

THE BUS INSIDER

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BY COACH BUILDERS INDIA



URBAN SPHERE: BOLD NEW FORCE IN CONNECTED MOBILITY

India to the World:
How AI Is Driving the
Future of the Bus
Industry

Tech-Driven, Trust-
Led: Surya Khurana On
Flixbus India's Journey
To 1 Million Passengers


The Road Less
Travelled: Reflections
on Building OurBus
Bharat


OUR PRODUCTS



IVORYLINE 6m City Electric Bus

Specification :


Upto 200 Km 


15 Seating + 10 Standings
+ 1 Driver 



VIYANA Double Decker E-Bus

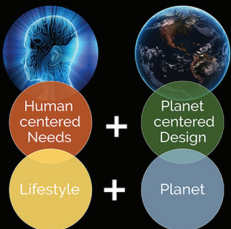
Specification :

 Upto 240 Km

 Upto 82 Seating + 1 Driver



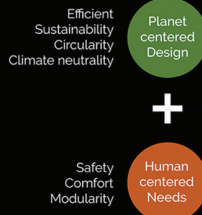
Urban Sphere Brand Philosophy



Efficient
Uplifting
Urban
City
Modern
New
Next

Globe
Earth
Natural
Sphere
Era
Life
Organic

WHAT IS URBAN SPHERE



URBAN SPHERE IS PLANET CENTRIC
BRAND FOCUSED ON HUMAN NEEDS

Logo design Story :



URBAN SPHERE
FINAL LOGO

PROUDLY INSPIRED, DESIGN & MANUFACTURED
IN BHARAT

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As I write this, with our team putting the final touches on what is our very first issue, I feel overwhelmed but in the best, most humbling way. This is more than a magazine launch; it's the beginning of a dream I have carried for years.

The Indian bus and mobility sector has moved billions, quietly and tirelessly but it has rarely received the attention, the recognition, or the storytelling it truly deserves. I always wanted to change that. To shine a spotlight on the ideas and innovations shaping the future of bus travel in India. But more importantly, to spotlight the people behind those ideas, the ones who seldom make headlines, but keep this country moving. This is our mission.

And this mission matters. Because the future of mobility in India will not be built on the back of cars or high-speed rail alone. Buses will be at the heart of India's mobility revolution. And the people who build, operate, and innovate in this space deserve a platform that sees them, understands them, and tells their stories with depth and dignity.

The bus industry in India stands on the cusp of a paradigm shift. The challenges are undeniable, but for the first time in a long time, the conversation is shifting. Technology is no longer a luxury, but a necessity. Passenger experience is being reimagined, not as an afterthought, but as a driver of value.

There's a quiet but unmistakable momentum building. The industry is ready for transformation. But like any meaningful change, it needs practical solutions, long-term thinking, and most of all, leaders who see the road ahead, even when it's still being built.

This magazine was born from that belief. And we hope to be a catalyst - to spotlight, question, connect, and celebrate. This is our vision.

To everyone who trusted us and became a part of this issue - thank you. And to my team, who shared my dream and rode along with unwavering dedication, I'm deeply grateful.

This magazine isn't just for the industry. It's by the industry. In the issues ahead, expect bold conversations with industry shapers, data-driven insights, and on-the-ground stories that reveal how change really happens.

Here's to the journey ahead.

Cheers!



Shivam Gautam

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VDL to Deliver 42 New Generation Citea Buses to Transdev Netherlands

Volvo and UNVI Collaborate on Luxury Coach for UK and Ireland

Daimler Buses Emerges as Top Performer in 2024 Despite Group-Wide Decline

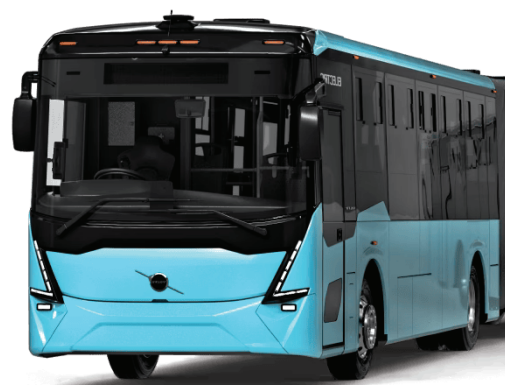
Volvo Launches First Locally Manufactured Electric Articulated Buses in Mexico

Volvo Secures 106 Electric Bus Order from Svealandstrafiken in Sweden

Scania Introduces New E-Bus Powertrain with Multiple Power and Charging Options

IVECO BUS Named Official Transport Partner for the IIHF 2025 Women's Ice Hockey World Championship

Solaris Will Deliver 81 Urbino electric Buses to VR Sverige AB in Stockholm



Ashok Leyland Unveils New Bus Manufacturing Facility in Andhra Pradesh

On March 19, 2025, Ashok Leyland inaugurated its advanced bus manufacturing unit in Andhra Pradesh.

The new manufacturing unit is situated in Malavalli, around 40 km from Vijayawada. The ultra-modern facility, which spans 75 acres, is set to play a crucial role in enhancing Ashok Leyland's production capacity while creating significant employment opportunities for the local workforce.

The plant was officially inaugurated by Shri Nara Lokesh, Hon'ble Minister of Information Technology, Electronics and Communications, and Human Resource Development, Government of Andhra Pradesh, in the presence of other distinguished guests.

This facility is designed to produce Ashok Leyland's full range of diesel buses and Switch Mobility's electric buses, further solidifying the brand's leadership in the Indian and global markets. The plant boasts an impressive annual production capacity of 4,800 buses and is equipped with state-of-the-



art equipment that ensures high levels of automation.

Among its standout features are Nalanda, a modern Learning Center, and an advanced Service Training Center, both of which will play a pivotal role in skill development and technical training for the local workforce.

The new bus manufacturing unit is also built with sustainability in mind. It features a green facility with rooftop solar panels, LED lighting, battery-

operated vehicles for internal logistics, water conservation measures, and a zero-discharge system.

These environmentally conscious features aim to minimize the facility's ecological footprint and contribute to long-term sustainability.

As part of the inauguration ceremony, Ashok Leyland and the Hinduja Group handed over the keys to a Switch electric double-decker bus to the Government of Andhra Pradesh.

JBM Auto Forms New Subsidiary, JBM EV Ventures, to Focus on Electric Vehicle Battery Services

JBM Auto Limited has announced the formation of a new wholly owned subsidiary, JBM EV Ventures Private Limited, as per a regulatory filing dated February 26, 2025.

The primary focus of JBM EV Ventures Private Limited will be to offer electric vehicle (EV) battery services on a subscription model, including battery leasing and rental.

Additionally, the subsidiary will concentrate on the research, development, production, and sale of cutting-edge battery technologies and related products.

The company will also engage in activities to support the adoption of electric vehicles, collaborate with government and private sector initiatives promoting eco-friendly transportation, and undertake other business ventures aligned with its core objectives.

While the new subsidiary has not yet commenced its operations, this strategic step positions JBM Auto to tap into the expanding electric vehicle market in India.



Govt Launches Hydrogen-Fuelled Bus & Truck Pilot Projects Under NGHM

The Government of India has launched hydrogen-fuelled bus & truck pilot projects as part of the National Green Hydrogen Mission (NGHM). These projects aim to test the feasibility of hydrogen-powered mobility in India by deploying 37 hydrogen-fuelled vehicles across 10 major routes. The initiative includes 15 hydrogen fuel cell-based vehicles and 22 hydrogen internal combustion engine-based vehicles.

With a financial outlay of ₹208 crore, these pilot projects will help assess the technical feasibility, financial viability, and safety of hydrogen as a fuel for transportation. The pilots are expected

to be commissioned within 18 to 24 months and will lay the groundwork for scaling up hydrogen-powered mobility in India.

Objectives of the Projects Launched
The pilot projects aim to:

- Validate technical feasibility and safety of hydrogen-powered buses and trucks.
- Assess economic viability of hydrogen as a fuel for long-distance and intra-city transport.
- Develop infrastructure, including refuelling stations for hydrogen-powered mobility.
- Promote large-scale adoption of hydrogen in India's transportation sector.

Key Companies Involved in the Pilot Project

Several major Indian automotive and energy companies have been entrusted with the implementation of these projects:

- TATA Motors Limited
- Reliance Industries Limited
- NTPC
- Agency for New and Renewable Energy Research and Technology (ANERT)
- Ashok Leyland
- Hindustan Petroleum Corporation Limited (HPCL)
- Bharat Petroleum Corporation Limited (BPCL)
- Indian Oil Corporation Limited (IOCL)

To ensure the success of the hydrogen-fuelled bus & truck pilot projects, nine hydrogen refuelling stations will be developed along the selected routes.

These stations will serve as crucial hubs for refuelling hydrogen-powered vehicles and ensuring seamless operations.

