



# Buying a ticket at the station

Research on ticket machine use

October 2008

# Foreword

Passenger Focus national priorities research shows that reducing queuing times at stations is one of the top ten priorities for improvement for passengers. Research into ticket queues at 12 major stations<sup>1</sup> (published in May 2008) shows that queues at ticket vending machines (TVMs) were on average shorter than at ticket offices during the peak and off-peak (including weekends). It also showed that 41% of all observations undertaken at ticket machines reported no queues compared to 18% at ticket offices, showing that TVMs were not being as heavily used as the ticket offices.

The National Passenger Survey (Spring 2008) also shows that satisfaction with ticket buying facilities was lower for passengers using ticket machines to purchase their tickets instead of ticket offices (71% vs. 79%).

Train companies are investing heavily in installing ticket machines and yet passengers are still facing lengthy queues at ticket offices.<sup>2,3</sup> It is important to understand why passengers choose ticket office windows over ticket machines.

We are pleased to have worked with South West Trains (SWT) to understand what can be done to reduce queuing times at 'pinch-points'<sup>4</sup> for passengers at SWT's stations. This quantitative research, funded jointly by Passenger Focus and South West Trains, looked at:

- the proportion of passengers queuing at ticket offices who could have used a ticket machine
- seeking to understand people's reluctance to use ticket machines
- other ways in which passengers could have purchased their tickets to avoid a long queue.

This was a timely piece of research for SWT to co-fund, given that they are investing £12m in TVMs and software enhancements. These enhancements include pre-paid ticket collection and the ability to renew monthly season tickets. The research also helped inform their customer communication materials for TVMs.

## Key findings

Most passengers queuing at ticket offices could have bought their ticket from a machine, although a large proportion chose not to.

The conscious decision to purchase at ticket offices is largely driven by:

- the purchaser's lack of confidence in using the machine
- the purchaser's lack of confidence in their ability to select a ticket at the appropriate price with the necessary validity or relevant route (as specified on the ticket and reflected in the price)
- older passengers who are less inclined to use ticket machines
- a preference for face-to-face transactions for reassurance.

## What next?

Passengers continue to purchase from ticket offices as some products and tickets are not available from the ticket machines: Tickets for future travel and reservations; tickets from other stations or places – including zonal add-ons which must be bought in advance to avoid a penalty fare; Railcards and Railovers.

Further qualitative research is necessary to ascertain the reluctance of some passengers to use ticket machines. By addressing the barriers to ticket machine use it may be possible to increase the use of TVMs.

For example, providing facilities whereby passengers can check basic information such as ticket validity appropriate for the journey and time they wish to travel before they make their choice using the TVM. Research is also necessary to investigate the sale of tickets at smaller stations and see if significantly different findings emerge.

Any technological enhancements of ticket-machine issuing facilities, provided passengers have the means of establishing the applicability of the ticket they are buying, is welcome. However, some passengers will still seek the reassurance of tickets issued at the ticket office and some passengers will have no choice but to use the ticket office as their requirements are not available from the machine. Staff presence at stations is valued by passengers for a number of additional reasons.

<sup>1</sup> Ticket queuing times at major rail stations – research published by Passenger Focus, May 2008

<sup>2</sup> Ticket queuing times at major rail stations – May 2008

<sup>3</sup> Mystery shop of rail ticket retailing research summary – March 2007

<sup>4</sup> Refers to Monday/Tuesday AM peak periods (07:00-10:00hrs), Friday PM peak periods (16:00-19:00hrs) and weekends (all day).



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## Table of Contents

A	Management Summary _____	3
1.	Context & Objectives _____	6
2.	Sample & Methodology _____	8
3.	Main Findings	
3.1	Tickets & Travel Intentions	
3.1.1	Journey Types & Day of Travel _____	11
3.1.2	Possibility of Advance Purchase _____	12
3.1.3	Imminence of Journeys on Same Day _	13
3.2	Ticket Machines	
3.2.1	Awareness and Usage _____	14
3.2.2	Reasons for Not Using _____	14
3.2.3	Willingness to Use in Future _____	17
3.3	Advance Purchase	
3.3.1	Awareness and Consideration _____	18
3.3.2	Reasons for Not Buying in Advance _	20
3.3.3	Willingness to Consider in Future _____	21
3.3.4	Pre-Paid Tickets for Collection _____	22
4.	Conclusions & Recommendations _____	24
5.	Appendix – Questionnaire _____	26

# A. Management Summary

## Introduction

Research was conducted among passengers queuing at stations on the South West Trains franchise to provide an understanding of the reasons for queuing and the potential for using alternative channels to purchase tickets. It has been funded jointly between Passenger Focus and South West Trains (SWT).

A total of 1,189 interviews were completed with customers queuing for ticket offices or for Ticket Vending Machines (TVMs), at 11 busy SWT stations, between 3<sup>rd</sup> March to 20<sup>th</sup> April 2008<sup>1</sup>.

## Main Findings

### TVMs

- The vast majority of those in ticket office queues could be buying their tickets from TVMs - and the majority have not dismissed the possibility of using them at some stage in the future.
- Non-usage cannot be attributed to lack of awareness. Indeed, nine out of 10 of those in ticket office queues were aware of TVMs at station (and 78% had used them in the past). Younger customers are a little more likely than others to have had experience of them.
- Rather, non-usage of TVMs is often due to a lack of confidence in the machines, a desire for a face-to-face encounter or concerns over ease of use, prices or ticket availability. One in five has no particular reason for not using a TVM, but instead simply does not consider the idea.

### Advance Purchase

- Almost all of those queuing are buying tickets that could in theory be purchased in advance. Most are aware that this is the case, and do not reject the idea of advance purchase in the future.

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<sup>1</sup> Pilot phase was conducted 3<sup>rd</sup> to 9<sup>th</sup> March and main fieldwork took place from 7<sup>th</sup> to 20<sup>th</sup> April.

Nevertheless, only one in 10 queuing customers actually considered the possibility.

- A mixture of practical and perceptual barriers apply: some have only just decided to travel, others have not got round to booking the ticket until now (in fact seven in 10 leave fewer than 15 minutes between queuing for a ticket and their train's departure time). Others prefer face-to-face dealings, or do not see advance purchase as particularly convenient when compared with buying on the day.
- One in five simply didn't consider advance purchase on this occasion

## Conclusions and Recommendations

- **There is some evidence of an opportunity to increase both use of TVMs and advance purchase (by internet in particular), while the idea of pre-paid ticket collection service from ticket machines appeals to a majority. However these products are not available from ticket machines, e.g. extensions, railcards, tickets for future travel (excluding next-day tickets)<sup>3</sup>, seat reservations.**
- **For many customers ticket offices are still the default method for purchasing tickets. There is little active objection to using TVMs in theory, but any doubts about the details of what tickets are available or the functionality of the machines mean people revert to the 'tried and tested' ticket office. Beyond this, however, there is clearly some scope to increase top-of-mind awareness and consideration of TVMs.**
- **Communications to this end should also aim to counter specific minority concerns about ease of use, ticket range, reliability, speed, range of payment methods available.**
- **In the absence of staff to advise, passengers using ticket machines may be unfamiliar with the validity of ticket types, as a result of which they may end up choosing the wrong ticket, e.g. either buy the cheapest or the most expensive ticket and risk paying a penalty fine or switch to an alternative mode of**

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<sup>2</sup> Refers to buying ticket before the day of travel rather than the train-specific cut-price ticket types

<sup>3</sup> Next –day tickets can now be bought from ticket machines

transport. To avoid this, the ticket machine must give details of the ticket validity matching the passenger's journey.

