RailBusinessDaily

Universal Signalling signs development agreement with Mobius Networks

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Universal Signalling Ltd (USL) has signed an agreement with Mobius Networks Ltd, which will see Mobius provide communications and support services to the railway signalling technology startup. Under the agreement, Mobius will support USL's first two demonstration and development systems by providing communications and backhaul services with unrivalled, industry-leading uptime.

"Public networks will be an essential and inevitable part of the communications mix of any future signalling and operations system, anywhere in the world" said Dr Sam Bemment, co-founder at Universal Signalling. "We know Mobius are the industry leaders in this respect, and we are delighted to sign this agreement. We look forwards to working with Mobius to demonstrate our system in real rail environments in the coming year."

Mobius Networks Ltd is a leading supplier of communications services across a number of verticals including critical national infrastructure, with a strong and growing presence in rail across operations and retail. They are already the supplier of choice for several safety-critical applications requiring high uptime

and low latency.

Peter Simm, of Mobius Networks, added “As soon as we saw what Universal Signalling were proposing, we were keen to get involved. It became obvious that our specialist knowledge and support services would make the ideal partnership to support them on their journey. Deploying something that works fine in the lab out on the big railway often brings significant unforeseen challenges. In that respect, our experience over many years in bringing similar systems to market will pay dividends.”

USL is currently constructing two whole-system demonstrators of its next-generation digital signalling system. The first is targeted at light rail and scheduled for completion mid-2024. The heavy-rail version will follow towards the end of the year. USL claim their patent-pending system slashes costs and radically reduces deployment times.

“The future of signalling is digital,” Dr Bemment added, “and there are few in the industry who dispute this. However, in the UK the term ‘digital signalling’ has come to mean ETCS, a system specified when the Nokia 3310 was state of the art. Clearly, technology has moved on. Most railways want signalling that is simple, cheap, flexible, and quick to retrofit to existing trains and infrastructure. The architecture of ETCS prevents it being any of these things, whilst our new system can tick all the boxes. Of course, we expect healthy scepticism to our claims, which is why our whole-system demonstrators – supported by experts like Mobius – are so important.”

Whilst the locations of the demonstrators have not yet been announced, USL has opened registration on its website for a series of ‘demo days’ for both systems, to be held in 2024.

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www.mobiusnetworks.co.uk /