

Creating win-win situations through collaboration with public transport operators

Many customer surveys have shown that public transport users are much more easily attracted to Car-Sharing than are die-hard car users. Thus it makes sense that Car-Sharing providers should work in collaboration with local or regional public transport organisations and develop “package deals” to offer to the public.

Scientific research has shown that both partners profit in the end. Through a unified offer, public transport operators have a new tool to help keep customers and maintain customer loyalty. Combined products that are tied to monthly or annual public transport tickets help encourage occasional public transport users to switch to higher value products. Transport providers also profit from the fresh, innovative image that Car-Sharing offers. Conversely, Car-Sharing providers profit from the larger customer database of the public transport provider and its multiple advertising channels. With their help, Car-Sharing can be promoted at the same time. Active collaboration built on mutual trust between equals is advantageous for both partners and leads to a win-win situation.

Possible package components for a joint offer

The advantages for public transport and Car-Sharing customers that result from collaboration between the providers differ from city to city. Collaboration is negotiated by each set of partners and reflects local conditions. Below is a sample of the components of package deals that have resulted from such collaboration.

- In Cologne (Germany), the Car-Sharing provider cambio rewards public transport season ticket holders with greatly reduced Car-Sharing rates. There is no sign-up fee (a saving of € 30), the monthly fee is reduced to € 5, the per-journey user fee begins at € 1.40 per hour for the smallest car class (from the regular € 1.90) and 23 cent per kilometre for the smallest car class (from the regular 30 cent).
- With Stadtmobil Rhein-Neckar (Mannheim, Heidelberg, and Ludwigshafen, Germany) public transport annual or half yearly season ticket holders pay only half of the regular sign-up fee and half of the regular refundable deposit.
- The Finnish Car-Sharing provider City Car Club cooperates with Helsinki’s two public transport authorities. Season ticket holders of Helsinki City Transport (HKL) get free access to Car-Sharing participation (a saving of € 59) and pay a € 2 monthly fee rather than € 9.90. Ticket holders for Helsinki Metropolitan Council (YTV) (with tickets of 30 days or more) get a € 150 voucher, which can be used to any of the City Car Club costs. The public transport authority and the Car-Sharing provider finance the costs of Car-Sharing rebates together in proportion of 50:50. Through this collaboration, the number of Car-Sharing users in Helsinki has grown significantly.
- Mobility Switzerland currently offers 15 combo packages created through collaborations with local and regional public transport operators

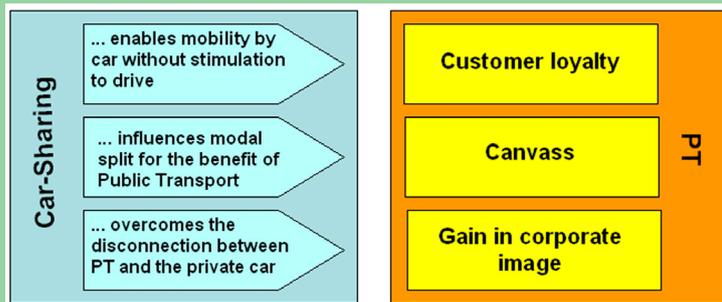


Fig. 1: Advantages for public transport operators of collaboration with Car-Sharing
(Source: André Neiß, üstra Hannoversche Verkehrsbetriebe AG)

Package pricing

The most common form of collaborative offers is **reduced Car-Sharing rates for regular public transport customers**. In general, they’re linked with possession of monthly or annual transport tickets.

and the Swiss National Railway (SBB). Thus season ticket holders of these operators gain access to Car-Sharing all over Switzerland for reduced charge. The first of these collaborations – with the public transport operator in the city of Zurich, and sub-sequently the entire region of Zurich – has enjoyed an incredible popularity, and contributed to a strong growth in membership for Mobility. As public transport in Switzerland enjoys high public esteem, the message is communicated to the public that, with the combo package, all of the customers' everyday transport needs can be met (allowing, of course, that short distances can be covered by the non-motorised modes of walking or cycling).

One of the most important partners of the Swiss Car-Sharing provider is Swiss Rail (SBB). SBB's head of regional transport estimates that the passenger volume induced by offering a combination of train and Car-Sharing created a profit of more than 43 million Swiss francs for Swiss Rail in 2008.

It is less common for the public transport operators to grant preferential terms for their services to Car-Sharing customers.

Joint mobility packages, in which other transport service providers are also integrated with public transport and Car-Sharing – offering holders of this integrated "MobilCard" benefits from all the partners involved – are reported on in a separate fact sheet (fact sheet no. 2).

Joint operations

Public transport providers offer a centrally located customer centre in most cities in which customers can buy their monthly or yearly tickets and receive advice and information. In some cities, this customer centre also advises those interested in Car-Sharing and can sign up new Car-Sharing customers. This is done, for example, at the Üstra customer centre in Hanover. The Car-Sharing provider is spared the need to set up a separate office; instead, it can use the public transport provider's existing infrastructure at a reasonable cost.

Further joint marketing activities

In many cases joint advertising campaigns are agreed upon by the partners.

- Trams travel around cities with eye-catching Car-Sharing advertisements (example: Milan).

- Posters and brochures in public transport vehicles highlight special Car-Sharing offers and new projects (example: Lisbon).
- In their customer newspapers and e-mail newsletters, public transport operators inform their customers about local Car-Sharing news and offers on an ongoing basis.
- In one-off e-mail promotions, public transport operators inform their customers of the new partnership with the Car-Sharing provider or of new Car-Sharing projects.

Car-Sharing information at public transport stops and in timetables

Public transport operators can also include Car-Sharing information in their normal information channels.

