LEITNER ConnX: Intensive testing and development phase as a major step towards market readiness

The further development of ConnX, the new "hybrid solution" comprised of a ropeway and autonomous vehicles, is progressing with great strides. Together with the Slovenian experts of Elaphe, LEITNER is currently testing the innovative mobility solution intensively in the test lab in Sterzing. The progress is a positive sign and supports the ambitious goal of making the patented system ready for the market as a future model for urban transport in the next two years.

With ConnX, LEITNER is dedicating its research and innovation resources to a forward-looking solution for the challenges of urban transport. Through the combination of ropeway transport and the change of the vehicles to ground-guided routes, the aim is to meet a wide range of urban planning needs and bypass existing infrastructural barriers – such as buildings or monuments – while overcoming topographical differences at the same time. Thanks to the combination of a ropeway and self-propelled vehicles, ConnX allows comfortable locomotion, without needing to change vehicles. As a dual solution, the system also lends itself as a "missing link" between different transport systems or between two ropeways, but also as a "last mile connection" for people and goods.

Intensive test phase is a positive sign

Together with the Slovenian vehicle developer, Elaphe, the latest developments on the system are being subjected to intensive tests in the Test Lab in Sterzing. At present, two cabins and two vehicles are in operation, which are circulating in coordination with one another, whereby the different processes are being tested and optimized. For example, this also includes getting in and out at the station, whereby the focus is on two scenarios: The complete stop of the vehicle in the station and traveling through the stopping point at a speed of 0.3 meters per second. Both processes, as well as the optimization of the vehicle-synchronization, produced positive test results and therefore also confirm the current project plan.

Strong partnership with a clear distribution of roles

The fruitful partnership between LEITNER and Elaphe is making a significant contribution to the successful interim assessment. With the Slovenian developers, real professionals have been found, who have the same entrepreneurial DNA and are market leaders in their industry in the field of direct drive technology. As an expert for in-wheel motors, Elaphe brings exactly the core competence that is needed for the development of vehicles for terrestrial transport. "We intend to design new multimodal concepts that the world needs, to solve the challenges in the urban environment and increase the comfort of public transport and make these even more attractive", Luka Ambrozic (Marketing Director of Elaphe) describes the joint vision. In close cooperation and the clear division of responsibility between vehicle and ropeway technology, it has so far been possible to solve the various complex issues and thus also to stay on track in terms of time. "The enormous public interest in the new solution is also motivating. This works like an additional motivation turbo for the entire team. Just like us, many people can already hardly wait to see the system in live use outside of the test lab – if everything continues to run to plan, this dream will become reality in two years' Klaus Erharter (Technical Director LEITNER) and Günter Tschinkel (Head of Electrical Engineering) explain, who are nearing the big target step-by-step with their teams.

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