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●ビッグデータで効率化されたバス・サービス提供するBridj

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ボストンの新興企業、Bridj は、市内で効率よくバス・サービスを提供することで一部利用者の通勤時間を半分にまで縮めることに成功したとのこと。

同社創設者、マット・ジョージ氏によると、クーリッジ・コーナーからケンドール・スクエアに行く場合、マサチューセッツ・ベイ運輸局のサービスを使うと 42～55 分かかるところ、同社バスは 15～18 分で済むという。

同社のサービスは現在、通勤に時間がかかる地区を主なターゲットしているが、決まった乗降場がなく、同社の使うアルゴリズムによって変動するのが特徴。

例えば、クーリッジ・コーナーのあるブロックで登録する利用者が増えれば、そちらへ乗り場が移されることになる。

同社は、市内の交通の動きを理解するために市が公開しているデータや人口統計データ、SNS データなどおよそ 19 種類の異なるデータ・ストリームを通じて、20 億～30 億に上るデータポイントを分析しているとのこと。

現在、利用者は同社ウェブサイトで乗降を登録しているが、11 月には専用アプリも提供開始される予定。ジョージ氏は、このサービスを全国展開することも視野に入れている。

(参考) 本件報道記事

Meet Bridj, the start-up using big data to revamp bus transit

By Matt McFarland October 22 at 7:00 AM

Traditional mass transit options, like this bus above, might be threatened by Bridj. (Luz Lazo/The Washington Post)

Boston start-up Bridj says it has cut some commute times in half by strategically offering bus service in the city. A ride from Coolidge Corner to Kendall Square, which Bridj founder Matt George says would likely 42 to 55 minutes on the Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority, has taken 15-18 minutes on his company's buses.

Bridj's service — essentially pop-up mass transit — is especially unique. Bridj

starts by targeting neighborhoods it considers commuter pain points. But there's no fixed pick-up and drop-off locations in these neighborhoods. The exact meet-up point are a changing product of Bridj's algorithms.

If dozens of riders on one block of Coolidge Corner suddenly sign up for a ride, it's likely the pick-up location would shift toward them. George thinks he can make transportation more efficient and have less friction thanks to good software and lots of data.

Bridj founder Matt George, left, speaks at America Answers Tuesday. (Matt McFarland/The Washington Post) "Internally we look at ourselves as a technology and big data provider," George said. "The output happens to be transportation rather than the other way around."

George says his staff of data scientists analyze between two and three billion data points to understand how a city moves. He says Bridj has "about 19 different data streams," including municipal data, census data and social media data.

For now Bridj is a small operation, having launched in select parts of Boston this summer. A typical ride costs \$5, which is more expensive than public transportation. George says so far he has had thousands of customers, but declined to get more specific.

Bridj is currently working on offering reliable WiFi access for riders. Its app will launch in November, so for now riders sign up at its Web site.

George envisions the company scaling nationwide, and finding a niche alongside car-sharing services such as Uber and Lyft. He says he's in "very late stage discussion with about six cities" across the country.

"It's not ever going to be as convenient as a direct trip on Uber or a direct trip on Lyft," George said. "However it is something you can use every day rather than once in awhile."

The founder was in Washington, D.C. Tuesday for America Answers, a Washington Post Live Event, where he announced Bridj would commit \$3-4 million over the next 18 months to set-up pilot programs around the country.

The news isn't a surprise given that last month the start-up raised \$4 million and brought on Gabe Klein, who formerly led public transportation in Chicago and Washington, D.C. Now we'll see if Bridj can do to city buses, what Uber has done to cab companies.

Source:

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/innovations/wp/2014/10/22/meet-bridj-the-start-up-using-big-data-to-revamp-bus-transit/>

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