



Press release

Freebike rolls out 'Tap and Ride' electric bike sharing <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1vyMhyQuG3M>

Freebike, a Prague-based developer and manufacturer of bike sharing systems, is rolling out an electric bike that can be rented by tapping a card or digital wallet without the need to download a new app or to register, a development that is expected to accelerate the role of bikes as a form of micro mobility.

This week, Freebike will be showcasing the bike at the Smart City Expo World Congress in Barcelona, supported by Mastercard. The bikes have been piloted in Prague and will be coming to the streets of Dublin, Ireland in April 2022 in partnership with local operator Moby.

Kevin Meade, senior executive officer in the Environment and Transportation department of Dublin City Council commented that “we are excited by the possibility of being the first large scale project with this new technology.” Thomas O Connell, CEO of MOBY commented that he believes that ‘this technology transforms the user experience and will increase both rides per day and adoption rates significantly.’

Freebike has spent 3 years developing this bike and its related software. The company has 10 years’ experience in bike sharing, with systems in eight countries and over 500,000 customers. CEO Charles Butler commented that ‘With a wide user demographic and a wide range of uses, from commuting to leisure, removing barriers to accessing bike sharing is the tipping point to it becoming a major form of city transport. Our target is a minimum of a 20% modal share for cycling in all European cities within 5 years’*

For city residents, visitors and local authorities, this represents a significant leap in convenience. Most users do not want to download and give their data to another app on their phone but in an urban environment an electric bike is twice as fast as a taxi** and is environmentally friendly. Furthermore, given high payment card penetration in most European countries, Freebike research indicates that this development will triple per bike rental revenue. Profitability will allow bike sharing to become a commercially viable mass market form of transport, and with 69 per cent of all journeys in the EU being less than eight kilometers – just 25 minutes on an electric bike - this has the potential of positively impacting emissions and air pollution whilst reducing traffic congestion.

“Mastercard is pleased to support Freebike’s presence at the Smart City Expo World Congress in Barcelona, as they showcase their innovative tap and ride electric bike solution,” added Jamie Fu, Global Head of Transit and Mobility. “Mastercard is taking an integrated approach to mobility to accelerate contactless transactions on all forms of public transport. Mastercard is



working with a range of partners across the ecosystem to deliver a consistent and seamless way to pay, whether it be buses, trains or micro-mobility such as bikes and scooters.

How it works

The bike is the whole system: The card reader deals with the payment, and the handlebar display shows all the information that the rider needs, including the real time cost of the ride, the location of free parking places and where else the rider can park and the cost. A user walks up to a bike, taps their payment card or phone on the card reader behind the seat and four seconds later is riding. No app, no registration and no hassle. To end the rental, riders either tap on the reader again or squeeze a brake 3 times quickly. The system takes an 8 Euro pre-authorization on the payment card at the start of the ride and then charges the card and cancels the pre-authorization at the end of the ride. Rides are expected to cost 15 Euro cents a minute with no unlock fee.

The bike also knows where it is allowed to be ridden and will stop if the rider tries to cross the geofence.

Further information <https://presentation.freebike.com/>

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References

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www.pct.bike

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<https://www.london.gov.uk/questions/2019/19767> The average speed of traffic in London from 0700 to 1900 is 11.3 kmh (7.1mph) and a bike goes at 22kph. At peak times, when most people travel, the speed will be lower than 7.1mph

