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Xerox and Dutch start-up share prestigious innovation award

Sensor-based car parking, foldable container honoured by transport ministers / Special Mention for Singapore Land Transport Authority

Paris/Leipzig – Xerox and Holland Container Innovations (HCI) are the joint winners of the 2014 Promising Innovation in Transport Award.

Xerox receives the award for its Merge® system, a city-wide sensor-based, smart parking solution that reduces traffic and congestion through guided parking with demand-based pricing.

HCI receives the award for their 4FOLD ISO-certified foldable container, which significantly reduces the economic and environmental cost of empty container shipment.

The Promising Innovation in Transport Award is awarded by the International Transport Forum at the OECD, an intergovernmental organisation for the transport sector with 54 member countries. It will be presented on 21 May in the presence of ministers from around the world during the opening plenary of their global transport summit organised by the International Transport Forum.

The winners will be available for media after the award ceremony on 21 May at the ITF stand (16:00-16:30, Level +1 of Congress Center Leipzig)

Xerox Merge®: Sensor-based guided car parking with dynamic pricing

Merge® is a smart parking solution first deployed in downtown Los Angeles in June 2012. It uses the data from smart meters, off-street parking lots and over 6,000 on-street parking sensors to get a complete view of parking demand and behaviour in a 6 square mile area.

The system feeds this data in real-time to smart phone applications and a vehicle’s navigation system to provide motorists with actual parking rates and guidance to available spaces. A pay-by-cell system allows drivers to pay for, and top up their parking meters using a cell phone or smart phone. Payments are automatically visible to enforcement officers.

Smart pricing algorithms use the parking sensor data to refine parking rates based on demand: Blocks that are often full see their rates increased; underutilised areas see their rates decreased. Drivers thus have an incentive to use a different mode or to
park slightly further away. When rates are set appropriately the need to circle around looking for parking is reduced – with less time lost, congestion reduced, safer driving and better access to shops.

The jury was impressed with the capabilities offered by the Xerox system, in particular with the implementation of dynamic pricing. It noted the possibility for this concept “to evolve by providing additional information for users regarding alternate options for travel”, which would offer “significant additional benefits for passenger mobility”.

“The Merge Parking System is the first system to fully integrate and provide analytics on all aspects of metered and off-street programmes,” said David Cummins, Senior Vice President and Managing Director of Xerox Services’ Parking and Justice Solutions. “Winning this important award highlights how Xerox innovation integrates hardware and software to provide revenue management, maintenance, enforcement, and occupancy detection by applying real-time data to solve parking issues. Merge and its algorithm-driven dynamic pricing model provide authorities with a flexible, policy-adaptive solution.”

Holland Container Innovations: The 4FOLD foldable container

Ocean carriers spend about €25 billion a year on repositioning empty containers to the point of their next cargo. On average 20% of the containers transported on sea, and 40% transported on land are empty. This economic inefficiency cuts into shipping lines profitability and increases unfavourable greenhouse gas and fine particle emissions. The costs and environmental issues caused by this empty transport can be significantly lowered when shipping lines use foldable containers.

The 4FOLD is the first 40ft HC foldable container in the world that has passed the ISO certification test. When empty it can be folded to a quarter of its height. Four folded containers can be bundled to the same dimensions as a standard container. Folding and unfolding of the container takes about four minutes and is done with standard lifting equipment.

A pilot project running between the Netherlands and Spain found that the costs of the empty transport were reduced to such an extent that it is cheaper to use a container in a multimodal setup than to use a truck on the road. Use of the foldable container therefore stimulates modal shift in a natural way.

The jury highlighted the significant potential offered by this innovation for “improving efficiency within the most prevalent freight movement mode globally”, both for the transport and the storage of containers.

"The 4FOLD foldable container provides a solution to one of the largest issues in present day transport - the issue of empty container movements and the related environmental impact", said Simon Bosschieter, CEO of Holland Container Innovations, the company behind the 4FOLD design. "We are proud to win this prestigious award and aim to leverage the exposure to further expand our global client base in shipping and rail."

Ms Lidewijde Ongering, Director-General for Mobility and Transport in the Dutch Ministry of Infrastructure and the Environment, who will present the award to HCI added: "Empty containers are inefficient: they carry nothing but air and take up a lot of space. The foldable containers developed by Holland Container Innovations are a fantastic solution: they take up less space and make container transport much more efficient. That's good for the economy and good for the environment!"
Special Mention for Singapore Land Transport Authority

The jury awarded a Special Mention to Singapore’s Land Transport Authority for their ‘MyTransport.SG’ initiative, offering a one-stop integrated transport companion for motorists, commuters, cyclists, citizens with special needs, students and tourists.

In the eyes of the jury, ‘MyTransport.SG’ is “an excellent example of bringing the customer to the centre of transport policy” through integration of all transport modes, the provision of tailored information about travel optimisation, the standardisation of data provision, and the financial support for new ideas.

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