Electronic tickets for smarter travel

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Intelligent electronic ticket solutions and networked traffic systems along the entire mobility chain will ensure that city dwellers reach their destinations conveniently and will help to transfer traffic away from roads to eco-friendly public transportation.

Electronic travel tickets are the key to networking different modes of transportation. This week, Siemens presents its eTicketing system at the ITS World Congress in Vienna. The system will demonstrate how easy it is to organize and invoice an individualized trip with a smartcard. Travelers are only billed for the routes they actually use, and the invoice covers everything from train tickets to the cost of parking cars or renting bicycles. By making local public transport more attractive, cities can

ensure that people will continue to be mobile in the future, while protecting the environment and reducing traffic jams and the associated costs. However, complicated fee systems, a variety of transport providers, and, last but not least, a lack of small change often deter people from using local public transportation. If buses and trains are to become a viable alternative to cars, public transportation solutions have to be convenient and user-friendly.

That's why the key component of Siemens' eTicketing system is a convenient credit card-sized smartcard that passengers can use to register for individual trips. The card is equipped with an active RFID radio-frequency identification chip. This smartcard allows passengers to flexibly use transportation systems from a variety of different transportation companies or networks. The card can also be used to pay for parking or to rent cars or bicycles. Users also save time since they only have to register once. What's more, passengers don't have to figure out complicated ticket fee systems.

The smartcard enables users to access the system in two different ways. For the non-contact method, passengers merely have to have the card on their person. The system automatically registers the chip whenever the traveler gets on or off a vehicle. For the active method, passengers have to hold the smartcard in front of a card reader when getting on and off. In both cases, passengers are billed the most favorable fee for the service in question. Passengers can have the fee automatically debited from their accounts or pay using a credit card. Alternatively, they can also pay fees anonymously with a prepaid card.

Besides the smartcard, Siemens also supplies eTicketing's billing system. The sale and billing of the tickets is managed centrally by the SAP-based Ptnova system, which operates in the background and can easily be integrated into the participating companies' IT systems.

Provided by Siemens