

Dynamic Travel Information on Train Platforms

In this age of rising passenger numbers during rush hours, and the increasing frequency of incoming and outgoing trains, offering dynamic travel information to travelers on the platform is under pressure. The two main public transport providers in The Netherlands, Netherlands Railways (NS) and ProRail, wanted to improve their services during the transfer process at railway stations to make the journey experience more comfortable, faster and safer for their passengers. The result of an extensive research and prototyping process are an implemented and tested service innovation that offers passengers real time information about the train composition and the availability of seats in the approaching train through an extended app, and a 350 meter long LED screen suspended above the platform, with the information being delivered through sensors in the train.

Process

The agencies Edenspiekermann and STBY worked closely with ProRail and Netherlands Railways (NS), in a staged process of discovery and co-creation that included the involvement of travelers at key moments. Initial customer insights on train journeys were collected through observations and interviews. In co-creation workshops with travelers and the client team key issues and possible improvements were discussed. A series of ideas for new service concepts was then introduced, selected and prototyped. A 3-month live test of the implementation and validation of the new services followed, with qualitative and quantitative research among a panel of more than 700 test users. A wide range of stakeholders from the client side were involved in meetings and workshops.

Benefits

This innovative service concept contributes to a better transfer process, from both the perspective of the passenger and the business: less crowded situations at the train doors; more comfort and overview for passengers; more efficient use of the platform; less dangerous situations; shorter waiting times; shorter dispatch times.

Effects

The 3-month pilot test proved to be very successful. The results were used for the internal business case. Plans for a nation-wide roll out of the new services are at an advanced stage. This project also shows that close collaboration and a carefully staged service design process can lead to innovative services.