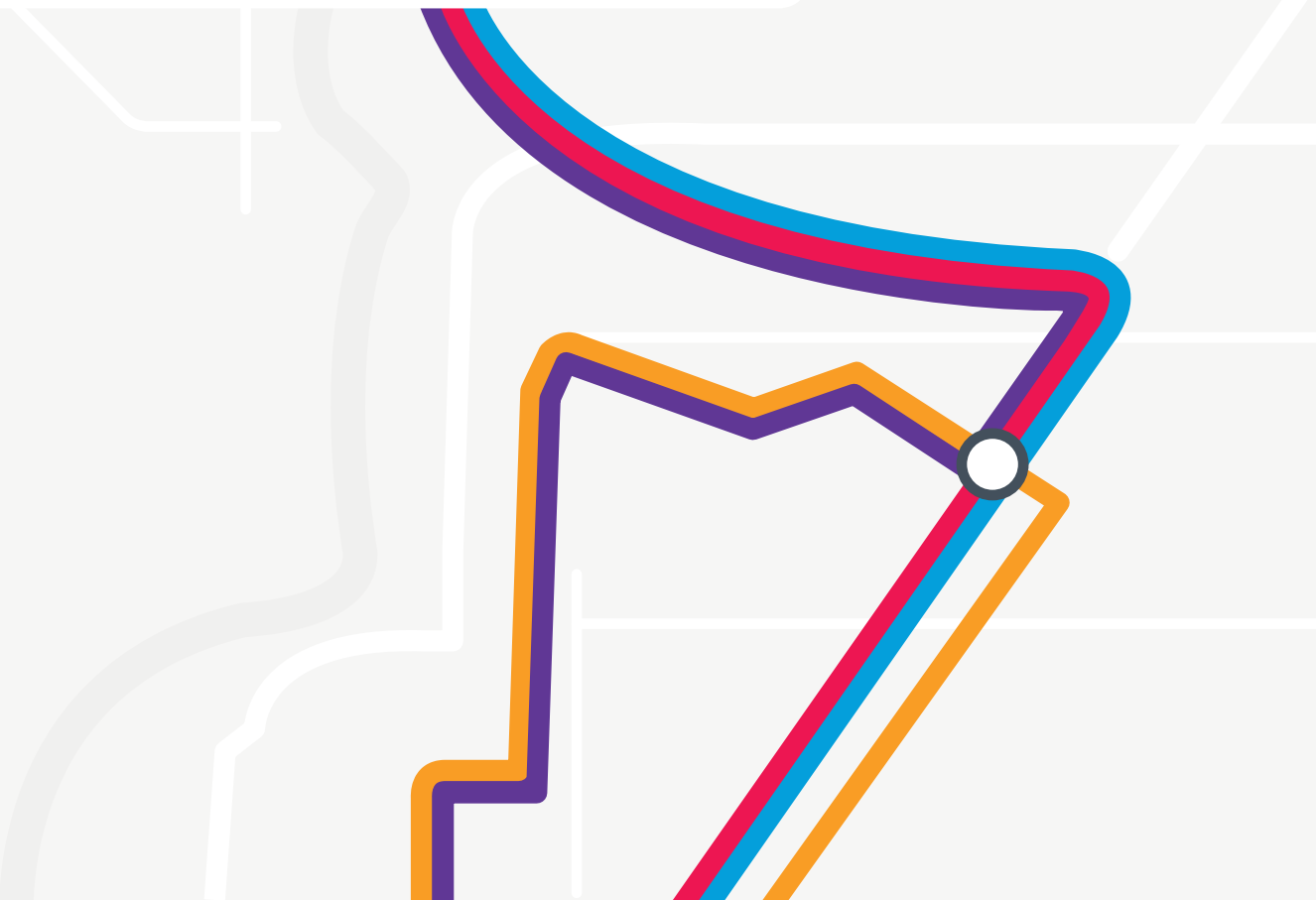




Swiftly

# How Juneau Is Wooing Cruise Ship Passengers with a Transit Rebrand

CAPITAL TRANSIT CASE STUDY





## OVERVIEW

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With a large service area, a small population, and a massive seasonal influx of riders from cruise ships, Capital Transit in Juneau, AK, faces challenges coming from many directions. That's why they chose to rebrand their system, with the help of Trillium and Swiftly, to balance the needs of local riders and capture the attention of their seafaring passers-through.

