



iC Plus trailer running gears from BPW pave the way for AI-supported maintenance management

May 03, 2023 09:15 CEST

## From digital DNA to the thinking trailer: how BPW is revolutionising vehicle and fleet management

- BPW reveals the next development stage of trailer running gear at transport logistic
- iC Plus trailer running gears from BPW pave the way for AI-supported maintenance management
- A fully integrated, digitalised life cycle makes trailer operation more efficient than ever
- Thinking trailer already being tested with leading vehicle manufacturers

**Wiehl, 3 May 2023 --- With its holistic approach to digitalisation, BPW has already fundamentally changed the way trailer running gears are developed, built and maintained. Now the innovation leader is advancing the digital DNA of its running gears to artificial consciousness: the trailer of the future thinks independently and manages itself. BPW reveals the first details of the new generation iC Plus running gear at transport logistic.**

"Born digital" - under this concept, BPW has assigned digital DNA to all of its running gear components, from the axle to the last screw: This DNA accompanies the entire life cycle of the trailer - from design and production to everyday use as well as maintenance and spare parts supply - thus ensuring unrivaled efficiency. At the world's leading trade fair [transport logistic in Munich](#) (9-12 May, Hall A6 Stand 310), the globally active family company will unveil the next stage of development, which gives the familiar company motto "we think transport" a new, unexpected meaning: The thinking trailer of the future senses the condition of all relevant [Running gear components](#) itself, predicts their wear and tear and schedules maintenance at the optimal time. It can even reliably order the right spare parts in the workshop. In future, fixed maintenance appointments or mileage will not be the only deciding factors in the maintenance of the trailer running gear, but also sensors and intelligent algorithms. The complex [Vehicle and fleet management](#) will become simple and more efficient than ever. The innovation is already being tested in cooperation with leading vehicle manufacturers Kässbohrer and Schwarzmüller, amongst others; it should be available to order this year.

### **Key innovations from the BPW Group brought together holistically**

In order to enable AI-supported vehicle management, BPW developers worked closely with colleagues from the subsidiary idem telematics: the European market leader for open systems [Transport telematics](#) evaluates the operating data on brake function, brake pad wear, axle load and tire pressure on its cloud-based platform cargofleet 3, then aligns these data with the prescribed maintenance intervals for the BPW running gear components. The system suggests the optimal time, place and qualified [BPW Service partners](#) for maintenance as required and records all work performed on the vehicle in a digital vehicle file. In the next step, fleet managers are able to arrange workshop appointments along the current route with one click in the cargofleet3 portal: The system then books the appointment with the service partner and sends the spare parts list. The workshops also benefit from this system: incorrect orders, long delivery times or extensive storage of spare

parts will become a thing of the past.

Thore Bakker, General Manager Trailer Solutions and Mobility Services at BPW in Wiehl, says: “The [new generation of running gears iC Plus](#) is the starting point for holistic digitalisation and intelligent networking of the entire vehicle life. It enables digital maintenance management as a first step, and is developing further into a self-monitoring vehicle that optimally controls its maintenance. In future, on this basis, we also want to ensure that AI-supported analyses of road conditions and load can be used to optimise economy and safety.”

### **How AI-supported maintenance management reduces fleet manager workload**

Vehicle operators are under a great deal of pressure: Tight schedules must be adhered to on routes that span Europe, price competition is high, and the pressure from competitors is fierce. The operating costs and the risk of vehicle failure must therefore be minimised. The freight forwarder only earns money when the trailer is on the road and is utilised to the best possible extent. [Maintenance management](#) is therefore one of the most important tasks that determines the cost efficiency of transport – but it is also one of the most complicated: legal inspection regulations, manufacturers' maintenance schedules, or even status and fault messages coming from the vehicles themselves must always be kept under control, and maintenance must be skilfully scheduled and diligently documented. With digital maintenance management - which will in future be AI-controlled - BPW and idem telematics are not only optimising cost efficiency in vehicle operation, but also providing relief for fleet managers. This leaves more time for other tasks that increase operating efficiency.

### **Algorithms instead of sensors: AI makes the running gears more intelligent - instead of more complicated**

A major advantage of artificial intelligence is the ability to recognise patterns from a volume of data that is unmanageable for humans and to draw conclusions from these data. BPW engineers use this characteristic to gain even more information in future from the running gear without making it more complicated: To do this, research vehicles were literally studded with sensors - and these were gradually replaced by calculation models. The

developers also used the data from around 1,000 vehicles that are in use around the world and have been equipped with a special [Black Box](#). The result: the running gear becomes more intelligent, but remains as robust and easy to maintain - as BPW products and solutions have always been known for.

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### **About BPW Bergische Achsen Kommanditgesellschaft**

*BPW Bergische Achsen KG is the parent company of the BPW Group. With around 1,500 employees, including around 100 trainees, the family-run company has been developing and producing complete running gear systems for truck trailers and semi-trailers at its headquarters in Wiehl since 1898. BPW's technologies include axle systems, brake technology, suspension and bearings. BPW's trailer axles and running gear systems are in use in millions of vehicles around the world. An extensive range of services also provides vehicle manufacturers and vehicle operators with the opportunity to increase economic efficiency in their production and transport processes. [www.bpw.de/en](http://www.bpw.de/en)*

### **About the BPW Group**

*The BPW Group researches, develops and manufactures everything needed to ensure that transport keeps moving and is safe, illuminated, intelligent and digitally connected. With its brands [BPW](#), [Ermax](#), [HBN](#), [HESTAL](#) and [idem telematics](#), the company group is a preferred system partner of the commercial vehicle industry around the globe for running gear, brakes, lighting, fasteners and superstructure technology, telematics and other key components for trucks, trailers and buses. The BPW Group offers comprehensive mobility services for transport businesses, ranging from a global service network to spare parts supply and intelligent networking of vehicles, drivers and freight. The owner-operated company group currently employs 6,945 staff in more than 50 countries and achieved consolidated sales of 1.632 billion euros in 2021. [www.bpw.de/en](http://www.bpw.de/en)*

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