solution to it.

Participant 1 – Basically all of us, I would say 90% or 99% of the companies come mostly in the morning. In the afternoon some will come but the bulk comes in the morning.

Participant 5 – And that's because people didn't change their brochures and their tours when the system changed here, too.

Participant 1 – For us, it's because we have other tours that we can do in the afternoons.

Participant 5 – We're going to keep it that way too, for us, but, it could change...

Moderator 1 – Do you know if your passengers or clients ever say, "Okay I have a (worst case scenario) 3-hour wait – will they go over to the Missouri, and the Bowfin? Will they buy a ticket for something else?

Participant 3 – My customers will not do that, because they paid for two hours – let's say, that number [3 hours], and when they hear that they can do something extra for an additional amount of money... Americans are cool with it; I've found that it's a cultural thing. My market does not like the paid-extra add-on in front of their face because there is some obstruction of the regular operating.

Participant 2 – If they paid it, they want to get it.

Participant 3 – They actually don't want to hear that there is more stuff to be seen. That's like a whole cultural [thing].

Participant 2 – Yeah, you're right. So if there's wind or something, at least – I don't know, it's different companies – but at least you offer, okay, if there's wind, you can visit the Bowfin for free or something.

Moderator 1 – Well, not that it's cancelled, but if you have to wait – they're going to get on the USS Arizona, but there's a lag time.

Participant 3 – Everyone drives back to town. Pearl Harbor is always combined. I think always.

Moderator 1 – In the tour?

Participant 3 – Not always?

Participant 6 – No, we do it singularly. Yeah, we do it 6 to noon. And then we take them back so they can have lunch. We don't want to buy them food, so we get them

Participant 5 – But, you're not here at the Arizona from 6 to noon?

Participant 6 – No, but we get here at 7. I'm outside at 6:30. Then, you're right, we take them to Punchbowl at about 7:30.

Participant 3 – So you combine it with your group, that's what I'm saying...

Participant 1 – There's the Pearl Harbor, because in the afternoon, we offer other tours that they can do, so –

Moderator 2 – Pearl Harbor, you mean Arizona, or some other.

Participant 5 – So they sort of combine it with what they choose to combine it with.

#### **Transcription Focus Group 4, continued**

Participant 1 – Yeah, and the city tour, we do it separately, that's another tour that most people do. City tour is from 8 to 12, Pearl Harbor is from 7 to whatever time.

Participant 3 – For the public. Public companies are combining those tours and they shuffle around the schedule and do it on one ticket. But like you guys are saying, it's not an issue so much anymore, except for the heavy holiday season, or Saturdays, it hardly ever happens to have a 3 or 4 hour wait for the program. I've not been driving much, I've been sitting more behind the desk in the office, but.

Moderator 2 – So when you say Pearl Harbor, you mean Arizona only?

Participant 1 – Arizona only.

Participant 6 – The visitor's center, and the Arizona. That's it.

Moderator 2 – So not the Bowfin, not Aviation, nothing else.

Participant 6 – What I tell my guests is, "Pearl Harbor now has expanded in the modern day, and they are including more and more attractions and more and more museum pieces; so we have the Bowfin, we have the Missouri, we have the Pacific Aviation Museum here. So if you guys want, you could make Pearl Harbor an 8-hour day and spend all day out here, doing two hours of everything." But that's how I kind of rationalize it with my guests. I don't want to sound like I'm nickel and dime-ing it, like, "Oh, we have to pay extra for those, we have to pay extra for the Missouri," but those are now additional attractions to the overall visitor center. The original Pearl Harbor is the visitor center and the Arizona Memorial and now, if you want, you can do the submarine, the battleship and the aviation museum. We don't package it that way.

Moderator 2 – But you don't see that comment and that [disappointment] very often?

Participant 6 – I've only had one customer that was a little salty that they couldn't go to the Missouri and all that stuff, because they didn't actually understand what the tour was all about.

Participant 3 – I've had some people that have done that.

Participant 1 – That happens to me too, once in awhile – "Why didn't you take us to the Missouri?" Well just because.

Participant 3 – Because it's not part of the tour that you booked! The tour is of Hawaii.

Participant 6 – What I did with that customer was I walked him over to the ticket office, and I said, "This is the tickets, the prices for all these attractions; right up here on the avenue is the #42 bus; it'll take you right back to your hotel in Waikiki, or the #20 bus." They were happy as clams.

Participant 1 – Well I did the same, and three weeks later I got a complaint from [...] Mexico, that the guy was very rude. That's the problem.

Participant 3 – Never take a bus ride.

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