

PRT Vendor Updates

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This article summarizes the latest exploits of some of the major PRT developers:

2getthere

2getthere (based in the Netherlands) was selected as the supplier for the first phase of Masdar City, providing the link to the Masdar Institute of Science and Technology (MIST) by means of 8 PRT, 2 VIP (leather interior) and 3 Freight Rapid Transit (FRT) vehicles. The pilot system will include two passenger and three freight stations. Production T-Pods are being delivered and tested on site.

Robbert Lohman, Marketing Director for 2getthere, said, "One of the biggest challenges is operating in a 41°C (106°F) environment with the air-conditioning powered from the batteries of the vehicles. Other limitations include the space available in the vehicle and the fact that



2getthere Freight Vehicle

the vehicles have a relatively wide door opening, allowing warm air to flow in easily. We meet the requirements through additional engineering and operation measures."

Masdar City will be the world's first carbon neutral, zero-waste to land-fill, car-free city, powered entirely by alternative energy sources. Masdar City will be built on six and a half square kilometers and will grow eventually to house 1,500 businesses, 40,000 residents and 50,000 commuters. Ultimately, there will be 3,000 PRT vehicles and 85 stations.

http://www.2getthere.eu/Personal_Transit/

Critical Move

Critical (based in Coimbra, Portugal) has developed an electric vehicle, designed to be easily used for small trips at low speed, in urban or private environments, to complement regular public transport.

CEO, Luisa Goulao, said, "The initial deployment, to be rolled out at a hospital in a few months, comprises two independent loops. These loops could later be interconnected to form a true PRT system."

<http://www.critical-move.com/>



Critical Move's T-Pod

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SkyTran

In a September 2009 press release, it was announced that NASA officials signed a Space Act Agreement with Unimodal Systems, LLC to collaborate on development of Skytran at NASA Ames Research Park. Utilizing NASA-developed control software and human factors techniques, Unimodal will contribute its SkyTran vehicle and its advanced transportation technology. NASA will provide its Plan Execution Interchange Language (PLEXIL) and Universal Executive (UE) software to control the vehicle.

SkyTran will use small vehicles, running on elevated, magnetically levitated (maglev) guideways, which distinguishes it from other railed systems. The vehicles are lightweight, personal compartments that



SkyTran's Sleek T-Pod

can transport up to three passengers. The technology still has to be tested, and Unimodal is planning to build a 1,000-foot oval test track on the tarmac behind Hangar Two at Moffett Field.

<http://a6.unimodal.com>

Skyweb Express

Skyweb Express is the name of the PRT product from Taxi2000 Corp (T2). It's a supported style system with the wheels and vehicle chassis inside a U-Shaped truss guideway. The guideway is covered for EMF shielding and aesthetic reasons, as well as protection from the weather.

Skyweb Express recently worked with the City of Winona, MN in an attempt to secure federal funding for a pilot PRT system, with the intent of promoting PRT research and establishing PRT manufacturing capabilities. Their initial funding attempts appear not to have been successful.

<http://www.taxi2000.com>

Vectus

Vectus, a POSCO (www.posco.com) subsidiary, has two branch offices in operation: one in Korea ("Vectus Korea") and one in Sweden ("Vectus Sweden"). After years of research and development, the company currently has an operating full-scale system (the test track) that has not only verified the technology itself, but has also enabled a complete safety case, including validation.

In September 2009, a memorandum of understanding was signed to produce a 5 km (3mile) Personal Rapid Transit system for Suncheon, South Korea. The new eco-friendly transit network will connect travelers to and from Suncheon Bay, a scenic agricultural and industrial city of around 250,000 people, to the Suncheon International Gardening Festival site. Forty vehicles, traveling at a top speed of 60 km/h (37 mph), are planned to be in operation by 2013.

<http://www.vectusprrt.com>

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ULTra

ULTra PRT, formerly known as Advanced Transport Systems, was formed to design and develop a mode of transport which would be the optimum form of transportation, meeting personal transportation needs better than the car. The ULTra system has been in development since the mid-nineties and now has two established systems in operation; the company's Cardiff test facility, and the world's first commercial PRT system, due to open to the public at London Heathrow Airport this year. In September 2009, BAA and ULTra PRT agreed upon a 20-year framework contract for use of ULTra for all BAA deployments of PRT.

The first phase of the Heathrow network consists of 21 vehicles and 4 kilometers (2.5 miles) of guideway, linking one station in Terminal 5 to

two remote stations in the business car park. The safety case for public passengers was recently approved and final passenger testing is now underway. Martin Lowson, President, said "We are on track for meeting the required 99.7% availability." Long-range planning at Heathrow involves the option to expand this system to the Central Terminal Area (CTA), with a network connecting three north side passenger and staff car parks to the CTA (Terminals 1, 2 and 3), car rental facilities and hotels.

<http://www.ultraprt.com>




ULTra track and T-Pods at Heathrow Airport

Website Updates

In addition to news updates (which now occur almost daily) our website has recently been updated with the following additions and/or changes:

- A new section entitled "How to Get Into PRT"
- Blogs summarizing the PRT papers and presentations at Transportation Research Board 2010 and Passenger Terminal Expo 2010
- A new 5 minute video of passenger trials at Heathrow Airport
- The vendor concept video "PRT Overview" has been revised
- A new podcast has been added, discussing basic advantages and disadvantages of PRT

Additional pictures and information at www.prtconsulting.com. 

UPCOMING CONFERENCES

RECon 2010

May 2010 • Las Vegas, NV
<http://www.icsc.org/2010SC/>
 (visit PRT booth #S3052)

ACI-NA Conference & Exhibition

Sept 2010 • Pittsburg, PA
<http://www.aci-na.org/pitt2010/index.html> (visit PRT booth #211)

Podcar City

Oct 2010 • San José, CA
<http://podcarcity.org/sanjose/>