



Dubai RTA: Delivering Smooth Journeys, Sustainability and Satisfaction



6 franchisees



10,700 taxis



4,110 km²
served



175.6 million
passengers a year

Industry

Taxi

Challenge

Providing the optimal customer experience

Solution

Taxi Business Management solution

Results

- ✓ Saved AED500 million on tolls
- ✓ Over 70% of drivers satisfied
- ✓ World-class customer experience

Dubai's Roads and Transport Authority (RTA) invested in a taxi business management system and improved customer and driver satisfaction while saving AED500 million.

Background

Dubai is one of the fastest-growing cities in the world. Its leaders aim to deliver world-class smart services and infrastructure to create happiness, a mission that all government departments play a role in accomplishing. The RTA is responsible for the emirate's transport network, roads and traffic, with an overarching remit to provide an advanced, integrated and effective transport system for the people of Dubai. It oversees not only transport infrastructure, but also the operation of all transport modes including taxis, buses, ferries and rail.

The Dubai RTA has used Trapeze Group's Taxi Business Management solution since 1994.



Challenge

The RTA's vision is to provide safe and smooth transport for all. It aims to do this by creating an integrated, sustainable transport network that is innovative and inventive, and providing services that are world-class in quality for all stakeholders' happiness.

In order to achieve these goals, the RTA had to overcome several challenges. Firstly, it needed to provide passengers with an optimised customer experience that was consistently high in quality right from the start of their journey—the trip planning process—through to their arrival at their destination.

This meant that the RTA needed technology that could integrate with other systems that traditional taxi management software would not usually interface with, like ride-sharing apps and city-wide traffic monitoring systems. The solution also needed to be flexible in its development so that it could continually evolve to meet the RTA's needs as the organisation added new technologies such as autonomous vehicles and flying taxis to its transport network.

It also meant the RTA needed to deliver driver satisfaction across its franchisees' taxi fleets. Khaled Al Nuaimi, Taxi Technical Support Section Manager at the Dubai RTA, explained why:

“Once a customer gets into a vehicle, he sees the driver. The driver, to him, represents the RTA.

“So how can you leave the customer satisfied? Give your drivers satisfaction. When they are happy, they will pass it on to the customer in many ways.”

“If you give your taxi driver satisfaction, he will deliver satisfaction to the customer.”

Khaled Al Nuaimi, Taxi Technical Support Section Manager

To keep drivers happy, the RTA wanted to invest in technology that would help create efficiency and improve performance. Taxis were either roaming the streets in search of potential clients, running up dead kilometres, needlessly increasing the wear and tear on vehicles and contributing to traffic congestion and pollution, or wasting time in long queues at malls and hotels in the hopes of picking up a fare. A better way was needed to reduce operational costs and help drivers do their work more easily.

Finally, the RTA needed to implement all of these upgrades and value-added services while ensuring Dubai's taxi operations remained financially sustainable. Sustainability is one of the RTA's key strategic goals and the organisation was looking to maximise asset value and revenues.

Solution

In order to provide passengers with an optimal experience and a smooth journey, the RTA looked to its long-time taxi management system provider Trapeze Group for solutions. Trapeze initially supplied the RTA with a control centre and automatic dispatch system, which allowed the RTA to take calls from customers and then dispatch these bookings to the taxis.

However, as the RTA's scale of operations grew and requirements changed, this system grew into a comprehensive taxi management solution that is now mission-critical for the RTA.

“The Trapeze Taxi Business Management solution is integral to the RTA's daily operations. It is mission-critical for not just our taxis, but the smooth running of public and private transport throughout Dubai.”

Adel Shakeri, Transportation Director

Using Data to Delight

Keeping track of thousands of vehicles is no easy task, but the RTA saw this as an opportunity to gain valuable information on what was happening on the roads in real time. Trapeze's taxi solution is able to receive, store, analyse and report on data from every taxi in Dubai's fleet and produce business intelligence on virtually anything to do with operations, including driver behaviour, fare collection, popular pickup points and customer preferences.

“This is what I see as the most important thing about the Trapeze solution,” said Khaled. “We have 10,700 taxis generating and sending data every second. The Trapeze system is able to handle this huge amount of data and analyse it for the information we need.”

The immensely powerful data processing capability of the Trapeze solution means that it is easy to track down any records the RTA needs. Khaled was especially enthusiastic about the Lost and Found module, saying it is one of the most important and useful features of the tool.

“Many customers forget their wallets, phones or bags in taxis— it happens daily. How do we reunite them with their valuables? We use the Trapeze taxi solution,” said Khaled.

“We ask the customer one or two questions about their journey, and with the wealth of information in the Trapeze solution we can easily find out which taxi they used and get their things back for them. It's a simple process for us but it makes the customer really happy.”

A recent enhancement to the Trapeze taxi solution has also brought benefits to the drivers: using machine learning capabilities, historical and live operational data is analysed to produce heat maps that show where the demand for rides is highest.

This is an exciting development according to Khaled because, “This will save dead kilometres and time for the driver. Instead

of him roaming around searching for customers, he can view the heat map, see where the demand is and go there immediately.”