Key Highlights of Hydrogen-Fuelled Bus & Truck Pilot Projects	
Feature	Details
Project Name	Hydrogen-Fuelled Bus & Truck Pilot Projects
Total Vehicles	37
Vehicle Types	15 Hydrogen Fuel Cell-Based & 22 Hydrogen Internal Combustion Engine-Based
Routes Covered	10 Major Routes Across India
Financial Outlay	₹208 Crore
Project Duration	18 to 24 Months
Supporting Companies	Tata Motors, Reliance Industries, NTPC, Ashok Leyland, HPCL, BPCL, IOCL, etc.
Hydrogen Refuelling Stations	9

Major Routes Covered

The vehicles will operate on 10 major transport routes, covering key urban and industrial centers:

Route	Circuit Covered
Delhi - Greater Noida - Agra	Delhi-NCR and Agra
Bhubaneswar - Konark - Puri	Odisha tourism corridor
Ahmedabad - Vadodara - Surat	Gujarat industrial belt
Sahibabad - Faridabad - Delhi	NCR region connectivity
Pune - Mumbai	Maharashtra commercial corridor
Jamshedpur - Kalinga Nagar	Industrial hub connection
Thiruvananthapuram - Kochi	Kerala transport network
Kochi - Edappally	Urban mobility test
Jamnagar - Ahmedabad	Gujarat hydrogen corridor
NH-16 Visakhapatnam - Bayyavaram	Eastern corridor connectivity





OurBus Launches Delhi to Dehradun Electric Bus Service

American fleet aggregator OurBus launched a new electric bus service between Delhi and Dehradun, marking a significant move towards greener and more sustainable travel.

The electric buses, provided by EKA Mobility, are 9 meters long and have been specially designed to offer a comfortable and efficient travel experience.

With a seating capacity of 33 passengers arranged in a 2x2 layout, these buses combine both sustainability and passenger comfort, making them an ideal choice for intercity travel.

This launch underscores the company's ongoing commitment to advancing eco-friendly and sustainable transportation solutions.

The goal is to create a cleaner transportation network that meets the rising demand for sustainable travel solutions.

Lav Kush, the Chief Operating Officer of OurBus, shared his excitement about the launch, saying,

"The introduction of OurBus' first fully electric intercity bus from Dehradun to Delhi is a significant milestone in our journey towards sustainable travel. We are committed to provide eco-friendly mobility solutions that prioritize comfort, efficiency, and environmental responsibility."

EKA Mobility Partners With BPCL To Launch Kerala's First Hydrogen Bus

In a welcome move towards Kerala's net-zero ambition, EKA Mobility delivered its first EKA Hydrogen bus at the Cochin International Airport (CIAL), Kochi. This initiative is part of a strategic partnership with KPIT Technologies and Bharat Petroleum Corporation Limited (BPCL) to deploy a state-of-the-art 9-meter hydrogen fuel cell bus.

The EKA hydrogen bus will be used as part of a Proof of Concept (PoC) project, with an operational life of three years.

The hydrogen fuel cell bus, capable of carrying over 30 passengers, was first showcased at the Global Hydrogen & Renewable Energy Summit held in Kochi on March 12-13, where it garnered attention for its potential to revolutionize Kerala's transportation sector.

This collaboration brings together the expertise of three industry leaders:

- EKA Mobility, which has integrated KPIT's hydrogen fuel cell technology into its 9-meter electric bus
- BPCL, which has developed the hydrogen generation, dispensing, and refueling infrastructure in Kochi.

This holistic approach is designed not only to deploy the EKA hydrogen bus but also to establish a complete hydrogen mobility ecosystem in Kerala, making it a model state for green hydrogen adoption.

The EKA Hydrogen Bus in Kochi is also the first hydrogen fuel cell bus to operate in Kerala.



India's First Telesurgery Bus Set to Revolutionize Remote Healthcare Access

India has introduced its first telesurgery bus, SSI MantraM, developed by SS Innovations. This mobile telerobotic surgery unit marks a groundbreaking advancement in remote healthcare, enabling expert surgeons to perform or guide surgeries from a distance with minimal latency. Designed to serve the country's most remote areas, SSI MantraM is set to transform how surgical care is delivered in underserved communities.

A Technological Marvel

Built on a BharatBenz 1824 chassis, the SSI MantraM ensures mobility, stability, and seamless connectivity. It is equipped with advanced telecommunication systems that allow for real-time remote surgeries, making it possible for specialists in urban centers to guide or perform surgeries in distant rural regions. The robotic-assisted system operates with an impressive 35-40 milliseconds of latency, ensuring precision and effectiveness during medical procedures.

How SSI MantraM Works

The unit enables surgeons, even when located far from the mobile unit, to perform surgeries using robotic systems. Despite the physical distance, the technology ensures real-time guidance and assistance, making the procedure as accurate as if the surgeon were physically present. The unit's advanced stabilizers



and reinforced structure ensure surgical accuracy, even while the bus is on the move.

Proven Success in Remote Surgeries

SSI MantraM has already proven its effectiveness with successful telesurgeries conducted over long distances. In January 2024, two telesurgeries were performed between Gurgaon and Jaipur (286 km), with minimal latency of 35-40 milliseconds. The system's efficiency was further proven when telesurgeries were

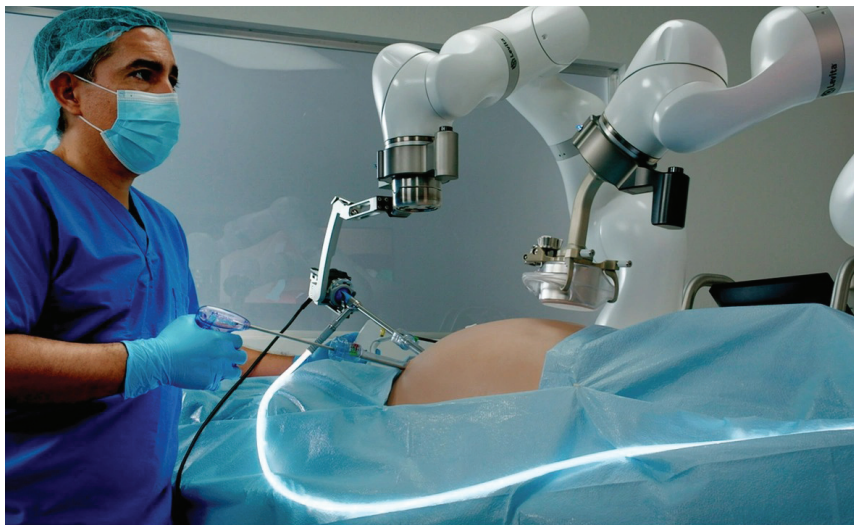
conducted between Gurgaon and Bangalore (1,700+ km), showcasing its ability to deliver quality healthcare over vast distances.

The Future of Mobile Telerobotic Surgeries in India

With its successful implementation, SSI MantraM is poised to revolutionize medical accessibility across India. The future looks bright for the mobile telerobotic surgery unit, which is expected to:

- Expand access to specialized surgeries in remote areas, ensuring that patients in underserved communities no longer have to travel long distances for critical medical care.
- Significantly reduce patient travel costs and medical expenses, which can often be prohibitively high for those in rural areas.
- Strengthen India's position as a global leader in medical technology innovation, as it demonstrates the country's capability in creating world-class healthcare solutions.

The SSI MantraM is not just a technological advancement, but a step toward a more inclusive healthcare system, where specialized surgical care is available at the doorstep of those who need it the most.



FlixBus India Named Official Transport Partner for Legends Face Off Football

FlixBus India has joined hands with The Sports Front (TSF) to become the official transport partner for the much-anticipated football event, Legends Face Off, which took place in Mumbai on April 6, 2025.

As part of this strategic partnership, FlixBus India provided two premium buses to ensure smooth transportation for the legendary football players from Real Madrid Leyendas and Barcelona Legends, who will be visited India for the event.

Through this partnership, FlixBus India managed the travel logistics for several renowned football icons, including Carles Puyol, Xavi Hernandez, Rivaldo, Ricardo Quaresma, Luis Figo, Fernando Morientes, Pepe, and Michael Owen.



The transport service covered their journeys from the airport to their hotels and event venues, ensuring comfort and convenience for the legends throughout their stay in Mumbai. This collaboration comes after the success of FlixBus's partnership with UEFA in 2024. Surya

Khurana, MD of FlixBus India, said, "We're proud to be the official transport partner for Legends Face Off. This collaboration reflects our commitment to connecting fans across India with sustainable, accessible travel."

Olectra Wins ₹424 Crore Electric Bus Contract from Himachal Road Transport Corporation



Olectra Greentech received a letter of award to supply 297 electric buses to the Himachal Road Transport Corporation on April 9, 2025.

The order is valued at ₹424.01 crore and is touted to be one of the largest single-state electric bus procurements under the outright purchase model.

