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Openness is Key for New Mobility

New Mobility promises intermodality and the integration of as many providers as possible, with a broad range of services from passenger transportation and transport services to the retrieval of municipal work and waste disposal services, which offer me as a user everything from a single source with intuitively usable touchpoints. This is mobility that inspires – geared to the needs of each customer’s consumption and at the same time sustainable.

But what is the most important thing in such a new mobility architecture? Openness. Because proprietary solutions tie users to providers. At the same time, they limit the provider’s market due to incompatibilities. Openness, on the other hand, is the key to facilitating and sustaining access to a growing market. If municipalities are market participants, there is an additional economic aspect: the responsible use of public funds. For software in public hands, this means public code for public money. This gives the public sector the necessary leeway in the choice of products and providers.

On the way to the outlined target image, one still is experiencing noticeable regulatory hurdles today. However, the major challenges are already just around the corner, such as the integration of digitally networked traffic into the smart city. The internationally highly regarded amendment to the

German Road Traffic Act for automated vehicles in public road traffic was a step in the right direction.

The direct impact of mobility innovations on everyday lives makes social acceptance a decisive success factor. Living labs offer the opportunity to create this acceptance through personal experience and participation of citizens in the creation of innovations.

The Edag Group is currently exploring an approach for such an open mobility architecture with a fleet of highly automated robotic vehicles, the Edag CityBots, together with the Campus FreeCity project partners, funded by the German Federal Ministry for Digital and Transport. The drive modules are productively moving rather than standing vehicles by being configured with interchangeable modules for a wide variety of transportation, transport and work tasks. In this way, they make a city mobile and keep the public space in good shape, i.e., they are productively mobile around the clock. This significantly reduces the vehicle density of a city center – with comparable mobility for citizens and guests. The CityBots are networked with the Operations Center, which in turn provides an open source interface to the smart city. This is Mobility as a Service that can be experienced in a feasibility demonstration in the living lab at Deutsche Bank Park in Frankfurt in fall 2023.