

And if not do you think either of these routes would get much ridership?

Jerry Martin

**I would turn your question around. Would it make sense to run a new train from Los Angeles to Denver? I doubt it. But does it make sense to bypass a major metro area that isn't that far away from existing trains either. The cheapest way to serve Denver from Southern California would be to run a section of the Southwest Chief to Denver. This is an old railroad practice which is almost like getting 2 trains for the price of one. Amtrak has eliminated most of the sections from its systems over the years. This makes life easier for their operations department and comes with the mistaken belief that they are saving money while losing revenue. Any study by Amtrak is skewed by their billing processes which if they do the study would say they needs more subsidy. Dr Adrian Herzog back in the 1980's developed what he called The Matrix Theory. It is largely based on the experiences of the airlines and the development of Hub and Spoke operations. If you fly a plane or run a train non-stop between 2 cities you have 1 market. If you add one stop that gives you 3 markets for this plane or train. If you have 4 lines going their different ways that's 4 markets. Have each of these 4 lines with 8 terminals share a 9th stop as a central hub you now serve 32 markets with transfers. Running a section to a train increases the number of markets that a train has. The train with the most ridership on Amtrak is the Empire Builder. It is one of the few trains left with a section from Spokane to Portland while the rest of the trains goes on to Seattle. Below I copied a list of what Dr Herzog was working on to create a viable and self-supporting rail passenger system in this county. This is just for the route of the Southwest Chief. It looks like 5 trains but its trunk is the existing Southwest Chief and these other trains are sections or branches of the trunk train.**

#### **Southwest Transcontinental Corridor**

**Southwest Chief/Capitol Limited** Los Angeles, Albuquerque, Kansas City, Chicago, Pittsburgh, Washington DC, Newport News

**San Francisco Chief** San Jose, Oakland, Bakersfield, Albuquerque, Kansas City, St. Louis, Chicago

**Grand Canyon Limited** Los Angeles, Albuquerque, Denver

**Zia** Denver, Albuquerque, Las Cruces, El Paso

**El Capitan** Chicago, Kansas City, Flagstaff, Phoenix, Tucson

**Dr Herzog who was a Physics Professor created a computer simulation program to predict rail ridership and revenue back in the mid 1980's. He calibrated his program by recreating the ridership of the Southwest Chief. Once the computer projections matched real ridership he felt he had an accurate simulation. From that he experimented with different services until he got the most ridership. The key is what Adrian called The Matrix Theory. It boils down to what the airlines did which was serve the most markets at the lowest costs using the least amount of equipment or overhead. Expanding long distance passenger rail service this way will increase revenues faster than costs and with a large enough service make the entire system profitable.**

**Opinions expressed in this newsletter are those of the authors and not necessarily those of the Rail Passenger Association of California.**

**The RailPAC Mission:** Passenger Rail advocacy, Publications...both print and electronic, Representation at regional meetings, and Rail education.

**Join us!** More memberships increase our strength in presenting the case for rail to policymakers at all levels!

**You can send your comments to me at [nbraymer@railpac.org](mailto:nbraymer@railpac.org)**

**For those who would like an additional copy of the eNewsletter with plain text (minus photos and graphics) just email me at [nbraymer@railpac.org](mailto:nbraymer@railpac.org) with**

**your name and email address. NB**

**If you are not a member of RailPAC go to <http://www.railpac.org/membership/> to get information about RailPAC and a **FREE** copy of our regular newsletter .**

For information about RailPAC, contact the Membership Office

Write:

Rail Passenger Association of California

1017 L Street, PMB-217

Sacramento, CA95814-3805

Email us at [info@railpac.org](mailto:info@railpac.org)

Call at **(415) 7-TRACK-2**  
(415) 787-2252

[Unsubscribe](#) from this list.

Copyright (C)Rail Passenger Association of California (RailPAC) All rights reserved.

[Forward](#) this email to a friend

[Update your profile](#)

The MailChimp logo is displayed in a light blue rounded rectangular box. The text "MailChimp" is written in a dark blue, cursive script font.