



Media release

## Railway technology wins the Austrian State Prize

### PJM awarded the Austrian State Prize for Digitalisation

**Graz, 16 May 2024:** A railway project was honoured with the Austrian State Prize for Digitalisation 2023. The automatic brake testing system from PJM emerged as the winner in the 'Digital Transformation and Innovation' category. State Secretary Claudia Plakolm and Harald Kräuter, ORF Director of Technology and Innovation, presented the award to CEO Günter Petschnig and COO Christoph Lorenzutti from PJ Monitoring GmbH.

*'We are delighted to receive this award for two reasons. The fact that a rail project was honored underlines the importance of rail freight transport in an economic and climate policy context. Nearly 10 years of development work, high investments and perseverance have been re-*

*warded. This is great recognition for our entire team,' says Günter Petschnig. He adds: 'SBB Cargo is a great development partner. Such complex projects can only be successfully completed if all project partners pull together. A big thank you for the commitment, the belief in the technology and the great collaboration.'*

*'The State Prize for Digitalisation shows that Austria is a strong location for digital innovations. We must continue to develop our qualities in a targeted manner and, above all, further strengthen digital skills throughout Austria. They are an important basis for successful digital transformation and innovative companies. I would like to congratulate all the award winners who are making new digital success stories possible for the whole of Austria and are attractive role models for other companies and insti-*

tutions,' said State Secretary for Digitalisation Claudia Plakolm.

*'Digitalisation is a decisive factor for growth and broad prosperity, which we must use in a targeted manner in Austria. Openness to technology is the indispensable basis for innovations that secure our competitiveness and thus our entire way of life. I am impressed by the achievements of the award winners and congratulate them warmly. Because they tackle and implement - that is the right spirit for the future,'* said a delighted Federal Chancellor Karl Nehammer.

*'The quality of the projects awarded this year as part of the State Prize for Digitalization is impressive. You can see how much innovative strength there is in Austria in this core area, which is crucial for a successful future. I am delighted that we have been able to bring some particularly outstanding ideas to the fore with today's awards. On behalf of ORF, I would like to congratulate all of the award winners,'* emphasized Harald Kräuter, ORF Director of Technology and Innovation.

### **The reasons for the jury's decision**

The jury of experts evaluated the open-topic submissions according to a catalogue of criteria such as degree of innovation, quality of implementation, high usability, added value for users and market potential. The submission phase was organized by the FFG (Austrian Research Promotion Agency). The jury's statement: *'The submission Digital Rail Transport - Automated Brake Test enables the digitalization of the previously manual inspection of brakes in rail transport using special sensor*



*technology and remote evaluation via mobile operating devices. This reduces the manual effort and duration of the brake test. By automating this inspection process, the physical strain on staff and the time required for the inspection are reduced. This means that the rolling stock can be put back into service more quickly and enables rail transport capacities to be increased. This patented system has already been approved and is being used successfully by the SBB Cargo.'*

### **The automated brake test is Europe's reference systems**

The automated brake testing system was developed with SBB Cargo, positively assessed by TÜV Süd in February 2022 and received type approval from the "BAV" in November 2023. The first pilot trains at SBB Cargo started in 2017 and around 200 wagons have now been equipped with the system. The automatic brake test is also part of Mercitalia Inter-

modal's extensive 'Smart Train freight wagons' upgrade.

This is PJM's second State Prize and 13th award in total. In 2021, PJ Messtechnik was honored with the State Prize for Engineering Consulting and last year PJ Monitoring was among the 3 nominees for the State Prize for Engineering Consulting. In addition, the innovation was honored with the Innovation Award Styria 2024.

