Case study

Now we can bring real-time visibility to busy transit

How Designium uses location technology for better travel in Japan

Designium needed
To help Aizu Bus better serve its community

Read more

HERE delivered
Location technology in the form of map content, APIs and development tools

Read more

Designium gained
The location-powered tools needed to improve the transit passenger experience

Read more

To help Aizu Bus better serve its community

Designium is a company based in Aizuwakamatsu City, Japan. It specializes in the development of mobile and experiential applications. As a member of the Samurai MaaS Project, Designium took on the challenge to help improve transit within the Aizu region.

The setting

Tourism is crucial for the revitalization of the Aizu region in the tsunami-affected Fukushima area. The region attracts many school trips as it's home to Tsurugajo Castle, where the Boshin War was fought, and it's also the setting of the story of the Byakkotai, a group of teenage samurai in the Edo period.

The challenge

Despite being a main region for tourist attractions, riders found it difficult to use the Aizu Bus to see the famous sites because the status of the ride was not informed to the user in real time. Passengers had to rely on timetables posted at stations or on the website. These only provided limited and static information.

Passengers had no way of knowing where their bus was, the distance between stops, if a bus was delayed or if it had been canceled. As an area with heavy snowfall, this information is especially beneficial in the case of sudden, severe weather events.

Even the Aizu Bus fleet's operation manager had limited real-time information about where their buses were because they outsourced the updating of GTFS (General Transit Feed Specification) data.

Designium

About Designium
Designium is a technology and design company based in Aizuwakamatsu City and Tokyo. They develop products and systems in three main areas: Applications, API and Cloud and Sensors and Hardware.

What is the Samurai MaaS Project?

A: The Samurai MaaS (or Mobility-as-a-Service) Project is a government smart city initiative in the Aizu region funded by Japan's Ministry of Land, Infrastructure, Transport and Tourism.

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The players

Designium was already developing apps and UX for several projects within the Aizu area. As a part of the Samurai MaaS Project, Designium set out to build a better system for Aizu Bus, a private transit company serving the region. Mitsubishi Corporation, who are also a part of the Samurai MaaS Project, participated from a project management perspective and introduced Designium to HERE Technologies.

Designium gained the location-powered tools needed to improve the transit passenger experience.

"Real-time, this is the key word for our solution. And that's the difference HERE can provide. That's something that Aizu Bus didn't have before, and now they do."

Takafumi Nakata, Project Manager at Mitsubishi

Mitsubishi Corporation

About Mitsubishi Corporation

Mitsubishi Corporation (MC) is a global integrated business enterprise that develops and operates businesses together with its offices and subsidiaries in approximately 90 countries and regions worldwide, as well as a global network of around 1,700 group companies. MC has 10 Business Groups that operate across virtually every industry: Natural Gas, Industrial Materials, Petroleum & Chemicals Solution, Mineral Resources, Industrial Infrastructure, Automotive & Mobility, Food Industry, Consumer Industry, Power Solution and Urban Development. MC's current activities have expanded far beyond its traditional trading operations to include project development, production and manufacturing operations, working in collaboration with our trusted partners around the globe.

Tak Nakata, Project Manager at Mitsubishi

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Location intelligence through data utilization and API

Designium's app allows passengers to track the status of transit in real time through the use of HERE Transit APIs. The HERE Routing API provides the visibility necessary for rerouting due to traffic or weather conditions and allows the bus operator to announce updates to drivers who can then react quickly. Aizu Bus hopes these new optimizations will lead not only to an increase in customer satisfaction, but an increase in visitors to the area, as well.

> "With better, more transparent transportation there's the potential of an increase in visitors to the area which is exciting."
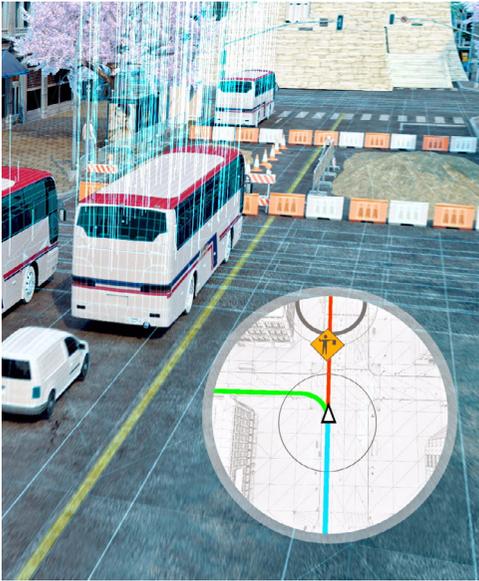>
> Designium

How HERE helped

After the introduction from Mitsubishi Corporation, Designium was able to build a bus operating system using the HERE Platform and made the switch to HERE Maps and APIs. The resulting HERE API can deliver dynamic visibility of bus status at any given time, including delays or seasonal and temporary changes to the service.

The location-powered tools needed to improve the transit passenger experience

The solution

For the region to remain and grow as a vibrant tourist area, Aizu Bus needed to provide passengers and potential visitors with a better experience. They wanted to set up live updates of the bus ride within the city of Aizu. Their goal was for passengers to be able to see the location of the bus in real-time, similar to what one sees when waiting for their rideshare vehicle to arrive.

Formerly, Aizu Bus outsourced the updating of their GTFS data. This process took several days to complete and Aizu Bus would only get updates if they asked — this was far from optimal. With HERE APIs and a system developed by Designium, Aizu Bus can now update their GTFS data in real time, deliver information through various applications and send automatic alerts to passengers.

"The HERE platform has excellent location technology information, and this project makes use of various APIs and HERE Workspace. As a platform, it was very beneficial to have a mechanism to accumulate and utilize data."

Designium

The results

Track the movement of its buses

Increase transit efficiency
(eg, seamless rerouting to avoid traffic and weather conditions)

Communicate delays and cancelations to passengers

Collect and update their own data to accurately predict future journeys

Improve customer satisfaction and bring more visitors to the area

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Bring the power of real-time visibility to your operations

But first, you probably have some questions. How can location technology help me?
What types of data and services does HERE provide? Are they easy to integrate?
Get answers to these questions and more by speaking with an expert from HERE.
Discover the transformative power of location technology.

[Get in touch]

Location technology can improve your business in countless ways. Learn more:

▶ Solutions

HERE Platform

▶ On the blog

The next big thing for supply chains in 2022? Real-time visibility

▶ On the blog

What will fleet management look like in 2022?

We're HERE

About HERE Technologies

HERE, a location data and technology platform, moves people, businesses and cities forward by harnessing the power of location. By leveraging our open platform, we empower our customers to achieve better outcomes – from helping a city manage its infrastructure or a business optimize its assets to guiding drivers to their destination safely. To learn more about HERE, including our new generation of cloud-based location platform services, visit **360.here.com** and **www.here.com**.

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