Towards a user-friendly bus system in Kagoshima-City : Learning from the Transperth system

Faculty of Law and Literature, 4th grade   Harune Inaba

The reason why I chose this topic

During my stay in Perth, I often used the convenient local bus app called Transperth. In contrast, I realized I had never used one in Kagoshima. While researching, I found many improvement requests from Kagoshima users. Enhancing app usability could increase convenience and encourage more people to use public transportation in Kagoshima.

In Kagoshima

In Kagoshima, we have multiple bus companies, and multiple apps with different purposes.

Mokuik

Users can…
・ Search for bus routes and timetables
・ Find routes based on their preference, such as "fewer transfers", "earlier arrival times" or "lower fares"
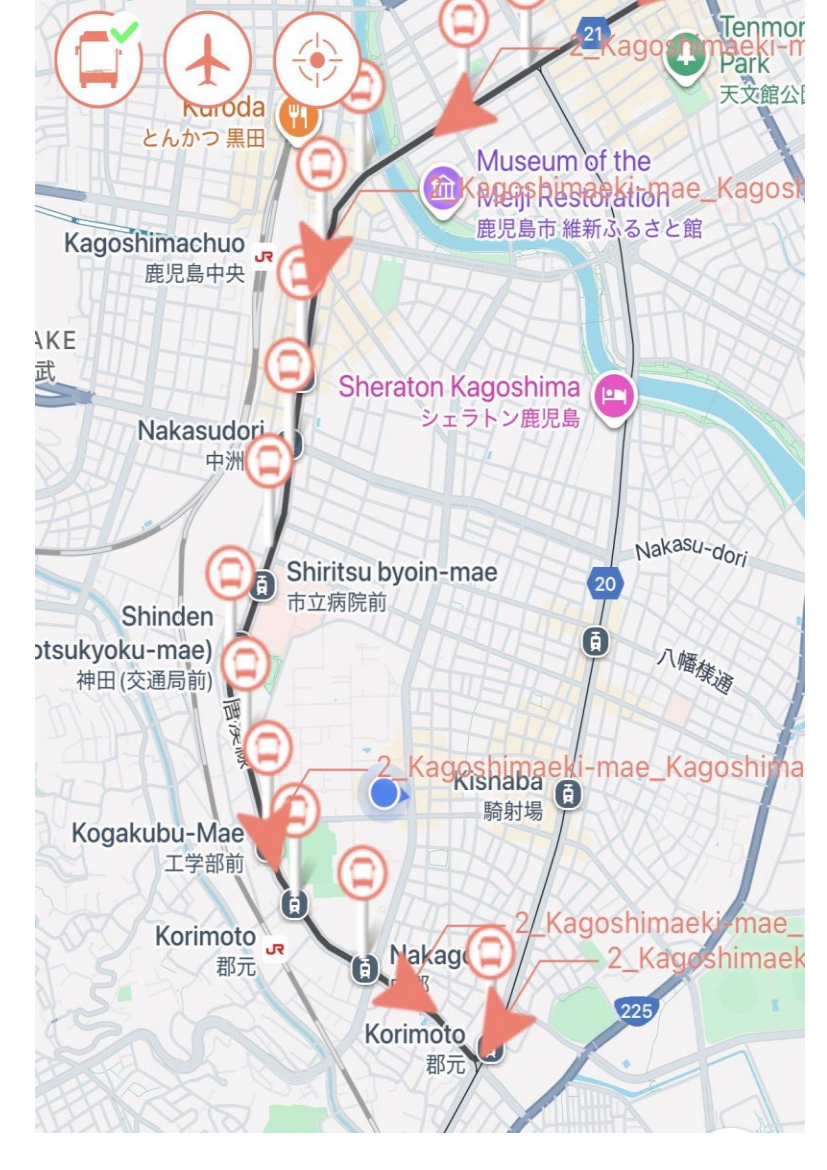
HOWEVER, City trams are not included, multiple route options are not shown, also the bus route itself and the real-time bus location are not displayed.

Departing at 15:32 →
Arriving at 16:12
40 mins(21 min. ride)
¥ There is no fare data available
1 transfers

15:32 南国交通株式会社（南国交通）
中央駅・天文館経由 鹿児島駅前行
き
明姫口
9停留所を経由 (12 mins | IC not support
¥240)

15:44 南国交通株式会社（南国交通）
(第五最乗り場) 天文館経由 鹿児
島駅前行
鹿児島中央駅
Transfer

15:56 鹿児島交通
[19]
Kagoshima-chuo-eki
4停留所を経由 (9 mins | There is no fare
data available)

16:05 鹿児島交通
[19]
Hobun-gakubu-mae
7 min. walk

16:12 鹿児島大学

PINA

Users can…
・ View buses in operation in real time
・ Search for nearby stops based on their current location
・ View all stops from the starting point to the final stop on a single screen.

