



Puma Bike

Jens Martin Skibsted of Biomega, Adam Thorpe and Joe Hunter of Vexed Generation and sports-equipment manufacturer Puma joined forces to design a bike specifically for urban use. The design addresses the limited storage space typically available in urban homes, the desire for low maintenance and the threat of theft. The Puma Bike is an example of how designers are attempting to reduce bike theft using “spoiling” (making the target of theft of less value to thieves) as a strategy.

The down tube of the aluminum frame has been replaced with a steel cable that works as a locking mechanism. It is also a structurally essential part of the frame which stops the bike from ‘splaying’ apart when it is in use. The cable is used to securely lock the bike by passing it through the wheels and parking furniture when the bike is folded for on street parking or domestic storage. The handlebars rotate and the pedals fold to further reduce the bike’s use of space when stowed. The bike is single-speed with disc brakes making it low maintenance with fewer components prone to theft.

If the cable is broken to remove the bike then the frame is left structurally unsound and prone to breakage. The missing cable is also obvious should the thief seek to resell the bike. The potential loss of value to the thief is obvious and likely to discourage any attempt of theft. An additional benefit is the reduced number of conventional locks that the cyclist may have to carry. A replacement cable and key is only available to those quoting a unique model number known only to the owner and manufacturer.

Strengths:

- Foldable bike to reduce space when stored
- Reduces the need to carry extra locks
- Stylish design
- Allows both wheels to be locked securely

Weaknesses:

- The bike needs to be folded for the built in lock to function making short ‘lock stops’ a bit of a hassle.



Useful References:

<http://um.puma.com/>

<http://www.biomega.dk/>

http://www.coolhunting.com/archives/2005/03/first_glimpse_t.php