The 9-meter, non-AC buses have been specially designed to navigate the high-altitude, hilly terrains of Himachal Pradesh. These buses can accommodate 30 passengers in a seating 2x2 layout and offer a range of 180 km in a single charge. The buses will be delivered over a period of

11 months from the date of the LoA.

Sharing his enthusiasm, KV Pradeep, Chairman & Managing Director of Olectra Greentech stated: "We are delighted to receive India's first and largest outright order for electric buses. It is truly a proud moment for us and a testament to the trust placed in Olectra's capabilities."

The company reported a strong performance in Q3 FY25, with its consolidated net profit soaring by 71.68% to ₹46.32 crore, driven by a 50.62% surge in revenue, which reached ₹515.36 crore compared to the same quarter last year.

ELECTRIC BUS

SALES VOLUME

IN INDIA IN MARCH 2025



By Zainab Azhar

India’s electric bus market continued its transformative journey in March 2025, showing both resilience and shifting momentum across manufacturers. Although overall sales volumes dipped compared to January and February, the month revealed telling trends in market dynamics and regional deployment strategies.

Emerging players began to challenge incumbents, signaling a potential shake-up in the competitive landscape. Established manufacturers saw varied performances, with some rebounding strongly while others faced sharp declines.

As cities expand their focus on sustainable public transport, March served as a crucial checkpoint in the sector’s evolving trajectory.

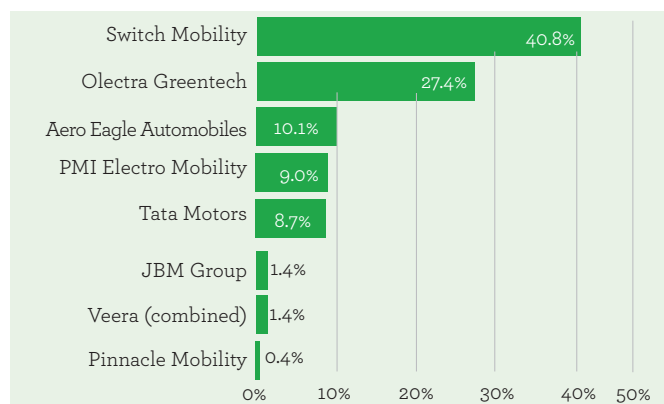
March 2025: Key Highlights

- Switch Mobility maintained its dominant position with 113 units sold, securing a commanding 40.8% market share.
- Olectra Greentech continued its upward trajectory, selling 76 units and capturing 27.4% of the market.
- Aero Eagle Automobiles emerged as a fast-rising challenger, surprising the market with 28 units sold (10.1%)—its highest monthly sales so far.

- Established players like PMI Electro Mobility and Tata Motors experienced drops in sales, closing the month at 25 and 24 units, respectively.
- JBM Auto and Veera contributed modestly with 4 units each, while Pinnacle Mobility recorded 1 unit.

March 2025 Electric Bus Sales by Manufacturer		
Manufacturer	Units Sold	Market Share (%)
Switch Mobility	113	40.8%
Olectra Greentech	76	27.4%
Aero Eagle Automobiles	28	10.1%
PMI Electro Mobility	25	9.0%
Tata Motors	24	8.66%
JBM Group	4	1.4%
Veera (combined)	4	1.4%
Pinnacle Mobility	1	0.36%
Total	277	100%

Market Share of Indian Electric Bus OEMs in March 2025



Comparison with January & February 2025

The first quarter of 2025 saw dynamic fluctuations in electric bus sales driven by tender completions, trial runs, and regional rollouts.

Electric Bus Sales Trend: Jan 2025 to Mar 2025

Manufacturer	Jan 2025	Feb 2025	Mar 2025	MoM Change (Feb-Mar)	MoM % Change
Switch Mobility	125	88	113	+25	+28.4%
Olectra Greentech	59	66	76	+10	+15.2%
PMI Electro Mobility	68	57	25	-32	-56.1%
Tata Motors	23	42	24	-18	-42.9%
JBM Group	48	36	4	-32	-88.9%
Aero Eagle Automobiles	23	12	28	+16	+133.3%
Veera (Combined)	13	4	4	0	0.0%
Pinnacle Mobility	1	2	1	-1	-50.0%
Total Units Sold	360	307	277	-30	-9.8%

Key Observations from Q1 2025

- **Drop in Sales:** The electric bus market dipped from 360 units in January to 277 in March, marking a 23% decline, primarily due to tender delays and execution bottlenecks.
- **Switch Mobility's Resilience:** Despite a 29.6% fall in February, Switch rebounded in March with a 28.4% month-on-month growth, driven by deliveries in Southern states.
- **Olectra's Steady Growth:** Olectra has consistently grown over the quarter, reflecting improved supply chain and order executions.
- **Aero Eagle's Strong Comeback:** After a 47.8% fall in February, Aero Eagle more than doubled its sales in March.

Note: Data taken from Vahan Dashboard as of April 7, 2025. Data from Telangana and Lakshadweep are not included in this report.



URBAN SPHERE:

INDIA'S BOLD NEW FORCE IN CONNECTED,
SUSTAINABLE MOBILITY

By Violina Pegu

In a global mobility landscape defined by rapid urbanization, sustainability imperatives, and shifting technology frontiers, a new name is making itself heard, Urban Sphere.

With a mission to solve both current and future transportation challenges, Urban Sphere is not just building electric buses, it's building a movement. One that puts clean energy, cultural context, and connected design at the center of the mobility equation. As India accelerates its EV ambitions, Urban Sphere is quietly positioning itself as one of the most distinct and forward-thinking players in the space.

Founded with a clear vision to reimagine commercial electric vehicles (EVs) for public transport, and fleet solutions, Urban Sphere is anything but a conventional electric bus OEM.

The very name reflects its ethos, "Urban" for the dynamic, fast-evolving realities of life in today's cities, and "Sphere" for the holistic, planetary view that sustainability demands. Together, they signal a company that thinks globally, but builds with grounded, community-first intent.

Manufacturing Ambition, Rooted in India

From its modern manufacturing hub in the Vasanthanarasapura Industrial Area, Tumkur District, Karnataka, Urban Sphere is building the next generation of electric buses. The facility anchors its vision of making India a global manufacturing base for clean public transport.



In a strategic push to expand India's clean tech exports, Urban Sphere has signed MOUs to export 50,000 electric buses to the Philippines and 1,500 units to Kenya over the next decade.

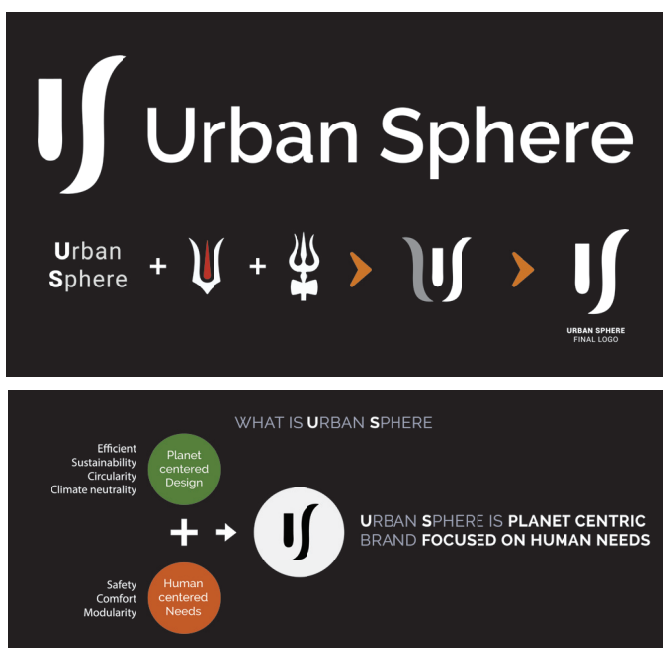
The company's approach is firmly focused on localization, with 70% of its production ecosystem built through partnerships with Indian SMEs, startups, and suppliers. This not only strengthens India's domestic EV ecosystem but also enables a more resilient, adaptable, and cost-efficient supply chain.

That localization has also given the company an edge in global markets. In a strategic push to expand India's clean tech exports, Urban Sphere has signed MOUs to export 50,000 electric buses to the Philippines and 1,500 units to Kenya over the next decade. These international partnerships represent more than commercial success, they signal a global appetite for Indian-designed, Indian-built electric mobility solutions.

A Design Philosophy Guided by the Cosmos

What truly differentiates Urban Sphere isn't just its production strategy or international footprint, it's the soul it brings to its products.

The brand's vehicles are shaped by a one-of-a-kind design language it calls "Inspired by Navagraha", based on the nine celestial planets of Indian astrology. It's a creative framework that ties cultural heritage with futuristic thinking. Each product is named and conceptualized in connection with one of these celestial symbols, representing strength, wisdom, adaptability, or innovation.





