



Feedback system for public transportation via smartphone app und social media

A project within the program iv2splus - 4th tender of the program line ways2go

Did the tram leave late? Was there chewing gum on the seat in the bus? Was the personnel nice? These are reasons for passengers to share positive and negative experiences in public transport with the provider. So far the feedback process has been laborious and unsatisfying for all parties concerned: public transport providers only rarely find out what they could improve and passengers spend much time on sharing, but are not guaranteed success if their request has met interest.

The project “**Öffi Feedback App**” aims at improving the quality of public transport and, thus, winning new customers and retaining old ones. This goal is achieved by a comprehensive optimisation of feedback process which both, public transport providers and passengers, profit from. Apart from the experimental development of the technologically modular single components of the Öffi Feedback system, the experimental development consists of the low threshold and iterative integration of passengers and public transport providers – already at the conception and development phase of the system. Empirical research in the Living Lab make sure that the development of the Öffi Feedback system is done according to market requirements and encourages involvement of all parties concerned.

The project focussed on the prototype development of three modules:

Based on the identified needs and requirements of the passengers and public transport providers, a **smartphone app** was developed with which the passengers can easily and instantaneously give feedback on their experiences in the public transport. The public transport provider, thus, receives valid information. At the same time, the passengers can follow via the app how the public transport provider reacts and what happens to their own feedback.

A lot of feedback by passengers is not given to the company directly but communicated via social media (Facebook, twitter, blogs, etc.) and thus reach a wide part of the public. This is the reason for why, together with the app, the public transport providers receive a tailored **social media monitor** with which they can react proactively to messages. As a third module, a **ticketing system** was developed within the project which integrates the new feedback channels – app and social media monitor. The feedback received is managed in a clear way, and the public transport provider can react quickly and easily to customer requests. The interfaces between the three single components were developed to be as flexible as possible; if a customer complaint service has already been established, it can easily be connected.

In field test lasting five weeks, the Öffi Feedback system was tested by the Mürztaler Verkehrsgesellschaft (MVG) in Kapfenberg – Bruck/Mur – Leoben with regard to its serviceability, functionality, acceptance by the passengers etc. The Öffi Feedback system was implemented well as there were no severe technical problems during this test and the vast majority of passengers asked evaluated the Öffi-Feedback app very positively. Many respondents – especially younger passengers, who are the majority of public transport customers – said that, compared to the traditional feedback channels (e.g. letter, telephone, standard form, e-mail), the Öffi Feedback app was a suitable and best possibility to give feedback. Considering a comprehensive complaint management, traditional feedback channels should not be replaced but supplemented. For a successful customer service, it is also important that passengers expect quick and personally formulated replies but no standard phrases. Only when these requirements are fulfilled, will the customers feel taken seriously.

During the test, the Öffi Feedback system ideally fulfilled the practice oriented requirements by MVG as a mid-sized transport service provider. The expansion of the existing service with the Öffi Feedback system aroused interest of the population as well as the employees and people responsible of the MVG.

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