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# Introducing the parking ticket dial-a-shredder

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By JOHN CICHOWSKI  
THE ROAD WARRIOR

Getting a Manhattan parking ticket can be bitter medicine. Ask Bob Arold of Woodbridge, who used to make big donations to New York City's Parking Violations Bureau.

"I'd pay \$300 or \$400 a year," said Arold, who visits clients for a health care company. "I'd run in for a minute, and by the time I get back, I'd get a ticket."

Arold says his company rarely reimbursed him, so he looked for a bureaucracy-buster. He found his champion in a Paramus company, whose Web site, parkingticket.com, cut his contributions to the PVB in half.

"Why pay full price?" he asked, sounding like a Wal-Mart commercial.

The company claims it has helped people like Arold beat nearly \$200,000 in tickets in the past decade, and that pace probably began accelerating exponentially during Tuesday's afternoon rush hour.

That's when parkingticket.com instituted a system that allows customers to fight tickets instantly by using their cellphones.

At a Tuesday news conference in Manhattan's Plaza Hotel, a technology whiz-turned-entrepreneur explained how his high-tech system helps parkers overcome the bureaucracy.

Fair Lawn's Glen Bolofsky, a former accountant, said his system beats parking tickets about 70 percent of the time. That's not quite the equal of Perry Mason, but then again, Bolofsky isn't a lawyer either.

"Mostly, we take advantage of mistakes," said Bolofsky, 47.

Frequently, he explained, parking meter agents put the wrong make of a car on the ticket. Or the parking agent's name is not included. Or the meter is broken. Or, or ...

The computer program Bolofsky invented keeps track of all of the rules and potential mistakes that can be made. His program logs a ticket's details,

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compares them with city parking regulations, and traces factual errors. It then spits out a letter to the PVB which explains why the ticket should be dismissed.

"If you wait more than 75 days, the law says you can't appeal anymore, and penalties start building," he said. "A ticket [here] can cost as much as \$115."

Bolofsky performed a two-minute demonstration by punching up parkingticket.com's number - (888) NYC-PARK - on a speakerphone. At each prompt, he entered information, such as the ticket number, the type of violation, the defense, and a credit card number. By the time a client returns to his computer, he can find the information on parkingticket.com, along with a letter to the PVB outlining his defense.

The PVB will investigate the defense and dismiss the ticket by mail if it proves accurate, said retired police officer Frank Signorile. He wrote thousands of tickets during his career and now is a consultant for parkingticket.com.

Bolofsky charges half the price of the ticket if the PVB dismisses the case, and \$1 if it doesn't.

But instead of paying \$55, can't we write our own letter for the 37-cent price of a stamp?

"Go ahead," he said, "if you want to take the trouble to learn all the rules and you want to spend time fighting in court."



Some city officials say Bolofsky's system is unnecessary because the city will advise motorists about fighting tickets for free. Officially, New York takes the position that it does not want revenue it is not entitled to.

That could be true. The city issues 10 million tickets a year and takes in about \$400 million in ticket revenue. Then it gives a lot of it back when one-third of the tickets are dismissed. Fines for another one-third are reduced.

With a track record that weak, it seems as if PVB has been swallowing a lot of bitter medicine itself. It appears people have exploited its weaknesses long before Bolofsky.

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