

## Press release

### Smart solutions for the networked city

#### **Communities: Connection to the digital world**

Digitilisation is a challenge for cities and communities of all sizes. While large and medium-sized cities are increasingly becoming "smart cities", smaller municipalities must also become part of the ongoing digital structural change in rural areas.

Because one thing is certain, digitalisation must not be allowed to pass small towns and communities by.

Networking, efficiency and innovative technology combined with a social aspect are the ingredients that should make everyday life easier for society. This also goes hand in hand with increased ecological efforts. What is needed are practical solutions, not so-called master plans, which often get lost in highly ambitious theories.

Kern 24/7 Smart Terminals are just such a smart solution for cities and municipalities. Behind the terminals is a sophisticated system consisting of automated, sensor-equipped parcel compartments in various sizes. One of the key features is the secure and timely delivery of goods and documents, including passports, ID cards or other types of paper forms. What is particularly interesting about this is that the terminals give public authorities the opportunity to offer the last step of their services in a modern way that is independent of opening hours.

All this works under the highest security standards. When applying for a new passport, for example, citizens decide to pick up their ID document at the issuing terminal. In addition, further contact data such as mobile phone number or e-mail address are entered in a web-based system. The system automatically generates a booking

number and sends an e-mail or SMS to the requesting person, informing them that their ID document is ready for collection.

## **Pick-up of ID documents around the clock**

Prior to this, the documents received by Bundesdruckerei (Federal printing Office) were made available by employees of the administrative authority in the designated compartment at the terminal in accordance with the dual control principle. Using transponder cards, they identify themselves at the terminal. Then they scan the barcode and an empty compartment opens. As soon as the compartment is closed, the citizen automatically receives an SMS or e-mail with a PIN code. The documents are then available for pick-up at the terminal for seven calendar days.

Upon collection, the applicant enters the PIN code and is then prompted to scan their fingerprint. After the data have been successfully synchronized, the compartment in which the document is located opens. The highest standards of data protection and security are taken into account, for example, the terminal is video-monitored. Of course, the functions can also be extended and used for lost property, vehicle papers or other documents. The terminals form a virtual bridge to the digital world. The city of Ludwigsburg already has an ID terminal in use, and other municipalities in Baden-Württemberg and Hesse are about to launch the system.

## **Local retailers can also take advantage of the Kern smart terminals**

It's not only public authorities that can use the functions of the Kern 24/7 smart terminals, but companies or local retailers are also potential users: customers can, for example, pick up various goods and products from retailers regardless of opening hours. Smart terminals with cooling functionality can offer food around the clock without interrupting the cold chain. Even frozen products can be stored in the terminals.

Finally, all municipalities are being confronted with this question: How can the benefits of local commerce be combined with the strengths of digitalisation? Especially in times of globalisation, regionality is a major asset that is playing an increasingly important role for more and more people. The enormous potential that digitalisation undoubtedly offers, so that regional offerings can hold their own against the offerings of the major online platforms, must be identified and systematically exploited. When customers offer the experience of regional products that can also be purchased 24 hours a day, this strengthens the relationship with local retailers, who in turn can play their trump card of personal contact.

The delivery of parcels is another possible use of the smart terminals: delivery services can deposit ordered goods so the first delivery attempt is guaranteed to work. The innovative software behind the smart terminals ensures that the parcels reach the right addressee and also guarantees a seamless process for the delivery and return of parcels.

There are also various possibilities for use in the tourist sector: For example, the secure handover of front door keys. This function is especially useful for rental properties or vacation homes, because handovers can be organized much more easily.

### **Less CO<sub>2</sub> emissions means positive effects for the environment**

All these functions bring ecological benefits. For example, cities and municipalities could work with so-called hub solutions and have goods delivered in bundles to a central location, which are then delivered to the recipients in the cities by bicycle couriers or e-vehicles. The result would be less traffic and consequently lower CO<sub>2</sub> emissions.

Citizens are also consumers and are therefore becoming more and more demanding, especially in times when shopping around the clock has become a natural part of life for many people. Municipalities that embrace digital solutions consequently become a part of the advancing global digitalisation. Systems such as smart terminals are a



building block on this path that can be implemented with little effort. Cities and municipalities can benefit from the opportunities and offer their citizens real added value.

Customary for all terminals are their simple and intuitive handling as well as their modular design, which allows the system to be configured individually according to the customer's requirements. The terminals are available in several versions and can be installed both outdoors and indoors. The award-winning Kern Support also guarantees 24/7 service, because reliability is the decisive factor especially in the public authorities environment.

Over 2,500 Kern smart terminals are already in use worldwide, and this number is growing continuously.

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