## BY THE NUMBERS

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5%

### INCREASED RIDERSHIP

Ridership has increased 5 percent year over year since the rebrand, which included implementing Swiftly's real-time data

1M+

### ANNUAL RIDERSHIP

Capital Transit's annual ridership is over 1 million despite a population of only 33,000 due to seasonal tourism

## We recently caught up with Denise Guizio from Capital Transit to hear more.

### WHAT DO YOU DO AT YOUR AGENCY?

My name is Denise Guizio, and I'm Admin Assistant III at Capital Transit. We're not so big, so I do a lot, but in general my role encompasses the administrative side of Capital Transit's needs.

### WHAT'S YOUR SERVICE AREA LIKE IN JUNEAU?

We're Alaska, so it's pretty rural. Juneau is a city that runs between a valley and the waterfront, so we're defined by our linear geography.

It's a really large service area, too, despite a population of only 33,000. That said, our ridership is over a million per year because we have a lot of tourists that come in.





## TOURISTS, HUH? WHAT'S BRINGING THEM TO JUNEAU?

Well, we're the capital of Alaska, and we have a lot of really pretty scenery. Shouldn't that be enough? We have a glacier, a lot of wildlife, and a rich mining history.

The major thing are the cruise ships that port here. Sometimes we get up to six at a time. Can you imagine?

It's amazing. They can dock about four ships downtown and then two out in the middle of the bay. Downtown isn't a very big area, and they're just packed in there. And all these people pack into our buses to go out to the glacier, which is about a 45-minute ride by bus. Then they walk a mile and a half from our closest stop to the glacier.

Our bus is two dollars a ride. For private tour companies, it's something like 30 dollars a ride, hence our strong ridership.

Our old branding was implemented sort of in an ad hoc way, so it was confusing for our riders.



## WHAT ARE YOU TRYING TO ACCOMPLISH IN YOUR ROLE?

My goal here is to make transit more user-friendly for everybody. I want to bring a more modern personality to it. And above all, to make it easy.

Capital Transit — and transit in general — is really thought of in a positive light in Juneau. But in recent years, it was kind of flat-lining.

For a while, the attitude here was, “Oh, we don’t want to rock the boat.” There wasn’t a lot of innovation. So what excites me is bringing innovation into Juneau. That’s actually how we came up with the idea for the new branding.

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## WHAT’S THE STORY BEHIND YOUR REBRANDING PROJECT?

Well, like I was saying, a lot of our service is popular with people coming off of cruise ships. But over the years, we saw that these riders were having trouble figuring out which bus was which. Our old branding was implemented sort of in an ad hoc way, so it was confusing for our riders. We wanted to create a unified look and easy-to-use schedules.

So we got in touch with the team at Trillium, who had some truly great ideas to accomplish this. They have a belief that consistent presentation of information and a consistent brand can make people “see” transit that otherwise grows invisible over time in the community. Plus, they helped us streamline a lot of our maps and handouts for the tourists coming in.

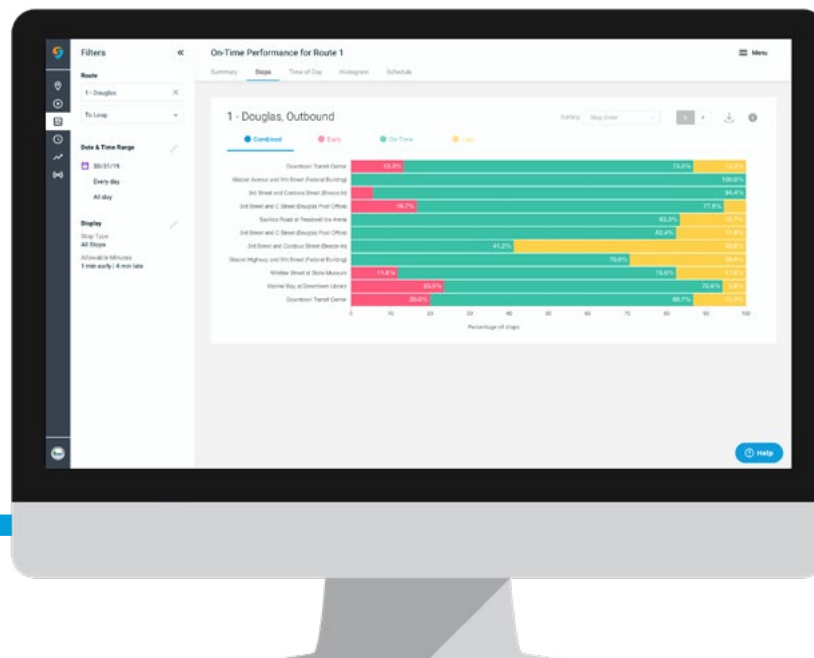
## TRILLIUM HELPED YOU BUILD OUT YOUR GTFS TOO, RIGHT?