- Older customers in particular may be alienated by a wider introduction of TVMs.
- Existing barriers to advance purchase might be more difficult to counter. Many queuing customers could not have bought their tickets in advance (due to the immediacy of their journey in relation to when the decision to travel was made) or cannot see any reason to do so. Nevertheless, there is still clearly a minority for whom advance purchase is not top-of-mind but would still have been both practical and advantageous. It would make sense therefore for communications to emphasise the ease of advance purchase, the convenience (with pre-paid ticket collection service from ticket machines), access to sales people on the telephone to discuss options, the speed of the process and delivery, as well as advantageous pricing.
- This research found that the majority of passengers waiting to buy tickets from the ticket office could have bought the same fare from a ticket machine and with a shorter wait or no wait at all. Further qualitative research to understand measures which could be taken to persuade more passengers to use ticket machines is required or to understand what alternative passengers would choose if a ticket office was not available.

# 1. Research Context and Objectives

The Ticketing Settlement Agreement (TSA) – an industry wide agreement – has set standards for queuing times for ticket purchasing at rail stations. During peak hours (07.00 – 10.00 and 16.00 – 19.00, Monday to Friday), rail passengers should expect to queue for no longer than five minutes when purchasing their tickets. At all other times the wait should be no longer than three minutes.

Passenger Focus, in its role as the watchdog for rail passengers, monitors the issue of queuing across the network and has found that the TSA standards are generally met. However, detailed analysis of performance has highlighted that there is significant variation from this rule by time of day, day of week and by station. More specifically, research into queuing times<sup>4</sup> at 12 large stations across UK during ‘pinch points’ – peak periods, and on weekends – frequently exceed the relevant standards.

Research into priorities commissioned by Passenger Focus has shown that the time spent queuing is one of the key areas where passengers (regardless of travel purpose) would want to see improvements. Passenger Focus is therefore keen to establish what can be done to reduce queuing times at specific ‘pinch points’. To this end, it commissioned research jointly funded by Passenger Focus and South West Trains among passengers queuing at stations on the South West Trains franchise to provide an understanding of the reasons for queuing and the potential for using alternative channels to purchase tickets. More specifically, it aimed to address the following objectives:

- to identify the proportion of passengers queuing at the ticket office during ‘pinch points’ who could be using a Ticket Vending Machine (TVM)
- to establish and prioritise barriers to using TVMs
- to measure propensity to use TVMs in the future
- to identify the proportion of passengers queuing for tickets during ‘pinch points’ who could have purchased their tickets in advance (e.g. via internet, phone or at ticket office during off peak times)
- to establish and prioritise barriers to purchasing tickets in advance
- to measure propensity to purchase tickets in advance in the future

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<sup>4</sup> Ticket queuing times at major rail stations” – research report can be found at [www.passengerfocus.org.uk](http://www.passengerfocus.org.uk)

Overall, therefore, the research aimed to inform the debate about the development of measures to reduce queuing times by providing a greater understanding of the nature and motivations of passengers queuing at 'pinch points' at key SWT stations.

## 2. Sample & Methodology

A total of 1,189 face-to-face quantitative interviews were conducted with customers while they queued, between 3<sup>rd</sup> March and 20<sup>th</sup> April 2008. A total of 815 of these were conducted at queues for ticket offices and 372 at queues for TVMs (a further two questionnaires were returned where the interviewer had not coded the location). Interviewing took place at 11 busy stations served by SWT. These locations were suggested by SWT and were as follows:

<b>Station</b>	<b>Number of interviews</b>
Basingstoke	108
Bournemouth	108
Clapham	107
Earlsfield	102
Guildford	98
Hampton Court	106
Putney	103
Salisbury	101
Walton on Thames	110
Waterloo	108
Winchester	138

At each station, a random sample of customers was interviewed in both types of queue. However, customers were only invited to take part when at least three people in total were waiting in the queue, so that no interview would still be taking place when the customer's turn came to be served. Interviewers approached the person at the end of each queue. If that person refused, they then asked the new person at the end of the queue if one had arrived. If no new person had arrived to join the queue, they approached the person next closest to the back of the queue.

The interview itself typically took three minutes to administer; a copy of the questionnaire used has been included in the appendix to this report.

An overall profile of the achieved sample is shown below:

<b>Table 2: Overall Sample Profile</b>			
		<b>No. of interviews</b>	<b>%</b>
<b>Age</b>	16-24	291	24
	25-44	566	48
	45+	326	27
	Refused	6	1
<b>Gender</b>	Male	546	46
	Female	641	54
	Not stated	2	*
<b>Ticket type</b>	Single	351	30
	Return	767	65
	Season	54	5
	Don't know/not stated	17	1
<b>Time of interview</b>	Weekday AM peak	279	23
	Weekday PM peak	157	13
	Weekday off-peak	242	20
	Weekend	511	43
<b>Journey Purpose*</b>	Commute	192	16
	Business	37	3
	Leisure	512	43
<b>Date of travel</b>	Today	1,104	93
	Future	86	7
	Both	1	*
<b>Total</b>		<b>1,189</b>	<b>100</b>

\*Journey Purpose was not asked in the pilot interviews

Note: Percentages shown in the table have been rounded to the nearest percent

- Commuters were undertaking a regular journey to or from either a place of work or a place of study
- Leisure travellers were visiting friends or relatives, on a shopping trip, on personal business (e.g. job interview, dentist etc.), on a day out, or travelling for another predominantly leisure reason
- Business travellers were on company business (or own if self employed)

Further details of the sample achieved at each of the 11 stations are shown in Chart 1 below. Boxes have been used to show where certain customer groups are more prominent in a given station's profile

than they are elsewhere (for example, Guildford and Salisbury had a higher proportion of customers aged 45 or over waiting in the queues).

**Chart 1: Sample Profile by Station**

		Earls -field	B'stokes	Hampton Court	Guild -ford	W'loo	Salis -bury	Walton on Thames	Winch -ester	Bourne- mouth	Putney	Clap'm
		%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Age	16-24	22	28	15	26	20	21	20	36	31	33	15
	25-34	43	27	27	15	31	21	22	23	22	40	44
	35-44	18	21	25	15	19	17	23	17	18	14	22
	45plus	18	24	31	43	28	41	35	23	28	13	18
Gender	Male	40	56	46	49	43	56	47	46	39	50	33
	Female	60	44	54	51	56	44	53	54	61	50	67
Ticket	Single	35	24	23	45	41	14	23	24	28	34	37
	Return	57	67	70	52	56	86	72	70	70	50	57
	Season	8	9	8	2	2	-	3	6	1	6	6
Time	AM peak	34	39	43	17	29	36	30	20	16	19	23
	Off peak	44	38	44	60	40	49	49	61	53	55	45
	PM peak	22	23	12	22	31	16	21	20	31	25	32

Base: all 1,189 respondents (c.100 at each station)

Throughout this report, “\*” is used to indicate a result of greater than zero but less than half a per cent.

