

HERTZ LAUNCHES GLOBAL CAR SHARING SERVICE


 MOBILITY & TRANSPORT

Back in Springwise's early days, one of the first stories [we covered](#) was the car-sharing service from [Zipcar](#). Fast forward almost six years, and the same topic has emerged again, this time from rental giant Hertz. Launched late last month, [Connect by Hertz](#) now offers car sharing in London, Paris and New York City. In New York, for example, members of the service can choose from among three plans, depending on how often they drive. All three give consumers 180 free miles per day and free gas; costs range from USD 50 per year with a rate of USD 10 per hour, to USD 125 per month with an hourly rate of USD 8.50. Insurance, roadside assistance, maintenance and cleaning are all among the benefits included. Similar plans are available in London—priced at GBP 50 per year with hourly rates starting at GBP 3.95, including congestion charges and 30 free miles per day—and Paris, where the annual fee is EUR 120, with hourly rates beginning at EUR 4. Three low-emissions cars featuring iPod connectivity are available in each location—including the Mini Cooper—and are kept in designated parking bays. Members can reserve them by internet or phone, and entry is via a smart chip-enabled Connect Card. More cities will be added to Connect by Hertz in 2009—as well as select university locations, the New Jersey-based company says—and members will benefit from reciprocal membership at any location beginning early next year. Given that each car-sharing vehicle in New York eliminates up to 14 traditional passenger cars from the road, according to Hertz—with similar statistics in other locations—the environmental benefits of car sharing are clear. Now, with the economy a shambles and the U.S. auto industry in ruins, it's a better bet than ever that more and more consumers will be eager to throw off the shackles of car ownership and become transumers instead. One to emulate in cities around the globe! (Related: [Zipcar uses mobile GPS to pinpoint nearest car](#) — [Parking & zipping](#) — [Making sharing even better](#).) Spotted by: RK

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