

CASE STUDY

Free Flow

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In 2018 the demand for Tap On, Tap Off EMV contactless payments on buses was growing. We needed to replicate the customer experience of the London Underground passenger. But achieving this had its own set of challenges.”

THE BUSINESS CASE

Our successful implementation of contactless across our UK operation was a great advance in transport, but...

I knew bus passengers wanted a more sophisticated product, one where they could use their contactless card to tap on and tap off a bus. A back office could calculate the fare, cap it if it exceeded the daily limit, and charge for the right amount. Just like London Underground. This would significantly improve the customer experience and might tempt car drivers to take the bus instead.

METHODOLOGY

The key to building such a system is in the simplicity of fares. To create this functionality, the team worked with our contactless partners, Ticketer and LittlePay, to create something unique.

They both understood the strategic importance of this development and supported us all the way.

Once this complex functionality was developed and tested, we deployed Freeflow service in Brighton, in 2019, followed by Oxford in 2020

We then focused on making the scheme interoperable with FirstGroup and Arriva.

RESULTS

- Freeflow was used by 30% of passengers within a week of going live.
- Cash now represents less than 10% of revenue in most bus operations.
- High acceptance and resilience.
- To the best of our knowledge, Freeflow was the first implementation of cEMV 'model 2' in the world.
- Transport Ticketing Global Awards: Highly Commended in the 2020 Ticketing Technology of the Year category.

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To our knowledge, Go-Ahead was the first operator to implement cEMV contactless Tap-On Tap-Off services in buses in the world