

Bike-Line

John McCulloch

Bike-Line is a proposal for a business, an exclusive club and a means of minimising ones carbon footprint. Most of the clients are commuters who want to cycle to work but whose commute is too long to allow the whole journey to be done on the bicycle, and so use public transport for much of the journey. Also it provides for holiday-makers who want to have bicycles to travel around in the vicinity of their stay but who need to use public transport for getting from home to destination.

Every railway station will have a *Bike-Line* garage and shop, either on the station concourse, in the station car park or in premises close to the station entrance. *Bike-Line* garages and shops will also be located at airports, bus stations and ferry ports. Clearly it will be an advantage if many different countries have a *Bike-Line* service available with similar coverage.

It is difficult and inconvenient to use public transport with a bicycle. At busy times the train companies often are reluctant to accommodate bicycles. Parking your bicycle in a station car-park can be very insecure. *Bike-Line* solves all of these problems. The commuter cycles from his home to his most convenient railway station. Here he checks his bike into the bike-line secure parking garage where it is under cover and in a properly designed rack. For *Bike-Line* members this is automated and he only has to swipe his membership card. He catches his train and, on arriving at his destination station, goes into the bike-line garage, retrieves his second bicycle and rides to his place of work.

The bicycles he uses for the two parts of his journey may be his own or hired, leased or purchased from *Bike-Line*. Members have discounted hire rates, leasing and deals are available. Where a member has to work in another location than his normal place of work from time to time, *Bike-Line* provides discounted facilities for bicycle hire at any railway station. Also, members get discounts when using *Bike-Line* facilities whilst on holiday.

The bicycle garage has a shop. Here the user has the opportunity to purchase bicycle-related items: lamps, batteries, waterproof cycling wear, water bottles, energy drinks, and so on. Satnav systems showing the safest and most convenient bicycle routes will be available. Goods with the *Bike-Line* members' logo are only available for members. Also, neck-ties, scarves, shirts and lapel badges with the *Bike-Line* logo are available to members. Members wearing the *Bike-Line* logo discreetly on business wear will clearly be seen as environmentally conscious as well as looking after their fitness and health.

A maintenance facility is available from *Bike-Line*. If the member experienced a breakdown on his journey, *Bike-Line* will ensure that this is fixed by the time he returns to use the bicycle again. If it cannot be fixed in time, then a hire bicycle is provided free of charge.

Bicycle insurance is available from the shop, with discounted rates available for members. Options include third party damage, accident damage, personal injury, theft and vandalism. Theft and vandalism are clearly much reduced if the bicycle is normally kept in the secure storage that *Bike-Line* provides. Bicycles hired or leased from *Bike-Line* must have insurance, of course, but a member's own bicycle can also be insured.