

# Hitachi enters into new partnership with digital sensor pioneers

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Hitachi has entered into a deal which will mean it can offer a real-time monitoring solution as part of its digital freight service.

It has entered into a long-term partnership with Intermodal Telematics (IMT), a Netherlands-based pioneer in the development of digital monitoring sensors and telematics solutions for freight wagons and containers.

The sensors it has developed can tell a user the exact location of the cars, the loading status, the open/close condition of doors and hatches, the temperature and pressure of the cargo and the health condition of bogies and wheelsets.

All of this data is sent to the Cloud via a solar-powered GPS device and allows the condition of the train and its cargo to be monitored in real-time, as well as alerting operators about potential issues. The partnership allows the use of AI analytics to optimise the efficiency and safety of its customers' freight services worldwide.

In partnership with IMT, Hitachi can now provide fully-fledged telematics solutions that it says improve reliability and performance for the freight market. It adds the technology can give companies the vital information they need to control their supply chains more efficiently and respond with appropriate interventions more quickly. With global supply chains having faced major disruption throughout 2021 and challenges predicted to continue, Hitachi says the partnership offers enhanced resilience for companies transporting goods via rail freight.

The partnership with IMT will complement Hitachi Rail's purchase of Perpetuum last year. The British rail technology firm, Perpetuum, provides Hitachi with digital solutions that improve train reliability and performance. Its remote condition monitoring detects emerging damage in train bogies long before it can be identified by other means, thus preventing failures, facilitating more efficient maintenance cycles, and increasing the life of the wheels. Coupled with the IMT solution, Hitachi says it will now be able to completely monitor freight vehicles in real-time.

Edoardo La Ficara, executive officer and chief operating officer for operation, service & maintenance, Hitachi Rail, said: "Hitachi Rail is focused on growing its digital offer to develop data-driven solutions to meet our customer's complex challenges. Our exclusive partnership with IMT delivers this and enables Hitachi to provide an enhanced digital freight offer across the globe, with a strong initial focus on European and North American markets.

"This solution will enable operators and maintainers to be aware of vehicles' position and status at all times. This will provide a radical evolution for the freight industry, whose railcars are overwhelmingly without any telematics or monitoring whatsoever."

IMT will now exclusively offer the Perpetuum sensor solution in the freight market, which will further broaden IMT's full portfolio in asset and cargo monitoring for the international rail market.

Dethmer Drenth, managing director and founder of IMT, said: "This partnership adds a significant value to our railcar market offering as we expand our renowned assets and cargo related monitoring to specific predictive asset maintenance monitoring with the Hitachi/Perpetuum sensor. In that way, we create a holistic view of the railcar above and below the axle, alerting the asset and cargo owner on a need-to-know and managing-by-exception basis."

The partnership's initial focus for the new digital service will be in European and North American markets. Hitachi Rail is already an established provider to freight operators in North America, where over 34.5 million carloads and intermodal units were transported in 2021, a growth of 4.8% compared to 2020.