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Municipalities have a strong power - now they need to use it

Section: Thought leadership

Title:

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Ingress:

Mobility services are increasingly becoming the go-to approach for urban mobility. Trafi is constantly testing new multimodal solutions and we collaborate with cities all over the world, reaching tens of millions of users on a monthly basis. Working together with municipalities across continents, we see public transportation as the backbone of any mobility system and the city as the key driver for steering, systematizing and syncing urban transportation.

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Cities need to act now

Public transit agencies and municipalities have a lot of power (and responsibility) when it comes to shaping the future of mobility. Public transportation is the foundation of urban transportation in Europe and beyond. With sometimes millions of local and international users, it is the ultimate basis for creating connected mobility systems. Owning public transport is a strong municipal asset. As the market quickly moves towards a consolidation of platform providers, there is a clear momentum to proactively lead the development *now*.

Berlin in the forefront

Together with BVG, the public transportation agency of Berlin, Trafi has been able to create a comprehensive mobility service in just a few months. Launching this summer, Jelbi is a fully multimodal service that will deeply integrate around twenty private and public transport options. Instead of switching between a number of different apps, the citizens of Berlin will now be able to consume a wide range of transport options from one single product. As a user, you only need to register once to use the full range of transportation modes around you. Simply put: one account to access all types of mobility in the city.

Taking the driver's seat

Touring Europe in a call to action for cities to join the connected mobility movement, we have noticed that some municipalities lack the knowledge or the will to develop integrated MaaS solutions. Others, on the contrary, are taking a proactive role in driving urban mobility forward, updating policy and establishing new infrastructure to meet the ever changing demands - and expectations - of their citizens. Today, cities are facing a population that is getting used to, and increasingly dependent on, shared mobility. In many American cities, municipalities demand MSPs to provide data about their operations. They also require a mapping of the precise areas of operations and the transport providers' licence to operate often includes the obligation to serve not only the city center, but also suburban areas.

Start now, scale as you go

When establishing new MaaS applications in partnership with municipalities, there needs to be a launch, learn and scale approach. Timing is of the essence, and being fast in launching is a prerequisite for attracting the fast adopters. A new service cannot be perfect from the very beginning, but it needs to be fast, frictionless and free for all transport providers to join. With BVG, we are starting with integrating a handful of partners in the first launch, which will be extended to include more than twenty partners in the following years.

Team up

Another way to not slow down progress or lose momentum is to leave the notion behind that you need to "own" the solution through and through. Team up with an innovative tech provider that can be your partner and innovation spark. Working in parallel and together with new mobility providers, we need to test and tweak the offer so that it becomes the natural go-to choice for moving around the city.

If I had one piece of advice to cities? Now is the time to begin.

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