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Green Light for the Mobility Platform

Making life easier for passengers through digitization: Bahnen der Stadt Monheim GmbH (BSM) has made this its mission. The result is an intermodal travel platform the company is developing in collaboration with HanseCom. An agile approach ensures maximum customer proximity.


BAHNEN MONHEIM

Based on the motto “we take a holistic approach to mobility,” BSM continues to evolve into a modern, customer-oriented mobility provider. The company’s digital strategy plays an important role in this transformation. “We want to make life easier for our passengers by using and offering efficient solutions,” explains Frank Niggemeier-Oliva, Managing Director of Bahnen der Stadt Monheim GmbH. “That’s why we are building an accessible digital platform that bundles all our mobility and service offerings. Moreover, it can fully cover the customers’ individual mobility flows from a single source.”

Mobile ticketing app launched

The company has already reached its first milestone on the path to realizing this platform: It launched a mobile ticketing app developed jointly with HanseCom in July 2022. This app allows users to digitally purchase all popular and major tickets for the Rhine-Ruhr (VRR) and Rhine-Sieg (VRS) transport associations as well as regional tickets for North Rhine-Westphalia. The provider ensured that the process is as easy as possible for users. It takes just three steps to get a ticket: select it, enter the price category and departure location, and lastly confirm the purchase.

The app also has a special highlight in store for citizens of Monheim am Rhein: If they own a Monheim Pass, they can use all buses and trains in the town of Monheim am Rhein and the neighboring town of Langenfeld free of charge.

The app shows users all tickets that are relevant for public transport with the Monheim Pass first, making it easy for citizens to get their bearings.

“The app is very popular and has been getting a highly positive response from customers,” says Managing Director Niggemeier-Oliva. “Its scope is still limited, but that is exactly what we wanted. We are taking an agile approach to building our platform and have only implemented a small part of the target feature set. This allows us to gain experience, gather customer feedback and build on this knowledge in subsequent stages of the project. This enables us to meet the actual needs of our customers to the tee.”

Gradual shift towards an intermodal mobility platform

As the project progresses, BSM is now working with HanseCom to upgrade the app into an intermodal mobility platform that integrates all offers and enables customers to combine them into routes and seamless individual multimodal travel chains – and pay a single final fare for the entire trip. BSM also aims to further optimize the user experience. In the future, for example, the app will automatically adapt to the user’s individual preferences based on AI. Other services that will be integrated into the platform include the bike-sharing service that BSM operates itself. Next, the existing car-sharing service will also be integrated into the platform. BSM will also integrate

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its season tickets into the platform. In future, customers will be able to have their season tickets issued as digital tickets in the app and to manage them there. In addition, when planning and booking intermodal journeys, the app will automatically take into account which legs of the trip are already covered by a season ticket. The so-called Deutschlandticket, which is the first digital season pass that was made available for purchase, has been on offer since May 2023.

By combining BSM's own mobility services in one platform with intermodal pricing in conjunction with a focus on the customer journey, the company can tap into new opportunities for their established sales channel. BSM envisions turning the mobility platform into a central interface between the passenger and the transport company that provides additional services (such as location-based services and information). In this way, the digitization initiative of BSM is creating significantly greater added value for its passengers. At the same time, the transport company is working on the “My BSM” self-service portal for customers and is introducing HanseCom's online subscription modules for private customers, school transport and major customers. The new features will be rolled out for the different customer groups in three successive project phases.

Students first!

The school transport module will be launched first, as this customer segment is particularly dear to BSM's Managing Director: “Under the catchphrase ‘Kids Come First’, Monheim am Rhein has developed into one of the most child-friendly cities in Germany,” explains Niggemeier-Oliva. “Students are therefore one of our most important customer groups. The self-service solution will make ordering student season passes much easier for everyone involved. Students and parents can apply for season passes via an online portal, and the school administration offices can directly confirm the approval of applications using this data. Students can

view the processing status of their applications online at any time and will receive their passes much faster owing to the greatly reduced manual effort.” In the second project phase, BSM will roll out Abo-Online for private customers. This will allow them to order and process their season passes from the privacy of their home or on the go with their smartphone at any time and without the need to visit a service center. The final step will be the introduction of Abo-Online for major customers. The solution enables BSM's corporate customers to manage their company and employee passes from a central location, control framework agreement quotas and view standard reports and evaluations. They also have the option of seamlessly integrating these self-services into their corporate intranet, and they can even adapt them to their corporate identity.

Customer-centric mindset

The BSM Managing Director is full of praise when it comes to describing the collaboration with HanseCom. “When we were looking for a suitable partner, in particular as regards the customer interface, we opted for HanseCom – and that was an absolutely golden pick,” says Niggemeier-Oliva. “Our collaboration runs quite deep, not least because we share a similar mindset: both of us take a customer-centric approach.”

The Managing Director is also impressed with the partner's technical expertise. “There are a lot of competent people at HanseCom, and they are great discussion partners even when it's not about the product itself. For example, we have discussed the strategic alignment of our IT architecture with many specialists, which also included HanseCom employees. They were instrumental in helping us develop a target vision for the architecture. All of this makes HanseCom an essential IT partner for BSM,” concludes Niggemeier-Oliva. “The partner has more than proven its worth, and there are still many upcoming projects we wish to realize with the help of HanseCom!”

Bahnen der Stadt Monheim

Bahnen der Stadt Monheim GmbH (BSM) is a wholly owned subsidiary of the municipal Monheimer Versorgungs- und Verkehrs-GmbH. The company employs over 140 people and is a member of the Rhein-Ruhr (VRR) and Rhein-Sieg (VRS) transport associations. Together with Rheinbahn AG, Düsseldorf, and wupsi GmbH, Leverkusen, BSM operates a bus network that comprises 16 routes measuring a total of 187.2 km.