Data are unedited and unweighted.

For full question wordings, please refer to the questionnaire in the appendix.

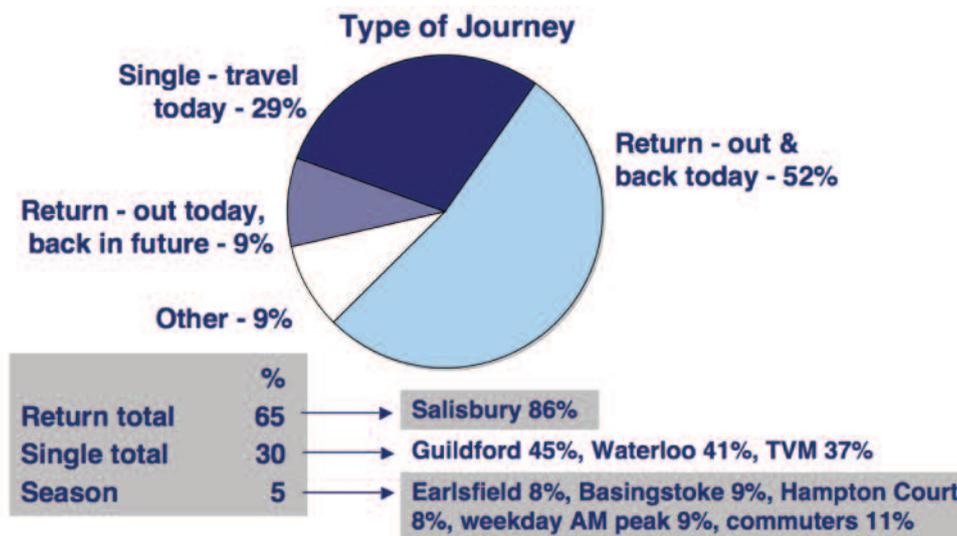
## 3. Main Findings

### 3.1 Tickets and Travel Intentions

#### 3.1.1 Journey Types and Planned Day of Travel

Overall, two-thirds of queuing customers are planning to buy return tickets. Those waiting at ticket machines are a little more likely to be buying one-way tickets compared with those in ticket office queues (37% vs 26%).

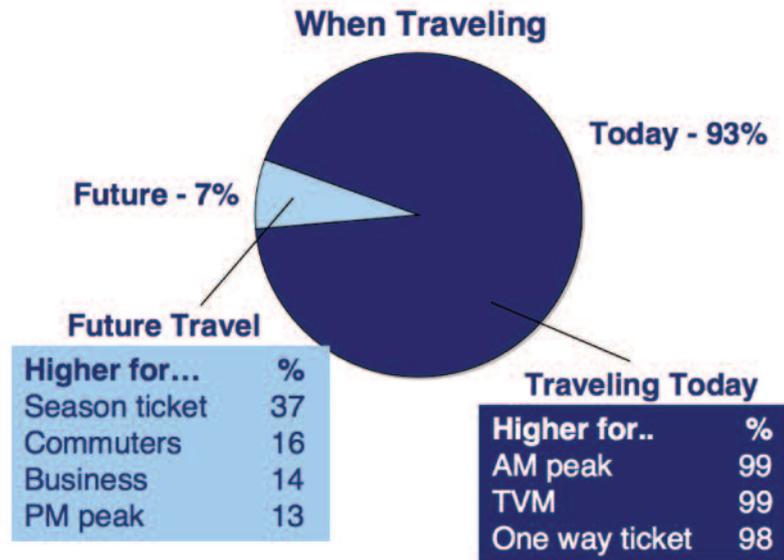
**Chart 2: Journey Types**



Base: all (1,189)

The vast majority (93%) are buying tickets to travel on the same day. TVMs are only rarely used for advance tickets: almost all (95%) of those buying tickets for future travel wait in the ticket office queue.

**Chart 3: Journey Imminence**



Base: all (1,189)

### 3.1.2 Possibility of Advance Purchase for Ticket Types Purchased

Almost all customers in both ticket office and TVM queues could in theory have bought their tickets in advance (94% in ticket office queues and 99% in TVM queues). Tickets being purchased which are not available in advance were as follows:

- excess tickets – e.g. beyond Travelcard boundary
- group/family tickets
- job seeker/new deal

Similarly, the vast majority (91%) queuing for the ticket office could have used a TVM in theory. Tickets being purchased from the ticket office that are not available from the TVMs include:

- seasons (with the exception of weekly seasons)
- excess tickets
- group tickets
- disabled persons tickets (excluding railcard discounts)
- railcards
- ticket valid from another station other than the station it was purchased from

### **3.1.3 Imminence of Journeys on Same Day as Ticket Purchase**

Of those due to be travelling today, seven in 10 are queuing to buy their ticket 15 minutes or less before their train is due to leave. In fact, four in 10 leave fewer than 10 minutes.

Those in the TVM queue are more likely to have left less than 10 minutes (48% compared with 39% in the ticket office queue).

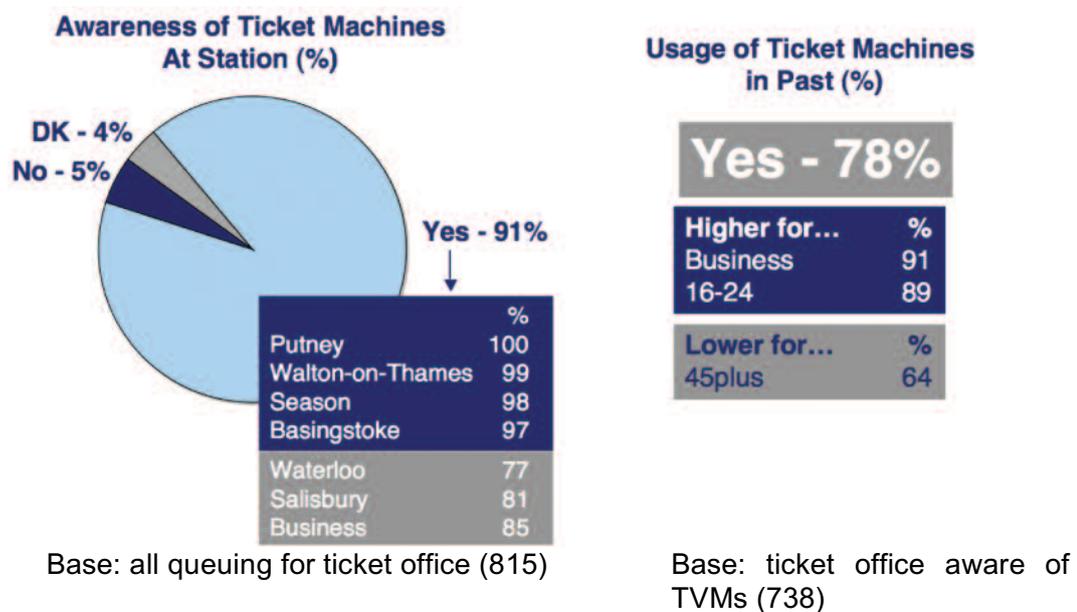
In total, 13% do not yet know when their train will leave. This type of customer is most often found at London stations - Waterloo (38%), Clapham (41%) and Putney (28%) – possibly due to the more ‘metro’-like timetable of many services from these stations.

