Application: 6014

Fare Innovation at Full Speed: How Modeshift’s Flexible Platform Delivered End-to-End Transit Modernization in 3 Months

Page: General Information

Provide information about the company to be considered for the award. If you will be nominating an individual, specify the nominee’s employer.

Name of Organization/Company

Modeshift

[redacted]

Additional Contacts

I do not wish to list additional contacts

Page: Entry Information

Entry Title

Fare Innovation at Full Speed: How Modeshift’s Flexible Platform Delivered End-to-End Transit Modernization in 3 Months

Category

T03. Technical Innovation of the Year - Transportation Technology

Technical Innovation of the Year Submission Format

Written Answers

a. Briefly describe the organization that achieved the nominated technical innovation: its history and past performance (up to 200 words). Required

Revolutionizing urban mobility, Modeshift provides flexible, scalable fare collection systems that empower transit agencies to enhance the rider experience while meeting their unique operational needs.

Founded in Europe, Modeshift has expanded across multiple countries, including Romania, Bulgaria, Macedonia, and Moldova, and now supports transit systems of all sizes in over a dozen U.S. states—demonstrating global scalability and adaptability across diverse markets.

What sets Modeshift apart is its ability to offer a 360-degree solution that can fully transform a transit system or integrate with existing infrastructure. While many vendors offer rigid, all-or-nothing fare collection, Modeshift brings the flexibility to meet agencies where they are. Whether an agency is ready for a fully new, third-generation fare collection system or simply needs to upgrade components, Modeshift adapts to fit. This enables agencies to gradually transition or modernize without requiring a total operational overhaul.

With over 50 implementations in cities ranging from small municipalities to major urban centers, Modeshift’s technology provides real-time tracking, mobile ticketing, dynamic fare management, advanced analytics, and modern hardware—all in one solution.

This adaptable approach allows transit agencies to scale and innovate at their own pace, ensuring their systems are future-ready and seamlessly integrated with existing technologies.

b. Outline the nominated technical innovation. Be sure to describe it in terms that someone with limited knowledge of the technology can understand and appreciate (up to 250 words). Required

SkopjeBus, a transit provider for Skopje, the capital of North Macedonia, contracted Modeshift in April 2024 to provide an innovative fare collection system. They had a 15-year-old system that was causing significant issues for riders and system operations. Passengers had little trust in the service, constantly dealing with missed buses and waiting for hours at bus stops. For a city that heavily relies on public transit, this was severely disrupting daily commutes. An overhaul was urgently needed.

Modeshift provided an updated mobile ticketing system that transformed every layer of the public transit experience. In just three months, Modeshift launched a fully integrated account-based fare collection system that included a user-friendly mobile app, a real-time vehicle tracking and scheduling platform, and multiple digital payment options (mobile, SMS, smartcard, and web.) The system replaced an outdated validation method with 600 cloud-connected validators that now power accurate, touch-free fare inspections. Riders can now view real-time bus arrival information, purchase tickets via app or SMS, store passes in digital wallets, and skip long waits at the stop.

Behind the scenes, SkopjeBus gained advanced cloud-based tools for analytics, revenue tracking, route optimization, and dynamic fare management—capabilities they never had before.

A significant part of this transformation was migrating 600,000 existing passenger accounts from a media-based system to the new account-based platform, while ensuring that riders experienced no disruptions during the transition. Modeshift’s technical innovation didn’t just modernize infrastructure, it rebuilt confidence in Skopje’s public transit system, making it more reliable, efficient, and rider-friendly.

c. Explain why the technical innovation you have highlighted is unique or significant (up to 250 words). Required

Rolling out a fully integrated fare collection system in just three months is virtually unheard of in the transit industry. Some providers take years to design, test, and deploy new systems, especially ones that involve account-based architecture, mobile ticketing, digital payments, real-time tracking, and smart validators. What made this rapid deployment possible was Modeshift's uniquely flexible technology platform, which integrates with existing infrastructure. This drastically reduced implementation time, modernizing without starting from scratch.

Within the first week after launch, 9,000 users were active; by week two, that number more than doubled to 19,000. Today, about 45,000 riders use the mobile app alone, out of the 150,000–200,000 active transit users in Skopje. Since launch, the system has facilitated over 4 million rides and 120,000 fare validations per day, demonstrating both scale and user adoption.

Another standout technical achievement was the seamless migration of 600,000 existing rider accounts from a legacy, media-based fare system to a modern account-based architecture. This type of migration—while preserving user balances, travel history, and personal data without any loss—is rarely accomplished without service disruptions. Preparation took several months, but for passengers, the transition was instant, activated on the system's launch day when tapping their smart card on a validator.

What sets Modeshift apart is that it delivered this without requiring SkopjeBus to overhaul its entire operational ecosystem. Instead of building from scratch, the system was layered into existing infrastructure, unlocking innovation through integration—something technically challenging, but ultimately more sustainable and scalable.

d. Reference any attachments of supporting materials throughout this nomination and how they provide evidence of the claims you have made in this nomination (up to 250 words). Optional

The supporting materials provided directly reinforce the impact, scale, and efficiency of the SkopjeBus implementation:

Mobile App Adoption Numbers substantiate the statement in Question 3 that nearly 45,000 riders are actively using the mobile app. This demonstrates strong, sustained user engagement well beyond the initial launch phase.

The User Adoption Graph visually supports the statement that within the first week, 9,000 users were active, and by week two, that number had more than doubled to 19,000. These figures demonstrate strong early traction and user confidence in the system.

The Project Implementation Timeline clarifies that all core features were live and accessible to riders within three months of contract signing, aligning with our claim of a "three-month deployment." While the official public launch was approximately four months later, the timeline confirms that the full system was technically deployed and in use within three months via a soft launch, enabling SkopjeBus to begin delivering value to riders sooner, gather real-world feedback early, and ensure a smoother full-scale rollout.

The Daily Riders Graph supports the claim that the system facilitates around 120,000 fare validations per day. This volume demonstrates system resilience, scalability, and high engagement among Skopje transit users.

Webpage Link

[REDACTED FOR PUBLICATION]

Would you like to add an additional supporting document?

No

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