

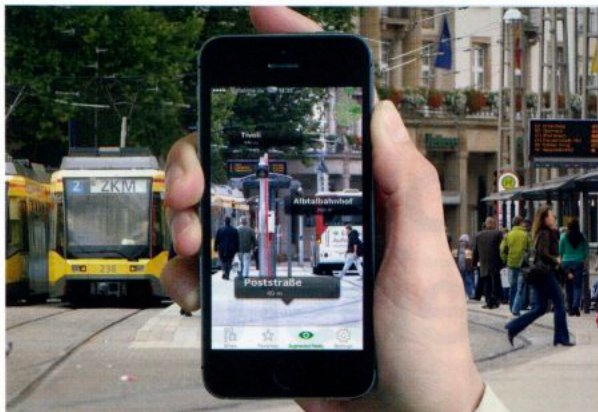
ADVERTORIAL

RTPI for a smooth travel experience

Providing passenger information at any time, at any place, in real-time and via contemporary media creates points of contact that help prompt passengers to switch to public transport.

Passenger information means service quality

A key factor when it comes to getting people to switch to public transport is service – and this includes easy access to reliable passenger information. Ultimately, passengers want to know when and how they will reach their destination. Traditionally, transport companies meet these requirements mainly by providing real-time information on display screens at bus stops. These devices require various technical components – like a power supply, plus a data supply based on a wired connection or a radio connection. The displays have to be mounted somewhere and must endure a wide range of weather conditions. This can make passenger information at a stop expensive.



Mobile on track

The availability of WLAN or mobile high-speed data connections has led to new opportunities for real-time passenger information. As the Internet, smartphones and tablets also have. Regardless of the media type, with INIT's innovative real-time passenger information system for web-based media – ONLINEinfo – the company can create the desired points of contact for every passenger.

The result is, passengers no longer have to wait for real-time information until they reach their stop, but instead can search for information on departure times and routes in advance: at home, at work or during their leisure activities. The passenger's connection to their smartphone makes it the perfect media for displaying departure information. The advantage of smartphones is that none of the technical preconditions for traditional passenger information devices is needed. Only an internet connection has to be available for the transport company to publish the information, and for the passenger to receive the information.

Here, INIT is assisting transport companies by offering a newly developed native iPhone app: 'DeparturesLive'. This app


provides real-time information for all stops within the transportation network. In addition to the classical stop lists, the selection of stops can be found using an Augmented Reality mode. The internal camera is used to display a picture of the surrounding area in which information about the next stops is added. After selecting a stop, the user will be led to the stop by a built-in pedestrian navigation. In addition, INIT provides a browser-based app that serves all mobile devices with real-time passenger information via lists and a map.

Interfaces – for new information channels

Another trend in public transport is the incorporation of the community into the real-time passenger information portfolio. Of course, their apps need access to the necessary data provided via an Application Protocol Interface (API). This kind of API will be one of the most desired points of contact in the future.

INIT's experience shows that the existence of an API will lead to a lively development of apps by the community. The knowledge and enthusiasm of the community should not be underestimated. Within a short time, a plethora of apps will be developed and a smart transport company should support this by providing a documented and stable API for the good of their passengers. For this reason, INIT is offering a simple-to-use http based API. Another advantage of having a dedicated API for the community is to have the certainty that a necessary update of an internal data provision API is still possible without crashing all of the community apps.

But whatever media the transport company decides to serve – the prerequisite is reliable real-time information on departures. Only that will convince people to use public transport. And it is what INIT stands for – with an impressive track record.



Frank Arnold studied computer science at the University of Applied Sciences in Karlsruhe. He started to work for INIT as a Software Engineer in 2006. Since 2012, Frank has been leading a team of software developers and is responsible for INIT's passenger information software.



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