



BlablaCar Improves Carpooling Services with Google Maps For Business



At a Glance

What they wanted to do

- Needed software to display maps of routes entered by drivers and passengers using the carpooling platform on its website

What they did

- Integrated Google Maps For Business into its services for the quality of the geographic data, display performance, and ease of use

What they accomplished

- Added a range of new features, including displays of driving routes
- Built carpooling platforms for clients' websites using their own color schemes
- Offered a number of features for accessing route mapping on client platforms

Company

Founded by Frédéric Mazzella in 2006, BlablaCar is the carpooling leader in France. BlablaCar has more than one million members who plan 200,000 trips per month. It also enjoys great success on mobile phones with its Comuto application, which provides options for car sharing in real time on iPhones and Androids. Comuto received two awards at the 2010 AppAwards and the "Proxima mobile" label that recognizes useful applications. BlablaCar also received the Responsible Tourism Prize in 2010 from Voyages-sncf.com for helping reduce carbon dioxide emissions in France. BlablaCar publishes carpooling platforms for clients that include IKEA, Carrefour, VINCI, Orange, Renault, MAIF and many local communities.

Problem

BlablaCar wanted to offer its business customers the ability to map carpool trips on their websites. This service included calculating routes and distances between cities, depending on road types and intermediate destinations. BlablaCar needed software to display maps with good route data and quick and stable response. The software also had to accommodate a high volume of requests.

Solution

BlablaCar used the Google Maps API to develop its carpool mapping solutions. "We have used Google Maps on our site for mapping starting points and destinations for carpooling since 2006. Then the site traffic increased and we needed to use HTTPS mapping for some customers. The free version of Google Maps was no longer sufficient, and we started using Google Maps For Business," explains BlablaCar Chief Executive Officer Frédéric Mazzella.

"We significantly increased the volume of requests handled by moving to the Premier version of Google Maps," Mazzella adds. "We took advantage of Google Premier's SSL capabilities that allow map data to be encrypted on a secure network."

"Performance and data quality are the greatest advantages of Google Maps For Business for us."

—Frédéric Mazzella, BlablaCar Chief Executive Office

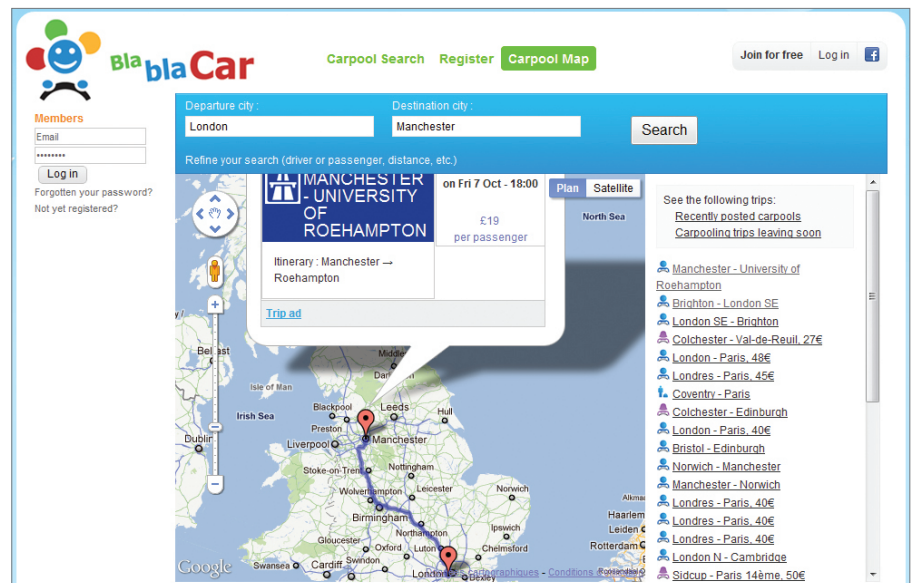
BlablaCar users simply enter a starting point and destination to begin a route search. They choose a trip from the list returned by that search. They then review trip information and the route and can zoom in for geographical details on a roadmap or satellite view. They also can move about with directional controls.

"Updating map data was also an important factor for us. Google Maps For Business handles updating in real time. We don't have to store data that may be changing," Mazzella continues.

About Google Maps For Business

Google Maps For Business allows companies to easily integrate interactive maps into their internal or public websites. The API lets users make informed decisions and view important information on a map. This is possible through advanced geocoding, the integration of secure content cards, and many services and options that help businesses.

For more information visit
<http://google.com/enterprise/maps>



Google Maps For Business is a powerful and reliable solution that ensures a high-quality display of continuously updated geographic data. Integrating the Google API was quick. “The APIs are very well documented. This meant we completed developments independently without external systems integrators. It was easy to get up and running. We were operational with the first features in a very short time,” adds Mazzella.

Results

Since launching in 2006, the company has relied on Google Maps technology. It now offers mapping of routes entered by drivers and passengers.

“Google Maps For Business adds real value to our website. It allows us to display maps of drivers’ routes. It was a very natural addition to our business, and we added a visual component that is important to our customers. We particularly like how it calculates route distances,” Mazzella states.

The economic impact is already very positive. “Ease of use for users and universality of the data are our main concerns. Google’s solution has definitely met our needs,” Mazzella continues.

Google Maps For Business integrates seamlessly with services developed by BlablaCar: “It was easier for us to sell our business-to-business solutions with the mapping. We have built carpooling platforms for clients’ websites, using their color schemes. We offer companies a number of features so users can access route mapping on these platforms. This mapping is the advantage that can make the difference,” Mazzella adds.

“We expect soon to integrate the Geocoding and Places APIs to guide user input. These APIs will query the database by entering an address in the search engine. The engine will immediately identify the latitude and longitude of the location.”

Google Maps For Business is the starting point for future BlablaCar projects. “We are testing some projects now. We are working to manage international geocoding and make it easier to enter starting points and intermediate and final destinations via the Google Places API ‘autocomplete’ feature. This will add more fluidity and flexibility for users. This is a key advantage for our users,” Mazzella concludes.

