

## Best practice example - Czech Republic

### **Electric bicycles rise awareness at MTB competitions**

Everyone and everything is competitive. Why not to put on starting track bikes and electric bikes next to each other to compare the performance, power and endurance. Across the Czech Republic are organized several bike contest during the calendar year. The most popular and familiar in the sphere is "MTB" - mountain bike contest under which bikers are measuring their strengths and speed.

In May 2011 the 6<sup>th</sup> MTB contest "Konrad Man 2011", BIKEATLON, took place in Liberec and it was specific in participation of e-bikes as well. This popular race had a time trial up the hill about 1.3 kms length and five XC rounds with a total length of 15 km. One of the bikers was riding e-bike and finished as the second one. At the end of the circuit riders had to go through a very difficult and technically challenging off-road downhill. As it turned out, final part of the circuit for the electric bicycle has been severely tested, but certainly not an obstacle. At the very beginning, many other bikers, the "orthodox" ones, who boycott any bike which has an additional help for a biker were quite disgruntled by presence of e-bike. Later it was understood the participation of e-bike within the contest is unofficial (the results were not counted) the e-bike just went thru the real challenging test in heavy terrain among the bikes.

Most of these bikers still have some prejudice towards pedelecs overall and do not get their intention and objectives. This specific group of bikers constantly give e-bike a bad look in the sense that this actually is not a bike as they strongly believe on a bike everyone must *sweat blood*. Therefore these types of fairs are a perfect occasion how to present pedelecs to a group of people who would most likely never attend the events focused strictly on the presentations of pedelecs. Among bikers themselves it is a smooth way how to introduce e-bikes to other ordinary people attending the event in aim to enjoy the bike competition. They can test and try e-bikes whole day long (during the duration of the contest) and find out their function and assets.



This contest launched follow-up participation of pedelecs on other similar fairs in June and July - "MTB 24HOURS" (24 hours race), "Šumavský MTB", marathon in Šumava mountains. In all fairs the e-bikes faced to the interest in testing and tryouts. All mentioned above is under the *stamp* of the Czech series bike contests "Kolo pro život" (Bike for life) sponsored by Česká Spořitelna. Very useful is a partnership of ekolo.cz with this sequence as that is a great occasion to demonstrate e-bikes *in all their glory*.



People participating on these races and events are able to test e-bikes not only for the race but on e-ride as well. For the disposal are usually several types of e-bikes (and different brands), guided trail with full information about e-bikes provided by trained people. The project "Kolo pro život", lasting now for 11 years, runs mountain bike races around whole country and deals with the municipalities and private organizations regarding the event spots. The places are

picked up in public accessible locations to be visited as many people as possible and to have very successful attendance with the right value added - not to organize just a content but to present other objectives. The project actively addresses thousands candidates of all ages and stands for a very beneficial launching of e-bikes to public.

#### BOX OF ADVICE

- + Boost the budget used for providing test rides of e-bikes on such events.
- + Close cooperation with *bikes show* organizers - to be informed about the planned contest/event, to communicate in person or via mail to get finalized vision of whole action in aim to be able to take part in
- + Actively participate on events connected with bike contests to promote e-bikes as part of "cyclo world" - to be presented in person (or on behalf of) to be visible that the municipal body is standing on the *green style* side
- + To stock all data about the event for further evaluation (e.g. How many people were presented, how many of



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