

German Cardiac Society Annual Meeting
Mannheim – DE, 15-17 April 2004

Official launch of the



European Membership Card

Brief history of the European Membership Card

The German Cardiac Society (GCS) was part of the Task Force created in 2001 with 5 other countries and the ESC to study the feasibility of creating, developing and implementing a membership card in Europe. This project was unanimously accepted in March 2003 by both the 6 National Society boards of and the ESC board for an implementation in all National Societies that wish to participate. A deadline was set for April 2004 at the annual meeting of the German Cardiac Society. 26 National Societies in total joined the first phase of the project and the second phase is ongoing.

In the previous years, GCS used to send congress badges to members up to date with their membership fees; no registration system was available onsite for members, only few registration desks for non members or unpaid members.

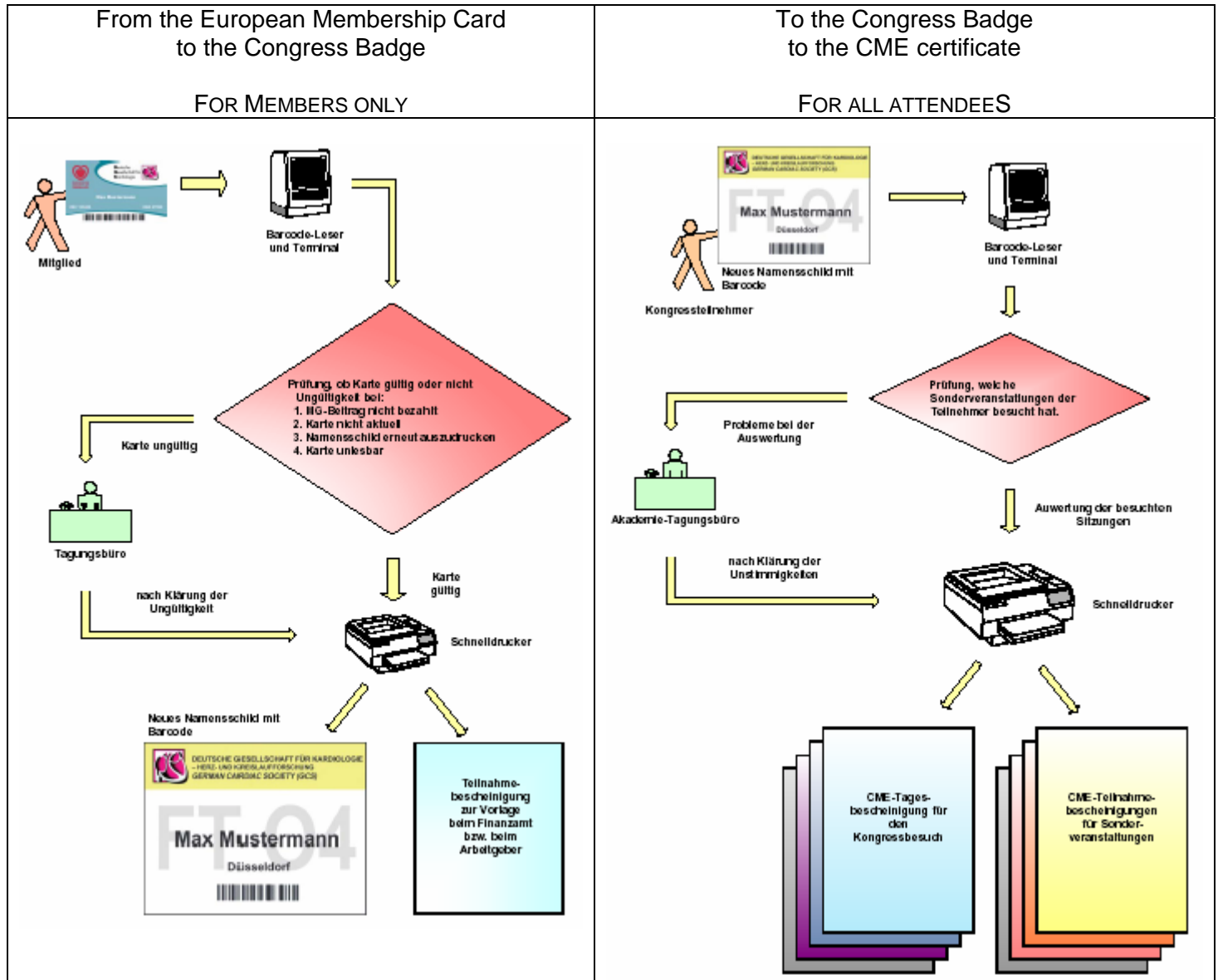
Figures and statistics related to attendance of members vs. non members or even on all participants were based on the number of plastic badge holder used by the attendees.

Therefore, the ambition of GCS was be able to print member congress badge thanks to the European Membership Card through self-service desks. This project was extended to the possibility to also print the CME certificate with the Congress badge.

GCS's promotion about this project started in the Annual Report 2002 with a preliminary presentation of the possible applications and functioning of such a card. The strong communication about the European Membership Card started after the ESC Congress 2003 with announcements, press articles, letters etc.

Beginning of February 2004, 5085 members of GCS started to receive their European Membership Card together with the final congress programme and explanation of the use of this card at the GCS annual meeting.

The use of the European Membership Card was clearly explained as follow in the final programme:



Official Launch

According to both documents above, members could first print their congress badge and later in the day, print their CME certificate at the same “Barcode reader and terminal”.

