

Brno Card Summary

Introduction

Main goal of Brno Card topic, part of Muniss project, was to determine whether it would be beneficial for City of Brno to issue a City Card. Following by questions what services should be integrated in the card itself, what kind of users should be eligible to get or purchase the card and whether private sector should take part in this project or not. We were searching for financially sustainable solution with regard to current reality in society.

Our work started with analysis of similar municipality projects in the Czech republic that started to issue city cards with similar functions. We also analyzed discount cards available in Brno and attended meetings with potential stakeholders of the card to gather as much information as possible. Having met with representatives from the City Council, Public transportation organizers, representatives of many semi-budgetary organizations and academics, we realized the complexity of the topic. Therefore we decided to separate the card type according to the target group, tourists and visitors of Brno and South Moravian Region being first one and inhabitants of Brno (including people who stay in Brno long-term, e.g. students, employees working in Brno with Permanent residence elsewhere).

Brno Card (citizens)

Initial plan of the Brno City Council was to support local inhabitants (people with Permanent residence in Brno) in providing them discounts for services which are subsidized by City Council, since the national tax revenue is redistributed to municipalities according to number of people with Permanent residence. However according to applicable law this is not permitted and Court decisions in similar cases in other cities around Czech republic confirmed it is not possible.

The organized of public transportation in South Moravian Region, KORDIS JMK, plans to issue plastic card for prepaid long-term transportation tickets, which should replace the current system of paper-based ones. Estimated total number of cards issued is 300 000 in South Moravian Region and

approximately 200 000 of these are supposed to be used in Brno. Mostly financed by EU funds. From economic point of view using this cards makes most sense, since majority of population in Brno will be using this card and City Council of Brno is one of most powerful shareholders in public transportation organizer. Implicit usage of this public transportation card could mean huge savings on marketing costs and PR of the new card. To put it simply, it will be compulsory to buy the card as prepaid long-term public transportation ticket. The main issue for this solution is impossibility of integration the functions of the Brno Card (either direct payment system or profile information for discounts) into the chip in the plastic card. The reason for this is that time necessary for reading the card by wireless reader (e.g. while checking into bus) would prolong and could cause delays. What we have realized is that to provide discounts we can simply insert the information (number of the card and information of validity) into the QR code on the card, which would be readable by any QR reader. The institutions involved need to be equipped by QR code reader with access to the internet and while reading a single QR code on the card to confirm eligibility for discount, the number and validity would be compared to records in the online database. Any user of new public transportation card can buy "discount package" which would activate upon payment of 200 CZK per calendar year and provide discounted entries at various institutions (theatres, landmarks, ZOO, aqua park, swimming pool and others). The discount offered should range from 5 to 30% of regular ticket price (depending mostly on current occupancy and total capacity of individual institutions and facilities), these discount should reflect and in the future replace the current discounts offered and shouldn't be combined with other discounts.

We have discovered that the information about services and entertainment that are available in Brno is limited, so we suggest creating a web portal to serve as a hub for all events (cultural, sport, etc.) to increase awareness about these events and institutions. Brno Card users will be even able to buy tickets directly at this portal with discounts. Mobile application (for iOS and Android systems) should be created to support the accessibility of information for cardholders. Main part of the application should be a map with points of

interest (in this case cultural institutions and other places where they can get discounts) and place & time based push-notifications (e.g. informing about a last-minute discount for performance or show nearby starting in 1 hour). This application is supposed to be used both for citizens and tourists; so multilingual version is necessary (Czech, English, German, Russian at least). Private sector can join the discount system for a small one-time set-up fee (1000 CZK + VAT) and offer discounts for cardholders with activated discounts. In return the private facility (e.g. restaurant, pub, shop) will be listed on the website and in the application as well.

The costs of implementation would be very low compared to cost of launching city card in other cities of Czech republic and the card can reach large % of population quickly thanks to integration of public transportation ticket.

Issuing

Brno Tourist Card

Since tourists are entirely different group than citizens of Brno, and usually stay in the city or region shortly (in Brno, the average stay is 3 days - 2 nights). That corresponds with most common tourist card model in Czech republic and worldwide as well - usually such a card has 3-day validity (many cities or regions have different versions of cards ranging from one to five days). It's common that public transportation passes are included, however prices of the card vary a lot. Our proposed Brno Tourist Card has two versions - individual and family one. Both cards come with 4-day validity (Brno would like to motivate visitors to stay an extra day and visit e.g. theater which is usually missed during short 2-3 day visit) and proposed prices are 600 CZK for individual card and 1500 CZK for family card (2 adults + 2 children), public transportation pass is included in the price. There are supposed to be significant discount for many attractions in the city and free entry to Labyrinth (normal price 160 CZK individual / 380 CZK family), free boat ride and entry to Veveri castle (normal price 200 / 420 CZK) and free Planetarium visit (normal price 90 / 300 CZK). These are the main reasons why Brno Tourist Card is favorable both for visitors from Czech republic and abroad.

To support smooth orientation around the city, smartphone application should be introduced. The app should contain a map with all necessary information about transportation, attractions where Tourist cardholders' discounts are offered, important monuments, dining and shopping options. Push notifications can be used based on application user's position within the city, informing about upcoming events in the area or highlighting nearby sights or cultural institutions. Visitors would be able to download this application anytime before coming to Brno and as well at Tourist information center (QR code containing the app and wireless internet connection should be available there), at the airport and main stations in Brno (bus, train).

Conclusion

Brno Card for citizens should be presented as a great way to save money and enjoy more at the same time. Furthermore website accompanying the card brings comfort of making online reservations for various cultural institutions in one user-friendly interface. Proposed Brno Tourist Card is aiming towards extension of time spent by tourist in the city by providing significant discounts, free entries and available information.