

CAR2GO, THE NEW MOBILITY SYSTEM FROM DAIMLER IN ULM

In Ulm – a city rich with symbolism – and parallel to current electric Smart testing in London and Berlin (to be followed soon by Rome, Milan, and Pisa), German carmaker *Daimler* has initiated "Car2Go". This original version of car sharing (see *EDF Network Letter N°135*) currently deploys the Smart Fortwo CDI low-emission producing diesel (88g CO₂/km).

Standing or cruising, the pert Smart vehicles of *Car2Go* are sighted everywhere in Ulm. The project is a solution implemented by the Business Innovation Division of *Daimler*, whose mission is to identify emergent market segments and devise ad hoc economic models.

Testing began during the latter part of October 2008, when **50 self-service Smart cars were made available for use to Daimler personnel. In April, following this conclusive initial phase, the city of Ulm (pop.200,000) implemented a second step of the project, with a fleet of 200 self-service Smarts handed over for hire to its entire administrative staff.**



A car available with just a phone call, or via the Internet



Ease of use and flexibility are the two major advantages of the service, obtainable for as long as needed at any time during the day. The only required formal procedure is an initial sign-up with *Car2Go*, who then affix an RFID (Radio Frequency IDentification) chip to the operator's driver permit. Once registered, users can either request or reserve a vehicle with a simple phone call, or over the Internet.



To unlock the Smart vehicle, the RFID chip is waved across the windshield, where a small receiver is housed. Once inside the car, the user inputs a confidential code on a dashboard touch screen, gaining access to the glove compartment where the car's key is stored, along with a gasoline payment card for purchasing any needed fuel.



The billing procedure is also novel, with payment based on the length of time the vehicle is borrowed, rather than on distance covered. The basic rate for short use is 0.19€ cents a minute, which includes taxes, insurance and fuel cost. For longer use, a sliding scale adjusts prices to 9,90 euros an hour, and 49 euros a day.

A maintenance team provides regular cleaning and technical upkeep for the cars, carrying out necessary mechanical adjustments, refueling, etc.

The first results confirm the high appeal of the vehicles to the residents of Ulm, **who, in greater and greater numbers, are taking to Car2Go.** This shared mobility solution is bringing **a higher quality of life to the city**, particularly through its freeing up of parking spots along public roadways.

Based on the success of *Car2Go* in Ulm, *Daimler* intends developing a second project on an even larger scale in Austin, Texas (pop. 750,000). Updates to follow.

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