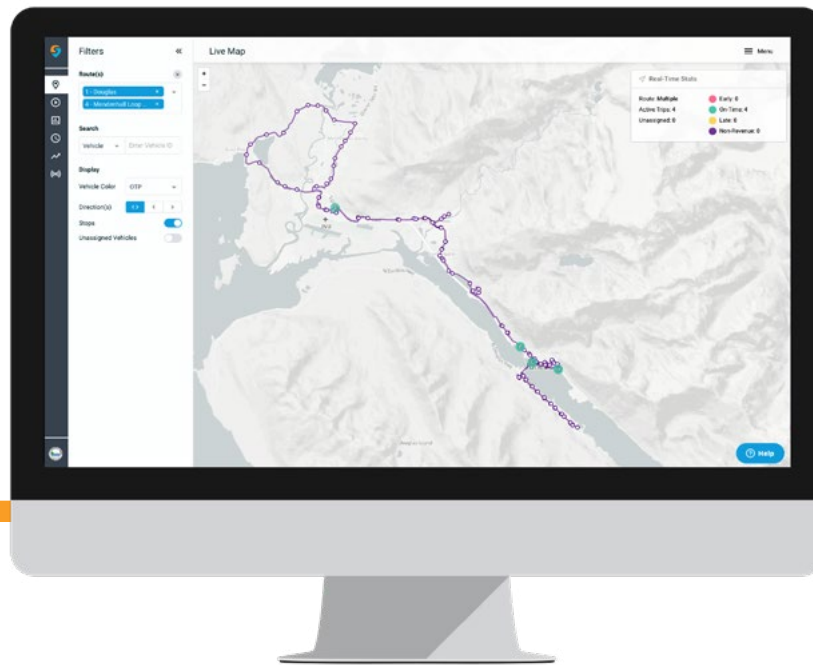
They did. First they collected locations from us to clarify names. That was for consistent naming and to make sure everything would be locally recognizable.

Then they came to us to understand our schedule, including all the pattern variants for our routes. We'd never had GTFS before — all our schedules were just printed out — so Trillium took every one of our trips and built them out into the Trillium GPS Manager. It was important to be able to explain the system in all its quirks to outsiders. So they built out our schedules for all the days of the week in GTFS, then we reviewed the data on a map. We did lots of testing of the trip planner in Google Maps, and once we approved it, we set it live.

We also updated all of our print materials and even rebranded our buses to make everything consistent and well thought out.

We're now looking at changing our route alignments and schedules in the next year or two. I don't think we could have done that without Swiftly.



