



Urban Mobility from a Single Source

Together with mobility expert HanseCom, Stadtwerke Heilbronn (SWHN) is developing a platform that bundles all municipal services in a mobile app for end customers. As a result, SWHN is ideally set up for the future of mobility as well as in a good position to claim a large share of the Deutschlandticket sales business.



Stadtwerke Heilbronn firmly believes that to retain customers, today's urban transport companies have to offer more than just local public transport. "Local customer loyalty depends on local and regional incentives," explains Erik Mai, Managing Director at Stadtwerke Heilbronn GmbH. "Municipal utilities can provide these incentives by linking public transport services with other municipal services, which creates true added value for customers."

SWHN has defined a platform strategy that puts this philosophy into practice. Together with HanseCom, they are developing the SWHN app, which will give users integrated access to all their services from a single user account. "We want to build an app that not only offers our customers comprehensive digital access to the individual municipal services," explains Andreas Schluchter, Head of Commercial Administration at SWHN, "but, above all, one that enables them to combine all services in a simple and useful way."

Integrated tickets and season passes

Stadtwerke Heilbronn has already reached several milestones on the way to creating this platform solution. The SWHN app has already been launched and includes several services in its current stage of development. The app allows users to purchase single, day, multiple and group tickets for buses and city trains, and it provides route and connection suggestions for the desired route on a map. Travelers can then book their preferred mobility offer directly from this screen. Users also have the option of downloading digital season tickets to

their smartphones and managing their classic season ticket contracts as well as the Deutschlandticket in the app. To make this possible, Stadtwerke Heilbronn integrated functions from their "My SWHN" self-service portal into the app. This portal, which is based on HanseCom's Abo-Online solution, seamlessly integrates with the Stadtwerke Heilbronn website and enables private customers to order and process their public transport passes online around the clock. A departure-to-destination search feature brings convenience and ease to selecting a product. The solution determines the required tariff zones based on the search and automatically selects the corresponding season ticket. In other words, customers do not need to understand the fare system to obtain the right pass. "The integration of passes into the SWHN app was a high priority because it allows us to integrate an important customer group with great potential into our platform solution," adds the Commercial Director.

The "buddy" escorts customers at night

What's more, the SWHN app already includes services that go beyond the normal public transport offering. For instance, users can also use it to book the new "buddy" on-demand night shuttle. SWHN has launched a pilot project that aims to replace the traditional night bus with this flexible service. Booking the shuttle is as simple as it gets: Users enter the desired departure time and destination, and then the app will instantly show them the nearest points of departure.

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Andreas Schluchter, Head of Commercial Administration, Stadtwerke Heilbronn

SWHN offers the night shuttle in cooperation with ioki, a specialist for on-demand mobility. However, this collaboration is not visible to users of the app. “The ioki system is deeply integrated into our platform solution, so our users never leave the familiar interface,” explains Schluchter. “Just like our public transport service, buddy seamlessly searches, books, generates and bills tickets in our app.”

Central management of customer data

Stadtwerke Heilbronn uses HanseCom’s PT customer management and sales background system as the central backend for the SWHN app. They have already been using this system to control their sales processes for many years. The software’s features enable SWHN to centrally manage its customer, subscription, contract and product data as well as its fares, for example. The app seamlessly integrates with PT, and the two systems exchange data in real time. This means that all changes take effect immediately and the background system always works with current data. At present, Stadtwerke Heilbronn is migrating from an on-premises version of the software to the SaaS version PTCloud. In the future, this platform shift will allow them to use PT without the need to operate their own IT infrastructure. HanseCom will operate an individually tailored solution for SWHN in a certified data center for a flat fee. A preconfigured system template ensures that Stadtwerke Heilbronn can quickly introduce and use the solution.

Further services and combined tickets are planned

SWHN will gradually evolve its app into a comprehensive platform in subsequent expansion stages. Offerings to be integrated include additional municipal utility services ranging from tickets for the municipal swimming pools and the Heilbronn ice rink to parking tickets, electric car charging and other mobility services such as bike and car sharing. SWHN also wants to develop special combined

products that offer added value to customers. Examples include solutions that combine admission to a swimming pool with the bus ride there, or parking and charging an electric car in a single ticket.

Ready for the future

Andreas Schluchter is highly satisfied with partner HanseCom. “Our collaboration is both productive and constructive. HanseCom has a very strong customer focus, knows our industry inside out and has an excellent understanding of how mobility will develop in the years to come,” says Schluchter. “We don’t have to start out by explaining our business to employees, as is sometimes the case with other service providers. In light of the broad range of services HanseCom is delivering to us, it’s safe to say that they are our key partner for implementing our platform strategy.” According to SWHN, the jointly developed solution gives them excellent market traction, in particular as regards the highly coveted sale of the BW Youth Ticket and the Deutschlandticket. Launched on 1 March 2023, the BW Youth Ticket allows young people to travel throughout Baden-Wuerttemberg by bus and train for 365 euros a year. Holders of a Deutschlandticket, which has been on sale since 1 May 2023 and currently costs 49 euros per month, can use local and regional transport throughout Germany. “We made a move in the right direction at the right time and now have an ideal technological platform to take us into the future,” summarizes Managing Director Erik Mai. “Of course, we also have to own this new approach and prevail over the competition that comes with it, because it turns the previous seller’s market into a buyer’s market. In addition to technical solutions, we also need to actively approach customers and change our way of communicating with them. However, we are highly confident that we will gain and retain customers with our offering and benefits, which will convince them of our mobility and municipal utility services.”

Stadtwerke Heilbronn

Stadtwerke Heilbronn (SWHN) offers a wide range of products and comprehensive services for water supply, mobility and leisure. SWHN’s transportation services backed by a fleet of five light rail vehicles and 65 buses provide mobility to around 27 million passengers each year. With its three multi-level parking lots and four parking areas, SWHN’s parking unit offers over 3,000 parking spaces and 78 e-charging points.