

News Release



AMTRAKCONNECT™

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AMTRAKCONNECT® WI-FI COMING TO MIDWEST CORRIDORS Passenger experience improvement with 4G performance coming in 2014

CHICAGO – [AmtrakConnect](#)® cellular-based Wi-Fi service is arriving soon on Amtrak trains in the Midwest, with eight corridors offering this free amenity to Amtrak passengers by early February of 2014. Collectively, these routes carried nearly 3.3 million passengers in the last year (Amtrak FY2013, Oct. 2012-Sept. 2013).

Amtrak is now installing the equipment on railcars under contracts with the states of [Illinois](#), [Michigan](#), [Missouri](#) and [Wisconsin](#). The Wi-Fi service will be provided on these routes:

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

A specific completion date will be announced next month. Passengers on these Amtrak Chicago Hub Service trains will start seeing the availability of the service as the railcars are deployed.

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“Last week, I met with Amtrak Board of Directors Chairman Anthony Coscia and his predecessor and current Board Member Thomas Carper. We discussed continued growth in ridership numbers and how we can maintain that trend,” said U.S. Senator Dick Durbin (D-IL), Chair of the Senate’s Midwest Passenger Rail Caucus. “Bringing Wi-Fi to these trains will better serve passengers and help Amtrak continue to set ridership records for the region.”

“Free Wi-Fi service on Amtrak trains, combined with our ongoing high-speed rail improvements, means passengers will get to their destinations more quickly, comfortably and enjoyably,” said Illinois Governor Pat Quinn.

“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.”

“We are eager to start providing the free Wi-Fi service to our *Hiawatha* passengers through this partnership,” said Mark Gottlieb, Secretary, Wisconsin Department of Transportation. “This is part of our commitment to improving the passenger rail travel experience between Milwaukee and Chicago, especially for daily business commuters.”

AmtrakConnect capitalizes on multiple cellular providers to provide the best mobile experience possible, taking advantage of 4G technologies where available.

“We are continually looking to improve customer satisfaction, and this service is yet one more way to do so, while also delivering the speeds and connectivity required to maintain a competitive position among transportation providers,” said Matt Hardison, Amtrak Chief Marketing and Sales Officer.

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. 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.

About 75 percent of Amtrak passengers nationwide already Enjoy the Journey® with free AmtrakConnect Wi-Fi. The addition of Chicago Hub Services will increase the coverage percentage to approximately 85 percent.

About Amtrak®

Amtrak is America's Railroad®, the nation's intercity passenger rail service and its high-speed rail operator. Amtrak and its state and commuter partners move people, the economy and the nation forward. Formally known as the National Railroad Passenger Corporation, Amtrak is governed by a nine member board of directors appointed by the President of the United States and confirmed by the U.S. Senate. Anthony R. Coscia is board chairman and Jeffrey R. Moreland is vice chairman. In FY 2013, a record 31.6 million passengers traveled on Amtrak on more than 300 daily trains – at speeds up to 150 mph (241 kph) – that connect 46 states, the District of Columbia and three Canadian Provinces. Enjoy the journey® at Amtrak.com or call 800-USA-RAIL for schedules, fares and more information. Like us on [Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/Amtrak), Follow us on Twitter ([@Amtrak](https://twitter.com/Amtrak)) and check out our blog at blog.amtrak.com.

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