

# ICOMERA CONNECTED IN TRANSIT





ICOMERA KEEPS PEOPLE CONNECTED ON THE GO.

# CONNECTED IN TRANSIT

PROJECT MANAGED BY: JAMIE WAITE

**Icomera is a leading provider of wireless Internet connectivity for the public transport industry, serving millions of Wi-Fi users and tens of thousands of vehicles every day.**

**F**ounded in Sweden in 1999, the company created its US subsidiary in 2014 and moved its North American HQ to Bethesda, Maryland last year. Today it is a wholly-owned subsidiary of ENGIE Solutions, a leading multinational energy and mobility group aiming to reinvent living environments for a more virtuous and sustainable world.

The key advantage Icomera has, however, has always been its people.

“I think with any company the unique selling point is its people. We’ve got excellent employees,” Dale Weaver, Icomera’s COO for North America says. “We’re a very innovative company, but that requires industry-leading

technology experts who can provide cost-effective solutions with the value that solve our customers’ issues and continue to be used for years to come. We have 20 years of experience in this industry and, as part of ENGIE, we’ve also got the scale. We can touch any place, any time, any part of the world.”

The technology platform that Icomera provides delivers the fastest, most reliable wireless Internet connection available to and from a public transport vehicle.

“That’s central, because as passengers are on their journey, they need to have productive time, and we provide that to them,” Weaver says. >>



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The innovation that powers these solutions, Weaver believes, is down to the special cross-cultural nature of Icomera.

"We're headquartered in Sweden which is a very innovative and high-tech engineering-type environment," he says. "The team is constantly looking at what exists today and where we can take it. Our teammates in Sweden are constantly innovating."

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Dale Weaver, <sup>^</sup>  
Icomera's COO for  
North America

concerns and perceived pain points of doing business with Icomera".

This process has two major benefits for customers and staff.

"It showed the clients we heard them and, by implementing the strategy, we also instilled confidence in our employees' ability to meet our client needs. By walking the talk we've increased credibility among our clients who now recognise our values of being open, honest and transparent," Weaver points out. "In many ways, they look at us as extended teammates, just down the hallway. It is a trust that we don't take lightly as a valued partner"

Partnerships are clearly an important aspect of Icomera, and it's clear talking to Weaver that their work is supported by a strong network of partnerships.

"We had to build an ecosystem of partners to support us outside of our core business," he says. "We're an OEM and with our infrastructure, we're also a managed service integrator. So having strong partnerships with businesses outside of our core is important, be it a media content provider for onboard infotainment, a 3rd party technology provider that we integrated as part of our solution, or a new installation partner." <sup>>></sup>



<sup>^</sup> Icomera has embraced its cross-cultural nature as a proud source of strength.

**CULTURAL TRANSIT**

This melding of cultures has not always been easy for Icomera.

"One of the biggest challenges we faced was in 2014 when we made the transition from the reseller model to a business-to-business managed services model in North America" Weaver admits. "We had to assess where the organisation was and adjust to deliver the quality of service that American transportation operators expect to receive.

"In America, business is very risk-averse, people want results and they want them now, while in other cultures it's often more conservative and businesses may have a bit more patience."

But ultimately, Weaver is adamant that the mix of cultures within the company is a proud source of strength.

"It's something we embrace and that's what makes us unique. Our differences can be harnessed across the globe as we went to all existing clients and actively listened to their



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↑ Icomera is a leading provider of wireless Internet connectivity for the public transport industry.

“WITH OUR STAFF, WITH ANY ORGANISATION, WE ESTABLISH A CULTURE WITH PEOPLE BY DRIVING OWNERSHIP AND TAKING PRIDE IN OUR WORK.”

continuity programme for social distancing, working from home, scheduling when people came into the office to be in the lab environments to perform tasks that they would not be able to do at home. From day 1 we’ve had protocols in place in the office to ensure that we are abiding by the latest health guidelines that we receive from health authorities.”

Lockdowns have obviously hit the public transport sector hard.

“While people are doing social distancing and staying at home, ridership has been significantly down,” Weaver says. “But we’re working to help transport operators restore passenger confidence, either by working with new technologies or using

existing digital passenger information channels – such as Wi-Fi portals - to promote onboard safety measures, and improving passenger access to real-time information, like live timetables or current passenger loads on the next bus and train.”

And again, it is Icomera’s ability to build and maintain relationships that have proved key during this period.

“We’re thankful to all the clients doing business with us during this crisis,” Weaver says. “During times like these you see the character of an organisation and I think we’ve seen that with Icomera - our existing clients have really come to know who we are and they like what they see.” ☺

**CONNECTING PEOPLE**

That value of collaboration can also be seen in how Icomera interacts with its own people.

“With our staff, with any organisation, we established a culture with people by driving ownership and taking pride in our work,” Weaver says. “If we’re looking for new positions we promote from within the company, developing the employees and showing them they can have career growth within the company. If we can’t fill the position internally, we ask our staff if they have someone they can recommend. We have trust in our employees making those recommendations but it’s also their personal brand on the line there, it’s someone you brought into the business so there is accountability and ownership.”

Self-improvement is also a key value for the company, and even before they hire a new candidate Icomera is talking to them about how they can develop.

“When we evaluate candidates, we have a talent development and assessment process which we do with each candidate. Many candidates we talk to say ‘I didn’t know I had these blind spots’ so we invest very early on in the process,” Weaver says. “If someone becomes part of the family we will sit down and go through our analysis with them, documenting where we want them to develop and continue to improve.”

At the same time, Icomera’s employees are rewarded with an extensive benefits package, another product of the trans-

cultural nature of the business.

As Weaver explains, “It’s a very generous vacation, medical and 401k package, and I think that comes from the cultural difference, the vacations and offerings you see are more in line with what you would expect from a European company.”

**WORKING THROUGH COVID-19**

Of course, all of these partnerships and values have been put to the test this year by the COVID-19 pandemic.

“When the pandemic really hit, I’d just returned to the States from our global management meeting in Sweden. It was early March and we said ‘This is coming, we need to take appropriate action,’” Weaver remembers. “We looked after the health of our employees first, executing our business

↓ The company’s key advantage has always been its people.





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