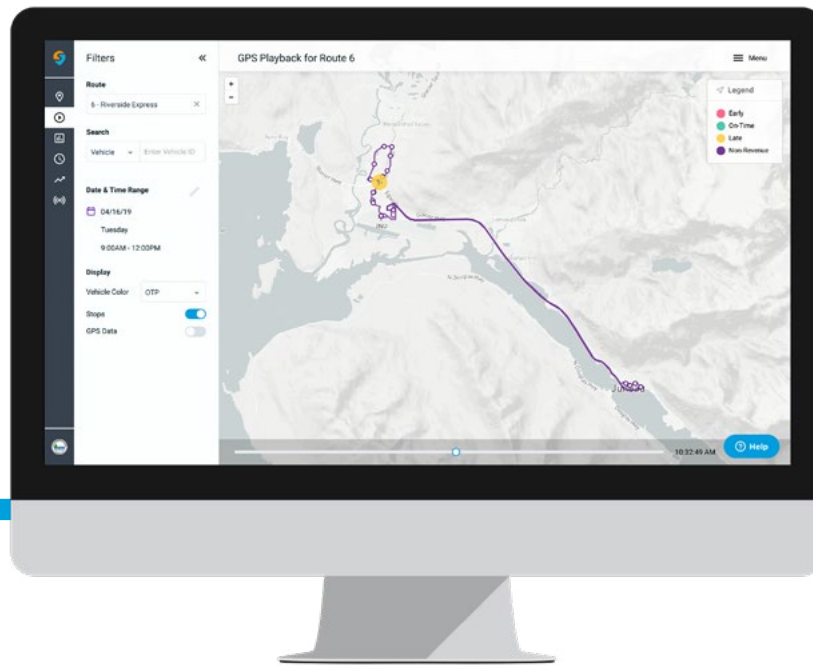


## HOW DID SWIFTLY FIT INTO THE WHOLE REBRANDING PROJECT?

Well, the huge thing is the real-time information we now have with Swiftly. It's really been a huge improvement. The one thing about Juneau you need to know is that it's really dark in the wintertime here. It's dark, wet, and cold. And we have the valley area, what we call the Back Loop. When it's wintertime, and it's dark, sometimes our local riders on the Back Loop don't know if the bus has passed them by! It's really that dark!

So we get a lot of "Where's the bus?" calls. Before Swiftly, the only way to know where a bus was was to call the operator and ask. When they're driving those back roads in the dark, we have the tough choice of distracting our drivers when they need to concentrate, or just leaving the rider literally in the dark, wondering at the bus stop. Now we can just look in Swiftly and immediately tell the rider the bus hasn't passed you by yet. Or that the bus really did pass you by! It's a huge benefit not disturbing the driver by calling them on the radio.

There are also some riders who have disabilities or just aren't at a level where they feel confident to check out apps or websites for themselves. So this has been a huge improvement for us and for our riders..



## HOW ELSE HAVE YOU BEEN USING SWIFTLY?

Checking on-time performance has been huge. GPS Playback in particular. People call and say, “Hey, the bus wasn’t there, the bus came early. What happened?” We’ve used GPS Playback to go back and say, “Well, the bus was here at this time.” We’ve even had schools call in telling us that a student said they missed class because the bus left the stop early. And now we can confirm, well, no it didn’t!

And we’ve also become a lot more proactive, looking to see if certain routes are consistently early or late, or if it’s just certain times of the day affecting on-time performance.

And with that information, we’re now looking at changing our route alignments and schedules in the next year or two. I don’t think we could have done that without Swiftly.



## **WHAT ABOUT WITH CUSTOMER SERVICE? DOES SWIFTLY HELP WITH THAT?**

Actually, yes. I get emails all the time from riders asking for the best way to get from A to B. [With Swiftly's APIs], now I can look up a trip in Google Transit, and just copy and paste it into an email, then send it off to them. They just have to click on the link. Beforehand, I'd have to write out a whole email. "Take this route, go here and here and here." But a picture is worth a thousand words. A link is worth even more. It gives them more freedom to explore the options themselves.

Swiftly has cut these types of requests in half.

## **HAVE THESE PROJECTS AFFECTED RIDERSHIP?**

It's gone up! It's gone up quite a bit actually. This month, we're about up five percent year over year.

## **HOW WOULD YOU DESCRIBE SWIFTLY TO A COLLEAGUE WHO'S NEVER HEARD OF IT?**

Swiftly has just made our lives so much easier over here. You should check it out!



Swiftly develops enterprise software to help transit agencies and cities improve urban mobility. Built by transportation experts for transportation professionals, the Swiftly platform harnesses billions of data points and sophisticated algorithms to improve transit system performance, service reliability, and real-time passenger information. Over 50 cities around the world use Swiftly's technology platform, improving transportation services for millions of riders each day. Swiftly is backed by leading mobility investors, including Ford Smart Mobility, Samsung NEXT, Via ID, and RATP Dev.

## LEARN MORE

Interested in learning how Swiftly can improve efficiency and reliability in your city?

Reach out to us at [contact@goswift.ly](mailto:contact@goswift.ly) or schedule a demo at [goswift.ly/demo](https://goswift.ly/demo).