HOWEVER, searching by time is not available. Also, it does not display essential information such as fares or walking time from your current location. What's worse, the route map of Nangoku Kotsu is not available.

The bus companies recommend using "Mokuik" and "PINA" together, since the two apps have different function.

HOWEVER, routes covered by each app are inconsistent — some routes are included in one app but not in the other
→ resulting in a lack of integration and poor usability

Can Bus Companies in Kagoshima-City Work Together to Create a Single App ?

In Perth

In Perth, there is only one bus company, and people can search routes for all buses with just one app.

Transperth

Users can…
・ Get routes from their current location to their destination, including transfer
・ View current location of buses
・ Check information related to bus operations, such as traffic regulations.

★ The use of colors and symbols makes the information visually easy to understand

LEAVE 592m 24 330m AIR +2
12:49 Bus departs 12:58pm 1.25km
PM Arrive at destination 01:47pm $3.15
⚠ Service Alert - More Info

Users can also…
・ save frequently used routes as favorites
・ view available payment methods
・ check SmartRider balance and auto charge it
・ adjust the walking speed in the settings

★ Transperth also puts effort into promoting its app
→ Digital ads for the app can be seen everywhere inside the bus terminal.

Conservative mindset in Kagoshima

The conservative and exclusive nature of Kagoshima is sometimes referred to as **"Kagoshima Monroeism"**

For example…
In terms of public transportation in Kagoshima, common transportation IC cards used nationwide, such as Suica, cannot be used.

but take a look at this case…

"Rapica" IC card is accepted by all major bus operators in Kagoshima, including Nangoku Kotsu, Kagoshima Transportation Bureau, and Kagoshima Kotsu.

Since they already collaborated on this system, they could also work together to operate a single app.

why??

Proposal

One App for All Routes and Every Need

Buses are **indispensable part of citizen's daily lives**.

💡 Integrate Mokuik and PINA.

💡 Present multiple route options in a simple display.

💡 Place the app advertisements at stations and bus stops.