## 3.2 Ticket Machines

### 3.2.1 Awareness and Usage of Ticket Machines

Non-use of ticket machines cannot be explained by a lack of awareness: the vast majority of those queuing at the ticket office are aware that they exist at that station. While awareness varies between stations, it does not dip below 77% at any (and is 97% or higher at Putney, Walton-on-Thames and Basingstoke). Furthermore, almost eight in 10 have used them in the past – though younger customers are more likely to have experience of them than are those over the age of 45.

**Chart 4: Awareness and Usage of TVMs**



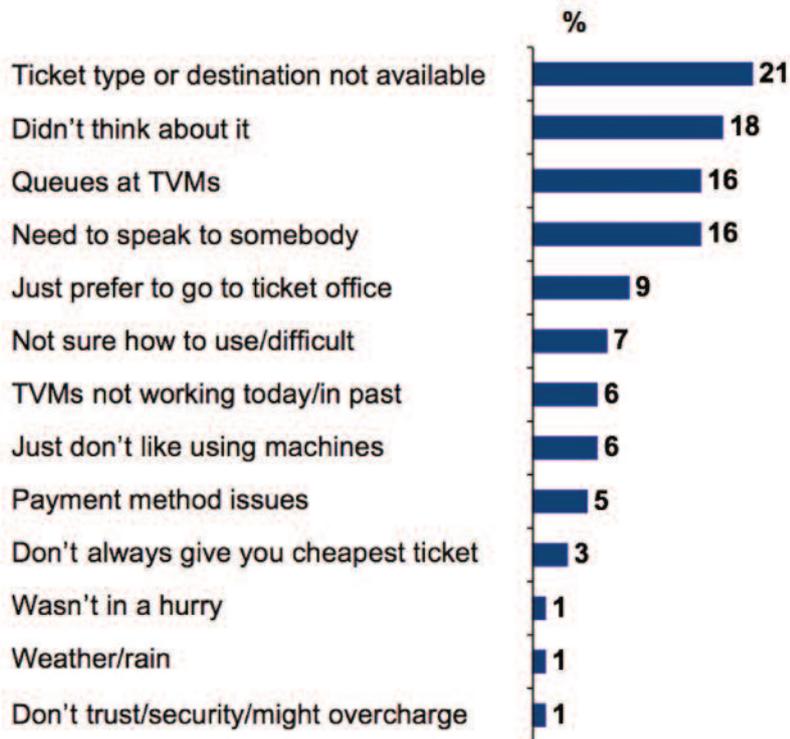
### 3.2.2 Reasons for Not Using Ticket Machines

Despite the widespread awareness of the machines, one in five of those waiting for the ticket office say they simply didn't consider using one. This suggests that there would be some value in promoting the machines further, in order to make them more top-of-mind. Sizeable minorities also, however, have active reasons for choosing the ticket office over the TVM, including the need to talk, or doubting that their ticket is available from the machine. Smaller numbers of respondents also express a lack of confidence in the machines or their own ability to

use them.

### Chart 5: Barriers to Using TVMs

#### Reasons For Not Using on This Occasion (Spontaneous)



Base: all queuing at ticket office and aware of TVMs (738)

Reasons for not using TVMs varies somewhat by type of customer and a breakdown of responses appears in Chart 6 below. The key differences, however, are as follows:

- Commuters (and season ticket holders) are the most likely to be of the view that their tickets are not available from TVMs.
- Older customers are the most likely to claim they are uncomfortable with machines generally or are unsure how to use TVMs.
- Leisure customers are the most likely to say they need to speak to somebody
- Leisure customers are also the most likely to say they 'didn't think of it', suggesting that the TVM is rather less of a default option for this group, when compared with business travellers and commuters.

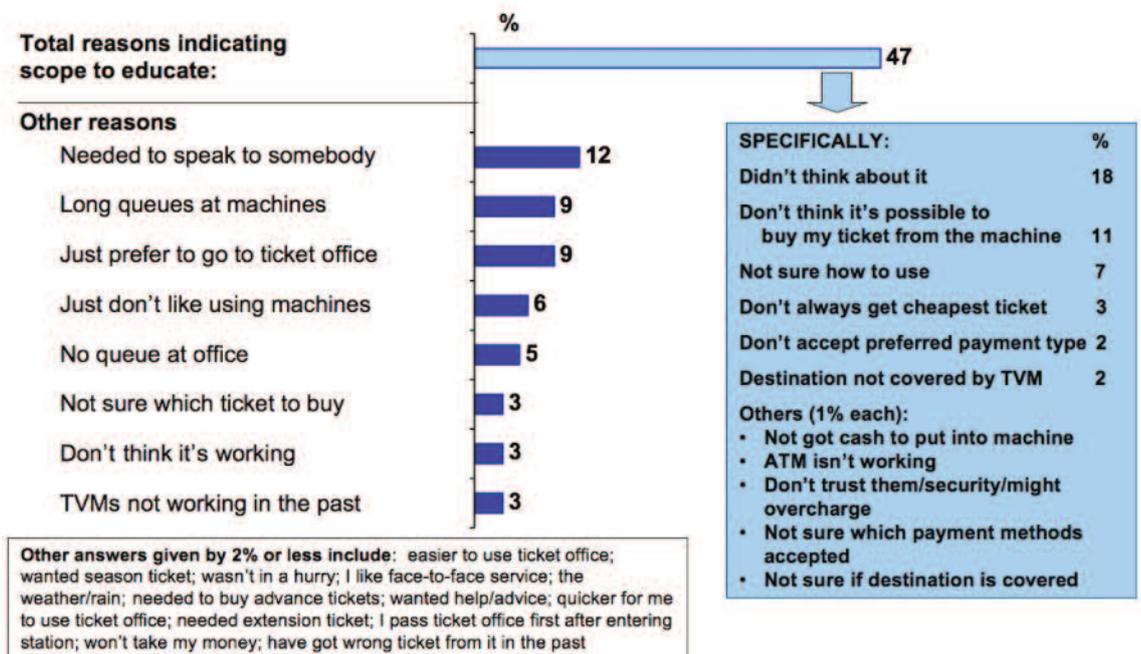
**Chart 6: Barriers to TVM Usage - Detail**

