

EXPERIENCE REVIEW AND SOFTWARE EVALUATION OF DEMAND RESPONSIVE TRANSPORT SYSTEM

CLIENT: *SAD Trasporto Pubblico Locale S.p.A.*

YEAR: *2009*

DESCRIPTION OF ACTIVITIES:

TRT Trasporti e Territorio, on behalf of SAD Trasporto Pubblico Locale SpA, conducted a benchmark analysis in order to collect the most remarkable experiences of Italian and European Demand Responsive Transport Systems (DRTS). The DRTS services, also called flexible transports, are provided on demand. This kind of service is diffused above all in the sparsely populated areas, as the transport demand is very low.

The management costs of a traditional bus line in this kind of areas are too elevated in comparison to the number of annual users (and revenues), so the DRTS become more competitive.

Targets of the project

The project achieved two main objectives, mentioned below:

- To identify nationwide the DRTS schemes potentially transferable to the Bassa Atesina territory, in terms of territorial extension, amount of inhabitants, geo-morphological features.
- To provide the client with an evaluation of the softwares currently available in Italy and in Europe which are used by transport companies to plan and perform DRTS services.



The TaxiBus service of the Province of Milan.

Project phases

TRT selected the most important Italian and European DRTS experiences. For each case-study it was provided a table filled with the following information:

- Territorial features (e.g. number of involved municipalities, total amount of inhabitants, territorial extension).
- DRTS features (e.g. method of reservation, service hours, fares for tickets and subscriptions).
- Management features (e.g. software used, number of annual passengers, public transport company, type of vehicle used).

The collection of the information linked to the Italian experiences has been conducted through direct technical visits to the call centres which manage reservations and plan the service.

Interviews with local bodies or managers of the public transport companies were also conducted.

This approach allowed to carry out a SWOT analysis related to the implementation of a flexible public transport service. At the same time the second target was achieved: the analysis found the operating software for planning the service amongst several alternatives offered both on the Italian and international markets.

Following to client's needs and recommendations, some technical and managerial criteria were selected, in order to conduct an analytical assessment of the software available.

To complete the analysis, economic offers were requested to the software companies, under the assumption of a common software/hardware package to be acquired for the equipment of the vehicles and the service planning.

This strategy allowed to classify the software by considering their quality/price ratio. In this way the client was provided with a set of alternatives among which to choose, by taking into consideration not only the technical aspects but also the economic investment.