

Innovation for more flexible and efficient operation of passenger trains

## A world first from HÜBNER: Coupling gangways at the press of a button

Kassel, Germany (3 September 2024). The HÜBNER Group is working on the development of a new system solution that allows for fully automated coupling and uncoupling of gangway systems. The new HÜBNER AutoCouple System promises to make the operation of passenger trains more flexible, more efficient and more cost-effective. The groundbreaking solution will be presented for the first time at InnoTrans 2024 (24 - 27 September) in Berlin.

### Customized system conserves resources

*"We're very pleased to be presenting a first-ever innovation that will allow rail transit operators in the passenger sector to be both more flexible and safer in their scheduling and organization,"* remarks **Alexander Schmidt, Head of Innovation and Product Development in the HÜBNER Mobility Rail division.** *"Our team is working to create a customized innovation for customers that also enables significant savings in important resources."*

The HÜBNER AutoCouple System is intended for use in passenger trains, particularly for metro transport, and can be integrated in new designs for nearly every type of vehicle. It is also possible to retrofit the system for existing fleets of passenger transport rail vehicles. The HÜBNER Group is currently in discussions with the first interested train fleet operators in North America about adopting the system.

### Automated solution to replace manual coupling processes

Until now, the coupling and uncoupling of cars in passenger trains has been a standard process that transit operators typically use to adjust for varying capacity requirements. When less capacity is needed outside of peak times, additional cars are removed usually with a manual process.

These coupling activities take place at train depots along the affected routes during ongoing operations. In this process, which typically takes half an hour, two employees in addition to the train driver are required to manually separate or connect the gangway systems of the cars. For safety reasons, the entire train must be disconnected from the power supply during the whole coupling or uncoupling procedure.

### Transit operators will be able to adjust train capacities more flexibly

With the new automatic gangway coupling system, the HÜBNER Group is planning to make it possible for transit operators to have a fully automatic system to manage this process for more efficient, convenient and safe operation. This will also make it possible to increase operational reliability for

train services. Transit operators should be able to quickly and flexibly adjust their train capacities to meet current capacity requirements – which finally will offer clear benefits to passengers as well.

### Reduced personnel requirements: Added value in ongoing operations

*“With the HÜBNER AutoCouple System, it should be possible for train drivers to uncouple or add cars to the train with the push of a button in a fully automatic process. During the entire coupling process, the train should be able to remain connected to the power grid,”* explains **Balamurali MK, Innovation & Product Developer in HÜBNER’s Mobility Rail division**. *“This way transit operators should be able to save up to 25 minutes in each coupling process. Thanks to the quicker availability of trains and the savings in personnel costs, the system would create a true added value!”*

With the new system, personnel would not be required on the tracks to undertake coupling and uncoupling tasks, minimizing the risk of accidents. The new system is also exceedingly robust and durable and in future should facilitate power and data transmission from one rail car to the next.

### Transit operators should save costs for energy and maintenance

With the flexible use of shorter (and thus lighter) trains during non-peak times, transit operators should be able to economize on energy use and the wear and tear on rail cars that are used less often. Added to the benefits of reduced costs for maintenance and energy use, the HÜBNER AutoCouple System also makes for an optimized ecological footprint.

*“With our numerous local production and manufacturing facilities in Europe, the USA, India and China, we are the ideal partner for our customers in the global rail transport sector,”* says **Alexander Schmidt**. *“Our customers benefit from locally provided service on a customized basis throughout the entire product life cycle.”*

### The AutoCouple System at InnoTrans 2024

The HÜBNER Group will present the HÜBNER AutoCouple System as a world first innovation at InnoTrans 2024 in Berlin. The company will also be presenting a host of other new developments and innovations at Booth 120 in Hall 1.2, a broad range of offerings that help to make rail transport more sustainable, efficient and reliable. More information about the HÜBNER Group at Innotrans 2024 is available online at: <https://www.hubner-group.com/innotrans/>

## HÜBNER Group

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With its business divisions **Mobility Rail, Mobility Road, Material Solutions** and **Photonics**, the HÜBNER Group is a global system supplier for the mobility sector, for manufacturing, and for life sciences and research applications. HÜBNER is the worldwide leader in gangway systems for rail vehicles and buses as well as a supplier of chassis technology, cockpit display solutions and door sealing and safety profiles. The company is also an internationally recognized supplier of sophisticated solutions involving elastomers, insulation and composite materials. HÜBNER's business unit for laser technology is developing successfully, featuring applications for cancer diagnostics and spectroscopy, for example.

In 2023, the HÜBNER Group generated sales of approximately €472 million, with approximately 3,500 employees worldwide. In addition to its headquarters in Kassel, Germany, HÜBNER is present with more than 30 locations around the world.

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