



CENTRALIZING A FRACTURED SYSTEM

When TransLink issued a request for proposals for its custom transit service – HandyDART – its hope was that it could consolidate 8 service areas into at least three. After MVT Canadian Bus (MVT) was awarded the bid to operate the entire turnkey operation – call center included – the benefits of a fully coordinated, demand response service were realized.

Challenge

In the Winter of 2009, MVT Canadian Bus (MVT) was tasked with transitioning the entire HandyDART service from 8 separate operators, while taking over the call centre from TransLink. Faced with centralizing and coordinating service across Metro Vancouver, together MVT and TransLink redefined how the HandyDART service operates.

Solution

During the transition, MVT identified three key areas of focus in order to affect a well managed coordinated system: on-road communications, passenger communications, and fleet maintenance.

MVT worked cooperatively with TransLink to deploy Mentor Ranger Mobile Data Terminals (MDTs) in each of the HandyDART vehicles. By interfacing these on-board units with the Trapeze Scheduling System, MVT receives up to the minute, real time updates on service, while creating a paperless demand response system.

MVT then deployed a centralized Interactive Voice Response (IVR) system, which keeps customers updated on service quality and manages the expectations regarding service delivery. Under this system, HandyDART passengers can receive confirmation calls, trip reminder calls, and they can cancel trips using a touch-tone phone.

Finally, MVT centralized the maintenance of 235 of the 343 HandyDART vehicles. By maintaining 68% of the fleet under one shop, MVT leverages economies of scale and minimizes deadhead-related costs - finding the right balance between cost efficiency and service quality.