

Audio-description of the intermodal node for PRM guidance



In Europe, legislation relating to equality of rights and opportunities, participation and citizenship of disabled people stresses an approach that gives consideration to different disabilities in order to respond to the main social issues of fighting back against exclusion and all forms of discrimination. Given that new Information and communication technologies are being used increasingly by blind and partially sighted people, the possibility of preparing their journeys over the public transport networks contributes to facilitating the use of that mode of transport. In this context, audio descriptions of multimode interchanges constitutes a tool that assists travel for visually impaired people.

Audio-description is a process that enables a blind or visually impaired person to have a spatial representation of the interchange he or she will be using. The description of the site and essential indications relating to accessibility functions through a voice-over message that describes the visual elements of the interchange. The audio-description provides the elements needed to prepare the journey, as well as mentally visualise an interchange and in particular the route to take towards another mode of transport.

To implement such a tool, a professional in sound communication will proceed with a number of visits to recon stations, while a partially sighted consultant will provide his or her experience of disability and validate the recordings. The text of the description is drafted and then made available (via the Internet) to a panel of blind or visually impaired people for trialling.

The audio-descriptor is an author. He or she works alone or with colleagues to write the text. A visually impaired audio-descriptor may write alongside a sighted audio-descriptor.

Analysis of the comments, given as feedback by customers who have tried out the descriptive file, enables the initial version of the script to be consolidated.

Analysis of remarks and the implementation of proposals for making effective improvements in the medium intended for travellers are part of the final stage in what is demanding and precise work conducted in close collaboration with customers with a visual disability.

When reading the texts and having them recorded by an actor in the studio, special attention will be devoted to the tone of voice and the speed of speech. Sound engineering and effects (punctuation jingles and original music) will give relief to the sound continuum that is broken up into audio tracks, based on an architecture that corresponds with the final mode of use.

Publication of files for CD recording and the constitution of mp3 files for websites offer vocal documentation describing the multimode interchanges and their immediate environment.

Good practice

Establishments open to the public, whether public or private, already use similar services, with positive feedback.

Tisséo-SMTC – AOTU of the Toulouse metropolitan area (France):

Audio-description of Tisséo network Metro and tramway stations, including multimode interchanges, provides the elements needed to prepare for a trip, as well as to mentally visualise a station or the itinerary for connecting with another mode of transport.

The 38 stations of Lines A and B of the Metro have their own audio-description MP3 file that can be downloaded from the Tisséo website. Line T1 of the tramway is also available.

Potential interchange performance improvement

Audio-description services of multimode interchanges contribute to making them more efficient as they allow intermodality, accessibility and liveability to be improved.

A form of information service adapted to the blind and visually impaired and a physical service for accompanying these users allow for better orientation of travellers in the interchange, as well as a reduction in the anxiety felt when moving around the interchange and help in reaching their point of destination reliably, comfortably and safely.

Moving around an interchange can generate stress. The space and time of interchanging must be marked out to be comfortable, reliable and safe. Being sure you will find your path and waiting on the platform of the mode of transport for a connection contributes to giving freedom of mobility back to people who are not fully able.

Moreover, the more fluid circulation of passengers and greater traveller satisfaction contribute to a better quality of service being provided by the manager, and thus a more efficient interchange.

Resources

– *Indications of costs relating to use of the tool*

2,000/3,000€ for relatively simple interchanges (2 modes of transport for example)

3,500/5,000€ for more complex interchanges (more than 2 modes concentrated at the interchange)

The more travel connections there are, the longer the description and recording work will be

- Other resources needed to use the tool

None

- Possible additional costs generated by use of the tool

Plan for updating of files

- *Allocation of costs between stakeholders*

Each transport authority present at the interchange can contribute financially to the description provision. In this case, it is preferable to retain just one service-provider for all the interchanges to be described.

References

Audio-description of Tisséo metro and tram stations, including interchanges :

Audio-description of stations of Tisséo network Tram line T1:

<http://www.tisseo.fr/se-deplacer/reseau-accessible/audiodescriptions-ligne-T1>

Audio-description of stations of Tisséo network Metro line A:

<http://www.tisseo.fr/se-deplacer/reseau-accessible/audiodescriptions-ligne-A>

Audio-description of stations of Tisséo network Metro line B:

<http://www.tisseo.fr/se-deplacer/reseau-accessible/audiodescriptions-ligne-B>

CDs are available free of charge in Tisséo agencies on simple request.

NODES strategic objective	Contribution
Enhance accessibility and integration	++
Enhance intermodality	++
Enhance liveability	++
Increase safety and security conditions	++
Increase economic viability and costs efficiency	0
Stimulate local economy	0
Increase environmental efficiency	0
Increase energy efficiency	0