	16-24 %	25-44 %	45-64 %	65+ %	Commute %	Business %	Leisure %
Didn't think about it	24	15	18	24	10	17	22
Need to speak to someone	10	13	9	12	6	4	13
Ticket not available	6	17	6	2	22	13	10
Long queues	10	10	9	-	11	26	9
Prefer ticket office	12	6	11	12	17	4	13
Don't know how to use	8	4	12	15	4	4	7
Don't like machines	4	4	8	20	6	4	5
Need to use travelcard	8	3	6	10	4	4	5
No queues at ticket office	5	5	5	7	2	-	6

Base: all queuing at ticket office and aware of TVMs (738)

Overall, just under half gave a reason which may indicate a need to educate customers further, either in terms of making TVMs more top of mind generally, or about specific details of their operation and the services which they provide:

**Chart 7: Reasons For Not Using on This Occasion (Spontaneous) - Scope to Educate Customers Further**

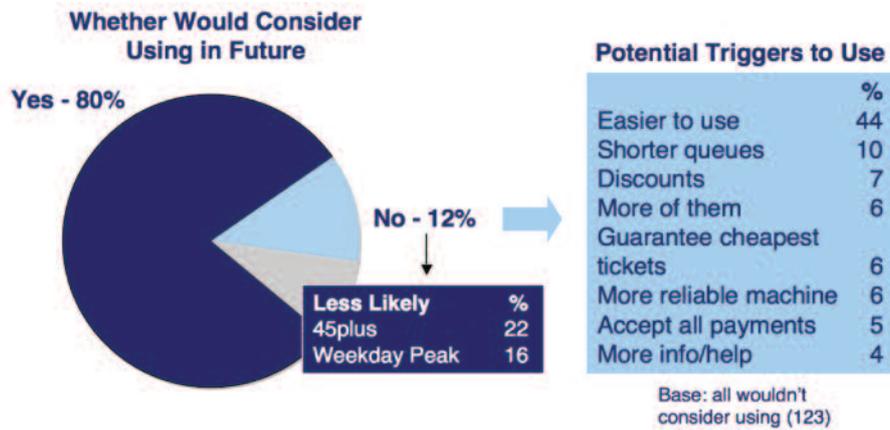


Base: all queuing at ticket office and aware of TVMs (738)

### 3.2.3 Willingness to Use Ticket Machines in Future

Non-use of TVMs can only be partly explained by active rejection of them: eight in 10 overall would consider using them in future (though over-45s are a little more reticent).

**Chart 8: Future Use of Ticket Machines**



Those who would not consider using TVMs often have a perception that they are not easy enough to use. Beyond this customers claim that they might consider using them if queues were shorter, there were more of them or if discounts and price guarantees were available.

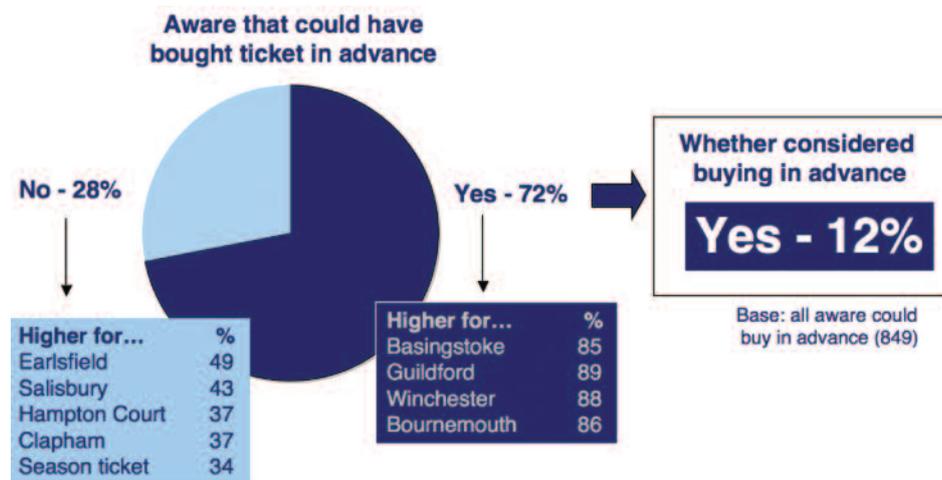
### 3.3 Advance Purchase

#### 3.3.1 Awareness and Consideration of Advance Purchase

Not buying in advance cannot generally be explained by a lack of awareness that this is possible. Nevertheless, just over a quarter who could in fact have bought in advance do not know that this is the case. Awareness of advance purchase availability tends to be lower at stations in or near London and amongst those who are buying season tickets.

Among those who are aware that they could in theory have bought their ticket in advance, only 12% actually considered doing so.

**Chart 9: Awareness and Consideration of Advance Purchase**



Base: all respondents with tickets available in advance (1,186)

Awareness that tickets can be bought in advance is broadly similar across different age groups, though rises slightly among under 25s. There is no difference in awareness between men and women, or among people waiting in each type of queue. However, those who are commuting to a regular place of work or study and – perhaps as a consequence – those waiting during the morning rush hour, are marginally less likely to know about their advance purchasing options.

<b>Table 3: Awareness of Advance Purchase - Detail</b>		
<i>Did you know that you could have bought your ticket in advance on the telephone or on the internet?</i>		
		<b>% (Yes)</b>
<b>Age</b>	65+	67
	45-64	70
	25-44	71
	16-24	76
<b>Gender</b>	Men	72
	Women	71
<b>Queue</b>	Ticket office queue	71
	TVM queue	72
<b>Journey purpose</b>	Business	73
	Leisure	72
	Commuters	67
<b>Time</b>	Weekday off-peak	78
	Weekday PM peak	75
	Weekend	70
	Weekday AM peak	68

Base: all buying tickets which could have been bought in advance (1,186)  
 NB: small bases for 65+ (49) and business travellers (37)

Actual consideration of advance purchase (among those who are aware) is highest among younger customers – but still fewer than one in five fall into this category. It is lowest at the weekend, when only one in 10 (equating to 6% of all weekend queuers) consider it.

<b>Table 4: Consideration of Advance Purchase - Detail</b>			
<i>Did you consider buying this ticket in advance either by telephone or on the internet?</i>			
		<b>YES</b>	
		<b>Base <u>all</u> <u>aware</u> they could have bought in advance %</b>	<b>Base all with tickets which <u>could</u> be bought in advance %</b>
<b>Age</b>	65+	12	8
	45-64	11	8
	25-44	10	7
	16-24	17	13
<b>Gender</b>	Men	12	8
	Women	13	9
<b>Queue</b>	Ticket office queue	13	9
	TVM queue	10	7
<b>Journey purpose</b>	Business	19	14
	Leisure	12	11
	Commuters	16	9
<b>Time</b>	Weekday PM peak	16	12
	Weekday off-peak	15	12
	Weekday AM peak	13	9
	Weekend	9	6

Base: all aware they could have bought tickets in advance (849); all buying tickets which could have been bought in advance (1,186)

NB: small bases for 65+ (33/49) and business travellers (27/37)

### 3.3.2 Reasons for Not Buying In Advance

Typical reasons for not buying tickets in advance suggest a lack of specific motivation to do so rather than an active rejection of the possibility in future. There will be little scope to influence the behaviour of those who claim they had no time to buy their ticket in advance, or did not actually plan their journey before the day of travel, or actively prefer a face-to-face interaction. Nevertheless, one in five say they simply 'didn't think about it', and one in 10 'didn't get round to it', suggesting that there is some scope to improve top-of-mind awareness of advance purchase generally.

