

## SKYBUS TECHNOLOGIES

**Project Location**  
Melbourne:  
various locations



**Client**  
Skybus:  
Simon Cowen  
Harley Hammoude

**Design**  
SmartGuide Pty Ltd:  
John Krivitsky  
Chris Cordell  
Chinh Quash



Skybus wanted a local company that had similar visions, and soon came to work with Melbourne-based information technology company SmartGuide, a joint venture between PixelTech Design and Schiavello.

# REVOLUTIONARY RIDE

Skybus, the official Melbourne Airport rapid transit link carrying more than one million passengers a year, with the help of Australian technology developer and integrator, SmartGuide Pty Ltd, has revolutionised the way passengers buy tickets with the launch of a new online ticketing system.

The online ticketing system enables passengers and travel agents to make credit card purchases online and print tickets immediately after the purchase is approved. The technology is based on issuing a unique barcode on each ticket that is scanned as passengers enter the bus.

“As far as we know, this method of ticket sales, automatic validation and real-time transmission and reporting is a world first for buses,” explains John Krivitsky of SmartGuide.

Real-time graphical Passenger Information Displays (PIDs) have been installed at designated pick-up points, such as Spencer Street Station, Qantas Domestic and Virgin Domestic terminals, to conveniently provide passengers with predicted Skybus departure times.

The buses are fitted with Global Positioning System (GPS) tracking and two-way data communication that feeds to SmartGuide’s prediction system. This system is based on artificial intelligence technology that predicts the arrival time and subsequent departure time of each bus by adapting to traffic conditions.

The Skybus central control can actually watch and monitor every one of their buses on an electronic Melways

(street directory) and can view how fast the bus is travelling. “In addition to the tracking, they also get live reports of ticket sales at each desk and from each bus and even the validations on the buses,” says Krivitsky.

“In the next stage, Skybus will also be able to see in real-time how many passengers are on each bus from passenger counters fitted at the doors.”

Aimed at the general public planning travel and the corporate traveller, the online ticketing system is part of a suite of new technologies designed specifically for Skybus.

According to Skybus, one of the project challenges was to understand what had to be achieved by making a complete change to an existing system that was working at a reasonable level. They needed to work with a company that could understand their requests, was able to match their expectations and assist with the development of the product.

SmartGuide designed the system’s unique architecture, and provided the core integration and implementation of electronics and software. Components of the ticket machine and passenger information displays have been provided by Schiavello and other communications equipment manufacturers.

The online ticketing function meets the massive growth of Internet airline ticketing, providing Skybus with enormous potential for the system to link with major airline and travel internet sites.