

Kizoom in the news

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Products



KIZOOM - REVOLUTIONISING BUS TRAVEL IN POOLE

CBW PRODUCT OF THE WEEK
Borough Council has maximised its existing RTI investment by deploying Kizoom's Live Departures to Mobile SMS service to deliver real-time information into passengers' pockets.

With burgeoning traffic congestion, tightening emissions regulations and ever limited parking, getting people to embrace public transport is a priority for most local authorities. Setting the bar high, the transport department of Poole Borough Council aims to have one in five journeys on a sustainable form of transport, which in the main means making bus travel an attractive and compelling proposition.

In the autumn of 2007, the Borough of Poole turned to Kizoom to implement its Live Departures to Mobile SMS service in partnership with Traveline. This simple, but revolutionary technology allows the Council to capitalise on its existing investment in real-time data feeds, harnessing it to deliver real-time information to any device, thereby putting control of the bus journey directly into the pockets of passengers.

Each bus stop is allocated a unique

and clearly-marked seven-digit code on special glow-in-the-dark plaques. Passengers simply text this code to 84268; seconds later, they receive a message back listing the next three departures from that stop, and when they are due. There's also the option to include a specified bus number in the original message.

Codes have been put on 350 Poole bus stops, covering 55 individual services, operated by seven different bus companies. Kizoom developed the Live Departure to Mobile SMS service in partnership with Traveline, to unite both scheduled data and the real-time data feeds, for a fully comprehensive service

Nick Phillips and the Poole Borough Council team at Sandbanks Beach

providing information on all routes run by the local bus operators.

This easy-to-use system cuts the dependence on old-fashioned paper timetables and makes waiting at the bus stop a thing of the past. Passengers don't need to be at the bus stop to text, they can simply note down the stop code and send the message from any location; from the office to the beach - freeing people to elect when to travel and to no longer be at the mercy of the wait.

An impressive 27,000 texts were sent by passengers in Poole in the first 12 months of the service. As testament to the popularity of the service, the bus stop in Arne Avenue, Parkstone, has been named the busiest stop in the UK by Traveline.

In recognition of it registering over 1,000 text messages, the Council has given Arne Avenue 'golden bus stop' status, awarding it a new shelter for its dedicated patrons.

Nick Phillips, Accessibility Team Leader for Poole Borough Council is adamant that both local authorities and bus companies need to work together to make a focused effort to get people out of their cars, and onto public transport.

"Whilst operators have vastly improved the onboard passenger experience, waiting at bus stops can be cold, wet and singularly unappealing in isolated areas, particularly after dark," he said.

"Even with improved services running at 10 or 15 minute frequencies, it still seems a long time to wait if you've just missed the bus or it's delayed in traffic. In rural areas with sparser services the problem is even more acute. However by checking first how the buses are running the wait at the stop is minimised and the whole bus journey product becomes far more marketable - even when compared with the convenience of the car on the drive.

"The system makes buses an easier and more convenient option for every day travel, helping contribute to modal shift. We hope the success of this first year will encourage more people to give it a go."

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