Two Flagship Lineups with Distinct Identities

Urban Sphere's product lineup currently spans two electric bus ranges, each designed for specific use cases and markets.

Ivoryline: Where Strength Meets Sophistication

The Ivoryline series, available in 6m, 7.5m, 9m, and 14m formats, is the company's premium offering for both urban and intercity mobility. Inspired by the vahana of Budhgraha (Mercury), the elephant, Ivoryline represents strength, wisdom, and endurance.

The name reflects both elegance and utility, drawing on the historical association of ivory with royal prestige and lasting value. These buses are tailored for high-traffic routes across Southeast Asia and Africa, offering a mix of robust performance and elevated passenger comfort.

Viyana: Affordable Innovation for Urban India

Urban mobility, however, requires a different kind of agility. That's where Viyana comes in.

The name is an acronym, Vi (Vidyut – Electric), Ya (Yana – Vehicle), Na (Nava – New), a subtle nod to Sanskrit and a clear declaration of intent. These buses, available in 6m, 7m, 12m, and double-decker variants, are engineered for the everyday challenges of urban transport, narrow lanes, high frequency, tight turnarounds, and affordability.

Viyana is designed to serve smart cities across India and other emerging markets, combining compact size, low operational cost, and sleek design with long-term reliability.

A Bigger Mission, Mobility That Empowers

More than an electric bus manufacturing company, Urban Sphere positions itself as a platform for ecosystem transformation. Its focus spans not only manufacturing but also human-centric design, digital integration, and decarbonization.

Beyond the tech, Urban Sphere is also investing in people, building partnerships with educational institutions, engaging with urban planners, and working with policymakers to promote sustainable transport at scale.

The brand is aligned with India's broader climate goals and has committed to achieving Net Zero Carbon Emissions by 2040. That means investing in clean energy for operations, recyclable materials in products, and intelligent systems that reduce lifecycle emissions across the board.

Beyond the tech, Urban Sphere is also investing in people, building partnerships with educational institutions, engaging with urban planners, and working with policymakers to promote sustainable transport at scale.

Paving the Road Ahead

As governments across the globe, and especially in India, double down on EV adoption, brands like Urban Sphere will be essential to meeting those targets. With the National Electric Bus Programme aiming to deploy 50,000 e-buses by 2030, India needs manufacturers who can deliver not only scale, but vision.

Urban Sphere's approach, blending local roots with global ambition, product innovation with cultural relevance, may very well be a blueprint for how electric mobility can move forward with purpose.

In an industry often obsessed with hardware specs and sales numbers, Urban Sphere reminds us that mobility is not just about machines. It's about the kind of world we want to move through, and how we choose to shape it.

Tech-Driven, Trust-Led: Surya Khurana On Flixbus India's Journey To 1 Million Passengers

By Zainab Azhar



“It’s a stamp of belief on the hypothesis we set out with”

-Surya Khurana,
Managing Director, FlixBus India.

When FlixBus India launched its services in February 2024, few could have predicted just how swiftly it would scale. One year later, the company has crossed the remarkable milestone of one million passengers — a figure that stands not just as a business achievement but as a powerful validation of the model FlixBus believed in from the start.

That hypothesis was both simple and ambitious - If India’s intercity bus ecosystem — long defined by fragmentation, unpredictability, and uneven service quality — could be reimagined with consistency, safety, tech integration, and a customer-first mindset, passengers would respond.

With this vision in mind, FlixBus set out to transform the landscape of intercity travel. And they did — in millions. In just 12 months, FlixBus connected over 200 cities across India with more than 900 routes, providing dependable, long-distance travel to nearly a million people.

But the road to that milestone was far from easy. “India is not the easiest market to do any operational business, let alone one that sits at the intersection of technology and sustainability,” Surya reflects. The bus operator space was deeply fragmented, and customer trust was low. “There was a massive need and a massive gap in what the customers expected and what was mostly being delivered.”

It was clear from day one that scaling in India would require more than technology and ambition. It would need deep integration with local ecosystems — and that began with choosing the right partners.

Since most of our readers are aware of Flix's assets light model, please confirm with Flix if we should keep this paragraph or delete it.

This model allowed the company to scale quickly while staying asset-light. But more than that, it enabled FlixBus to embed itself in local ecosystems. "The bulk of what you see on a daily basis is actually put forward by our local operators," says Surya. "They're the life and blood of our business. They're the face of what we do every day to our customers."

For FlixBus, operators are more than partners—they're co-drivers of customer experience. Surya sees them as one of his most important customer segments. "If I am able to grow and nurture strong relationships with bus partners, create well-defined SOPs, train them, enable them, and give them the right financial incentives—that's what grows the baseline of our business."

As FlixBus continues to expand, its focus remains on identifying and partnering with operators and entrepreneurs across India who share a vision for sustainable mobility and customer-first service.

"Trust is nothing but delivering what you're promising."

FlixBus recognized early that the biggest gap in India's intercity bus market wasn't affordability or availability—it was trust. Customers often booked journeys without knowing if the bus would actually show up, if it would leave on time, or if the vehicle would match what they saw online.

For Surya, trust is about follow-through. "If I say I'm going to be there for an interview and I show up, you'll trust me. If I say I'll make coffee every morning, and I do, it builds trust. It's the same in business."

That belief translated into clear actions. Every FlixBus booking shows the exact model of the bus—down to whether it's a 12-meter or 13.5-meter vehicle and even specifics like the layout and OEM. Customers are told upfront what kind of seat and configuration to expect.

"If a bus is under repair or delayed, and we have to change it, we inform the customer. That's how trust is reinforced," Surya explains.

He acknowledges that the market is still adjusting to this transparency. "People have been conditioned to expect last-minute changes, delays, and cancellations. Our aim was to change that." And while not everything is always in control, FlixBus focuses on consistent communication and keeping





the customer informed at every step. “Delivering what you promised—or letting them know if you can’t—is what builds trust.”

“We had to customize the global service to the Indian market.”

While FlixBus brought with it a globally proven model, adapting to India meant rethinking key parts of its customer experience. The company invested heavily in localization—not only operationally, but technologically and culturally.

Surya highlights that they spent time speaking with customers across different cities, studying their behaviour at boarding points, and conducting focus groups to understand what truly matters to them. “When you look at the India Flix experience, it’s different in a lot of ways,” he says.

Real-time bus tracking, host visibility, WhatsApp-based communication, multiple payment modes, and safety measures like AIS compliance and seatbelts were all deliberate additions based on local needs.

“We wanted to ensure we have a consistent and functional service. Everyone who touches the customer—whether it’s the driver, the host, or the app—must be obsessed with the experience,” he adds.

India also became the first FlixBus market to pioneer WhatsApp as a primary communication channel. A chatbot was launched at entry to provide round-the-clock support and drive customer satisfaction at scale.

“You can’t operate at this scale without technology.”

If India demanded scale, it also demanded systems that could sustain it. For FlixBus, technology wasn’t just a part of the model—it was the enabler of everything.

“There’s no way we can do what we do at the scale that we do without technology,” says Surya. From pre-booking to fleet tracking, from customer service to dynamic route management—tech powers it all.

Each vehicle is GPS-enabled. In some cases, buses are equipped with telematics. Station selection and creation is powered by GIS. Customer queries are handled through AI-based self-service tools. Communication around delays, cancellations, or rerouting is automated in real time.

“In the past, operators had to call each passenger manually to say the bus is late or the pickup point has changed. Now, all of that is automated,” he explains. The result is efficiency, consistency, and the ability to scale without overwhelming the system.

Surya believes this approach isn’t just about FlixBus—it’s the future of the sector. “This creates more scalability and it’s the direction the industry will move in.”

“Indian consumers are more advanced in how they interact with tech.”

Understanding Indian consumer behaviour was central to how FlixBus designed its offering. While many markets are still adjusting to digital-first travel, Indian users, according to Surya, are ahead of the curve.

“The Indian consumer is very value-conscious, very quality-conscious, and also very tech-savvy. They are mobile-first and app-first. And they expect technology to make life easier,” he says.

When he first used the global FlixBus app years ago, Surya recalls it felt distinctly European. “Now when I use the Indian version, it doesn’t feel global anymore. It feels tailor-made for India.”

The team focused on making the experience intuitive—clear communication, responsive updates, simplified flows, and local expectations built into the tech. “They want to know where the bus is, stay in touch with the host, use their preferred payment mode, and get quick customer support. That’s what we delivered.”

He adds that Indian users are also increasingly sustainability aware, and many are now open to shifting their habits toward greener alternatives. “That’s a positive trend and one that aligns with what we offer.”

“People → Process → Product. That’s how we build.”

As FlixBus India scaled, the company relied on a simple but effective framework: start with people, move to process, and then build it into the product.

“Everything starts with people—solving a problem manually, figuring out what works. If it works repeatedly, you make it a process. And if that continues to deliver, you automate it with tech,” Surya explains.