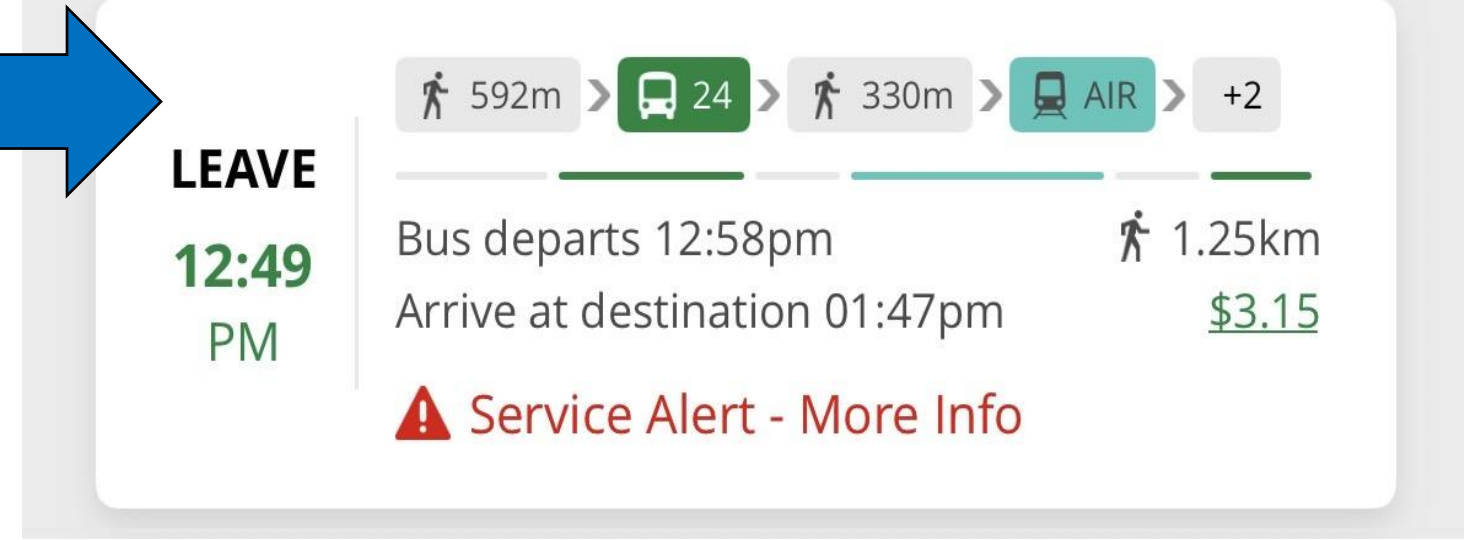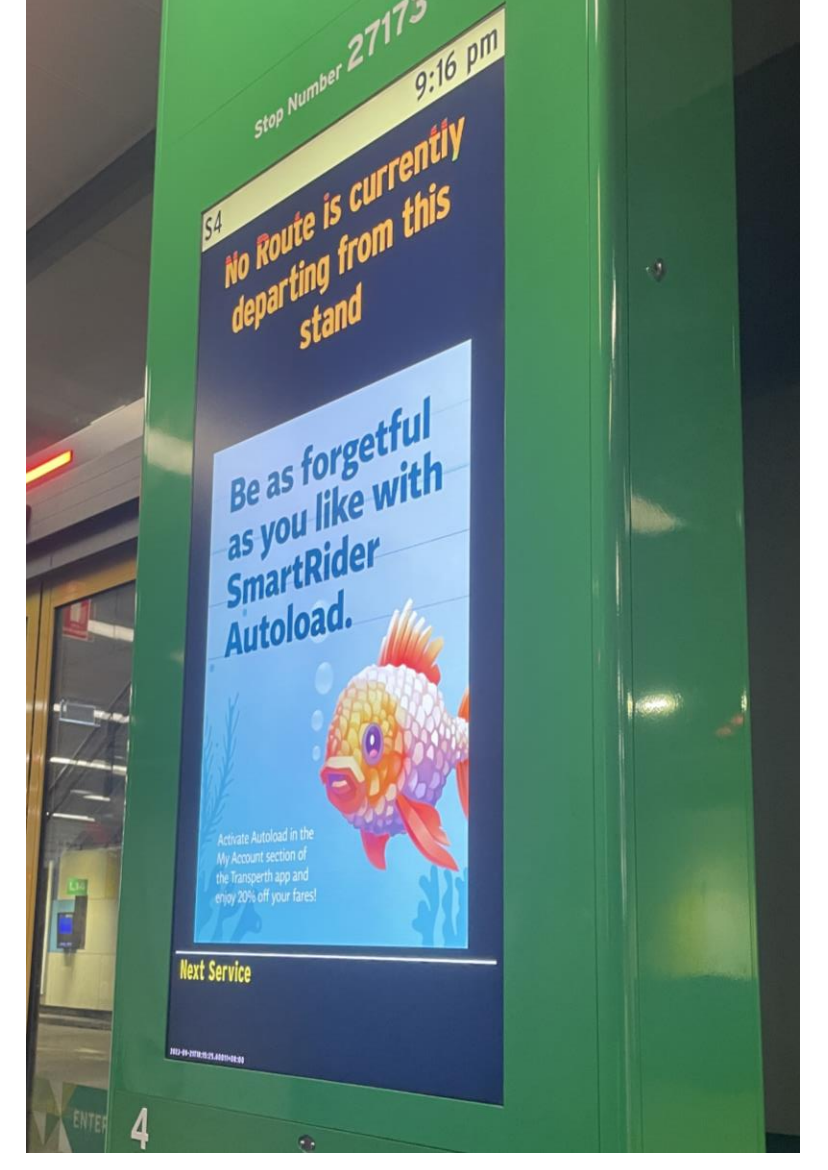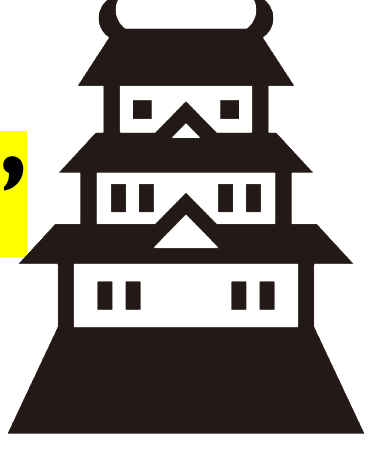**The companies should cooperate** at least in terms of accessibility. **A unified app** would make the transportation system more convenient and easier to access for everyone.