Izuko MaaS App
Izu, Japan

Key Dates and Project Owner
In 2019, the Izu region of Japan became one of the first regions of the country to develop a MaaS platform. moovel Group led the production of the app, known as 'Izuko', in partnership with Tokyu Corporation, East Japan Railway Company, and East Japan Marketing & Communications.[1] The Izuko app launched in three phases:

- Phase 1: April 1, 2019 - June 30, 2019
- Phase 2: September 1, 2019 - November 30, 2019
- Phase 3: November 16, 2020 - March 31, 2021

Commented [MR1]: Unsure what exactly happened in each phase

Commented [MR2R1]: Seems like each phase obviously built on the other, and they added things like more bus stops in each phase, but unsure past that

Geographic Context
This project serves the Izu peninsula, located roughly 90 miles southwest of Tokyo. The Izu region is largely rural but also includes small-urban cities on the northeast coast, such as Atami, Ito, and Shimoda.[2]

1. Bus Terminal at Izukyu Shimoda Station[3]

Specific User Groups
This project largely seeks to address the mobility needs of tourists traveling within the Izu peninsula, with some additional focus on elderly residents and visitors. The Izu region sees

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[1] https://www.automotiveworld.com/news-releases/moovel-group-testing-its-mobility-as-a-service-platform-in-japan-izuko-app-launched-for-the-izu-region/
[2] https://www.japan-guide.com/e/e6310.html
[3] https://tokyo.digi-joho.com/trips-excursions/izu-tips-transportation.html

about 18 million tourists per year and is one of the most popular destinations for domestic tourists in Japan.

Project Goals
While the Izu peninsula is an attractive tourist destination, the region struggles to fully capitalize on its popularity with tourists in part due to fewer transportation options compared to other more populated regions. As such, the project goals of Izuko are largely aimed at increasing tourism and helping tourists navigate the region.[4] Specifically, Izuko aims to:
- Provide tourists with improved transportation infrastructure to increase visitors' length of stay, and increase the number of places they visit within the region
- Reduce private car dependence for tourists
- Revise promotion and product strategy for customers and tourists by visualizing customer demographics and purchasing behaviors

Governance Model
Japan is taking a regional approach in promoting MaaS, with both local governments and private-sector companies playing important roles.[5] While the public sector sets priorities and identifies regional needs, transit systems in Japan are largely run by the private sector, with little direct government funding. Along those lines, Izuko was developed for the Izu region, but with a heavy emphasis on private-sector development. In many ways, Izuko's governance model regarding MaaS is like Helsinki's model, where the public sector has minimal involvement. The governmental role in this case, is analogous to 'MaaS Enabler.' Find out more about this public sector governance role, and others, on the MaaS Governance Models page.[6]

> **Commented [JA3]:** Link to Helsinki blog post

In what is known as the "commercial integrator model," MaaS operators sign bilateral agreements with different transportation operators.[7] Using this framework, the Izu region was able to deploy a MaaS platform with minimal government investment, instead leveraging substantial private-sector funding and coordination.

Moovel Group, a German joint venture between Daimler AG and the BMW Group, took the lead in developing the Izuko app and has developed several other MaaS platforms in Europe and North America. East Japan Railway and Tokyu Corporation are the day-to-day operators of the app within the Izu region.

Funding
Because transit is largely a private sector endeavor in Japan, private companies provided funding for the Izuko initiative. While there is no publicly available data on the total cost of the Izuko app, MaaS has become a point of emphasis for many Japanese mobility

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[4] https://www3.weforum.org/docs/WEF_MaaS_Rural_Mobility_2021.pdf
[5] https://www.forbes.com/sites/japan/2020/11/30/japan-is-innovating-mobility-as-a-service-and-creating-a-61-billion-market/?sh=2ff76f0b2d87
[6] MaaS Governance Models Page
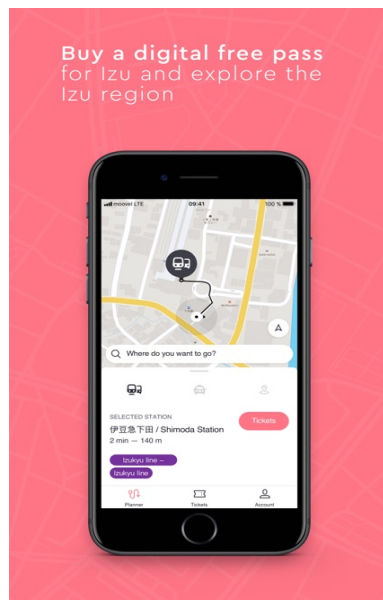[7] https://www3.weforum.org/docs/WEF_MaaS_Rural_Mobility_2021.pdf

companies like East Japan Railway. In FY2019 East Japan Railway appropriated roughly $3.7 billion USD for all its capital projects, which included MaaS efforts like Izuko. East Japan Railway defined this as an "advance investment that contributes to technology innovation."[8] Additional investment was likely provided by Tokyu Corporation as well.