He believes this approach creates scalability while maintaining quality. “If you rely only on people, you get inconsistency. Processes help—but they can break, too. Technology brings reliability in repetition.”

This thinking extends across functions—whether it’s operations, marketing, or customer experience. Internally, the team uses this framework to decide what to systemize and what still needs human input.

“Plans seldom turn out how you expect. You have to pivot and learn.”

While systems and SOPs have their place, Surya is clear that rigidity doesn’t work in a dynamic market like India. One of the biggest lessons the company has learned is the need to remain flexible.



“You set out with a plan, but very soon, the market shows you something completely different,” he says. “What you need is direction—but also the ability to react quickly, pivot, and keep learning.” Surya believes the mindset that helps in such situations is to always remain in “beta mode”—tweaking, evolving, and staying humble. “If you get too attached to the plan and it doesn’t work, you’ll get stuck. You need to respond to reality.”

This philosophy has shaped everything from route strategy to communication design and allowed the company to continuously improve in response to what customers actually need.

“We want to get to market leadership.”

Now that the one-million mark has been crossed, FlixBus has a clear vision for what comes next: to become the market leader in tech-enabled intercity mobility.

Surya says the company is now focused on building deeper connectivity across India—particularly in corridors where trains don’t run frequently, like hilly regions in the North. “In these areas, buses are the default option. You just need to offer good quality, and people will switch.”

The company is also exploring demand-led opportunities. During the recent Mahakumbh, for example, FlixBus observed spikes in movement from cities like Delhi and Lucknow, which led to new direct routes. “We saw demand that wasn’t organically there before—and built interconnections from it.”

High-volume corridors like Bengaluru-Hyderabad are also being expanded, and the company is increasing its presence in both South and West India.

“We’ve been clear about what we want in this market,” Surya says. “We want to grow sustainably, responsibly, and keep quality high.”



INDIA TO THE WORLD: HOW AI IS DRIVING THE FUTURE OF THE BUS INDUSTRY

By Zainab Azhar

Artificial Intelligence (AI) is revolutionizing operations and service delivery across global public transport systems. The bus industry, in particular, is undergoing a technological transformation, with AI at the forefront of optimizing efficiency, ensuring safety, and enhancing the passenger experience.

In a country like India—where buses constitute the backbone of public mobility and serve

millions of commuters daily—the application of AI presents vast opportunities. From predictive maintenance and real-time scheduling to passenger-facing technologies, AI is influencing nearly every dimension of bus transportation.

Let's take a look at the transformative role of AI in the bus industry, examining key innovations that are reshaping operations and passenger services with real-world examples from both global and Indian contexts.

1

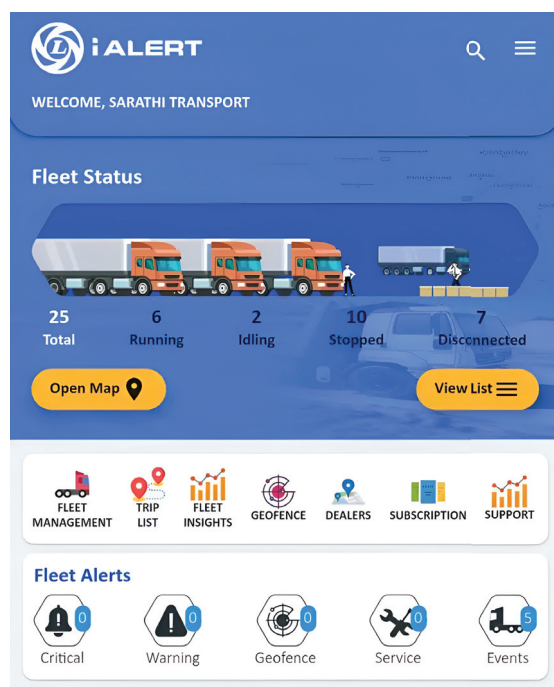
Predictive Maintenance for Fleet Health

Traditionally, bus maintenance adhered to either reactive (post-failure repair) or preventive protocols. AI introduces a more advanced alternative—predictive maintenance.

By harnessing data from onboard sensors, monitoring engine temperature, vibration levels, oil pressure, and fuel consumption, AI algorithms can identify anomalies before they escalate into mechanical failures. This allows for proactive interventions, reducing vehicle downtime and optimizing fleet availability.

Example – Preteckt, i-Alert & Fleet Edge

Global platforms such as Preteckt claim to reduce breakdowns by up to 20% through real-time



diagnostic insights. In India, OEMs like Ashok Leyland (i-Alert) and Tata Motors (Fleet Edge) have integrated predictive maintenance solutions within their commercial vehicle ecosystems, empowering operators with early warnings and actionable insights for improved vehicle lifecycle management.

Example – Arriva Czech Republic & Stratio

European operator Arriva Czech Republic has reported tangible benefits from adopting AI-based maintenance. After deploying Stratio's Predictive Maintenance platform, the company saw a 13.5% increase in the mean time between failures, a 66% reduction in towing incidents, and achieved 2% net cost savings per kilometer annually.

Further validating this trend, an online survey by UITP (International Association of Public Transport) revealed that 1 in 3 public transport organizations globally are considering AI integration for critical applications—including predictive maintenance—as part of their future digital strategies.

2

Route Optimization and Scheduling

AI is streamlining route design and dynamic scheduling by processing vast data sets—traffic flow, passenger demand patterns, ridership peaks, weather conditions, and special events.

By leveraging historical and real-time data, AI enables route planners to allocate resources dynamically, reduce redundancy, and respond to live disruptions. This ensures better frequency management, reduced headways, and optimal fleet utilization.

Example – RTA, DTC & Chartered Speed

Dubai's Roads and Transport Authority (RTA) implemented AI-powered route optimization, resulting in a 13.3% reduction in route inefficiencies

within a single month.

In India, Delhi's Transport Department collaborated with experts, including a research partnership with IIT Delhi, to plan routes for its "Mohalla" minibus initiative using AI-driven models based on granular mobility surveys. However, with the minibuses not yet fully operational, the actual efficacy of AI integration remains to be evaluated.

On the private front, Gujarat-based Chartered Speed adopted AI-enabled scheduling platforms to manage its electric bus fleet, achieving better energy efficiency and operational control.

3

Fuel Efficiency and Emissions Reduction

AI also plays a significant role in promoting fuel efficiency and emissions reduction. By minimizing idling, optimizing trip distance, and refining driver behavior, AI contributes to lowering operational costs and environmental impact.

Through intelligent route management and real-time driver coaching, systems can ensure smoother acceleration, regulated speed profiles, and minimal abrupt braking—factors critical to sustainable bus operations.

Example – Volvo’s I-Coaching

Volvo’s connected fleet ecosystem features the I-Coaching tool, which delivers real-time feedback to drivers on driving parameters such as over-speeding,

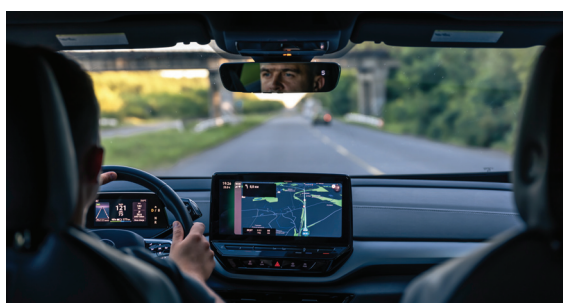


sharp turns, and gear usage. The platform has shown measurable results in enhancing fuel economy and reducing emissions.

4

Driver Monitoring and Advanced Safety Systems

Ensuring driver alertness is paramount for long-distance and intercity bus services. AI-based driver monitoring systems (DMS) use inward-facing cameras and behavioral analytics to detect signs of



fatigue, distraction, or non-compliance with safety protocols.

These systems can identify micro-sleep, yawning, or gaze deviation and issue audible alerts, enhancing road safety and minimizing accident risks.

Example – KSRTC’s Safety Pilot in Karnataka

The Karnataka State Road Transport Corporation (KSRTC) deployed a pilot program utilizing AI-based DMS with dual cameras—one monitoring the driver and the other the road. The system automatically flagged fatigue indicators and alerted drivers in real time. Following a successful trial, KSRTC is expanding deployment across its long-haul routes.

5

Intelligent Enforcement and Traffic Prioritization

AI tools are increasingly being adopted for automated traffic enforcement and to support bus priority mechanisms in congested urban corridors.

Computer vision-enabled cameras, either vehicle-mounted or roadside, can identify traffic violations, such as lane obstruction or illegal parking, and facilitate the automated issuance of penalties—keeping bus rapid transit (BRT) corridors functional.

Example – Chicago & Maharashtra’s AI Initiatives

In Chicago, buses equipped with AI cameras detect unauthorized vehicles blocking dedicated lanes and generate citations in real time. Maharashtra has utilized AI as part of the Intelligent Traffic Management System (ITMS). The state has installed advanced cameras utilize radar technology to monitor traffic violations and violators are issued electronic challans.



