

QUALITY OF PASSENGER SERVICE

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Summary: The problem of the quality of passenger service is consideration in the present paper. Some ways of improving it are given. The implementation of quality systems is suggested.

Key words: the quality of passenger service, the implementation of quality system.

Анотація: В статті розглядається проблема обслуговування пасажирів. Подані деякі шляхи вдосконалення обслуговування. Запропоноване здійснення систем якості.

Ключові слова: якість обслуговування пасажирів, здійснення системи якості.

Аннотация: В статье рассматривается проблема обслуживания пассажиров. Предложено выполнение систем качества.

Ключевые слова: качество обслуживания пассажиров, выполнение системы качества.

Urban passenger transport organization is one of the most serious problems the solution of which provides the livelihood of modern cities. Any city space is a property of its residents and public transport uses it much more effectively than private motor transport. There is a theory asserting that public transport can reduce traffic congestion, air pollution and energy consumption [1]. People will be diverted from automobiles by public transport if it duplicates any automobile flexibility. In this situation it is necessary to develop public transport as an alternative to private one.

Travel both by public and private transport becomes more complicated with each year. At morning and evening rush hours the streets connecting the city centre with the residential areas experience high congestion. One of the main reasons of it lies in the excessive use of private vehicles. There are already 370 vehicles per a thousand residents in Kiev [2]. It is known as a fact that 20 percent [3] of all motorized passenger transportations is realized by privately-owned automobiles being more expensive than the usage of buses or rail. The Ukrainians would rather waste time in traffic jams than spend an hour to reach their office by public transport. The reason can be easily understood and it happens because buses and trolleys are neither comfortable nor fast, currently in Ukraine public transport lags behind the needs of the population. Therefore to solve the problem of transport quality is considered to be rather urgent.

The high quality of transport services in passenger road transport is the key to transport safety, satisfaction and customer loyalty.

In times of financial crisis and economic instability, reduction of costs and improvement of service quality management is the basis for any transport company operation. International experience shows that 95% competitiveness depends on the quality.

Despite the importance of service there is no system of integrated approach aimed at improving the quality of service at present.

The accumulated theoretical and practical developments require further improvement, firstly, because the recommendations on quality management in passenger transportation need a fundamentally new market basis according to MS ISO 9000 version 2000 and focus on customers (passengers and other interested parties.) Secondly, the existing quality management system does not fully take into account the specific services provided by passenger automobile company. The importance of solving these problems led to the relevance of the study.

According to the current market conditions it is offered to enter consumer's evaluation of services quality where a little national experience has been currently accumulated, methods of evaluating of the effect of the consumer are just beginning to develop.

New economic conditions, the formation of the transport market, the emergence and intensification of competition between transport companies have helped develop and consolidate on practice organizing and planning such term as "transport services". Service is defined as an activity of transport aimed at meeting consumer needs in transportation characterized by the presence of necessary technological, economic, legal information and resources. Thus, under the service we understand not only transportation but also any operation that is not directly a part of the transportation process but is related to its preparation and implementation.

It is known what attracts service users, namely: minimum time of traveling, traffic safety, reliability of transportation, regularity of traffic, guaranteed time of rolling stock on the route, presence of additional services, presence of different levels of transportation services adapted to customers requirements (flexibility of transport services), organized system of information, acceptable fare of transportation.

Taking into account everything mentioned above we can offer Lamben model for evaluating quality of services and apply it to transport [4]. The first phase is the questionnaire. The main part contains questions on satisfaction with the quality of the process, questions on the importance of individual parameters and test questions (additional indicators of satisfaction).

In general the analysis is conducted in three stages starting with assessment of satisfaction degree with the service and then to assess satisfaction for each attribute and its importance. For these three measures using the same 10-point scale which adds the ability to answer "I do not know".

At the beginning of the second phase it the average value and standard deviation for each attribute are calculated. These estimates are compared with the average of the studied segment. This comparison allows to make a picture of the market perception of service quality.