- Details about Car-Sharing services and Car-Sharing stations in the urban area are found in printed timetables.
- In the information provided at public transport stops, people are made aware of nearby Car-Sharing stations.
- Car-Sharing stations are marked on public transport route maps.



Fig. 2: The Car-Sharing provider in Lisbon promotes a new special offer with posters in city buses (Source: carristur)

Car-Sharing parking spots on the property of the public transport operator

Public transport operators own property all over the urban area on which to park and maintain vehicles or where personnel can stop to take their mandatory breaks. When these locations are near Car-Sharing customers, the opportunity presents itself, within the framework of the collaboration, to place Car-Sharing cars there. This is especially advantageous in the European countries in which Car-Sharing stations are not yet allowed in public space (see fact sheet no. 6).



Fig. 3: Tram in Milan with eye-catching Car-Sharing advertisements (Source: Guidami CarSharing)

Car-Sharing is organised by subsidiaries of the public transport operator

In several European countries, the collaboration between public transport and the Car-Sharing providers goes so far that joint companies have been established which manage the Car-Sharing service. Examples are the different regional subdivisions of cambio Belgium or the newly-established Car-Sharing service in Lisbon that was initiated by a subsidiary of the public transport operator Carris.

Sometimes the Car-Sharing service is organised by the public transport operator itself. Examples are in Italy Bologna, where the local public transport operator atc Transporti Pubblici Bologna provides the Car-Sharing service CARATC, and Rome, where the public transport operator Atac S. p. A. organizes the Car-Sharing service Roma Car Sharing in order of the local administration, or the German Railway, whose subsidiary DB Rent GmbH both sets the framework for the brand DB Carsharing, and also keeps its own Car-Sharing vehicles in some cities in Germany and at key train stations.

Example: Collaboration between the Brussels public transport operator (STIB/MIVB) and cambio Brussels

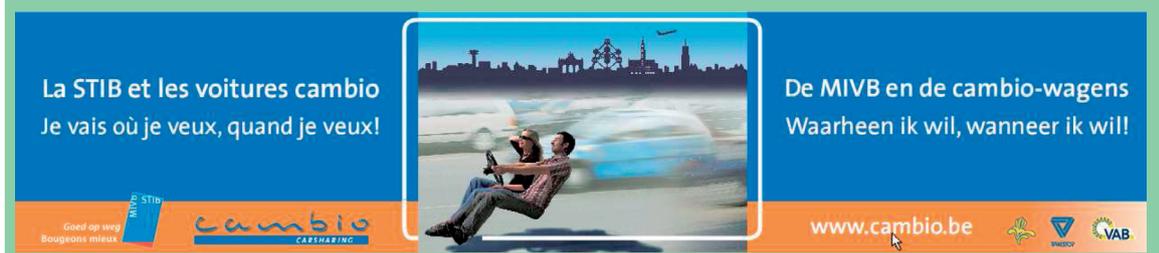
To close this fact sheet, we would like to single out the collaboration between the Brussels public transport operator STIB/MIVB and the Brussels Car-Sharing provider cambio Brussels as it exemplifies a combination of several of the combined offers described above.

The Brussels public transport operator sees its collaboration with other transport providers as much more than just empty talk; instead it actively lives it in daily operations. This is expressed in the fact that STIB has its own Intermodality Department, whose head, Didier Dumont, also holds the chair of the UITP Car-Sharing platform. At the request of the Metropolitan Region of Brussels, STIB has also participated in the development of the Car-Sharing provider cambio Brussels, and holds 49.5% of the shares of cambio Brussels. The collaboration between Public Transport and the Car-Sharing operator, together with the political support of the local authorities is a really key factor of the Car-Sharing success in Brussels.

The result is that the Car-Sharing station network has been rolled out in close collaboration with the public transport network and stations are highly visible on the maps of the public transport operator. STIB and cambio jointly developed the public communication plan for the complementary services of the two transport providers. They work together on a joint marketing committee, whereby cambio profits from STIB's expertise and know-how in commercial marketing and advertising. The Car-Sharing product from cambio has been fully integrated into the product communication of the public transport provider. The collaboration has developed into seamless day-to-day teamwork, and this is reflected in the exemplary growth rate of Car-Sharing participation in the Belgian capital.

Although we have focussed on the capital region of Belgium, the other regions should not go unmentioned. There too, the public transport providers work well and closely with the regional Car-Sharing providers: the Flanders public transport company De Lijn with cambio Vlaanderen and the transport company TEC in Wallonia with cambio Wallonie. In both regions, the collaboration encompasses shared fee structures as well as public relations. The public transport companies are also involved as shareholders of the regional Car-Sharing providers.

Fig. 4: Combined outside advert for Brussels public transport and cambio Brussels on trams (Source: cambio Belgium)



Further Information:

Dumont, Didier: Successful partnerships between public transport and CarSharing. Presentation at Workshop EU-project MoCuBa. Helsinki 2007 (in English)

Verband Deutscher Verkehrsunternehmen (Eds.): Mobilitätsbaustein CarSharing (Mobility Cornerstone Car-Sharing). Empfehlungen zur Kooperation mit dem ÖPNV (Recommendations for Collaboration with Public Transport). VDV Mitteilungen Nr. 10.009. Köln, 2004 (in German)

Bütikofer, Martin: Mit der kombinierten Mobilität zu mehr Lebensqualität im urbanen Raum (Combined mobility: The way forward to a higher quality of life in urban areas). Presentation during 58th UITP World Congress (Session 23: Complementary mobility services: last mile & more). Wien, 2009

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