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Summary

Evaluation and Modelling of Mobility's free-floating car-sharing pilot *Catch a Car*

Background

In August 2014, Mobility has launched the free-floating car-sharing pilot project *Catch a Car* in Basel. It is the first free-floating car-sharing scheme in Switzerland. The Institute for Transport Planning and Systems at ETH Zurich has seized this opportunity to study, how free-floating car-sharing affects individual travel behaviour. To this end, a sample from the car-sharing users as well as from the general population was invited to a two-stage survey consisting of a questionnaire with general socio-demographic questions and a mobility diary capturing insights into the individual travel behaviour. Both survey elements were first conducted shortly after the launch of *Catch a Car* in November/December 2014 and in April/May 2015. In November/December 2015, they have been repeated with the same participants. The results give promising first insights into users, usage and impact of free-floating car-sharing in Basel.

Customer Group

Catch a Car mainly attracts young people. Half of the members are between 18 and 36 years old. They describe themselves as open to innovations and do not regard private vehicles as a status symbol.

Usage

Catch a Car is mainly used for shorter trips and serves a wide range of trip purposes, such as vists, shopping trips or airport transfers. In most of the cases, *Catch a Car* is used, because it is the fastest connection between A and B. In half of the cases, *Catch a Car* is chosen on a spontaneous basis. Every second *Catch a Car* member is also member of Mobility Carsharing.

Catch a Car members use public transportation more often than average. The results of the study indicate, that many members regard *Catch a Car* in combination with public transportation and other services as part of their private-car-free mobility strategy.

Car Ownership

Carsharing allows its members a public-transportation oriented lifestyle by providing them with access to a car on an as-needed basis. The results of the study indicate, that *Catch a Car* members significantly reduce private car ownership. Projected onto the number of users by March 31st, 2016, it creates a net reduction of 363 cars.

Substitution Effect and Environmental Impact

A comparison of the mobility diaries of the two survey waves shows, that *Catch a Car* members reduce their average car usage. Estimating the effect based on the travel diary data yields an annual reduction in car-use of 560'000 km (projected onto the number of users by March 31st, 2016). This translates into annual savings of 45'000 l gasoline or 104 t CO_2.

Conclusion

Due to the rather short study period of about one year from the launch of the scheme, the results are limited to the early customer groups and their initial usage patterns. Also the environmental impact has probably not yet reached its final level. Therefore, the observed effects only represent first trends, which may even amplify in the course of time.

Already at this early stage, the results show, that *Catch a Car* complements the existing transportation system. It offers an affordable possibility to travel intraurban distances in a short time and at the same time reduces private vehicles holdings and use.