Passenger-Centric Innovations: AI Enhancing Commuter Experience

Beyond operational efficiency, AI is transforming the passenger interface by offering real-time information, seamless ticketing, dynamic fare structures, and elevated safety mechanisms.

1. Real-Time Bus Tracking and ETA Accuracy



Advanced vehicle tracking systems (VTS) powered by AI deliver accurate estimated time of arrival (ETA) updates and vehicle location data, crucial for commuter planning and safety.

Example – Chalo App and State-Level Solutions

Chalo, a leading Indian startup in transit scheduling and digital ticketing, utilizes AI to process GPS inputs and traffic

feeds to provide real-time bus movement updates and reliable ETAs. Chalo has demonstrated consistent accuracy in predicting arrival times, which has been pivotal in improving last-mile planning for urban commuters. State-level initiatives, such as One Delhi and BEST Mumbai, have integrated similar features to modernize public transport tracking systems.

2. Dynamic Pricing and Revenue Optimization

AI-based dynamic pricing has become the norm in the mobility industry, enabling real-time fare adjustments based on demand, competition, customer behavior, and market conditions.

Example – Sciative Solutions and Industry Trends

These algorithms offer data-driven insights by continuously analyzing sales trends, competitor pricing, customer will-

ingness to pay, and external factors like weather or events. This model enhances both revenue optimization and seat occupancy. In India, companies like Sciative Solutions are pioneering AI-powered fare engines tailored for state transport undertakings (STUs) and private operators—bringing aviation-style yield management to the bus sector.

3. Surveillance, Safety, and Incident Response

AI-driven surveillance systems are revolutionizing security in the travel and tourism by employing advanced perceptual technologies to analyze video feeds in real time. Utilizing machine learning and computer vision, these systems can process vast amounts of video data, detecting anomalies that may signal potential security threats. By distinguishing between normal and suspicious behaviors, AI enhances the

effectiveness of surveillance operations, enabling prompt and appropriate responses to emerging threats. Beyond detection, AI automates incident response by triggering alerts, notifying security personnel, and executing predefined protocols. This automation accelerates reaction times, reduces human error, and ensures that appropriate measures are taken swiftly to mitigate risks.



4. AI-Driven Customer Support Systems

AI-powered conversational interfaces like chatbots are increasingly used by transit authorities to provide real-time assistance, answer FAQs, and gather service feedback.

Example – Chat with CTA (Chicago)

The Chicago Transit Authority launched Chat with CTA, a multilingual chatbot utilizing Google AI, enabling

riders to access trip information and log service feedback. Such platforms offer scalable customer engagement and data-driven service improvements.

Conclusion: The AI-Driven Shift is Already Here

AI is no longer a speculative technology within the bus industry—it is actively reshaping its future. From fleet health diagnostics and driver oversight to real-time journey planning and personalized commuter services, the scope of AI integration continues to expand. For Indian transport operators, both public and private, the path forward lies in accelerated adoption. AI can significantly elevate

operational resilience, passenger safety, cost efficiency, and service reliability—key pillars in modernizing India's transit infrastructure.

The global benchmarks are in place. Now is the time for the Indian bus ecosystem to institutionalize AI as a core enabler of innovation and growth.

“THE FUTURE OF THE BUS INDUSTRY IS TECH & SMART STRATEGY”

Says Abhijeet Konduskar, CEO, Konduskar Travels



Established in 1994 and headquartered in Kolhapur, Konduskar Travels Pvt. Ltd. has been a trusted name in intercity transport for nearly three decades. What began as a modest operation has since grown into one of Maharashtra's leading private bus operators.



With a fleet of 84 buses and 112 operational routes, Konduskar Travels serves 6 states—Maharashtra, Telangana, Karnataka, Goa, Uttar Pradesh, and Gujarat. The company currently employs 200 professionals, all committed to delivering exceptional service and embracing innovative technology to stay ahead in a dynamic industry.

At the helm of this thriving legacy is Abhijeet Konduskar, CEO of Konduskar Travels, whose leadership has guided the business through the industry's transformation.

From the days of manual ticketing and word-of-mouth marketing to the integration of real-time analytics, GPS tracking, and AI-driven fleet management, Abhijeet has continually adapted to industry changes while maintaining a sharp focus on customer satisfaction.

By Zainab Azhar

APRIL, 2025



His deep expertise in market trends, technological advancements, and shifting passenger expectations has positioned him as one of the most influential figures in the Indian bus industry today.

But leading in this industry hasn't been easy. The past two decades have brought rising operational costs, shifting government policies, and the rapid emergence of online booking platforms that changed how bus operators do business.

Through it all, Konduskar Travels has stayed ahead of the curve, adapting not just to survive, but to thrive.

In this exclusive conversation, Abhijeet Konduskar shares his insights on the industry's evolution, the challenges of balancing traditional operations with modern expectations, and what it takes to succeed in a market that is more competitive than ever.

Zainab Azhar (ZA): Konduskar Travels has been in the industry for nearly 30 years. How did it all begin, and how has the company grown?

Abhijeet Konduskar (AK): Konduskar Travels started in 1994 with a simple but strong vision—connecting metros with Tier 1 and Tier 2 cities while ensuring reliability and comfort. In those early years, things were straightforward.

Routes were fixed, passengers were loyal, and business was about having the right buses and the right people to run them.

Back then, success in this industry was all about knowing your routes, keeping your buses well-maintained, and making sure passengers trusted your service. Today, it's an entirely different ballgame. We grew by expanding strategically—not just adding more routes, but by understanding demand, improving service, and using technology to optimize operations. Now, we use real-time data, customer feedback, and analytics from

“Running a bus company isn't just about owning buses anymore. It's about understanding data, technology, and customer behavior. The operators who get this right will shape the future of this industry.”

Abhijeet Konduskar,
CEO, Konduskar Travels

platforms like RedBus to make informed decisions. But at the heart of it all, our approach hasn't changed: service quality comes first.

ZA: The industry has changed drastically in the last 10-20 years. What's been the biggest shift?

AK: The biggest change has been technology. When I compare today's operations with what we had 20 years ago, it's a completely different game. Ticketing, route planning, fleet management—everything is now data-driven.

Earlier, we operated on experience and intuition. Now, we have real-time analytics, predictive maintenance tools, and AI-driven fleet management. A lot also changed after RedBus came in. It made ticket booking easier for passengers and brought transparency. However, it also meant operators had to adapt quickly. Now, passengers check ratings, reviews, and pricing across multiple operators before booking—so we constantly need to stay ahead in service quality.



ZA: You mentioned technology playing a big role. What are the key technologies you rely on?

AK: There are three main ones:

Fleet Management Software (Fleetaint ERP):

It's like a 360-degree dashboard for our operations. It tracks maintenance schedules, financials, and predictive analytics, ensuring our buses are running efficiently.

Online Booking & Aggregators (RedBus, Bitla):

Platforms like RedBus and Bitla help us manage online ticketing and reach a wider audience. But they also mean we have to maintain strong ratings and offer competitive pricing.

IoT & Predictive Maintenance:

IoT helps us predict breakdowns before they happen. Instead of waiting for a problem, we get alerts when an engine needs servicing. This minimizes downtime and improves efficiency.

ZA: What are the biggest emerging trends in the bus fleet industry?

AK: I see two major shifts happening:

The move from operator-owned fleets to aggregator-based models.

Companies like FlixBus and Intrcity SmartBus are entering India with an aggregator model. Instead of owning buses, they partner with fleet operators, manage the bookings, and take a commission. This could be a game-changer for the industry.

A growing demand for electric buses and sustainable transport. Governments and investors are pushing for EV buses, and while the transition is slow, it's happening. Operators who adapt early will have an advantage.

ZA: You've seen many new operators enter the market. What are the biggest mistakes they make?

AK: One major mistake is not leveraging technology. Some

“ Earlier, running a bus business was about having good buses and reliable drivers. Today, it's about data, technology, and optimization.

If you give passengers a clean, comfortable, and reliable experience, they'll choose you over anyone else—no matter the price. ”



operators still rely on manual processes instead of using ERP systems, GPS tracking, and AI-driven maintenance tools.

In the age of AI and automation, relying on pen-and-paper operations is a guaranteed way to fall behind.

Another mistake is focusing too much on competitors instead of customers. Some fleet owners constantly worry about what others are doing, instead of improving their own service.

We are in the service industry. If you give passengers a clean, comfortable, and reliable experience, they'll choose you over anyone else—no matter the price.

ZA: If you could ask the government to change one thing to help the bus industry, what would it be?

AK: In many cities, state-run buses have unrestricted access, but private buses face limitations on routes and permits. If we're both serving the public, why should there be discrimination?

Another major issue is the licensing system. In Maharashtra, for example, only state transport undertakings can get stage carriage permits, while private operators are restricted to contract carriage permits. This limits private sector growth.

