

Digital solutions to alleviate distress

T-Systems built a virtual marketplace in just 24 hours to support the Mercabarna wholesale market in distributing fresh food to people in need

Reference project:



“The solution helped to realign supply and demand for fresh food, helping needy people through Covid-19 times.”

Alberto Moleiro Naval, T-Systems

Spain is one of the countries hardest hit by the Corona pandemic worldwide. The dismal facts: over a quarter million infected Spaniards and over 28,000 deaths through July. The country is also hit hard by a slump in domestic demand and export markets, along with a drop in tourism. The economic impact of the pandemic, which was fought with a total lockdown in March, is clear: in March 2020, the country reported record unemployment figures, with over 300,000 new applications. The slump in gross domestic product primarily affects workers in the low-wage sector, such as tourism and agriculture – all in all around a quarter of the total population.

At a glance

- Corona pandemic hits Catalonia hard
- Unemployment causes food shortages among families
- Surplus supplies in wholesale markets were in danger of spoiling
- Spanish Red Cross organizes distribution of excess food
- T-Systems built a virtual marketplace pro bono within 24 hours

Reference in detail

The challenge

Shortly after the onset of the Corona crisis, the Spanish Red Cross found that workers in low-wage sectors were lacking essentials, especially food. At the same time, the Mercabarna wholesale market in Barcelona had full stores of fruit and vegetables that were in danger of spoiling, because markets had been closed. Mercabarna connected two fruit and vegetable wholesalers, Frutas Diego Martínez and Hermanos Fernández, and a logistics company, TAE Transports, with the Spanish Red Cross to distribute the wholesalers' perishable goods to the needy. However, the timely matching of supply and demand for perishable goods at the 90 Red Cross distribution points in Catalonia posed new logistical challenges. The partners approached T-Systems – with the aim of supporting distribution through a digital platform. And time was of the essence.

The solution

As part of a round-the-clock hackathon, T-Systems developers designed the virtual marketplace. T-Mercabarna Solidaria within 24 hours. For T-Systems and the developers involved, participation was a project from the heart. They performed the service pro bono as part of the TSIBCovidChallenges campaign by T-Systems. The digital platform supports the work of the aid community. It brings together non-profit organizations such as the Red Cross on the demand side and the fruit and vegetable wholesalers on the supply side, along with logistics companies. The wholesalers enter the available food into the system and the non-profit organizations see which foods are available. At the same time, they can initiate delivery to the various distribution points. With integrated order and delivery time statistics, the system gives all stakeholders a high degree of transparency. Order tracking based on status and location in real time is possible – so the local distribution points know when the deliveries will arrive. The web service runs on a server in the T-Systems cloud.

Customer benefits

T-Mercabarna Solidaria is an example of how digital solutions can help solve business challenges in the shortest possible time and –in this case – mitigate problems caused by the Corona pandemic. The innovative initiative complements the regular work that Mercabarna's wholesale companies do through food banks, contributing more than 100 tons of fruit and vegetables a month to 35,000 people in need. T-Mercabarna Solidaria gives stakeholders real-time insights: perishable foods can be sent to food banks and distributed at short notice. The system is designed to be scalable, so that other non-profit organizations, wholesalers, and transport companies can come on board at any time, even outside of Catalonia. Josep Tejado, the director general of Mercabarna, sums up: "With this initiative, Mercabarna is showing its solidarity. We must not lose sight of the needs of the weakest in this health crisis and have a civic duty to provide the population with fresh food." With its support, T-Systems has increased the efficiency of the initiative: „The current COVID-19 crisis makes it clear how important technology to offering collaborative solutions. We are happy to contribute our expertise and technological abilities to improve the difficult situation people find themselves in,“ summarizes Osmar Polo, Managing Director of T-Systems Iberia. Further advantages:

- Pro bono project
- Realization within 24 hours
- Use of established security mechanisms
- Web-based – flexible access via the Internet



Contact

T-Systems International GmbH
Hahnstraße 43d
60528 Frankfurt am Main, Germany
E-Mail: referenzen@t-systems.com
Internet: www.t-systems.com

Publisher

T-Systems International GmbH
Marketing
Hahnstraße 43d
60528 Frankfurt am Main
Germany