**Chart 10: Barriers to Advance Purchase (Spontaneous)**



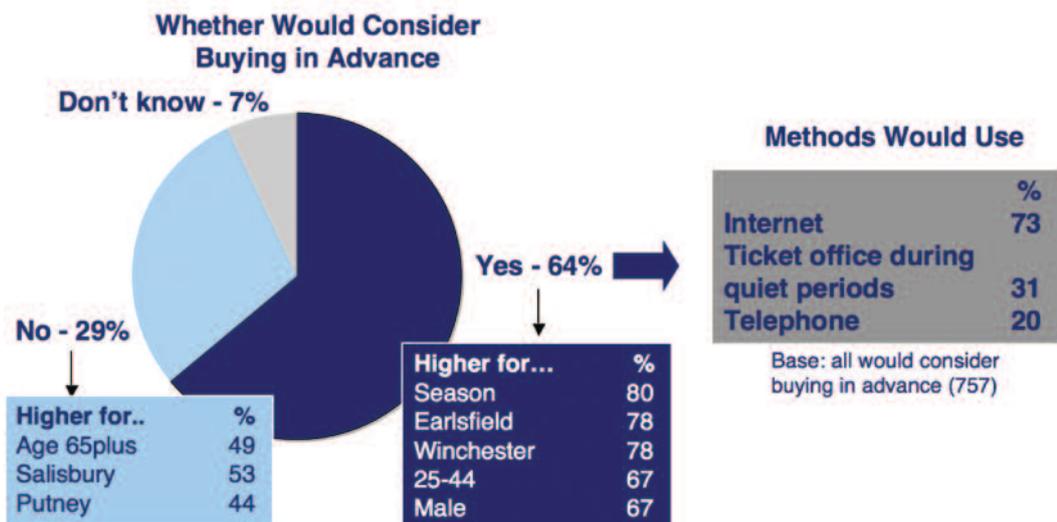
Base: all aware they could buy in advance (849)

**3.3.3 Willingness to Consider Advance Purchase in Future**

Slightly under two-thirds would consider buying in advance in future – rising marginally among under 45s (67%) and amongst those buying season tickets (80%). The internet is seen as the most natural way to do this although there is also some interest in buying from ticket offices during quiet periods or buying on the telephone.

Least interested in buying tickets in advance are those aged 65 plus.

**Chart 11: Future Consideration of Advance Purchase**



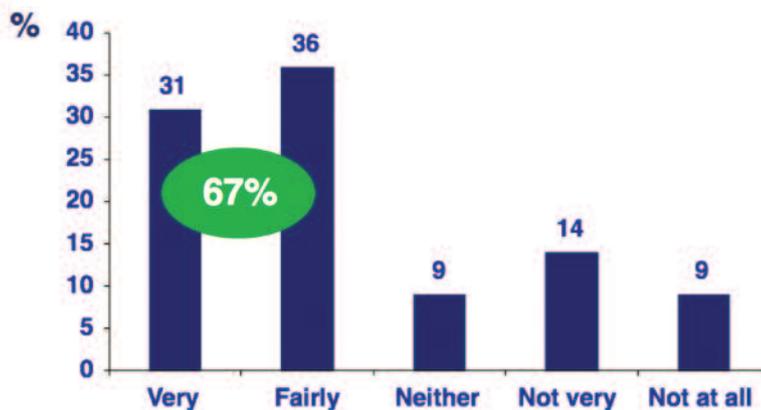
Base: all respondents with tickets available in advance (1,186)

### 3.3.4 Pre-paid Tickets for Collection

Two-thirds are very or fairly interested in using the Pre-paid Ticket collection service from ticket machines if they become available in future.

#### Chart 12: Interest in Pre-paid Ticket Collection

*How interested would you be in using a Pre-paid Ticket Collection service which involved purchase of tickets in advance by telephone or internet and collection of the tickets from a ticket machine, using a reference number and the card that you paid with, at the station?*



Base: all (1,189)

Interest in using the service is slightly higher among those interviewed during peak hours. It also tends to appeal more to younger customers (under 45s – 72% very or fairly interested).

While interest levels differ between stations the majority in all locations, with the exception of Salisbury at 43%, are interested in the service.

<b>Table 5: Interest in Pre-paid Ticket Collection Service - Detail</b>	
	<b>Very/fairly interested</b>
	<b>%</b>
<b>65+</b>	31
<b>45-64</b>	58
<b>25-44</b>	72
<b>16-24</b>	72
<b>First*</b>	83
<b>Standard</b>	69
<b>Peak</b>	71
<b>Off-peak</b>	64
<b>Season tickets</b>	78
<b>Men</b>	68
<b>Women</b>	66
<b>Winchester</b>	78
<b>Guildford</b>	76
<b>Earlsfield</b>	75
<b>Clapham</b>	74
<b>Bournemouth</b>	74
<b>Waterloo</b>	64
<b>Walton on Thames</b>	63
<b>Putney</b>	63
<b>Basingstoke</b>	63
<b>Hampton Court</b>	62
<b>Salisbury</b>	43

Base: all (1,189)

NB very small base for First Class tickets (12)

## 4. Conclusions & Recommendations

- There is some evidence of an opportunity to increase both use of TVMs and advance purchase<sup>5</sup> (by internet in particular), while the idea of pre-paid ticket collection service from ticket machines appeals to a majority. However these products are not available from ticket machines, e.g. extensions, railcards, tickets for future travel (excluding next-day tickets)<sup>6</sup>, seat reservations etc.
- For many customers ticket offices are still the default method for purchasing tickets. There is little active objection to using TVMs in theory, but any doubts about the details of what tickets are available or the functionality of the machines mean people revert to the 'tried and tested' ticket office. Beyond this, however, there is clearly some scope to increase top-of-mind awareness and consideration of TVMs.
- Communications to this end should also aim to counter specific minority concerns about ease of use, ticket range, reliability, speed, range of payment methods available.
- In the absence of staff to advise, passengers using ticket machines may be unfamiliar with the validity of ticket types, as a result of which they may end up choosing the wrong ticket, e.g. either buy the cheapest or the most expensive ticket and risk paying a penalty fine or switch to an alternative mode of transport. To avoid this, the ticket machine must give details of the ticket validity matching the passenger's journey.
- Older customers in particular may be alienated by a wider introduction of TVMs.
- Existing barriers to advance purchase might be more difficult to counter. Many queuing customers could not have bought their tickets in advance (due to the immediacy of their journey in relation to when the decision to travel was made) or cannot see any reason to do so. Nevertheless, there is still clearly a minority for whom advance purchase is not top-of-mind but would still have been both practical and advantageous. It

---

<sup>5</sup> Refers to buying ticket before the day of travel rather than the train-specific cut-price ticket types

<sup>6</sup> Next-day tickets can now be bought from ticket machines

would make sense therefore for communications to emphasise the ease of advance purchase, the convenience (with pre-paid ticket collection service from ticket machines), access to sales people on the telephone to discuss options, the speed of the process and delivery, as well as advantageous pricing.

