

“Bremer Karte plus AutoCard”

Experiences from Bremen

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Since 1986, Bremer Karte has been the name of the familiar as well as popular yearly ticket for bus and rail travel in Bremen. Ticket holders are free to travel on all the city's public transport modes for only 30 euro a month. Bremer Karte is transferable and can also be used as a family card during evenings, at weekends and bank holidays, when it allows travel for one extra adult and up to four children.

Since 1998, a combined offer has also been available, known as “Bremer Karte plus AutoCard”. This is the yearly PT ticket plus an electronic car key from the city's car-sharing provider, cambio StadtAuto Bremen.

Payment of an additional yearly fee of just 30 euro provides access to the car-sharing vehicle fleet. The Bremer Karte plus AutoCard option enables all-round mobility – public transport provides the basis, while AutoCard offers mobility insurance if ever bus and rail are unable to provide the desired service, for example when travelling at night, making bulk purchases, visiting the DIY store, etc.

Placards at stops and posters on board bus and rail vehicles, information handouts and press briefings were used to publicise the new combined product. Incidentally, the PR work was also supported by a well-known figure in the form of the then manager of Werder Bremen football club. His familiar face, as featured on placards inside bus and rail vehicles and at stops, supported PR efforts behind the new product.

Above all, AutoCard has made private car use unnecessary. Some 80% of the households of all Bremer Karte plus

AutoCard users own a car. Approximately one third of users have dispensed with their own car or have not purchased a new one. From the PT angle, a key result has been that, while Bremer Karte plus AutoCard has made it possible to win new converts to PT, there has also been a trend away from monthly over to yearly tickets: the proportion of yearly ticket holders has risen from 55 to 72%.

From the environmental perspective, there are two essential elements. Firstly, the car-sharing scheme is replacing private cars, thus making it a means of providing an intelligent answer to the ubiquitous problem of parking space shortages: service in the place of car ownership.

Secondly, car-sharers tend to alter their mobility behaviour, travel more by bus and rail, and make fewer car journeys. On average, Bremer Karte plus AutoCard users drive some 1,600 fewer kilometres per year. Together with bicycles, public transport modes serve as the staple forms of transport – above all during off-peak periods.

Bremen currently has 2,500 car-sharers, of whom around 700 have chosen to combine car-sharing permanently with PT.

From bus operator to mobility service provider – recommendations for cooperation with car-sharing

How may a PT operator organise cooperation with car-sharing? On the basis of experiences in Bremen, whose PT provider, Bremer Straßenbahn AG (BSAG), is cooperating with the car-sharing operator, cambio StadtAuto Bremen, the following recommendations should be issued:

- ✓ The joint service must be attractive to the (potential) customer, i.e. offer an additional benefit from tariffs and services.
- ✓ Information is a particularly important precondition for expanding the service. Car-sharing services are still relatively unknown to many people. Stops and vehicles provide suitable information and advertising outlets and enable pinpoint targeting of selected groups. The PT provider is able to generate a great deal of benefit for the combined service in return for

low additional outlay.

- ✓ Electronic timetable information should include car-sharing locations as points of interest. Links to the information and reservation pages of the car-sharing operator should be provided as a matter of course.
- ✓ The PT operator's information personnel should be trained so that they are also able to provide reliable information about car-sharing – just as the car-sharing operator should also know all about PT services.
- ✓ Car-sharing stations should – whenever the location is suitable – be located close to stops and may also be arranged at PT sites. This allows car-sharing vehicles to also be used jointly by the PT operator.

PT and car-sharing – integration as part of sustainable urban development

Car-sharing is able to provide a better alternative to the private car if a town's structure keeps car dependency low. Journeys to work are a particularly good indicator here – wherever the car is not necessary for the journey to work, car-sharing makes a great seal of sense.

The European Commission White Paper on European transport policy until 2010 recommends car-sharing in combination with quality PT as a particularly sensible measure for the sustainable future development of urban traffic. Bremen and Vienna are mentioned as examples in the Commission report.

The European CIVITAS initiative, in its set of requirements for applicant cities, has included car-sharing as an alternative to car ownership.

Car-sharing has developed into a modern mobility service.

There is a close relation to urban development – and car-sharing provides an urban development opportunity. Orderly integration of car-sharing into urban projects is able to impact positively on urban development projects from the beginning. Parking space policy in relation to new building projects is currently very much tilted in favour of the car and thus does everything to encourage more car traffic. As an alternative, greater emphasis should be placed on PT and car-sharing



Christine Wischer, Senator Bau und Umwelt of the city of Bremen, with the combined ticket BSAG - Car-Sharing

mobility service providers at suitable locations. At the same time, this will avoid road infrastructure construction and maintenance costs.

An example of this kind of least-cost planning is Bremen's Begienhof development. This new inner-city project has incorporated a smaller underground garage than is usually the case. A car-sharing station has been arranged on site and is open to the complex's residents as well as other car-sharing customers. There are good bus and rail links. An electronic information booth has been arranged in the residential complex to provide information about both bus and rail services as well as taxis.

The inclusion of car-sharing and PT in the regeneration and expansion of our cities is an important task for the future. Alongside efficient parking space management, above all this involves easy-to-access information, quality infrastructures for bicycles, PT tickets for residents and car-sharing.

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