



TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY
Transportation Services

Texas A&M University Transportation Services

The 6th largest transit operation in Texas with 97 buses that run on 18 routes.

Problem/Challenge

- Adjusting service to avoid running empty buses
- Splitting shifts on short-notice
- Reducing complaints

Solution

- Run alternating routes during off-peak periods
- Use electronic manifests that follow the driver, not the vehicle
- Improve on-time-performance and give riders access to real-time information

Result

- Maximize route efficiency
- Easily split shifts in real-time
- Reduce outdoor wait times & improve rider satisfaction

Texas A&M University Transit: Addressing Efficiency and Customer Service Needs

Texas A&M University is one of the largest Universities in America. Covering over 5,000 acres and hosting over 63,000 students, Texas A&M's College Station campus is the size of a small city. The university's transit system serves not only students and staff, but also the general population of College Station with 97 buses that run on 18 routes both on and off campus.

Texas A&M uses TripSpark's CAD/AVL and scheduling software, MDTs and automatic passenger counters to help them manage their fixed route operation. The technologies allow the university to transport an average of 50,000 passengers on a typical fall or spring semester day.

Maximizing Route Efficiency

Since the majority of Texas A&M's transit riders are students, there is lower demand for service when fewer classes are in session.

By using ridership data to intelligently adjust evening, weekend and holiday service, Texas A&M was able to reduce driver hours without negatively impacting their ridership.

“We will start interlacing routes. We’ll run one route that runs say route 27 and then turns around and runs route 12 or something else, so we use less buses as the day goes on in order to get the same benefit for the students.”

Randy Davidson, Senior IT Professional

Running a more efficient operation has allowed Texas A&M to redeploy driver hours so that they can continue to provide excellent service without buying more buses.

Flexible Rostering

The majority of Texas A&M’s transit drivers are student-drivers, and as a result schedulers must roster shorter shifts and frequently split shifts. With drag and drop rostering, Texas A&M is able to easily roster a schedule that has been broken up into small pieces. Because drivers use TripSpark MDTs to log their work and view their manifests, it’s easy for dispatchers to manage real-time rostering changes.

“We have gone from running about 4.5 million passenger trips up to nearly 8 million passenger trips, without overhauling the size of our fleet.”

Randy Davidson, Senior IT Professional

“[With the scheduling software and MDTs] we’re able to split shifts on the fly if we need to. We can take shifts and move them to another person, and it automatically follows that person.”

Justin Tippy, Transit Manager



Reducing Complaints by Reducing Wait Times

Nobody wants to be stuck outside waiting for their bus and not knowing when it will come. Texas A&M uses real-time dispatching to improve on-time performance so that riders can more accurately predict when their bus will arrive. The University also provides riders with real-time bus location information so that they can track exactly when their bus will arrive. As a result, the transportation office is receiving fewer complaints.

Not only are fewer complaints a sign that riders are happier, fewer complaints also means that dispatchers are fielding fewer calls.



“The number of complaints that we’re seeing has dropped dramatically over the last 7 years since we started using TripSpark, because the bus is where it’s supposed to be and the students know where the bus is supposed to be.”

Randy Davidson, Senior IT Professional

“Now that [riders] have that real-time data... it’s allowed our dispatchers and our office staff to actually concentrate more on their job of running our fleet and making sure we’re running it efficiently.”

Justin Tippy, Transit Manager

Partnering with TripSpark

Justin, Randy and the Texas A&M team work closely with TripSpark staff to ensure their technology is being used effectively to address their operational needs. Though TripSpark software and hardware is designed with ease of use in mind, it’s always helpful to have experts at arms’ reach to ensure the technology is being applied in the best way possible.

By partnering with TripSpark, Texas A&M has been able to maximize efficiencies and provide superior service to their riders.

“One thing we were looking for in a vendor is that they would be willing to work with us after the sale, and TripSpark has done that very well.”

Justin Tippy, Transit Manager