



Montreal, January 2009

## **Parsons transfers to 21Net the operation of the Internet services on board VIA Rail Canada's Windsor-Quebec City trains**

Montreal, January the 13th, 2009: As of November 1<sup>st</sup> 2008, the Internet Wi-Fi services on VIA Rail Canada trains running between Windsor, Toronto, Ottawa, Montreal, and Quebec City are operated by 21Net, a European Internet operator specializing in broadband Internet access to trains via satellite communications. This follows an agreement between Parsons and 21Net, and validated by VIA Rail Canada, whereby the services operated by Parsons since November 2006 will be transferred to 21Net.

Since 2004, 21Net has been working with leading European train companies (Renfe in Spain, SNCF in France, Thalys International) and the European Space Agency to demonstrate the technical and commercial pertinence of offering broadband Internet on trains via a bi-directional satellite link and to pioneer key advances in this technology and the Internet service provisioning to train passengers.

“21Net’s combination of railway certified high gain bi-directional satellite antenna and advanced dynamic bandwidth assignment technologies provides a robust, proven, and economic solution,” said Henry Hyde-Thomson, Chairman of 21Net. “We are extremely proud to have been selected by VIA Rail and Parsons to take over the Internet operations and propose expansions of the services to both VIA Rail and its passengers, thus contributing to VIA’s commitment to quality services towards its customers.”

21Net has already demonstrated its unmatched capabilities with the delivery of broadband Internet on the Thalys fleet running between Amsterdam, Brussels, Cologne, and Paris in collaboration with Nokia Siemens Networks and Telenet. Since its commercial launch in May 2008, the service, known as ThalysNet, is now fully deployed on the Thalys fleet. Already, more than 60.000 Thalys passengers have used the broadband Internet connection while traveling at 300 km/hr across four European countries – Belgium, The Netherlands, France, and Germany. Nine out of ten interviewed ThalysNet users have evaluated the service as “good” or “very good”.

Starting in December 2008 in France, the 21Net solution is now deployed onboard mooviTER, the communicating and innovative intercity train of SNCF (French National Railway Operator), providing Broadband Internet access to TER passengers.

### **About 21Net**

21Net is a European operator who established the world’s first bi-directional satellite communications system capable of delivering high speed Internet to high speed trains. Initially sponsored by the European Space Agency, 21Net was the first provider to technically demonstrate the provisioning of broadband Internet on a high speed train, in 2004.

Since 2004, 21Net has been working closely with leading railway operators RENFE, THALYS, and SNCF to develop a robust and technically mature system.

21Net is committed to providing a great user experience with high data rates and seamless connectivity based on bi-directional satellite communications integrated with terrestrial wireless solutions for stations and tunnels. Its “Broadband To Trains” system is the only productized system capable of providing true broadband connectivity to high speed trains.

[www.21net.com](http://www.21net.com)



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