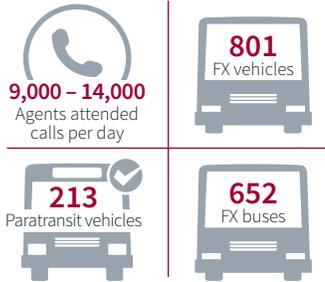




HOW DART DECREASED ITS CALL CENTER VOLUMES AND INCREASED WEBSITE TRAFFIC

Dallas Area Rapid Transit



Industry

Fixed Route
Paratransit

Products

INFO – Web
INFO
PASS
OPS
FX

Results

Decrease call center volumes by



By implementing an online trip planning software, Dallas Area Rapid Transit (DART) was able to provide a better transit experience for its riders while decreasing its call center volumes by 300–400 calls per day.

Background: DART’s call center consists of more than 9,000 agent attending calls each day — 2,000 calls through its interactive voice response (IVR) system for fixed route schedule look-ups and an additional 250 requests for trip planning by either fax or e-mail. DART discovered that customers, including the general public, large employers, hotels, and medical facility coordinators, wanted an online trip planning service to be available when their call center is closed.

Challenges: To provide the best customer service possible, DART wanted all the information given to customers to be consistent, whether it was through the agents, IVR or online. They needed a stable system which required little or no data maintenance since adding another individual to maintain the system wasn’t an option. Another goal was to allow anyone with an Internet connection on a desktop or a wireless, Web-enabled device, to access the trip planning information from anywhere, at any time. DART also wanted a clean and simple user interface for its customers.

Solutions: DART selected Trapeze INFO-Web for its online trip planning software. “The fact that Trapeze INFO-Web required absolutely no additional data maintenance was a huge factor in selecting the company as a vendor,” said Alan Gorman, Senior Manager, Transit IT Systems.

Integration with the existing schedule data was another factor as changes to the schedules are immediately reflected on their website. There’s no need for manual updating or uploading of data. DART also liked the system’s simplicity: riders enter a starting point, a destination, and a preferred departure or arrival time, and itineraries are generated using scheduling and routing data from the Trapeze FX scheduling system. Results can be sorted by total trip time, number of transfers, and walking distances. Drop-down menus also allow riders to select landmarks such as shopping centers or hospitals as their origin and destination points.

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Alan Gorman,
Senior Manager Transit IT Systems, DART

Results: Since implementing INFO-Web, DART has decreased its call center volumes by 300–400 calls per day, and increased its website traffic by 10–20%. Gorman says the service has been getting “rave reviews” from customers and staff, and they’re looking into deploying the technology on dedicated kiosks in high-traffic areas such as convention centers, social service locations, and shopping malls.

“The application is already serving as a fallback for our attended call center in the event that our primary trip planning server goes down,” said Gorman. “Through the INFO-Web interface, we are able to capture and retain the origin, destination, and time of each trip requested. We will be using this data to augment our regional travel and ridership analysis capabilities within our GIS packages.” This type of analysis helped DART’s Planning and Scheduling departments design routes and schedules to fit regional commuters’ needs.

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