Digital Twins Drive Better Outcomes across the Rail Asset Lifecycle

Connect the physical and virtual worlds to plan, design, construct, and operate rail and transit networks
Digital Twins Are Going Mainstream in the Rail and Transit Industry

Rail networks will play an essential role in the future of mobility, but owner-operators and their supply chains face many challenges, including dealing with aging infrastructure, shorter deadlines, tighter budgets, and distributed teams. Yet, in an ever-evolving and connected world and economy, digital technology, including digital twins, has the potential to rewrite the rulebook.

Digital twins provide opportunities to deliver improved business outcomes across the entire rail and transit asset lifecycle, and can help reshape how infrastructure is planned, designed, built, and operated. However, the sheer volume and variety of data, as well as managing the constant and dynamic change in our industry, can be overwhelming for rail professionals, whether in project delivery or operations.

To help engineers, designers, asset managers, inspectors, and other specialists do their job better and faster, the rail industry is embracing digital workflows on existing and future networks.

As part of this transformation—made possible by advances in geotechnical engineering, 3D modeling, 4D planning and visualization, reality modeling, artificial intelligence, and machine learning—digital twins today provide an immersive and holistic view of infrastructure assets aboveground and belowground.

For capital projects, a digital twin can help drive efficiency and increase quality within multidiscipline and digitalized workflows, enabling streamlined collaboration, maximum productivity, and more informed decisions.

During operations, combining data from continuous surveys, photogrammetry, LiDAR, walked inspections and/or remote sensors, digital twins help optimize rail maintenance strategies to reduce costs and improve overall safety and reliability.
A digital twin is a digital representation of a physical asset, process, or system, as well as the engineering information that allows us to understand and model its performance.

Typically, a digital twin is continuously updated from multiple sources, including sensors and surveying, to represent its near real-time status, working condition, or position. A digital twin enables users to visualize the asset, check its status, perform analysis, and generate insights to predict and optimize asset performance.

Throughout the lifecycle of an asset, a digital twin helps you to:

- Understand existing conditions
- Improve and accelerate design and construction workflows
- Increase asset reliability and performance
- Visually enhance collaboration
Bentley Systems is a pioneer in offering a digital twin solution that spans the entire rail asset lifecycle, enabling users to make more informed decisions and deliver improved outcomes.
The Benefits of a Digital Twin Workflow

In Planning
- Assess and understand existing conditions (aboveground and belowground)
- Identify project requirements
- Manage and mitigate risk
- Optimize communication and coordination
- Understand financial impact early

In Design and Engineering
- Accelerate project delivery
- Evaluate project impact
- Streamline collaboration
- Reduce risk, project costs, and delays
- Optimize design alternatives

In Construction and Commissioning
- Enable right-first-time construction
- Increase safety and efficiency
- Monitor project schedule vs. performance
- Optimize communication and coordination
- Reduce site visits

In Operations and Maintenance
- Undertake virtual asset inspection and documentation
- Perform the right work, in the right place, at the right time
- Reduce operational costs and unplanned downtime
- Ensure regulatory compliance
- Reduce on-network time, increasing worker safety

The following use cases demonstrate how organizations around the world are leveraging digital twins to synchronize work, gain greater visibility, and make more informed decisions across the lifecycle of rail and transit networks.
Inspection of LRT Jakarta Phase 1 Using 3D Data Capture
PT. Wijaya Karya (Persero) Tbk
North Jakarta and East Jakarta, Jakarta, Indonesia

LRT Jakarta Phase 1 is the first light rail train line in Indonesia’s capital that aims to reduce traffic congestion. When the owner planned regular structural health monitoring, LRT Jakarta realized the need to accelerate information exchange among stakeholders to effectively manage asset performance and maintenance. PT Wijaya Karya (Persero) Tbk (WIKA) offered a digital inspection solution but faced challenges in safely surveying the rail line within a short timeframe in the dense urban area without interrupting service.

WIKA used ContextCapture to generate a 3D reality mesh of the as-built environment from aerial photos and terrestrial laser scanning. Integrating reality modeling with virtual and mixed reality technology, they established a digital twin for smart inspection. Bentley’s dynamic, interoperable reality modeling solution saved up to 41% in costs and enabled WIKA to complete the inspection twice as fast as conventional methods. Stakeholders are extending the use of a digital twin beyond asset performance to help avoid design errors in Phase 2.

