

# ShuttleTrack Running Again Though Problems Remain

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STAFF REPORTER

ShuttleTrack, a service that is designed to show real-time locations of MIT vans from a Web site, is running again after having been out of service since at least last summer.

Ilia Mirkin G said he and Samuel N. Korb G began repairing the tracking system in late February. Testing of the Web site, available at <http://shuttletrack.mit.edu>, began in early April, and the site was released for "public consumption" about a week ago, he said.

Korb said that ShuttleTrack, which was originally an iCampus project, stopped operating because no one was responsible for maintaining the site after the creators graduated. iCampus, an alliance between Microsoft and MIT, provided \$30,000 for the ShuttleTrack

project in 2002.

## Repairing ShuttleTrack

Korb said he and Mirkin decided to fix ShuttleTrack because they use the Boston West Saferide daily and thought they could figure out how to repair the system.

They replaced the non-functional Global Positioning System tracking devices on the vans and then put in "about a month's effort in getting access to documentation, writing software, and fixing hardware," according to the "About" section of the Web site.

The code is available on the Web site, and suggestions for improving it are always welcome, Korb said. He said feedback to the Web site has been very positive, but he does not know how many people actually know it exists and is running again.

Mirkin said minor problems still remain to be fixed; for example, the GPS devices in two of the vans do not always respond, he said. However, because these vans are older 15-passenger vans and do not run as frequently as the other vans, this is not a major problem, he said.

Lawrence R. Brutti, Operations Manager of the Parking and Trans-



JOHN CLOUTIER—THE TECH

After an extended hiatus, the ShuttleTrack service is again online. However, not all routes are currently being tracked, and the page is still under development. The Parking and Transportation Office is continuing to upgrade its fleet of vans with larger and more heavy-duty vehicles as well.

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## More Planned for Site That Tracks Shuttles

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portation Office, said that he thinks it is great that ShuttleTrack is operating again. "It's about time," he said. He also praised Mirkin and Korb for repairing the Web site.

### Future of ShuttleTrack

Mirkin said that he would like to expand the "About" and "Help" sections of the Web site and also track shuttle stops. Users would be able to choose a location and find out which vans service that location. This would be especially useful in Cambridge, since more than

one van often stops at a location, he said.

Korb said that while he and Mirkin are currently in charge of the Web site, the Parking and Transportation Office will probably take over eventually. He is working with the Parking and Transportation Office to ensure that ShuttleTrack continues in the future, he said.

Brutti said he is meeting with representatives from the Information Services and Technology Department next week and that they are working together to take over responsibility of ShuttleTrack.