



# Seminar series benefits Web customers

How GE Capital-Rail Services uses technology to assist customers with service and utilization issues.

In the present challenging economic environment, where business travel has been curtailed, GE Capital-Rail Services “is opening its doors virtually to customers across North America,” according to Communications Leader Farrah Aper. “In past years, traditional shop open houses were hosted, enabling customers to network among industry professionals, share best practices, and tour maintenance facilities. This year, we’ve been leveraging virtual web technology through a new webinar series, ‘Managing Your Rail Fleet Through Tough Times.’”

GE says its primary goal is to help customers identify their railcar fleet problems and better understand what can be done to solve them. Prior to the program’s March 2009 launch, GE surveyed customers about their current needs and problems. Three key themes emerged from the results: managing a highly com-

plex railcar fleet; controlling maintenance costs; and improving railcar utilization. Among the topics:

- Railcar Basics: providing overviews on general car types (hoppers), most common components needing repair, and typical preventative maintenance areas.
- Maintenance Management Strategies: making sense out of data, trending costs, and developing improved maintenance practices.
- Industry Changes, including ATSI (The Association of American Railroads’ Advanced Technology Safety Initiative).
- Shop Talk: shop selection and factors affecting shop cycle time.

Each session is 50 minutes in length, including the presentation and time for questions and answers.

GE Rail Services President and CEO Joe Lattanzio says the

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## GE Capital-Rail Services webinar topics include Railcar Basics, Maintenance Management Strategies, Industry Changes, and Shop Talk.

webinar series “is keeping customers in touch with GE’s approach to railcar fleet management and encouraging community engagement. The more someone understands the industry and its nuances, the more effective they are in adapting to the industry’s ever-changing environment. This is an excellent way for us to share our experiences and knowledge from managing one of the largest fleets in North America, and to learn from our customers about issues they confront in managing their own fleets.” GE, however, will continue to support personalized shop visits upon customer request.

Executive Vice President-Customer Operations Sameer Gaur says the webinars, described as “value-added virtual face time,” “help us to identify key customer touch points and to better understand concerns.” Adds Executive Vice President-Sales and Services Kareen Gray, “The webinars have provided our team with a deeper understanding of the unique challenges faced by our customers and help us to develop creative solutions.”

GE says customers are finding the webinars useful.

- Nova Chemical: “We are all managing the same issues, and the webinars help us to benchmark internally and confirm we are doing the right things.”

- Sunoco: “Both thorough and simple to follow, the GE Rail Services webinars continue to be a good source of information for veteran and novice rail shippers. GE provides industry specific information during each seminar while making it simple and interesting to follow. Also, the webinars allow for more convenience during the day, both on time and on travel. We look forward to attending more webinars in the future.”

- Evonik Degussa: “These days we are getting more involved with the day-to-day operations of fleet management, as companies cut back and our fleets get bigger. Ten years ago, fleet managers would focus solely on negotiating rates; today we are explaining how to use the cars, ordering parts, and auditing repair bills. The webinars are a great complement to the Sayre Shop events (opposite page) we have attended in the past. They make it easier for us to manage our fleets.”

For additional information, go to [www.ge.com/railservices](http://www.ge.com/railservices) or email [rail.webinar@ge.com](mailto:rail.webinar@ge.com) to register for a session.

*Editor’s note: This story originally appeared in the July issue under the headline “FleetMaintenance.com,” which is an automotive industry website. We reprint it here for clarification.*

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