

# Experiences from „Wien Energie“'s pedelec test initiative

## **Introduction**

Wien Energie, Austria's largest energy provider, owned by the city of Vienna, and KTM, an Austrian bike company, started a big pedelec test initiative in Vienna in spring 2010. From over 500 applicants, 50 sportive men and women were chosen to test the pedelecs for two months. During this period the testers had to cycle as much as possible, share their experiences in an online blog and participate in the community meetings. The comprehensive blog is funny to read and can be obtained at Wien Energie at individual request. The five busiest cyclists and bloggers were chosen from a jury and were allowed to keep their test pedelecs for free. The overall goal of this initiative was to increase the acceptance of e-mobility and awareness of the new technology.

## **Facts and Figures**

The planning for the pedelec test already started in summer 2009. The idea behind this initiative was to sensitize the population and to reduce CO2 emissions. On the other hand, the motivation for Wien Energie was also to increase customer ties and to strengthen the company's image. The reason for choosing KTM was the good reputation of their pedelecs and the fact that it is an Austrian company. The whole initiative was accompanied by a marketing campaign including announcements in news papers, in bike journals and on the internet including social media as well as posters on the street.

The conclusions that can be drawn from this test initiative are that the acceptance for the new mode of mobility in Vienna is high – people are interested to test e-mobility and share their experience with others. For such a broad campaign several partners are necessary (such as Löffler, UVEX, Intersport Eybl, etc.). Open questions are still the weight and the recycling of the batteries as well as the standardization of the charging infrastructure and prize and availability of vehicles. Wien Energie will continue campaigns for e-mobility focusing on infrastructure and handling of refueling accompanied by info days in Vienna, regulars' tables for e-bikers and the one or other smaller pedelec test. A online-website ([tanke-wienenergie.at](http://tanke-wienenergie.at)) will be established to inform about the further initiatives.

Apart from the pedelec test, Wien Energie already installed 25 charging stations in and around Vienna. Experience showed that pedelec users mainly charge their pedelecs at home or at established cycling places. If more charging stations are set up they should be placed at hotels and restaurants or at parking garages as well as at cycling areas.

Further more, the subsidy initiative of Wien Energie and City of Vienna has been extended until the end of 2011. Per pedelec a subsidy of 30 percent of the purchase price or max. 300 Euros are available. The application is done at MA 22 (Municipal Department for Environmental Protection in Vienna).

## **Box of advice**

- Investing much into public charging without a clear idea on the future acceptance can easily result in lost money
- If you plan to do a broad long term testing event the promotion and visualization is very important.
- Choose a good mix of target groups in order to get an interesting variance in the lessons learned.
- Stay in intensive contact with the testers and provide them with good servicing. Incentivate them to share their experience, e. g. providing them a blog or similar.

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