- This research found that the majority of passengers waiting to buy tickets from the ticket office could have bought the same fare from a ticket machine and with a shorter wait or no wait at all. Further qualitative research to understand measures which could be taken to persuade more passengers to use ticket machines is required or to understand what alternative passengers would choose if a ticket office was not available.

## 5. Appendix – Questionnaire Used

**PASSENGER FOCUS/SOUTH WEST TRAINS  
 QUESTIONNAIRE (FINAL)**

Job Number				Serial Number			Card
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)
1	1	7	3				

### INTRODUCTION AND SCREENING

Good morning/afternoon/evening. My name is.... from Outlook Research. We are conducting some research about train tickets. May I ask you a few questions - it will only take a few minutes

**Reassure respondent that we are not selling anything and that all personal information will be treated in strictest confidence, etc**

QA. Can I just check, do you work in any of the following professions or industries?

- Marketing or advertising
- Market research
- Journalism
- Public transport

**Thank and close if any of the above – others continue**

Q1. Are you queuing to buy a train ticket?

- Yes.....
- No .....

**Continue  
Close**

Q2. Are you buying a ticket for travel today or is it for some time in the future?

- Today.....continue
- Future ..... skip to Q4

(09)  
1  
2

**Ask if traveling today – others skip to Q4**

Q3. How long do you have before your train leaves?

- Less than 10 mins.....
- 10-15 mins .....
- 16-30 mins .....
- 31-60 mins .....
- More than an hour .....
- Don't know .....

(10)  
1  
2  
3  
4  
5  
6

Q4.	Which of the following best describes the type of journey you are buying a ticket for today? <b>SHOWCARD – JOURNEY TYPES</b>	(11)
	One way – traveling today .....	1
	One way – not traveling today .....	2
	Return journey – traveling out and returning today .....	3
	Return journey – traveling out today and returning in the future .....	4
	Return journey – traveling out and returning in the future.....	5
	Season ticket (weekly, monthly, annual).....	6

Q4a. And which of the following types of ticket are you buying? Please choose as many as apply. **MULTICODE OK**

	<b>SHOWCARD – TICKET TYPES</b>	(12)
	Standard Class .....	1
	First Class .....	2
	Peak time travel (07.00 to 10.00 or 16.00 to 19.00 weekdays)..	3
	Off peak travel (other times) .....	4
	Disabled persons discount ticket .....	5
	Railcard (Family, Young Persons, Senior etc.) .....	6
	Ticket for travel in the future (i.e. not today) .....	7
	<b>Tickets NOT available in advance</b>	
	Excess tickets – e.g. beyond Travelcard boundary.....	8
	Group ticket or family ticket .....	9
	International ticket .....	0
	Discount job seekers ticket/'New Deal' ticket.....	x

**If ticket can't be purchased in advance (Q4a codes 8/9/0/X/) skip to routing at Q10 – others continue**

Q5.	Did you know that you could have bought your ticket in advance on the telephone or on the internet?	(13)
	Yes.....continue	1
	No ..... skip to Q8	2
Q6.	And did you consider buying this ticket in advance either by telephone or on the internet?	(14)
	Yes.....	1
	No .....	2

Q7. Why didn't you buy your ticket in advance? <b>Do not prompt – probe to pre codes</b>	(15)
Didn't think about it .....	1
Didn't have time .....	2
Just didn't get round to it .....	3
Not sure where to buy it from.....	4
Not sure which ticket to buy .....	5
Don't have internet access .....	6
Prefer not to buy things on the telephone .....	7
Prefer not to buy things on the internet.....	8
Prefer to talk to someone face to face .....	9
Only just decided to travel .....	0
Didn't think it was available in advance.....	x
Other (write in)_____	v
<hr/>	
Q8. In the future, if you were buying tickets similar to the ones you are getting today, would you consider buying those in advance?	(16)
Yes..... continue	1
No ..... skip to Q10	2
Don't know ..... skip to Q10	3
<b>Continue if Yes at Q8 – others to routing at Q10</b>	
Q9. Which of these methods would you consider using to buy tickets in advance?	(17)
Telephone .....	1
Internet.....	2
At the ticket office during quiet periods ...	3
<b>Ticket Office Queue Only – Ticket Machine Queue Skip to Q15</b>	
Q10. Are you aware of the ticket machines at this station?	(18)
Yes..... continue	1
No ..... skip to Q13	2
<b>Continue if aware – others go to Q13</b>	
Q11. Have you ever used these ticket machines or others like them, in the past?	(19)
Yes.....	1
No .....	2
Not sure .....	3

Q12. Why didn't you use them on this occasion?	(20)
Didn't think about it .....	1
Not sure which ticket to buy .....	2
Need to speak to someone .....	3
Not sure how to use them/difficult.....	4
Long queues .....	5
Don't always get the cheapest ticket.....	6
Need to use a travelcard/pass/discount.....	7
Destination not covered by machine.....	8
Not sure if destination is covered.....	9
Just don't like using machines .....	0
Not sure which payment methods accepted .....	x
Preferred payment method not accepted.....	v
	(21)
Don't think it's possible to buy my ticket from the machine .....	1
Just prefer to go to the ticket office .....	2
Don't think it's working .....	3
Other (write in)_____	4

**Ask All In Ticket Office Queue**

Q13. Would you consider using ticket machines in the future?	(22)
Yes..... skip to Q15	1
No .....	2
Not sure .....	3

**Continue if no or don't know at Q13 - others skip to Q15**

Q14. What might encourage you to use them in the future?	(23)
<b>Do not prompt – probe to pre codes</b>	
Easier to use .....	1
More of them .....	2
Shorter queues .....	3
Offered more ticket types .....	4
Able to use travelcards/passes/discounts.....	5
Guarantee the cheapest tickets .....	6
If they accepted all/other payment methods .....	7
Discounts .....	8
Other (write in)_____	9

**Ask All**

Q15. How interested would you be in using a Fast Ticket service which involved purchase of tickets in advance by telephone or internet and collection of the tickets from a Fast Ticket machine, using a reference number and the card that you paid with, at the station?		
		(24)
Very interested.....		1
Fairly interested .....		2
Neither interested nor uninterested		3
Not very interested.....		4
Not at all interested .....		5
Don't know .....		6
Q16. What is the main purpose of your journey?		
Daily commute to or from work or study.....		7
Less regular commute to or from work or study .....		8
On company business (or own if self employed) .....		9
On personal business (job interview, dentist, etc.).....		0
Visiting friends or relatives .....		x
Other leisure trip .....		v

**Classification**

**Showcard**

C1. Which of these age ranges do you fit into?