The answers to various questions on attributes were divided by two axes, the first one corresponding to the average estimation of satisfaction and the second one to the standard deviation estimates. A large deviation means that the same view is supported by a small number of customers. Selected point of axes intersection represents a subtle question, usually chosen the average result of joint assessments.

The third phase of assessing the quality of services is to identify the attributes of services being most important for the client and estimating the level of customer satisfaction concerning each of them. Visually the results can be represented as a matrix, put on the abscissa of customer satisfaction with the service and the importance of a particular attribute to a mark on the vertical axis. As a point of intersection of the axes it is needed to take a point with coordinates corresponding to an average rating of 8 marks and standard deviation equals 1. It is substantiated by the assumption that if a client puts the attribute evaluation below 8 points it means that there are reasonable grounds and specific reasons. A pretty good indicator of quality attributes is rated higher than 8 points. The value of standard deviation "1" is critical to determine how unanimous the opinion of customers on the assessment attribute is.

Comparing the obtained data to the importance of assessing the degree of presence attribute in the product or service is valuable because it allows to check whether the quality of the service is expectable for clients.

In sum the method gives an accurate information for strategic planning. Graphic representation of data can be used to respond quickly to changes in consumer preferences and to take a corrective policy decision. The relative simplicity and clarity of the results make this method attractive for the application in the context of the audit of internal marketing.

In order to increase service quality global changes are needed to be applied. It can be improved by giving priority to buses, trams, bicycles and pedestrians, so public transportation becomes faster, safer and more attractive.

Some ways of public transport improvement can be borrowed from foreign experience. Residents of European countries commute to and from their places of work by trams or buses. Public transport operates there regularly as clockwork.

German cities are trying to raise the quality of bus and tram transport through numerous activities in the field of planning. It is known that regularity is one of the main components of quality, since 2000 there have been special lanes for public transport on main highways in Paris. They are separated from the road by markings or low curbs. Therefore public transport avoids traffic jams and can move on schedule.

In Helsinki, for example, public transport is considered to be one of the best in Europe because of the high level of service, comfort and great government allocations to transport development.

Except separate travel lanes, priority at traffic lights the introduction of integrated tickets (one ticket for subway, bus, tram and minibus) for intermodal passenger transportation is included to improve the public transport.

As comfort and the number of transfers are components of quality the role of intermodal transportation systems has become increasingly important. The basic ideas and solutions to develop intermodal transport are published in the White Paper, prepared by the European Commission EU in September 2001 entitled "European transport policy for 2010: time to decide" [5]. The intermodal approach involves looking at how individual modes can be connected and managed as a seamless and sustainable transportation system. The main objective is to foster an

approach to transport systems aiming at better integration of various modes in order to achieve "seamless" travelling, targeting policy making, planning and management of mobility services at different levels (national, regional, local). Such a system should support efficiency, safety, mobility, economic growth, protection of the natural environment. Any person departing from any of the available modes of transportation (trolleybus, bus, tram, metro) may get on the intermodal system additional services to reach its final destination. Public transport interchange is the key element in any urban transport system.

In recent years increasing emphasis to the development of intermodal transport centers as tools for improving urban mobility has been given. A transport centre is an established point of interchange between two or more public transport lines serving any urban area. In order to serve adequately a high volume of transferring passengers, pedestrians and cyclists passing through points of interchange should be provided with attractive and convenient transfer facilities. Comfort and attractiveness of passenger transport systems depend largely upon the quality of transfers at interchanges between public transport modes. So, the crucial elements of a successful intermodal transport system are coordination of schedules, synchronizing arrival and departure times between modes as much as possible to minimize passenger's travel and waiting time.

Integration of different modes within the transport chain will mean the improved flexibility, quality, cost effectiveness and will stimulate the competition among transporters but not the competition of transport modes.

Thus, public transport must take an increasingly flexible and competitive approach to meet the needs of the commuted public and become more service-oriented. It has to increase its punctuality, frequency, attractiveness and comfort. The further development of passenger transportation should be directed towards implementation of the quality systems, creating a database of performance and quality of passenger service, the development of systems of voluntary certification service carriers.

References

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