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ADVERTORIAL

INTERVIEW SPOTLIGHT

In this interview for *Eurotransport*, **Dr. Jürgen Greschner**, Managing Director of INIT, describes the advantages of integrated ITS systems against the backdrop of new mobility challenges. He talks about the need to rethink public transport and the future of integrated mobility platforms.

How does INIT assist transportation companies in making public transport services more attractive, faster and more efficient?

To make a long story short: with uniquely integrated hardware and software solutions. Only if you handle the processes of planning, dispatching, operations control and ticketing within one integrated system can you really make full use of the synergy potential and streamline processes and costs. But we also never forget about the passenger experience. For example, many planning systems minimise the number of vehicles required to fulfill schedules and blocks. But we know this is not suitable as it significantly increases the risk of delays. Therefore we allow you to consider various other goals such as robust schedules or your drivers' wishes. Our systems balance your planning goals, present alternative results and enable you to make the best choice to suit your company's goals. For this purpose, our planning systems are enhanced by market leading optimisation tools. Overall, this is what we call 'thinking outside the box'.

How important is innovation to INIT?

Innovation is part of our company name. For more than 30 years it has been our vision to make technological progress promptly available for public transport – with the clear purpose to make it more efficient and attractive. INIT spares no effort to put this vision into action. Our employees work in close collaboration with our customers to ensure the practical benefits of our ideas and participate in standardisation projects for the evolution of our whole industry. In addition, our passionate Research & Development team collaborates with renowned partners to find solutions to tomorrow's public transport challenges.

Tell us about a recent European project success for INIT and do you work with your customers to provide aftersales/ongoing support?

We are currently integrating Luxtram (the operator of the future tramline in Luxembourg) into the pioneering mobility platform we recently established for 37 bus service providers in Luxembourg. The integrated operations control, real-time passenger information and ticketing system covers the entire Luxembourg area including services into Belgium, France and Germany. It connects the services of different transport providers to create an integrated multimodal platform. Even secure bicycle parking spaces are integrated into the same platform and can be opened using an INIT validator and the nationwide mobility card, mKaart. Furthermore, car park tickets can be paid using mKaart. Offering easy access to their services is a high priority for Luxtram and they have decided to participate in the nationwide ticketing system, mLive.

We also provide services such as phone support, 24/7 hotlines, training, and more. But as we always try to go the extra mile for our customers, we also provide technical and operational services on a variety of levels; from maintenance via technical services to technical operations, and from pure IT hosting to ITCS in the cloud. Our customers trust us to keep their system functional, enabling them to focus on their core business. We can also offer operational services, such as preventive device maintenance or tariff and operational data supply, if they require further support.

How does INIT make sure it stands out from its competitors and what are the company's goals for the future?

We aim to make mobility easier for our customers, their employees and passengers. To achieve this, we strive for long-term relationships with our clients that are based on trust, reliability and comprehensive service. We place their challenges in the centre of all our activities to help them realise their goals. We are the only supplier to offer real integrated hardware and software solutions for all key tasks in public transport. In turn, we feature an open system approach which allows our customers to connect their system 'to the world' – whether it is for the integration of specialised third-party systems, or for other transport modes – and provides flexibility for future requirements.

Our ID-/account-based ticketing systems provide a good example; they convincingly demonstrate how easy it is to integrate various sales channels, ticket media, open payment schemes, third-party solutions, different transport providers and new connected services such as bicycle rentals or parking. We aim to forge ahead in this direction as we believe the future requires integrated mobility platforms.

We will assist public transport providers in 'leading the transition' towards integrated mobility offers, like the motto of this year's UITP Global Public Transport Summit suggests. There are many new players entering the market also based on new mega-trends like e-mobility and autonomous driving. But with innovative concepts and the right technological support, public transport providers will emerge from this development even stronger than before. We will help them initiate and master the transition. ⊖

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