“The heat map in Trapeze's taxi solution has been extremely popular with our drivers. They are very happy with it.”

Khaled Al Nuaimi, Taxi Technical Support Section Manager

Breaking Down Barriers

The tremendous amount of data generated by Dubai RTA taxis has proven to be even more valuable once integrated with other systems outside of taxi operations. The RTA, being in charge of all transport in Dubai, was keen to break down siloes between different modes of transport and cooperate more closely with other parts of the administration.

Relevant information is shared with other government departments such as Dubai Police for security purposes, traffic management units for monitoring congestion and Dubai Tourism for visitor convenience. Khaled explained the latter as a customer service initiative:

“When travellers come to Dubai, many go online to find out the best way to get around and they may end up going to the Dubai Tourism website instead of the RTA's.

“Our integration with Dubai Tourism means customers can go to Dubai Tourism and still have the opportunity to book a taxi directly there without having to go to a new page. We want to make things easy for them.”

Local residents also enjoy the benefits of this rich data and integration. The RTA uses the Trapeze solution to integrate data from the taxi fleet and ride-sharing private companies with its MaaS-esque S'hail app.

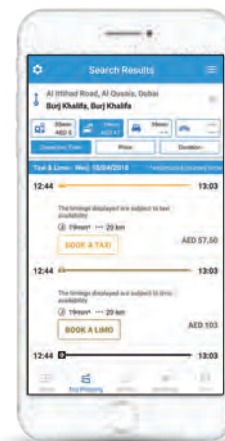
S'hail is not your usual journey-planning app: not only does it display estimated trip times for regular public transport like buses, ferries and metro, it also provides information on taxis and ride-sharing cars. Khaled said the idea was to show people all the options they had for transport in one place so that their experience with Dubai's transport network began smoothly.

“The app will help the customer estimate the vehicle's time of arrival and overall journey time,” said Khaled. “If, for example, there is peak hour congestion and the bus will take too long to get him where he needs to go, he can choose another kind of transport like a taxi.”

Improving Working Lives

The RTA has also invested in new features and processes in order to make every taxi driver's job easier. For example, new cash deposit machines will shortly be introduced to allow drivers to deposit any cash takings for the day at any ATM in Dubai instead of having to return to the depot, queue up to see a cashier and drive extra unpaid kilometres.

“It will save a lot of time for the driver, and also saves on cashier operations,” said Khaled.





The taxi solution's Out of Vehicle feature has also been upgraded so that it is easier for drivers to show they are taking a short break. In the past, drivers were not able to inform the system that they were leaving the vehicle for short periods of time and the system would not know that they were unavailable to take bookings. This potentially could cause a driver who missed a booking while having a lunch break to be unfairly penalised for rejecting bookings.

"This feature is now customised to give them more flexibility," said Khaled. "Whenever they are out of vehicle, they can turn it on for five or ten minutes and then resume their duty when they come back without any worries."

Increasing RTA Revenue

Dubai's RTA previously had to absorb the costs of taxis using toll roads. When the Salik toll gates were first introduced in 2007, taxi drivers were instructed to press a button on the meter to add on the toll fee to the fare whenever they passed through a toll gate. However, customers unfamiliar with the process tended to misconstrue this action: many assumed the driver was tampering with the meter, creating a negative perception of taxis and sometimes causing confrontations.

This resulted in the RTA having to waive toll fees for taxis. While it improved the situation for customers and drivers, it meant the RTA was missing out on the revenue from millions of taxi trips made on toll roads.

To get around this challenge, Trapeze upgraded the taxi system to automatically detect toll gates without the need for manual intervention by the driver. This has increased driver satisfaction as they are not at risk of an adverse customer reaction and allowed RTA to collect its revenue from tolls.

"We save a lot of money in terms of RTA toll gate revenue. Since we implemented Trapeze's Virtual Salik in the taxis, we have saved AED500 million."

Khaled Al Nuaimi, Taxi Technical Support Section Manager

On the Journey Together

For more than 20 years, the Trapeze taxi solution has grown with the needs and aspirations of the Emirate of Dubai.

Khaled and his department work closely with Trapeze's Middle East team. He appreciates the agility of the taxi solution and believes the RTA's investment in the system has paid off.

"We are coming into our 25th year of working with Trapeze Group in our taxi management business and they continue to be responsive to our needs as we strive to give Dubai's people smooth and safe transport. They have truly been here for our journey."

Adel Shakeri, Transportation Director

"One of the most important things about Trapeze's solution is its flexibility. Whatever you need in terms of integration or enhancements, you can do it with Trapeze. It meets all our needs and is unique," said Khaled.

"It can handle a huge amount of data and deal with large volumes of taxi bookings. It's a huge system—a critical system for the Dubai RTA."

Success

- Saved AED500 million in toll gate fees
- Over 70% of drivers are satisfied with the heat map
- Delivering a world-class experience to Dubai commuters

TRAPEZE GROUP

Trapeze Group works with public transport agencies and their communities to develop and deliver smarter, more effective public transport solutions. For more than 25 years we have been Here for the Journey, evolving with our customers around the world to helping them move people from point A to Z, and everywhere in between.

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