

Royal Appointment for Omnibus

Whilst we are now almost a month into the New Year, we do like to use the Winter edition of OmniNEWS to reflect on the closing months of the previous year. And with all the drama and events of the economy that seem to unravel each day, we are pleased to report that OmniNEWS contains nothing in the way of banking, credit or even crunches!

The big event for Omnibus in the autumn was the Eurobus Exhibition in Birmingham. This is the largest passenger transport exhibition in the UK and spans the first few days of November. It was a good opportunity to meet with a number of existing and prospective clients and provide a steady stream of demonstrations of our software, including the new modules launched at the show.

visiting those organisations recognised as operating 'best practice' in the industry. He didn't buy anything either, but discussed views on how capable the transport sector was to withstand the current economic gloom.

On the commercial side of things, the company has been busy with enquiries coming from many parts of the world, and there has been a good interest from current clients in the new software: OmniMAP, the enhanced PocketBUS and the TransXChange/EBSR modules. Also, the installation of OmniTIMES, OmniBASE and OmniSTOP into Isle of Man Transport has been completed, which included an Omnibus data interface to their new Almed ticket machines.

The Depot Allocation System has seen a number of projects starting towards the end of 2008, for both new installations and clients upgrading to the new OmniDAS. These are currently ongoing in the early part of 2009.

What else will 2009 hold for Omnibus? The interest and

movement toward Electronic Bus Service Registration and the use of TransXChange as a medium to exchange data is an area of interest to both our Bus Operator and Local Authority clients, as they move towards submitting and receiving Bus Service Registrations in electronic format. The modules Omnibus have developed over the past 18 months will enable us to meet that challenge head on and provide our clients with the tools they will need.

Two visitors to the Omnibus stand are worth mentioning, however. On the second day of the show we were pleased to greet the Transport Minister, Paul Clark. Whilst he didn't buy anything from us, he did discuss the use of technology across the passenger transport industry with Peter and Carol Crichton.

On the final day, the stand was visited by HRH the Duke of Kent, who was

PocketBUS revisited

One of the major developments of 2008 was the introduction of the enhanced PocketBUS module. Both the mobile and PC management elements of the software have been updated to ensure that a wider range of information is recorded. Collected data (including bus numbers, actual departure times, passenger numbers, driver details and weather) can be downloaded into a central database, allowing instant analysis of all data against user defined performance criteria.

The enhanced PocketBUS has been adopted by a number of organisations to enable them to monitor performance, including both Cardiff Bus and Newport Transport. Cardiff's Commercial Team Leader, Gareth Stevens, commented: "The improvement in functionality and speed in the latest version of PocketBUS has been superb, and our Service Quality Supervisors have genuinely noticed this improvement whilst out and about our network".

To find out more about upgrading or implementing PocketBUS, contact our commercial team.



Developing OmniPRODUCTS

At Omnibus we always continue to develop the range of programs on offer, and established clients will know that the update is an important part of the maintenance of our products. Often these are 'tweaks' to make life easier for users.

Another important reason to update our software is to keep pace with the ever developing bus industry, especially in a time when improving efficiency is ever more critical. Sometimes, changes are so dramatic that the end result is a new product (as in the case of PocketBUS). However, most often these changes form the basis of the updates that we send out to all clients on a regular basis. Most recently, some of these changes have been quite dramatic:



OmniTIMES

Understanding that bus stop inclusive timetables are a massive administrative strain on our users' resources, we have sought to provide helpful utilities to assist maintenance of such timetables. Within OmniTIMES, intermediate times between bus stops can now be estimated, adapted and saved as part of the timetable data, without extensive manual calculation and distribution of allotted time.

This OmniTIMES functionality, alongside the recent development of the new product OmniMAP now allows schedulers to quickly expand a basic timing point only timetable to be bus stop inclusive. Such in-depth timetables are becoming

pre-requisite for Real Time and Electronic Ticket Machine systems and Omnibus will continue to improve products to meet this demand.

OmniMAN

The OmniMAN file management program now includes a 'shared job' facility that enables several users to create timetables and develop schedules within the same project.

OmniMAP

Although OmniMAP is a new product, developments that enable clients to utilise other mapping software have been added. As well as Ordnance Survey maps, OmniMAP can now be set up to use the popular Navteq mapping. With this development, we feel confident that 90% of users will now be covered with maps that are relevant to their business.

**ELECTRONIC REGISTRATIONS
- SPEED IS THE SECRET...**

Eurobus proved to be a useful launch pad for the Omnibus EBSR module. With a number of visitors interested in seeing the software work, one question arose more often than any other; "how long does it take?" This is a theme that has been concerning many in the industry, and we are pleased to say that the Omnibus EBSR module has not disappointed anyone who has seen it in operation.

Northamptonshire County Council use the Omnibus EBSR module to import Electronic Bus Service Registrations they receive directly into their OmniTIMES database. Their Senior Bus and Rail Development Officer, Neil Holland, said "We now regularly import registrations from a local operator and my colleague and I are both impressed with the way it works, especially how fast it imports the data.

If you would like to see how fast the EBSR module could create or import an electronic registration for you, contact Omnibus.

How it all fits together

This diagram represents the relationship between all Omnibus products and demonstrates how differing modules obtain information - primarily from OmniTIMES.

If there is anything within the diagram you are interested in exploring further please do get in touch with us.

In fact, if you feel that there is anything missing from our line-up, please also speak to us.

We are always happy to discuss our range of software and how we can best serve the passenger transport industry.

