



AmtrakConnect® Wi-Fi Now on Midwest Corridors

AmtrakConnect® cellular-based Wi-Fi service is now available on Amtrak trains in the Midwest, with eight corridors offering this free amenity to Amtrak passengers, effective today. Collectively, these routes carried nearly 3.3 million passengers in the last year (Amtrak FY2013, Oct. 2012-Sept. 2013) and account for about 10 percent of Amtrak ridership.

"We continually look for ways to improve the customer experience on board our trains. The availability of a free Wi-Fi service that delivers the speeds and connectivity passengers are looking for is yet one more way to achieve this goal and maintain a competitive position among transportation providers," said Matt Hardison, Amtrak Chief Marketing and Sales Officer.

AmtrakConnect utilizes multiple cellular carriers to provide the best mobile experience possible, taking advantage of 4G technologies where available. Amtrak installed the equipment under contracts with the states of Illinois, Michigan, Missouri and Wisconsin as part of their sponsorship of Amtrak service. This brings the Wi-Fi coverage to about 85 percent of passengers across the national network.

Hardison explained that AmtrakConnect is provided at no cost to passengers and has proven very popular - as evidenced by the fact that it routinely supports between 30 and 50 percent of passengers on a given train.

"Amtrak trains in Illinois are faster, thanks to our joint commitment to high speed rail," said Illinois Governor Pat Quinn. "Now, Wi-Fi access on those same trains will make each trip more productive and enjoyable. Faster, better and more efficient - now there are even more reasons to take the train in Illinois."

"The traveling public has come to expect easy access to the Internet, so we're very pleased to be offering free Wi-Fi on the Hiawatha Service between Milwaukee and Chicago," said Mark Gottlieb, Secretary of the Wisconsin Department of Transportation. "This Wi-Fi addition is going to be especially appealing for our many business travelers, who can now make even better use of their time on the tracks."

"Wi-Fi is an important additional amenity for passengers on Michigan and other Midwest corridor services. Michigan looks forward to travelers enjoying Wi-Fi and other service improvements as we continue to implement our Accelerated Rail program," said Tim Hoeffner, Rail Director, Michigan Department of Transportation "We are excited to partner with Amtrak and our sister state DOTs on Wi-Fi service as we look for more and creative ways to make train travel a more attractive option in Michigan and throughout the Midwest."

"The Missouri River Runner is a popular travel option in our state," said Michelle Teel, Multimodal Operations Director, Missouri Department of Transportation. "Adding Wi-Fi service for passenger use makes an already attractive service even more customer-friendly."

Wi-Fi service is now provided on these Chicago Hub Services routes in addition to Amtrak trains on the East and West Coasts (FY2013 ridership data):

Illinois: 1.22 million passengers
Lincoln Service: Chicago-Springfield-St. Louis (expanding to all four round-trips);
Illini/Saluki: Chicago-Champaign-Carbondale;
Illinois Zephyr/Carl Sandburg: Chicago-Galesburg-Quincy;

Michigan: 1.05 million passengers
Wolverine Service: Chicago-Ann Arbor-Detroit-Pontiac;
Blue Water: Chicago-East Lansing-Port Huron;

Pere Marquette: Chicago-Holland-Grand Rapids;

Missouri: 200,000 passengers

Missouri River Runner: St. Louis-Jefferson City-Kansas City

Wisconsin (contract shared with Illinois): 821,000 passengers

Hiawatha Service: Chicago-Milwaukee

As the demand for on-board Wi-Fi continues to grow, and in order to ensure the best experience for everyone, data-intensive activities, such as streaming video and music, and large file downloads that can slow everyone down, will be restricted. Doing so helps ensure that high-volume data users onboard the trains do not degrade the experience for others. More information is available on the attached document, which is available at stations and aboard the trains.

Passengers will also see specially dressed "AmtrakConnect Ambassadors" on some trains, distributing brochures and providing other assistance in celebration of the new service.

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