Those 2 objectives imply

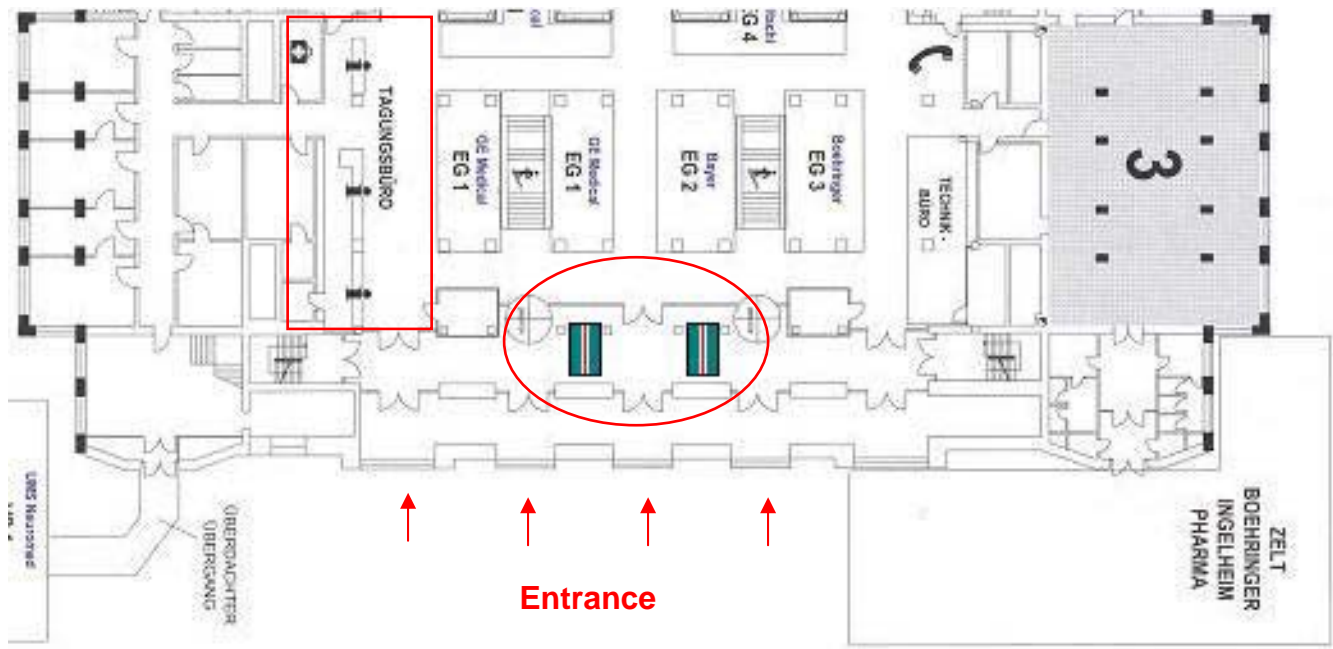
- Creation of self service desks
- Membership database available on site
- Synchronisation of EMC and Congress badge barcodes
- Creation of self service desks
- Modification of the full registration system
- Barcode readers can read both barcodes (EMC and Congress badges)

Self Service desks

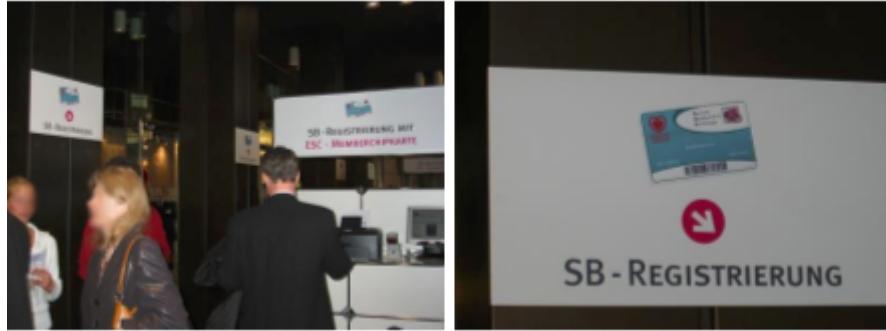


4 self service desks like the one above were located at the entrance of the Convention Centre as follows:

Registration Desks



Signage of the self service desks



Technical information

4 self-services desks, each of them composed of:

- 2 computers
- 2 barcode readers
- 1 A4 printer



10 hostesses were available to help and teach the attendees








About 3 seconds between time of reading card and printing congress badge.

1st objective: Congress badges printed at self-service desks.

Communication with regards to EMC and its advantages has been made since January 2004 to encourage people to attend with their EMC.

Some of the members did queuing (information desk mainly) because of lack of signage to the “Congress Badge self service”.

Despite good use, no queues were observed during those 2 days at any of the 4 self service desks. Meanwhile those self service desks operated fast and effective, a lot of people were queuing at the regular Registration desks especially devoted to non members, unpaid members, exhibitors, etc.

Self service desks	Registration desks
	
	
	

2nd objective: CME points printed.

Starting at 15h00 every day, attendees could go to the self service desks in order to print their CME certificates.

4 computers were available for CME and the other 4 remained for the print of congress badges. At 16h00, only 2 computers remained for the congress badges.

Feedback on the EMC and the fast track registration system from attendees
(questioned on the ESC stand)

Members of the GCS could get a free pocket guideline when showing their membership card. It has been suggested to get their feedback on the membership card, its use and their own feeling when giving them a PG.

The members were very proud of this system, found it efficient, fast, and convenient, especially by avoiding queuing. They also were strongly enthusiastic about printing the CME certificates with their congress badge itself printed with the membership card!

No queues were observed whatever the service given at the self service desks.

Official figures

More than 2 500 members were registered and more than 6 700 CME certificates were printed at the self service desks.

6300 registered visitors, including exhibitors attended the German Cardiac Society annual meeting 2004.