Final Thoughts

With nearly three decades in the industry, Konduskar Travels has successfully adapted to changing market trends, new technology, and evolving customer expectations.

Abhijeet Konduskar's insights make it clear—success in the bus industry today is no longer just about owning buses. It's about data, technology, and smart strategy.



The Road Less Travelled: Reflections on Building OurBus Bharat

By Lav Kush, COO, OurBus Bharat

On 24th November 2024, we set out on a bold journey, one that would take us deep into the heart of India's intercity travel ecosystem. Our mission was simple, but not modest — to build the country's most loved long-distance bus service. What followed was a masterclass in grit, innovation, and conviction in the face of complexity.

Today, just 141 days later, I pause to reflect not merely on what we've achieved, but on what we've had to overcome to get here.

A Landscape Both Familiar and Formidable

The intercity travel sector in India is paradoxical. It's vast, indispensable, and used by millions every day, yet it remains

deeply fragmented, plagued by outdated practices and systemic inefficiencies. Success here does not come easily. It must be wrestled from a landscape that resists change at every turn.

The challenges were, and remain, real. From operators slow to embrace reform, to entrenched offline sales lobbies guarding their turf; from law enforcement decisions that defy logic, to a maze of RTO permissions influenced by local gatekeepers—we have encountered every flavour of friction.

Aggregators like us, who bring transparency, structure and data-driven decision-making, are often treated as

threats in markets long accustomed to informal arrangements.

Yet, we persevered, not by pushing against the system, but by engaging with it. We showed operators a more viable model, one that rewards professionalism and trust. We brought fairness to sales practices, integrity to pricing, and accountability to the customer journey. Most importantly, we proved that better business is possible—and profitable.

Milestones that Matter

In just under five months, we've grown from idea to impact. Some numbers illustrate the scale of that transformation:

- 38 buses now on the road, including 4

electric vehicles, across 100+ cities in 8 Indian states.

- Over 50,000 passengers have travelled with us, many becoming loyal advocates.
- Consistently top-tier ratings across OTAs, with customer satisfaction scores in the high 90s across voice, chat, and platform feedback.
- From metro corridors to tier-2 and tier-3 markets, our network has expanded rapidly, without compromising on safety, punctuality, or experience.

These are not vanity metrics. They reflect a deeper truth—that passengers are responding to a different kind of service. One that treats them with dignity, respects their time, and puts consistency ahead of shortcuts.

But these numbers, impressive as they are, only tell part of the story. They speak to our growth. They don't quite capture the learning curve, the late nights, the firefights, or the philosophical debates on the kind of company we wanted to build.

“Aggregators like us, who bring transparency, structure and data-driven decision-making, are often treated as threats in markets long accustomed to informal arrangements.”

—Lav Kush,
COO, OurBus Bharat.

Culture as Our Compass

At the heart of OurBus Bharat is a culture rooted in learning, not hierarchy. We've built an organisation where “figure it out” is not a brush-off—it's a mindset. We didn't bring in experts with all the answers; we nurtured generalists willing to ask better questions.

Hiring was deliberate and disciplined. We welcomed 79 new team members through a highly targeted, in-house process. We prioritised operators who valued systems over shortcuts. Our buses were reimaged in close collaboration with bodybuilders, and we built operations from the ground up in cities where we had no playbook—only commitment and curiosity.

Lessons from the Road

Operating in India means dealing with the unexpected—and often the unreasonable. You learn that

We've built an organisation where “figure it out” is not a brush-off—it's a mindset. We didn't bring in experts with all the answers; we nurtured generalists willing to ask better questions.



BUILDING SUCCESS

a bus impounded by an overzealous official can derail a day's plan. That a broken tail lamp can become an excuse for harassment. That trust, once lost, is almost impossible to regain with passengers.

Not every initiative met our standards from the outset. Some routes were introduced ahead of full readiness; a few vehicles initially fell short of our quality benchmarks; and certain partners did not align with our operating philosophy. Yet these early learnings strengthened our resolve. We established robust feedback loops, empowered teams to make informed, real-time decisions, and consistently anchored our actions around the traveller's experience.

What Comes Next

We are just getting started. In the weeks ahead, our fleet will grow and so will our footprint. We are on track to expand to 80+ cities, launch new routes in the north and central belts, and increase our chassis count significantly.

Electrification is high on our agenda, we launched EV bus before any of our competitors. Parallely, we are developing an AI-first GDS system that will allow us to offer smarter routing, real-time fleet tracking, and dynamic pricing—features that will define the next generation of intercity travel.

And through it all, we will remain obsessive about quality, across maintenance, customer service, and every single touchpoint where the passenger interacts with OurBus Bharat.

In Gratitude and With Resolve

This journey would not have been possible without the unwavering commitment of our teams across supply chain, operations, people experience (HR), customer experience, technology, finance, legal, marketing, and our frontline staff. You have not merely built a



company, you have fostered conviction, culture, and credibility.

To our early partners who placed their trust in us, the cities that welcomed us, and the customers who continue to choose us—your belief has fuelled our momentum.

OurBus Bharat is more than an enterprise. It is a demonstration that a different way is possible in India, that

trust and transparency can thrive in a landscape long shaped by opacity. That placing the customer at the core, underpinned by disciplined execution, can drive transformation—even on the most unpredictable roads.

Here's to the journey ahead—challenging, ambitious, and full of promise.

About the Author

As the driving force behind OurBus Bharat, Lav Kush has led its growth from the ground up, with a singular focus: to build India's most loved intercity bus brand. As Chief Operating Officer, he has played a pivotal role in shaping the company's trajectory, seamlessly integrating regional sensibilities into a globally informed strategy.



VDL to Deliver 42 New Generation Citea Buses to Transdev Netherlands

VDL will supply and maintain 42 new-generation Citea Low Entry (LE-122) electric buses for the Hoeksche Waard/Goeree-Overflakkee (HWGO) concession in the Netherlands. The contract, awarded to Transdev—currently operating as Connexxion—is valid from December 2025 to December 2038. This move is part of Transdev's commitment to advancing zero-emission public transport.

The new Citea series, first introduced in Eindhoven in May 2024, was originally launched in September 2022. These buses will be manufactured at VDL's modern facility in Roeselare, Belgium.

Designed for comfort and accessibility, the vehicles feature a wide passage between the wheel arches, low entry height, and both electric and manual ramps for wheelchair users. Passengers will benefit from thick cushioned seats with individual seat heating, multimedia consoles equipped with phone holders, reading lights, USB ports, and folding tables.

Safety is a central focus in the design. The Citea buses meet the latest General Safety Regulation (GSR2) standards and include advanced systems such as Blind Spot Information System (BSIS), Intelligent Speed Assistance (ISA), Moving Off Information System (MOIS), Driver Drowsiness Detection (DDD), and Tyre Pressure Monitoring System (TPMS). Additional features include camera mirrors, a reverse camera, cornering fog lights, cruise control with a speed limiter, and electronic stability control.

For added protection, the vehicles comply with EU directives on impact safety and display ISO 17840-compliant stickers to help emergency responders identify them as electric vehicles.



Volvo and UNVI Collaborate on Luxury Coach for UK and Ireland

Volvo Buses has partnered with Spanish coachbuilder

UNVI to develop a new luxury coach exclusively for the UK and Ireland markets. The coach will feature the Volvo B13R chassis, assembled in Borås, Sweden, with bodywork completed at UNVI's facility in Ourense, Spain. Deliveries are expected to begin in summer 2026.

The new model will initially be available as a 12.8-meter single-deck coach, offering either 53 seats or 49 seats with an additional wheelchair space. It is powered by a 13-litre Euro-6 diesel engine compatible with HVO and biofuels, paired with a 12-speed Volvo I-Shift transmission. This setup delivers up to 500 hp and 2,500 Nm of torque, along with improved fuel efficiency—up to 9% better than the previous B11R chassis. The coach

also meets EU GSR2 safety standards and includes the Volvo Active Safety Platform.

Passengers will travel in comfort with Brusa Create 120 'top flair' reclinable seats, each featuring three-point seat belts, armrests, footrests, tray tables, and USB-A and USB-C charging ports. The cabin includes LED lighting, overhead storage, fabric curtains, and a ThermoKing climate control system. Entertainment is provided by a Bosch AV system with dual 22" screens, reading lamps, and speakers.

Additional amenities include a sunken freshwater toilet and approximately 9.5 m³ of luggage space. The coach is backed by a 3-year or 300,000 km warranty, plus a 12-year structural warranty.

The project was officially announced by Domenico Bondi, Managing Director of Volvo Bus UK & Ireland, and UNVI CEO Eloy Pérez.

Daimler Buses Emerges as Top Performer in 2024 Despite Group-Wide Decline

Despite an overall 12% drop in unit sales for Daimler Truck in 2024, Daimler Buses emerged as a top performer. The group sold 460,409 vehicles in total, down from 526,053 in 2023. However, the bus segment bucked the trend with a 2% increase in global sales, reaching 26,646 units, and a 15% rise in revenue to €5.25 billion.