### **A short video on the automated brake testing system:**

**<https://youtu.be/PKS4YZx8f0Y>**

Source / texts partly taken from (in German language): <https://www.leisure.at/de/presse/7036/Staatspreis-Digitalisierung-Staatssekretaerin-Plakolm-zeichnet-Preistraeger-am-4GAMECHANGERS-Festival-aus--BILD>

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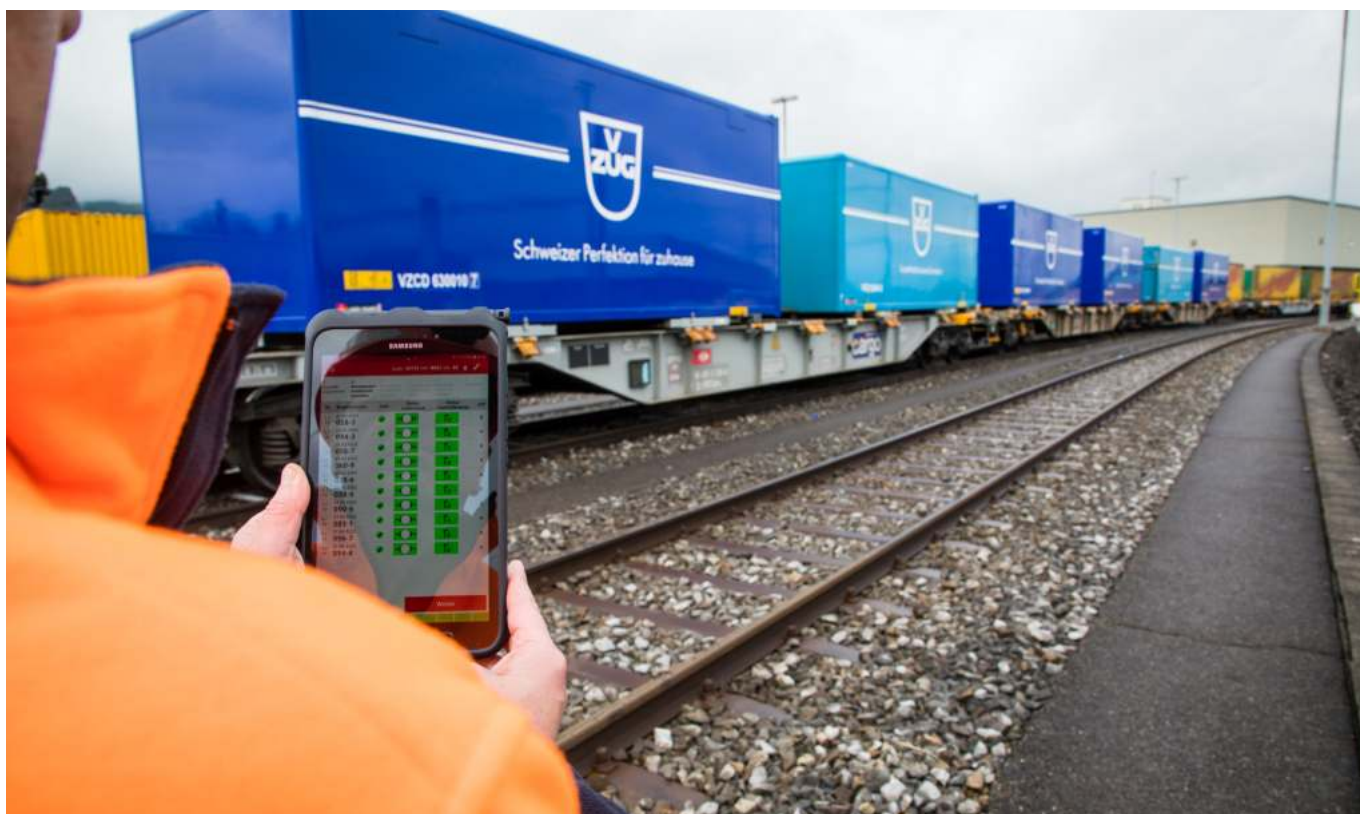
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State Secretary Claudia Plakolm (left) and Harald Kräuter (right), ORF Director of Technology and Innovation, presented the award to CEO Günter Petschnig and COO Christoph Lorenzutti of PJ Monitoring GmbH.  
Credit: BKA – Christopher Dunkler, free of charge



Thanks to the automatic brake test, a manual process has been automated for the first time in 100 years. The brakes are checked automatically using a tablet. The automated brake test fulfils all safety-related requirements in terms of operation and vehicle and is the reference system for the automated brake testing for freight wagons in Europe.  
Credit: SBB Cargo, free of charge