



No Hiding Place For Lost Trucks As Their Progress Is Tracked Via Satellite, Internet and Mobile Phone

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A Irish-based electronics firm, already a leader in the automotive field, is set to make another leap forward. TONY GALVIN reports AN innovative Irish company has secured its place at the cutting edge of telecommunication technology thanks to their own dedicated research team who have broken new ground by developing a product range centred on vehicle tracking via satellite, mobile phone and internet. Celtrak is part of the CEL group (Connaught Electronics Ltd.) and concentrates on the research and development of new products and the marketing and sales of the finished product. The company has just launched a new range of state-of-the-art products using the latest technological advancements which are expected to keep CEL, one of the area's largest employers, a leading player in the international market and copper-fasten their base in Tuam, Co. Galway. Not only are the new systems designed to utilise advances in satellite technology but the company will be making full use of the internet to market the new range and provide a specially designed service via their own website for the auto motive industry.

Fleet Tracking

Leading the new range is a product called Fleetwatch, a satellite based vehicle monitoring system that can track a fleet of vehicles and also keep a communications link with all the drivers. This is done through the use of an in-truck unit which has a direct link with a designated base station. As well as providing a company with all the relevant information on a truck's movements, location etc the system allows for text messaging and voice communication. Design team member Maria Burke explained that one of the main selling points of the system was its accessibility and ease of use and the significant savings to companies in the areas of gained efficiency and huge cuts in phone and other costs which can be a significant factor for many transportation companies. She explained that a fleet manager simply has to dial in the code of a particular vehicle and no matter where it is, the Celtrak system will pin-point its exact position. In addition the speed the truck is driving at, the direction it is heading in and other relevant details will immediately be displayed along with a map of the region the truck is in. Customers awaiting the truck's arrival can also monitor the truck's progress if the code is provided by the fleet manager. However, another very important aspect of the system is that a fleet manager need not be confined to a base station office to monitor a fleet of trucks. Celtrak have developed the system in such a way that vehicles can also be monitored via mobile phone.

Cost Effective

The same technology has been adapted to yet another new service being developed at Celtrak's Tuam headquarters - the Phonetrak system. Phonetrak uses the same innovations in tele-technology to make satellite tracking of private and fleet vehicles via a mobile phone possible. Up to now it has been necessary to

provide an expensive base station to monitor vehicles such as private or company cars. Using this technology this prohibitive cost is eliminated and once a small device is installed in the vehicle it can be tracked using a mobile phone. This brings the advantages of the Fleetwatch system within reach of smaller businesses and individuals. This is not only a most cost effective way of monitoring vehicles but also operates as the most sophisticated anti-theft device on the market. The system can be set to alert a driver if his vehicle is being interfered with by a non-authorized user and should it be driven away the police can immediately be alerted to its exact position. There is also a Celinek system available which can be used for over the air remote control or monitoring of building and equipment using mobile phones. www.celtrak.com. This is the address of Celtraks own website which has been designed at Celtrak's headquarter in Tuam and will be continually updated from this base. The site is designed to be a dedicated internet one-stop-shop for the auto industry and Celtrak hope to use it to target the client base most suited to their products. Unlike many portal sites, which can be very widely focused and prove time consuming and frustrating for users, the Celtrak site will focus on a specific areas and concentrate on providing the type of information and services they know will be of use to their client base. Such sites are known as vertical portals or vortals and the Celtrak site will feature a broad range of attractions such as on-line magazines, industry news, message boards and a jobs and for sale section. There will even be a translation service provided to help drivers negotiate documentation in foreign languages and a similar service to assist with currency transactions. Companies can also advertise on the site. Maria Burke points out that it is estimated that by the year 2004 one third of all Europeans will access the internet via their mobile phones. These most recent product developments are designed to keep the CEL group at the forefront of their industry and leading the way in advances at all levels.



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