

CASE STUDY

Hopsta



I've always had a vision of a world with no tickets. At the end of the day, passengers don't pay for a ticket, they pay for the ride. A train or bus ticket is only proof of their authority to travel."

THE BUSINESS CASE

In 2017 geo-fencing and iBeacon technology was entering the mainstream.

It was clear to me we had the opportunity to eradicate the need for tickets. At the end of the day, who wants a ticket?

The concept was about making it easy and effortless for the passenger. An app on their smartphone would initiate their journey as the bus arrives and, on leaving the bus, the back office would calculate the fare, cap it if it exceeded the daily limit, and charged the right amount. This was a ground-breaking mobile-only system.

This solution would improve passenger satisfaction and reduce idling time at bus stops.

METHODOLOGY

To create this functionality, I decided to partner with iBlocks, a small, very capable supplier that we use in our Rail operations. They had already helped us develop clever solutions like keyGo.

Developing a ticketless product was more complex than we could have envisaged, and we finally managed to run a successful live pilot in November 2018 for the University of Southampton's buses, Unilink.

At that stage it was clear that this technology was giving way to contactless model 2 and, unfortunately, we had to abandon the concept.



Hopsta was winner in the transport category of the 2018 Smart Cities Awards

RESULTS

- Deployed in a production environment, not just a lab.
- Over 1,200 trips made and charged.
- Insight into geo-fencing and iBeacon technologies.
- Further development of digital capabilities in the team.
- To the best of our knowledge, Hopsta was UK's first implementation of iBeacons in public transport.
- Smart Cities Awards 2018: Hopsta named winner in the Transport category.