

# Introduction to UTMC

The UK Department for Transport (DfT) conceived the Urban Traffic Management and Control (UTMC) programme to provide cost-effective tools and solutions for urban traffic control that could not be achieved through traditional isolated Urban Traffic Control (UTC) systems.

This has been achieved by specifying interface standards between equipment and software applications that enable offerings from different suppliers to work together or 'interoperate'.

This means that Purchasers are not fixed to one supplier for all of the various elements of a UTMC system. For example, a local authority can now choose parking guidance signs from one supplier, car park occupancy counting equipment from another and then get a common database and applications to control the signs and car parks from a third supplier.



This brings several benefits to Purchasers.

Firstly, Purchasers no longer have to procure (or even specify) the full extent of the system at the outset. Provided they stick to the UTMC standard, Purchasers can start with a Common Database (at the installation) and then add individual car parks, variable message signs (VMS) and other equipment as and when required. In this way UTMC Systems can evolve as Purchasers gain experience and their requirements change.

The second major benefit to Purchasers is the introduction of competition in the supply of traffic management solutions. A Local Authority which has an existing Common Database and, perhaps, an old car park guidance system and now wants to add some car park count data is no longer forced to go back to the original supplier of their car park system. Any car park occupancy counter which complies with the current version of the UTMC standard will connect to the Authority's existing UTMC Common Database.

A third benefit is that UTMC uses non-proprietary communications links. In the old days suppliers would keep their communications protocols private thereby preventing interoperability and effectively 'locking-in' their customers. UTMC uses IP communications - the same network protocols used by just about every other industry. This means that Authorities can more readily recruit personnel who understand UTMC communications making UTMC networks easier to maintain and enhance.

IDT have played a leading role in the development of the UTMC technical specifications and have a range of products which are fully compliant. If you would like further information please do not hesitate to contact us.