



IRU Bus Excellence Award 2013

The Swedish Bus and Coach Federations nomination and application on behalf of Åkerberg's Trafik and the Trosa bus line



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Introduction

The Trosa-Stockholm-Trosa Bus Line started May 3, 2010 by Åkerberg's Trafik

Trosa is a small but growing town with about 12 000 permanent inhabitants in the municipality. Trosa is an attractive and beautiful town, and during the summer the archipelago town has 30 000 inhabitants.

Before the start of the Trosa bus line there was no bus traffic between the cities of Stockholm and Trosa at all. Most of the passengers earlier commuted with their own car. The bus line has made it easier for the commuting inhabitants and students as well as tourist to travel between Trosa and Stockholm. A lot of the travelers have left their car at home and now take the bus everyday instead. A smaller number who previously traveled by train have also switched to traveling with the Trosa bus instead. The main reason for this is that the bus is punctual and is considered to be an easier way to travel. A testimonial of this is Lotta Finstorp who is a member of the Swedish Parliament and specialist in public transport. Her son moved to Trosa based on the fact that he could take the bus and never be late for work in Stockholm. Earlier he was late at least once or twice a week when he was taking the train. Since he moved one year ago and is taking the bus he has never been late a single day.



The bus line is based on unique and innovative ideas and has received great attention in the Swedish public transport industry and society as such. One way the line is 67 km long and is served seven days a week with 15 departures in each direction each workday. A single trip takes 60 minutes using the highway and the dedicated bus lines entering the south part of Stockholm. By entering the Liljeholmen multimodal terminal, the major south Stockholm public transport hub, with connections to the subway, the tram and all south going buses the passengers get direct access to the whole Stockholm public transport infrastructure. The innovated way the bus line is planned and executed has attracted a large portion of managers and executives who earlier always used their own car. During rush hours most of the travelers naturally are working people and students. By differentiated fares at outside the rush hours departures have had an increase of travelers who are mostly tourists and retirees.

Unique cooperation as a base

The Trosa bus line is one for Swedish conditions unique concept based on a service concession contract. The one party, Åkerbergs Trafik, a privately operated company with a strong entrepreneurial force, the other is a public body through some financial support to improve and increase public transport use. Åkerbergs Trafik takes all the business risk and has accounted for the investment in buses and traffic management.

Länstrafiken Södermanland (publicly owned limited company that is the principal of public transport in Södermanland) contributes to the bus line through an operating grant paid during the first five years in a declining scale before it ends.

The agreement, revenue and number of passengers in figures

Year	Revenue including operational grant (SEK)	Revenue excluding operational grant (SEK)	Operational grant (SEK)	Number of passengers
2010	9 200 000	5 100 000	4 100 000	75 466
2011	10 100 000	6 300 000	3 800 000	93 223
2012	10 300 000	7 600 000	2 700 000	105 698
2013			2 200 000	
2014			1 680 000	

Åkerbergs Trafik handles all the sales and pricing and get all the bus line revenue. Åkerbergs Trafik also takes care of all the marketing even if they were supported the first three months by Länstrafiken Södermanland and Trosa city. In an innovative way Åkerbergs Trafik also collaborate with local Trosa companies like hotels, real estate brokers and industries. The main partner is City hotel. This means for example that the buses are advertising the City Hotel in Trosa while the hotel is advertising the Trosa bus line. City hotel sells special accommodation and activity packages where the journey by the Trosa bus line is included. City hotel also has a special drink named The Trosa Bus :-)



Customer focus

The new Trosa bus line started with newly purchased coach buses with low floors, 47 seats and with following customer focused features:

- Extra space between the chairs making the journey much more comfortable
- Free internet
- Computer tables at the back of each chair
- Conference tables
- Toilet
- Safety belts in all seats

Besides the basic features described above the number of departures has increased significantly based on the cooperation with the business environment in Trosa community, especial at weekends. Based on the customer focused operational planning no departures since the start has been cancelled and if the capacity is not enough based on bookings, additional buses or taxi vehicles are immediately arranged for the passengers. Based on the operational excellence the time table has been kept to almost 100% which you can see in the market surveys.

As an extra feature travelers are served breakfast a few times a year during special occasion or special days.



Marketing

The Trosa bus line has been marketed through advertisements in publications, posters, other printed materials, at trade shows and of course through the Trosa bus website www.trosabussen.se.

The Trosa bus line has also been promoted by its own rumor in the bus industry based on numerous media coverage with a lot of focus on the innovated way to start and develop a new bus line in cooperation with local authorities and companies. The Trosa bus line is often mentioned in the public debate within the public transport industry as a good example how to “Double the public transport in Sweden” and doing so and still reducing the cost for society and increase customer satisfaction, which is an equation many bus companies and authorities are looking for.



Finally Friday ☺

Customer satisfaction and customer surveys

Follow up report 2011-11-15 by Transportforskningsgruppen i Borlänge (Transport Science Group in Borlänge)

The survey was made by Transportforskningsgruppen as a follow up on the started traffic of the Trosa bus line. The survey was based on interviews with people travelling with the Trosa bus. The summary of the report said:

Respondents were satisfied or very satisfied with:

- Number of departures
- Travel time
- Time keeping
- Departure time relative to the connecting public transport
- Comfort
- The response from drivers
- The drivers driving style
- Value for money

The comments received on the opportunities for improvement in quality and service is as follows:

- Requests for more and more frequent service from Trosa and Vagnhärad (Already in place)
- A more central stop in Stockholm (Not applicable since there are no dedicated bus lines going direct to the City Terminal which will mean 30 minutes extra in peak traffic for 4 kilometers)
- Combined ticket system (Will be introduced during autumn 2013)
- Real-time information and possibly a mobile application (Will be introduced during autumn 2013)
- Access to the coffee on board the buses (The days when hostesses are onboard the bus)

Overall, respondents in the Trosa bus were very pleased with the line.



The Trosa bus own survey conducted 2013-05-03

Each passenger was handed the survey during the morning traffic May 3, 2013. Out of 160 passengers 146 replayed. The results are used as a direct input to the business development.

1. How do you evaluate our current schedule?	Number of recipients in each category	% of recipients in each category
1= Poor / Badly	0	0%
2= Less good	13	9%
3= Good	97	66%
4= Very good	36	25%
Average grading	3,2	
Number of answers	146	
2. How do you evaluate our departures according to schedule?	Number of recipients in each category	% of recipients in each category
1= Poor / Badly	1	1%
2= Less good	10	7%
3= Good	44	30%
4= Very good	91	62%
Average grading	3,5	
Number of answers	146	
3. How do you evaluate the drivers service on the buses?	Number of recipients in each category	% of recipients in each category
1= Poor / Badly	0	0%
2= Less good	0	0%
3= Good	38	26%
4= Very good	108	74%
Average grading	3,7	
Number of answers	146	
4. In what way do you want to purchase your tickets?	Number of recipients in each category*	
SMS	31	
Web	45	
Commuter card by direct debit	12	
As it is today	110	
* Each recipients can chose several categories		



Environment, quality and safety

Åkerbergs Trafik has management systems and is certified to the ISO system for quality (ISO 9001) environmental (ISO 14001) and also for road safety (ISO 39001). There are only two or three other bus companies in Sweden to date have been certified in this manner.



Pär Åkerberg

Pär Åkerberg, inventor, president and owner of Åkerbergs Traffic and The Trosa bus line has also been awarded "Entrepreneur of the Year 2010 in both Trosa community and the region of Södermanland.

