

WDF 2019 Identifying trends – shaping the future

Vienna, Austria. 100% availability, fully automated shunting, artificial intelligence in traffic management: What sounds like dreams of the future has already entered the stage of the railway world – for example at WDF 2019, where such and other ideas were discussed in concrete terms.

More than 260 visitors from 40 nations represented 101 companies and institutions from the railway industry at this year's WDF. Exciting inputs were given not only during the 21 lectures. In between, operators, system integrators, technical experts and decision-makers got in touch in an informal atmosphere. Together, they let their thoughts and ideas regarding "Intelligent tracking solutions" run wild.

Open exchange paves the way into the future

Christian Pucher, Programme and Content Director and initiator of the WDF, is certain: "Initially, this event formed a platform for discussing solutions that work exclusively with axle counters and wheel detection systems. This focus is too short-sighted to meet current requirements. New technologies and approaches open up completely new possibilities. We have to discuss these together. Thereby, we can identify potentials and find out, what role proven solutions can play and what path the industry is taking as a whole. The lectures we heard this year dealt with visionary concepts, current research results and innovative practical applications. This mix of topics provided for productive discussions and stimulated the visitors to an intensive exchange of opinions."

Fulminant start

On Wednesday, 5 June, WDF 2019 started with three brilliant keynotes. TC Chew, Director and Global Rail Leader of Arup, looked into the future with his lecture "Future Rail 2050". Marco Gercke, Director Cybercrime Research Institute, used practical examples to illustrate how artificial intelligence will change the rail industry – whereby he created exciting pictures in the minds of the audience even without any slides. Finally, Dirk Ahlborn, CEO Hyperloop Transportation Technologies, gave inspiring inputs for the implementation of ambitious future-oriented projects using the Hyperloop as an example. The first WDF day ended with a relaxed get-together in the lobby.

Inputs, exchange, networking

Thursday started with the scent of fresh coffee and tea - and the tangible anticipation of further exciting inputs in four streams.

Concrete application examples were discussed in the stream "Train localisation": From the possibilities of using GPS in tunnels, the architecture and performance of multisensor solutions, to the evaluation of a fully train-borne localisation algorithm.



The topic “Maximising efficiency – managing traffic” was discussed on the basis of new technological possibilities. With regard to train detection, approaches based on fibre optic sensing were discussed intensively. In addition, the importance of specifically developed system landscapes for availability were thematised.

Using the Internet of Things in the railway industry, enabling fully automated shunting based on active communication between trains, infrastructure and personnel as well as approaches to automated train recognition: The stream “Freight transport 4.0” made the progress of digitalisation in the railway industry tangible by means of concrete examples.

Under the title “Digitalisation, Trends and Innovations”, Cyber Security in the area of train control and signalling technology was discussed in Thursday’s last panel. The discussion on the use of georeferenced infrastructure data concluded with an insight into practical aspects of current trends.

On top of these fascinating presentations, Thursday offered a special opportunity for further exchanges of ideas and experiences. Right after the last lecture, the visitors of the WDF made their way to the Orangery of Schönbrunn Palace. In a relaxed atmosphere, the second day of the event ended with a gala dinner and pleasant conversations.

From theory to practice

Friday was dedicated to the practical aspects of sustainable technologies: Two panels discussed innovative solutions for track vacancy detection and projects, in which Distributed Acoustic Sensing (DAS) is used for train tracking. Max Schubert, Head of System Architecture and IT Security, DB Netz AG, closed WDF 2019 with his presentation. He also emphasised on the importance of an open exchange: „WDF is **the** event to meet experts and managers from the globe to discuss about fibre optic sensing and axle counting – and of course every topic that is related to that, like safe train tracking, asset condition monitoring or security on the track. The atmosphere here is tremendous – I mean, there are people from all over the world and they are willing to share their thoughts and their experiences. This is what creates new ideas in my head and in this whole area of the railway world – WDF creates and develops these ideas!”



PICTURES

Image	Text														
	<p>The WDF 2019 took place from 5 to 7 June in Vienna.</p>														
 <table border="1"><thead><tr><th>Statistic</th><th>Value</th></tr></thead><tbody><tr><td>Days Event</td><td>3</td></tr><tr><td>Speakers</td><td>21</td></tr><tr><td>Visitors</td><td>260+</td></tr><tr><td>Countries</td><td>40</td></tr><tr><td>Companies</td><td>101</td></tr><tr><td>Speeches</td><td>460 min</td></tr></tbody></table>	Statistic	Value	Days Event	3	Speakers	21	Visitors	260+	Countries	40	Companies	101	Speeches	460 min	<p>Under the motto "Intelligent tracking solutions", numerous experts from various fields gathered at the WDF in Vienna.</p>
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Dirk Ahlborn, CEO Hyperloop Transportation Technologies, presented concepts for sustainable projects.



Between and after the presentations, WDF 2019 offered numerous opportunities to informally discuss new ideas and experiences.

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