

# Ticketer



## Unlock the Potential of Transport Data

*“The transport sector creates incredible amounts of data, but as an industry we’re not making the most of it. Through analytics and insights, data can help us improve decision making and operational efficiencies, as well as provide better value for customers,” says Andy Monshaw, Ticketer Group CEO.*



The transport sector produces a phenomenal amount of data and yet uses so little of it to its own advantage – and to that of its customers.

If you look at operators alone, there’s so much information to work with. They can record the number of tickets sold, the amount of people on a bus at any given time and the

condition of vehicles, to name but a few.

The transport industry could, and should, be doing so much more with this information. Just think about the last 18 months. During the pandemic, authorities allocated a lot of money to public transport to ensure that essential workers could move about. However, they had





to do this with only a sliver of the information needed to make the most effective decisions.

The raw data the industry is sitting on can be analysed and turned into valuable insights to help it deliver better value for customers, improve operational efficiency and support better decision making.

Clearly there's a gap to be closed, but gradual change is happening as operators and authorities come to understand the value this data holds.

## The Need to Innovate

We need to innovate to stay relevant, and data is key to driving the kinds of bus services passengers' desire.

Passengers want to be well informed and in control of their entire journey – from door to door – and a wide range of technology solutions are starting to revolutionise the operation of buses in ways that responds to these customer needs.

Many trends were accelerated due to the pandemic, for example touch-free travel through technologies such as contactless payments and tap on/tap off readers. The benefit of the latter has been that operators and authorities can now see passengers' exact journeys and travel patterns, which can help improve capacity management, and planning more efficient and optimal routes.

The addition of passenger counting technology has also been of great benefit to operators since the arrival of Covid-19, as this simple enhancement allows drivers to record passengers alighting a vehicle, and when combined with ticket data, provides full visibility of

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on-board passenger levels. With this information, drivers can more easily ensure passenger safety by staying under Covid-friendly capacity thresholds.

The need to become more adaptable and dynamic helped the sector start to realise the benefits of capitalising on its data sources, particularly as it continues on its journey to digital transformation.

As we move past the pandemic, we're seeing more and more opportunities. Operators are turning to data analytics to better understand customer journeys and optimise route planning, while passengers can use the information gathered to help plan their rides. This might be checking the time of, or space on an upcoming bus, plan ahead based on quiet times, or ensuring there's available space in the disabled area if travelling by wheelchair.

One of the most exciting opportunities is around demand-responsive transport (DRT). This is the ability to run services that don't operate to a specific timetable or route, but rather to flexible passenger demand. This will revolutionise public transport, better connect rural and urban areas and make public transport easier and more accessible than ever before.

Data plays a key role in driving DRT, as real-time data will help multimodal and intermodal journeys become easier. We're delighted to be at the forefront of this area, as Ticketer recently partnered with Via to provide a seamless integrated ticketing offering that allows passengers to purchase a single ticket for use on both conventional bus and DRT services within the same public transport network. With journeys

booked via a simple-to-use app, DRT becomes more accessible and customer-friendly, which will help drive uptake.

Transparency and sharing are key to successful data-driven transport networks.

Integrating with Via's flexible DRT solutions is just the start of our journey towards creating an industry framework that enables partners to integrate and deliver an improved passenger experience.

But we have a lot of work to do. Many operators don't yet have the technology in place to source the necessary information to create insights, for example. However, we are seeing more authorities coming forward to help operators deploy the technology required to be able to deliver this information, such as tap on/tap off readers and passenger counting solutions.

Another issue is the lack and cost of data analysts. It's great to have the data, but if you're unable to easily analyse the information you have, what use does it bring? The skills within the industry simply aren't there at the moment, but there is a different solution. By adding an additional application programming interface (API) layer to your technology, which enables different applications to 'talk' to each other, you can let AI and big data analytics do the work for you.

In creating a central data repository able to scale to the volumes of data available in the sector, storing and cleansing data, and making it available for mass data aggregation and analytics in a secure way, it will become possible to connect the dots and allow access to invaluable

insights. The sector as a whole will flourish by providing passengers with seamless public transport services that will not only benefit company bottom lines, but also sustainability objectives.

For this to become a reality, we need to break down silos, in addition to improving data governance and legislation. This is something we as an industry are currently getting to grips with through improved communication and collaboration, and the future is looking positive.

Let's innovate, collaborate and communicate!

Data insights and analytics provide a huge opportunity for the public transport sector to update and reinvest itself, providing new revenue streams, efficiencies and services that will see customers park up their cars and return to public transport.

The industry is heading in one very clear direction, and those that don't start their data journey soon are at risk of being left behind. It's time to innovate, collaborate and communicate – together we can develop data-driven transport networks optimised to provide the best service for customers.

For more information please call (+44) 020 3195 8800 or email [info@ticketer.co.uk](mailto:info@ticketer.co.uk).

**You can also contact us by using the QR code opposite.**



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