



## Passenger Entertainment Onboard the Pacific Surfliner and Coast Starlight

### Client Summary:

The National Railroad Passenger Corporation, doing business as Amtrak, is a government-owned corporation that was organized on May 1, 1971, to provide intercity passenger train service in the United States. In fiscal year 2008, Amtrak served 28.7 million passengers, representing six straight years of record rideship. Through various commuter services, Amtrak serves an additional 61.1 million passengers per year in conjunction with state and regional authorities in California, Connecticut, Maryland, Virginia, and Washington. If included among U.S. airlines, Amtrak would rank 8th in the number of passengers served in 2008. On average, there are nearly twice as many passengers on an Amtrak train than there are on a domestic airline flight.



The **Pacific Surfliner** is a 350-mile AMTRAK passenger train route serving communities on the coast of Southern California between San Diego and San Luis Obispo. With 2.89 million passengers in fiscal year 2008, this is Amtrak's most heavily-travelled service outside of the Northeast Corridor. The Pacific Surfliner operates 11 daily trains each way between Los Angeles and San Diego on weekdays and 12 trains each way on weekend. The Pacific Surfliner is funded mostly by state authority, Caltrans, rather than the federal government. These trains, collectively referred to as Amtrak California, operate in addition to Amtrak's own interstate trains – the Pacific Surfliner, and the Coast Starlight - connecting California with the rest of the country.

The **Coast Starlight** offers a Sightseer Lounge car that has floor-to-ceiling windows to watch the passing scenery. It is the only train on the Amtrak system intended to feature a first class Pacific Parlour lounge car. The **Pacific Parlour** cars are first-class lounges used exclusively for First Class / Sleeping Car Passengers. They feature 3 types of luxurious seating, a full bar, food serving area, and a movie theatre downstairs. The Parlour Car is the true heart of the Coast Starlight, and holds the Wine Tasting as well as Continental breakfast. Since these cars were built over 50 years ago, these ex-Santa Fe Hi-Level cars are one of Amtrak's most prized assets.

### Project Objectives:



Based on I.C.G.'s successful pilot program onboard the Pacific Surfliner, Amtrak has decided to offer its commuter customers Wi-Fi service. In addition, I.C.G., united with Amtrak will provide ad based entertainment with opt-in audio and complimentary WiFi to business class riders.

Looking to the future, Amtrak desires a solution that can be managed remotely, is simple and flexible to update and maintain while delivering the greatest possible value to their riders. Overall project cost and State/ Federal regulations were key considerations.

Amtrak's overall business goal is to enhance the passenger experience by providing convenient entertainment and messaging, with minimal operating cost.

## Solution Deployment:

These objectives were addressed by incorporating I.C.G.'s wireless digital media infrastructure, ICNet® connectivity, and ICMedia's™ Content and Content Management Software. I.C.G.'s MobileMedia System™ (MMS) will be installed throughout Amtrak's key west coast lines (e.g. *Pacific Surfliner and Coast Starlight*). Once completed, all commuter and intercity trains will feature several LCD's per car displaying content (e.g. *sitcoms, news updates, advertisements, weather updates*)

The Coast Starlight car will feature a 50" LCD in their onboard movie theatre displaying feature films. An additional display will be installed in the wine bar to provide valuable information on the fine cheese and wine selections available.

The on-site deployment activities began with a site-survey where the potential positioning of the MobileMedia System™ and ViFi Adapter® were assessed for optimizing 3G/4G signal strength, reduced reflectivity, overall WiFi connectivity and security of the device.



Due to the complexities of running cabling in a train car, the cost and time involved would defeat Amtrak's overall budget objectives. I.C.G.'s wireless infrastructure allows for a lower deployment cost compared to a wired solution.

For customers in a mobile environment, providing WiFi connectivity and up-to-date content (*news, weather, sitcoms, etc.*) is a challenge. To overcome this, connectivity through I.C.G.'s subsidiary company ICNet®, allows the end user unsurpassed network connectivity as they do not have to piggyback on to other networks or set up another wired network. This eliminates the need for satellite connection, cabling to monitors, and in-house IT involvement. Traditional DSL or T1 connections were not possible in this mobile environment.

Amtrak required that their passengers have the ability to listen to the short form content. An opt-in audio solution has been utilized incorporating FM and blue-tooth broadcasts.

I.C.G.'s comprehensive suite of professional services for digital content delivery was possible through ICPro's® installation and custom configurations team.

The I.C.G. MobileMedia System™ and ViFi Adapter® function in tandem to enable network connectivity through remote control of ICMedia™ displays. ICMedia™ CampaignManager content software manages content that is remotely pushed to each MMS. This allows for specific content to be played on the screens when the target audience is in place.

## Solution Summary:

Amtrak's ability to enhance the rider experience by providing the latest in digital display and wireless connectivity was critical. This goal was achieved by integrating I.C.G.'s wireless infrastructure with ICMedia's software and ICNet's® hotspot capabilities. The solution provides Amtrak riders access to on the spot internet access, entertainment, news and weather updates, and much, much more.



For more information about I.C.G. Wireless Digital Signage deployment, please contact:  
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