

Case Study for

greateranglia

FAREGO VITA: PERSONAL SERVICE AT TICKET MACHINES



CHALLENGE:

Greater Anglia operates an intercity and regional rail network connecting the towns, cities and rural areas of Eastern England with London. Modern ticket vending machines are available to passengers at 92 stations for ticket purchases. At larger stations, tickets are also available at the counter.

One of Greater Anglia's corporate key objectives is making their customers' lives a little easier. This is why the transport service provider strives to offer its passengers first-class customer service. As most travels start with purchasing a proper ticket, making this experience as pleasant as possible is a great opportunity to achieve high customer satisfaction right from the start.

The professional service provided by Greater Anglia at the ticket counters is greatly appreciated and widely used by passengers. The staff are highly trained to answer all individual questions from the right ticket to the best connection.

Greater Anglia had been looking for a solution to offer its customers this excellent service at unmanned stations. At the same time, the sales

counters at heavily frequented stations should be relieved to improve the customer experience through shorter waiting times. In addition, the use of ticket vending machines should be increased: therefore, ticket purchases at vending machines should be made more attractive and offer better support to the customers. The desired solution must then be straightforward to implement and economical to operate.



SOLUTION:

Greater Anglia already operates with modern FareGo ticket vending machines from Scheidt & Bachmann for ticket sales on the entire route network. Scheidt & Bachmann offers the Virtual Ticket Agent „FareGo ViTA“ for all FareGo ticket machines.

FareGo ViTA enables Greater Anglia to use its ticket vending machines as full ticket counters. Passengers can connect at these machines with customer service representatives stationed in the central Greater Anglia help desk. The representatives not only provide passengers with information, but can also actively sell tickets – as they would at the counter. The passenger can then comfortably purchase its respective tickets directly at the machine.



FareGo ViTA benefits

/ EXTENDED CUSTOMER SERVICE WITH REDUCED DISTRIBUTION COSTS

/ BEST POSSIBLE REACH OF CUSTOMER ADVISORS WITH E. G. SPECIAL LANGUAGE SKILLS

/ SIMPLE IMPLEMENTATION INTO EXISTING MACHINE FLEET

FareGo ViTA also offers practical functions. In case a passenger needs assistance in operating the ticket machine, the representative sees on his screen the same interface as the passenger. By using a cursor, the representative guides the passenger visually through the sales application.

This makes FareGo ViTA the ideal solution to meet the specific requirements of Greater Anglia. Passengers at unmanned stations are offered a convenient way to buy their tickets in a personal consultation, or simply use FareGo ViTA to get expert answers to questions about what Greater Anglia has to offer. The benefits of FareGo ViTA are also evident at large ticket counters: Due to the personal consultation at the ticket vending machines, the availability of the service is increased, the ticket counters are relieved and waiting times are significantly reduced. There is then no difference for the passenger between the use of the nearest ticket vending machine or the counter. This not only results in more satisfied customers, but also a better utilisation of the machine fleet

and more efficient operation. Since all enquiries from the entire Greater Anglia route network are received by a central help desk, FareGo ViTA and a comparatively small team can offer comprehensive service for 92 stations (122 by the end of 2018).

On the vending machine side, FareGo ViTA uses components such as microphone, loudspeaker and (optional) camera, with which the machines are either ex works equipped or easy to retrofit. The existing IT equipment is used on the helpdesk side, as FareGo ViTA does not make any special demands on the hardware. The remote control functions of the helpdesk and the possibility for passengers to initiate a call at the vending machine are implemented by means of a software update. A compact server module is responsible for call management and connection setup. Alongside the FareGo ViTA version with audio support used by Greater Anglia, configuration levels with additional one-sided and two-sided video transmission are available.

EXECUTION:

In preparation for the FareGo ViTA implementation, 140 FareGo Sales ST|20 and FareGo Sales ST|70 ticket vending machines were upgraded at 66 stations with FareGo ViTA upgrade kits. A loudspeaker, a microphone and a headphone connection were integrated into the machines. The remaining 56 ticket vending machines FareGo Sales ST|71 were already equipped with the necessary components ex works.

An update of the device software and the sales application was subsequently carried out for the machines and the FareGo ViTA backend system was set up together with our partner

Cancom. The hardware forms a standard-rack-server installed in the Greater Anglia data centre and configured according to the existing network structure. This server controls the automatic connection between the vending machines and the FareGo ViTA workstations in the Greater Anglia help desk and provides the remote control functions.

No major measures were necessary in the help desk itself. The existing computer workstations could then be used as FareGo ViTA workstations after installing and configuring a software package and connecting a headset. Lastly, the Greater Ang-

lia staff received extensive training before FareGo ViTA went into pilot operation. This enabled the new service to be used at selected stations and was immediately well received by passengers with round 250 calls per day.

A 12-week test phase followed, during which FareGo ViTA was activated on the machine fleet. After successful completion, the system was transferred to regular operation. Since then, Greater Anglia has offered FareGo ViTA service at all 196 ticket vending machines round the clock. By the end of 2018, the service will be available at 231 machines.



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