



AI and Text Engagement Crack the Code on Driver Shortage for Via Mobility

Via Mobility competes with other public transit vendors to fulfil transportation routes for Colorado's Regional Transportation District (RTD), serving about 3 million people in the Denver-Aurora-Boulder area. Completing assigned routes for RTD is vital to Via Mobility's financial health. Thus, Via's success lies in its ability to attract drivers. The company doesn't just lose out on potential revenue if there aren't enough drivers on hand; they're penalized for every route they miss.

Based out of Boulder, with its smaller labor market, Via Mobility needed a better way to reach and incentivize new drivers from across the state to join its fleet of passenger vehicles.

Faced with a shortage of drivers, Via Mobility increased its applicant pool by advertising jobs on the sides of its vehicles. Alongside benefits and basic qualifications, there's a code job seekers text to submit their application. "On the road you can see 'Text Via to 97211' at least three cars back." says Tonya Runnels, general manager of administration at Via Mobility. "We've basically got billboards driving all around the Denver area."

Once candidates apply, Via Mobility's AI chatbot steps in to guide them through the process and support recruiters. Powered by iCIMS, the chatbot answers FAQs, schedules interviews, and screens candidates. For example, Via Mobility's drivers are required to pass a Federal Transit Administration preemployment drug screen.

"We had to do something drastic or we weren't going to get people. There's a lot of pressure for drivers in the Denver Metro area. You have to be smart and creative with your recruiting, you have to think outside the box – or you won't survive. iCIMS was the answer to our prayers."

In a state where marijuana is legal for recreational use, this is an automatic disqualification for many would-be drivers. Via Mobility's recruiting chatbot sets this expectation early so no one's time is wasted.

If Via Mobility's team was at all uncertain about their new approach, they didn't have to wait long to see their investment pay off in a big way. Job seekers began texting in their applications the very same day the new bus advertisements hit the streets.

74% response
rate from
candidates

30 minutes
average
candidate
response time

500+
applicants
through ARI in
first 6 months

Results: A full roster of drivers boosts Via Mobility's revenue and market share



The flyer features the Via logo at the top, followed by the text 'JOIN OUR TEAM'. Below this, it states '\$16 - \$18 TO START'. A list of benefits and requirements is provided, including 'Full Pay Thru Training', 'Guaranteed Wage Increase', and '21 years old or older'. A green banner says 'APPLY TODAY!' and a large text block says 'TEXT 'Via' to 97211'. A photo of Jim, a smiling man with a beard, is shown. At the bottom, it says 'HAVE A QUESTION? ASK JIM' and provides contact information: 'hr@viacolorado.org or 303-473-2899'. A small footer contains the address: 'Via 6500 Franklin St #C | Denver, CO 80229 | viacolorado.org'.

Via
JOIN OUR TEAM

\$16 - \$18 TO START

- Full Pay Thru Training
- Guaranteed Wage Increase
- Full Benefits Package (PTO, Medical, Dental, FSA, Life Insurance)
- **HIRING BONUS!**

- 21 years old or older
- Valid Colorado Driver's License
- Employment Verification
- No CDL Required
- Pass random Drug Tests

APPLY TODAY!

TEXT 'Via' to 97211

HAVE A QUESTION? ASK JIM
hr@viacolorado.org or 303-473-2899

Via 6500 Franklin St #C | Denver, CO 80229 | viacolorado.org

Via Mobility is doing so well with recruitment that it's no longer in danger of missing scheduled routes. That's improved its reputation with RTD and allowed Via Mobility to take on additional routes, improving its market share compared to that of other vendors.

"We've been able to have extra people ready to pick up routes other companies cancel. Our people are in seat and ready to go. We're taking all the runs others can't do. Not only do we make the revenue, we earn an incentive from RTD."

That extra revenue has helped Via keep its employees longer. "We got really creative with our contracts and how we pay people," says Runnels. "The pain point for drivers used to be working late nights, early mornings, or weekends. Now they want those shifts. We don't have the shortage we used to. Morale is different and people love them."



At a Glance

FOUNDED:
1979

INDUSTRY:
Transportation

HEADQUARTERS:
Boulder, CO

NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES:
2019

IMPACT:
Increased market share of accessibility ride routes.

iCIMS SOLUTIONS:
Text Engagement and AI & ML