- |                |      |
|----------------|------|
|                | (25) |
| A. 16-24 ..... | 1    |
| B. 25-34 ..... | 2    |
| C. 35-44 ..... | 3    |
| D. 45-54 ..... | 4    |
| E. 55-64 ..... | 5    |
| F. 65+ .....   | 6    |
| Refused .....  | 7    |

NB: IF RESPONDENT REFUSES, CODE 'REFUSED' AND ALSO CODE YOUR ESTIMATE OF THEIR AGE

**ASK FOR ADDRESS AND PHONE NUMBER – EXPLAIN THAT THIS IS FOR QUALITY BACK-CHECKING ONLY**

Name .....

Address .....

.....

**Tel no (including area code** .....

C6. Code respondent gender

- |              |      |
|--------------|------|
|              | (26) |
| Male .....   | 1    |
| Female ..... | 2    |

C7. Code location

- |                     |      |                        |      |
|---------------------|------|------------------------|------|
|                     | (27) |                        | (27) |
| Earlsfield .....    | 1    | Walton on Thames ..... | 7    |
| Basingstoke .....   | 2    | Winchester .....       | 8    |
| Hampton Court ..... | 3    | Bournemouth .....      | 9    |
| Guildford .....     | 4    | Putney .....           | 0    |
| Waterloo .....      | 5    | Clapham .....          | x    |
| Salisbury .....     | 6    |                        |      |

C8. Time of interview

- |                      |      |
|----------------------|------|
|                      | (28) |
| 07.00 to 10.00 ..... | 1    |
| 10.01 to 13.00 ..... | 2    |
| 13.01 to 16.00 ..... | 3    |
| 16.01 to 19.00 ..... | 4    |

C9. Day of interview	(29)
Monday.....	1
Tuesday.....	2
Friday.....	3
Saturday.....	4
Sunday.....	5
C10. Queuing conditions	(30)
Extremely busy.....	1
Fairly busy.....	2
Fairly quiet.....	3
Extremely quiet.....	4
C11. Interview type	(31)
Ticket office queue.....	1
Ticket office queue – served by staff with hand held device.....	2
Ticket machine queue.....	3
C12. TVM is...	(32)
Inside station.....	1
Outside but under shelter.....	2
Outside not sheltered.....	3
C13. Weather...	(33)
Raining.....	1
Cloudy but no rain.....	2
Clear.....	3

I confirm that this interview was administered according to the MRS Code of Conduct:

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Interviewer**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Date**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Signature**

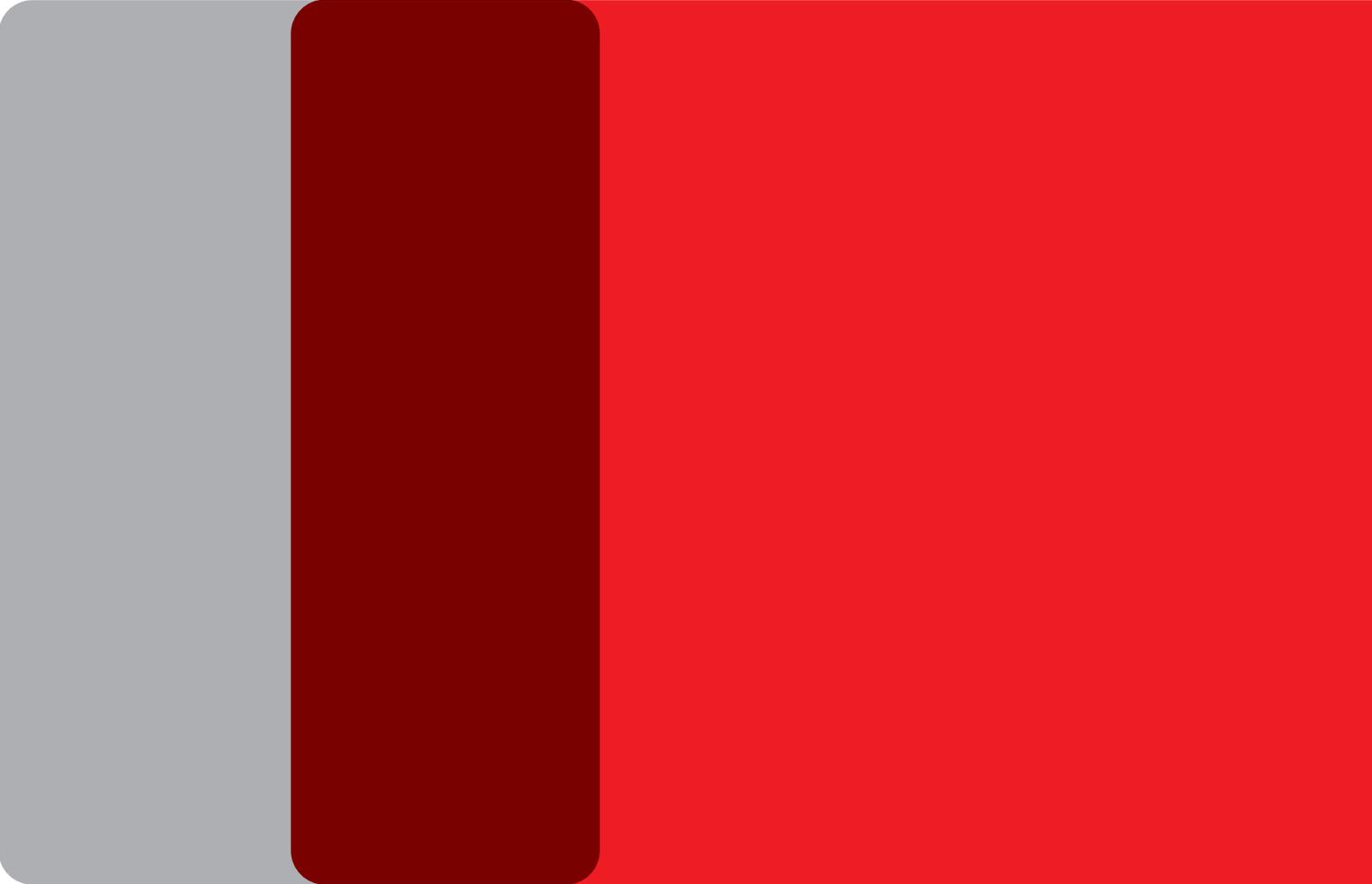
A large rectangular area with rounded corners, containing 25 horizontal lines for writing.

A large, vertically oriented rectangular area with rounded corners, containing 25 horizontal lines for writing. The lines are evenly spaced and extend across most of the width of the page.

Lined writing area with 20 horizontal lines.

A large rectangular area with rounded corners, containing 25 horizontal lines for writing.

A large rectangular area with rounded corners, containing 25 horizontal lines for writing.



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