Control center

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2 Overview

2.1 What is a control centre?

What happens when the driver of a bus or train is suddenly faced with special circumstances? Be it technical problems with their own vehicle, a road closure, a missing replacement, even an accident? In most cases, the delicate gears of interlocking timetables run the risk of being disrupted - and in addition, more or less extensive measures have to be taken. What is the best solution when a vehicle has to stop running completely because it can no longer safely carry passengers? Does a replacement vehicle have to be sent? Does an additional driver have to be brought in from standby? And in the rail-bound sector, there is also the whole coordination of which vehicle should/can drive on which track.

Of course, these decisions and tasks are not left to the drivers, as they would have to coordinate in a complicated way and, above all, would hardly be able to get an overview. Not to mention radio and telephone, which have to be used extensively in such situations.

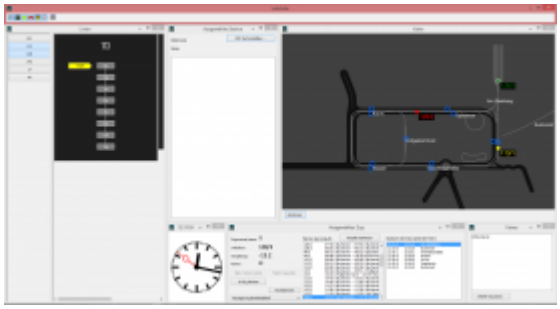
A control centre is therefore - to put it simply - a central facility that can establish contact with all drivers, but also with all other employees or external facilities, can always obtain an extensive and, if necessary, detailed overview by means of appropriate tools, and ultimately bears the responsibility for easing the situation as best as possible by making the right decisions.

2.2 The LOTUS Control Centre

In general, several people can operate the control centre interface. The LOTUS control centre can be used by every player who is assigned the role "dispatcher" at the start, as well as by the game leader. Every player who is explicitly assigned this role does not have his own vehicle, but can still move around the map for observation (corresponds to the F4 view). If the game leader sorts himself in as a driver, he naturally receives his own vehicle and can thus be the only player to have a vehicle and operate the control centre at the same time.

The control centre can be opened in the Alt menu via the corresponding button:

A series of windows will then appear, which in their entirety represent the control centre:



The central element is the toolbar window at the top edge. It can be used to switch the individual windows on and off and as soon as the toolbar window is closed, all other control centre windows also close.

The arrangement and size of the windows is saved. However, if they are to be reset to "factory settings", this button must be clicked:

3 The specific windows

First of all, it should be mentioned that the windows interact with each other in a certain way, namely via the selected vehicle and the selected station. This "selection" can be set over several windows each and is also used by several windows.

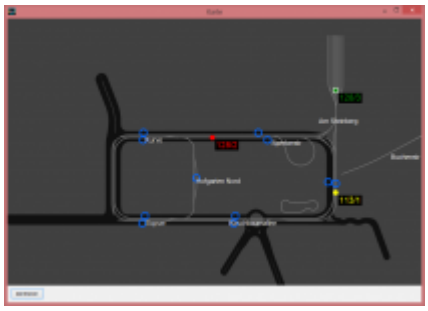
3.1 Line display

Any lines can be activated or deactivated here via the sidebar. The corresponding lines are then displayed as a beaded line. For this purpose, the individual trains/buses are displayed and coloured depending on whether they are on time (green), slightly delayed (yellow), significantly delayed (red) or early (magenta). If you point to a train with the mouse, its delay is shown in minutes. However, it is also possible that a train is shown in grey - in this case it is a "cancelled" train/bus, i.e. there is no vehicle on its route. It can still be selected, but it is not visible in the map display, but it is visible in the journey list of the station and possibly in the train window.

Trains located to the left of the bead line run "from top to bottom", trains located to the right run "from bottom to top". If the vehicles are located between two stations, the marker is placed in the middle, regardless of how close the vehicle is to the next station.