Project Components

The primary functions of the Izuko app include:

- **Integrated trip planner and integrated fare system**: When using the app, users can plan their trip by entering a starting location manually or automatically via location and then by searching for the destination of their choice. The app then "immediately displays all available mobility services that can be booked directly via the app or after being redirected to the provider's website (Hello Cycling, Izu Potter and JR Rent-A-Car)."[9] When users choose bus or train, they can buy a digital ticket on the app, which is valid for two days. Digital tickets include the Izuko East Pass, which covers the entire eastern region of Izu, and the Izuko Wide Pass, which covers almost the entire Izu region. Additionally, the app allows reservations of on-demand transportation, bicycle rental, and car rental.

2. Advertisement for the Izuko App[10]

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[8] https://www.jreast.co.jp/e/investor/pdf/2021_presentation.pdf

[9] https://www.automotiveworld.com/news-releases/moovel-group-testing-its-mobility-as-a-service-platform-in-japan-izuko-app-launched-for-the-izu-region/

[10] https://appadvice.com/app/izuko/1452587394

- **On- demand transit**: The Izuko project also developed an on-demand transportation service to improve travel within the region and cover first-mile last-mile issues with fixed-route service. Izuko initially set up 27 bus stops, mostly located near tourist attractions, where users can utilize the on-demand bus service. In phase 3 of the project, Izuko added more bus stops at other tourist attractions, as well as at hotels or hostels, to increase tourism to hotspots.
- **Tourist destinations**: Due to its focus on tourists, the Izuko app offers tickets for selected tourist attractions, such as the Shimoda Aquarium or the amusement park (the app offers tickets for 6 different tourist destinations).
- **Real-time data monitoring**: The Izuko app also contains a real-time data monitoring system to visualize client demographics and purchasing behaviors by location and time to aid their promotion and product strategy. Other businesses, such as shops, are also able receive this information to help them market their business by joining the app.[11]

Related Efforts

The MaaS market in Japan is growing rapidly; in 2019, the Yano Research Institute forecasted that the domestic MaaS market will hit $61 billion USD by 2030 (a 44% increase annually year-over-year).[12] Recognizing this opportunity, Japan's Ministry of Land, Infrastructure, Transport and Tourism is promoting several MaaS projects[13]. Some of these projects include:

- Toyota Motor and Nishi-Nippon Railroad (Nishitetsu) recently introduced a multi-modal smartphone mobility service called "my route" in Fukuoka City and Kitakyushu City that enables users to plan an outing by entering a destination and then choosing from various routes and modes of transportation, such as walking, buses, trains, and taxis.[14] The app offers payment options in addition to providing information on destinations like cafes and restaurants. It joined the developing MaaS infrastructure of well-known apps that assist commuters in navigating intricate transit systems in large cities in Japan last year and is now fully operational.
- SkedGo Nōgata – Residents in the city of Nōgata can now use the SkedGo app to plan, book, and calculate fares for multi-modal public transport routes. The result is a seamless door-to-door experience, with SkedGo's solution supporting real time updates of demand response transportation (DRT) availability, virtual stops, and operating hours.[15]
- Shobara MaaS – Shobara MaaS Study Council launched service in 2020 in an effort to fill service gaps in a mountainous region that has been losing population. Recognizing the importance to remove any hurdles that may hinder daily transit use in rural areas, the city explored using subscriptions instead of having pay-per-journey options only. [16]

[11] https://www3.weforum.org/docs/WEF_MaaS_Rural_Mobility_2021.pdf
[12] https://maas-alliance.eu/2020/12/02/japan-is-innovating-mobility-as-a-service-and-creating-a-61-billion-market/
[13] Creation of New MaaS in Various Regions to be Promoted (meti.go.jp)
[14] https://www.telematicswire.net/multi-modal-mobility-service-my-route-operational-in-fukuoka-city-and-kitakyushu-city/
[15] https://www.traffictechnologytoday.com/news/mobility-as-a-service/skedgo-brings-demand-responsive-maas-to-nogata-japan.html
[16] https://www3.weforum.org/docs/WEF_MaaS_Rural_Mobility_2021.pdf

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