The positive performance extended to EBIT, which more than doubled for the Daimler Buses division. Notably, the company presented a near-series prototype of the Mercedes eIntouro intercity electric bus, scheduled for delivery in 2026.

In Latin America, an articulated variant of the eO500U electric bus chassis was also introduced, with production planned for 2026.

The North American market marked a milestone as Daimler Buses delivered its 1,000th electric Jouley school bus. Across the group, sales of battery-electric trucks and buses rose by 17% to 4,035 units.

Daimler Truck's total revenue dipped 3% to €54.1 billion, with EBIT down 15% to €4.67 billion. Still, the company posted a 12% increase in free cash flow from its industrial business, totaling €3.15 billion.

Looking ahead, Daimler Truck expects a stable 2025, with unit sales projected between 460,000 and 480,000 and an adjusted EBIT increase of 5% to 15%.

CEO Karin Rådström emphasized pride in the group's achievements, especially in North America and the bus division, while CFO Eva Scherer reaffirmed the company's focus on strengthening its European operations and maintaining strong shareholder returns.



Volvo Launches First Locally Manufactured Electric Articulated Buses in Mexico

Volvo Buses has introduced the Volvo 7800 Electric in Mexico, marking the country's first locally manufactured electric articulated and bi-articulated buses. Built on Volvo's global BZR electromobility platform, the new models are set to enhance Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) systems by improving operational efficiency and reducing urban emissions.

Designed to support high-capacity urban transit, the bi-articulated model measures 25.6 meters and can carry up to 300 passengers. The articulated version has a capacity of up

to 191 passengers. Both models feature a 250 kWh charging capacity, aligning with the growing demand for sustainable transport in major cities.

Rafael Kisel, President of Volvo Group Mexico, emphasized the broader impact of this launch: "We are accelerating the transformation to sustainable and efficient transport solutions to further improve the public transport system in Mexican cities. This will not only have a positive effect for the operators and the passengers, but it will also improve the quality of life for citizens."

The Volvo 7800 Electric will be delivered with a comprehensive maintenance contract, spare parts access, and timely servicing. It will also be equipped with advanced active safety systems to protect pedestrians and cyclists, alongside a connectivity and circularity system tailored for the Mexican market.

The electric articulated buses will be manufactured at Volvo's local facility, with the first units scheduled for delivery in 2026.



Volvo Secures 106 Electric Bus Order from Svealandstrafiken in Sweden

Volvo Buses has received a significant order for 106 electric buses from Swedish public transport operator Svealandstrafiken. The buses will operate in the counties of Västmanland and Örebro, marking the first order for Volvo's new intercity model, the 8900 Electric.

The order includes 60 Volvo 8900 Electric buses and 13 Volvo 7900 Electric Articulated units, with a follow-up order adding another 33 articulated buses. The 8900 Electric will run on regional routes starting in early 2027, while the articulated buses are scheduled for city operations in Örebro from 2026. Svealandstrafiken already runs 17 Volvo electric buses in Västerås.

This order follows the operator's decision to cancel most of its Ebusco orders due to delayed deliveries, instead shifting to the Swedish OEM. The Volvo 8900 Electric is built on the electromobility platform and will be offered in selected European markets from 2025. It comes in two sizes—12.3 and 14.9 meters.

Volvo will manufacture the chassis at its Borås and Uddevalla facilities in Sweden, with bodywork completed by MCV, under a 2023 partnership. A new production site in Egypt is also under development for electric bus manufacturing.

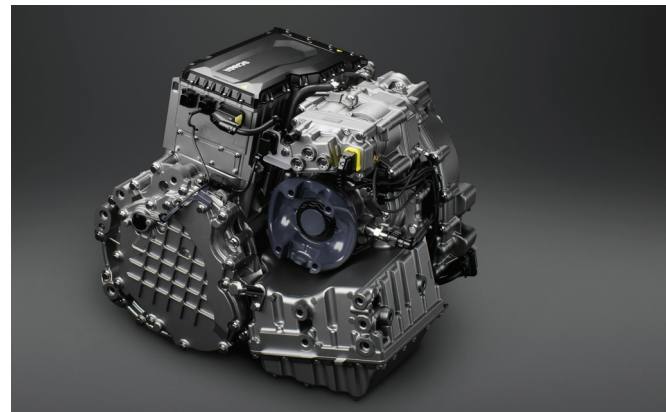
Martin Spjern, Market Manager at Volvo Buses, expressed enthusiasm about the substantial order for the Volvo 8900 Electric, emphasizing its role in facilitating efficient, sustainable, and quiet transportation between cities. Geert Schaap, Head of Technology & Innovation at Svealandstrafiken, welcomed the continued collaboration with Volvo, highlighting their shared commitment to quality and innovation in public transport.



Scania Introduces New E-Bus Powertrain with Multiple Power and Charging Options

Scania has introduced a new electric powertrain for its battery-electric bus platform, offering four power variants and the option of a two- or four-speed integrated gearbox. The new system is a compact unit that combines the electric motor, inverter, gearbox, and oil system, designed to improve performance and flexibility for bus operators.

Power output options include 240 kW, 270 kW, 300 kW, and 330 kW. A new battery configuration is also available, with three battery packs providing a total installed energy of 312 kWh. To speed up charging, Scania has added a second charging interface at the rear of the bus. This rear port supports higher



charging power—up to 325 kW with 500 A—compared to the current front charging system, which supports up to 130 kW and 200 A.

Scania has also recently acquired Northvolt's heavy-duty battery pack business and continues its shift from complete bus manufacturing in Europe to a focus on electric bus chassis. The new electric bus developed with Spanish bodybuilder Castrosua is the first under this strategy, and the chassis is compatible with other manufacturers such as Irizar. The Scania-Higer Fencer model has also begun sales in Germany and Austria.

Explaining the system, Scania notes that the e-motor converts battery energy into mechanical power, while a single oil system cools the motor and lubricates the gearbox. According to Scania, the new solutions address real-world challenges faced by operators, including power demands, range, charging speed, and efficiency.

IVECO BUS Named Official Transport Partner for the IIHF 2025 Women's Ice Hockey World Championship

IVECO BUS has been announced as the official transportation partner for the upcoming IIHF 2025 Women's Ice Hockey World Championship, taking place from April 9 to 20 in České Budějovice, Czech Republic.

To support the seamless mobility of teams throughout the tournament, IVECO BUS will supply four premium coaches—a combination of two CROSSWAY intercity buses and two EVADYS long-distance coaches. In addition, six EVADYS coaches operated by Czech Railways will also be part of the championship's transport fleet, ensuring smooth and efficient logistics for all participating teams.

Jan Kimla, Business Director for IVECO BUS in Central and Eastern Europe and the Nordics, shared his enthusiasm:

"We're honored to support this prestigious sporting event. Our buses are designed to offer the highest level of comfort and reliability—essential for top-tier athletes. This partnership reflects our shared values of performance, teamwork, and dedication that are so deeply rooted in the world of sports."

All vehicles in service for the championship are proudly manufactured locally at IVECO BUS's Vysoké Mýto



plant, a key contributor to the Czech Republic's industrial economy. The CROSSWAY model is well-regarded for its safety features and intercity comfort, while the EVADYS coach offers a premium travel experience ideal for long-distance journeys.

By partnering with this international event, IVECO BUS reaffirms its commitment to sustainable, inclusive, and performance-driven mobility solutions—aligned perfectly with the spirit of international competition and sportsmanship.

Solaris Will Deliver 81 Urbino electric Buses to VR Sverige AB in Stockholm

Polish manufacturer Solaris Bus & Coach has secured a new order from VR Sverige AB, a major Swedish public transport operator, for 81 units of its Urbino 15 LE electric buses. These fully electric, low-entry buses will be deployed in and around Stockholm beginning in the second quarter of 2026.

The new vehicles are homologated as Class II, making them suitable for both intercity and suburban operations. They will be equipped with Solaris High Energy batteries designed for long-range performance and reliable operation across varied routes.

This move expands Solaris' footprint in the Swedish market. The company recently completed a successful delivery of 23 Urbino 15 LE electric units

to Kristianstad. The latest contract with VR Sverige AB marks a continuation of that momentum and introduces Solaris as a new VR partner in the capital region.

The buses will feature advanced safety systems, spacious interiors, and a high level of travel comfort, while contributing to Stockholm's transition to zero-emission public transport.

Once the new order is fulfilled, the Stockholm region will operate a total of 225 Solaris Urbino 15 LE electric buses.

Solaris reported sales of 1,525 vehicles in 2024, with over 80% being battery-electric, hydrogen, trolleybuses, or hybrids—reinforcing its status as one of Europe's leading suppliers of clean transport solutions.





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