Trains and stations can be selected here so that they are selected as mentioned above. If a train/bus is selected, its border turns white.

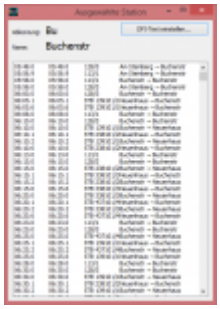
3.2 Map display



The map shows all streets and tracks as well as the station names, and the positions of the trains/buses are also shown on it, with the same journey coding as on the line display. Here, too, the selected train or bus is marked by a white border around the circle. The trains/buses can also be clicked here to select them.

The map can be moved by holding down the left mouse button and zoomed using the scroll wheel. "Centre" ensures that the entire map is displayed full screen.

3.3 Selected station

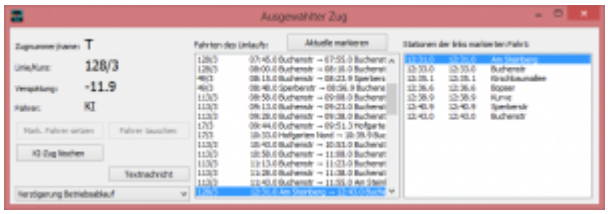


This window shows various information of the currently *selected* station:

- Name and abbreviation for overview
- The arrival and departure times at this stop are listed for all trips of all currently occupied trains (if the corresponding train passes this stop). The first column shows the arrival time, the second the departure time, followed by the train type and train number and/or line/course. The last column shows the start and destination of the journey.

  By double-clicking on a trip, it can be made the selected trip, e.g. to mark it on the map.
- The DFI text can be set. Many DFIs, e.g. the Daisy displays in Berlin's local transport system or the platform displays of Deutsche Bahn, are able to display an individual (running) text in addition to the normal train information. This can be set for each station using the button "Set DFI text...".

3.4 Selected train



In this window, various information about the selected train can be displayed and various functions are available.

At the top left, there is information on the train type, name/number (if available), line/course (if available), the current delay and the player driving the vehicle (alternatively "AI" if it is controlled by the AI, or "-" if there is no vehicle on the circuit).

In the middle is the list of all journeys that will be made by this train/circulation one after the other. By default, the current trip is highlighted. To the right of this is the list of stations of the journey, which always shows the stops of the journey that was marked in the previous list. Here, too, the current stop at which the train/bus is currently located is marked by default. With the button "Mark current" the described standard marking is set again on the basis of the actual position of the train.

There are a few more functions at the bottom left:

- "Set selected driver": Here the vehicle of the selected driver is assigned to the selected trip and the selected station. It is possible to keep the current driver, e.g. only to change the "position" within the timetable. However, if the driver changes, that round trip will immediately be served by two trains/buses with their drivers (or the driver and the AI). The round that was previously served by the selected driver is now "grey", i.e. unoccupied.
- "Swap driver": This function is an extended version of the function described above: A roundabout, a trip and a station are also selected first, then another driver and then with this function the selected driver is placed on the selected trip and vice versa automatically the "old" driver of the trip is placed on the "old" trip of the selected driver. Or in short: The drivers swap the rounds/courses with their vehicles, whereby the position within the timetable can still be changed.
- Delete AI train: If a round is played by both an AI train/bus and a player train/bus by "set marked driver", this can be used to delete the selected train and vehicle, provided it is driven by the AI.
- Text message: If the selected vehicle is suitably equipped, text messages can be sent to the driver on his train.
- Cause of delay: Among other things for the station announcements, a cause for the delay can be specified here. This information is independent of whether the train is delayed at all.

3.5 Driver overview

This is simply a list of the currently registered players. It is important to note that (currently) only those players are listed who have also been registered via the timetable. Players who are "free" to drive are not yet listed. This list can be used to select a driver, e.g. for scheduling. It is also possible to select the train/bus that is currently being driven by this player by clicking on "Select train".

3.6 Clock

A station clock, only genuine original with "commemorative second".