Project Playbook: ContextCapture, LumenRT, Pointools
Network Rail Wales and Western Region had to install new signaling apparatus at Bristol Temple Meads station. However, evaluating and designing new track signals is expensive and difficult to coordinate. They did not have much space to perform construction, and there were many overlapping schemes. They realized that, to showcase all the necessary renewals and predict the impact of the new signaling, they would need software to support an intelligent 3D model.

Network Rail chose MicroStation as their CAD platform, and used OpenRail Designer to recreate track geometry and place new signals, before developing fly-through animations that allowed designers to view the project from the train driver's perspective. They replicated multiple train approaches toward signals virtually to correct train signaling issues ahead of time, avoiding costly rework and the risk and expense of site visits, as well as optimizing design. Bentley’s 3D collaborative modeling environment helped Network Rail reduce months of work into one single meeting.

Project Playbook: MicroStation®, OpenRail™ Designer, Pointools, ProjectWise®
Transpennine Route Upgrade
Network Rail + Jacobs
Manchester, Leeds, and York, United Kingdom

Transpennine Route Upgrade (TRU) is a GBP multibillion railway program between York and Manchester, which will modernize the existing 100-kilometer rail line, doubling capacity and shortening journey times for passengers between rural and suburban stations and their nearest major urban centers.

Since the project needed to bring together the large volume of data and disciplines involved, Network Rail tasked Jacobs with implementing a route-wide digital twin to support the safest and most efficient design, construction, and handover ever completed on a U.K. railway upgrade.

Jacobs used the Bentley iTwin platform with other Bentley applications. By federating the data from over 60 separate systems into the digital twin, over 1,300 staff could track, contribute, and analyze design data and asset information in real time. They then overlaid more than 600 GIS datasets, which improved decision-making. Rapid data access, 50% faster than previous methods, saved the team 20,000 hours in the first six months, worth an estimated GBP 1 million. Overall, the digital twin will save approximately GBP 15 million.

Project Playbook: ContextCapture, iTwin.js, iTwin® Design Insights, iTwin Design Review, iTwin Design Validation, MicroStation, OpenBuildings® Designer, OpenRail Designer, ProjectWise
Shaoxing Urban Rail Transit Line Design and Construction
POWERCHINA Huadong Engineering Corporation Limited

Shaoxing, Zhejiang, China

POWERCHINA Huadong Engineering Corporation (HDEC) was entrusted to digitally engineer Shaoxing’s new Urban Rail Transit Line 1, including project management, overall consultation, survey, design, construction, and handover to operations and maintenance. HDEC needed to overcome the challenges of limited underground space and complex environmental conditions, plus numerous technical interfaces between the disciplines involved. Facing tight deadlines and high complexity on the project, HDEC realized that they needed to adopt digital workflows.

The team independently developed 3D geology software based on Bentley applications, using their solution along with the subsurface utility engineering functionality of OpenRoads, to create an integrated BIM model of the railway’s route. The ability to manage urban spatial and planning data in a single unified environment helped the team optimize design quality, reduce rework, cut time, and reduce the impact of subway construction on the citizens of Shaoxing.

Project Playbook: ContextCapture, iModel.js, MicroStation, OpenBuildings Designer, OpenRoads™ Designer, ProjectWise, ProStructures
To ease congestion in Melbourne’s Metro Tunnel, the Rail Infrastructure Alliance sought to create a new line that would reroute three of its busiest lines. The AUD 1 billion project included 9 kilometers of twin tunnels, two new entrances, and five underground stations. Because they had to minimize disruption to ongoing rail traffic, careful planning was vital. Conventional 3D models, while useful for previous rail designs, did not provide the required level of coordination.

The alliance discovered 4D construction planning and a digital twin created with Bentley applications could help them overcome all challenges. Each 3D model was coordinated through ProjectWise’s open data environment. SYNCHRO 4D consolidated these models and external logistics information into a federated 4D model and automatically assigned resources to tasks. The finished 4D construction schedule eliminated potential clashes, improved safety, reduced costs, and inspired other infrastructure organizations in the region to leverage 4D design.

**Project Playbook:** iModel.js, MicroStation, OpenBuildings Designer, ProjectWise, SYNCHRO™ 4D, SYNCHRO Field
Railway Facility for Manggarai to Jatinegara
PT. WASKITA Karya (Persero) Tbk
South Jakarta, Jakarta, Indonesia

Indonesia’s Ministry of Transportation is revitalizing Jakarta’s Manggarai Station, converting it from a commuter transit station to a terminus for long-distance trains. With the existing station incapable of accommodating a daily flow of 100,000 commuters, PT. WASKITA Karya (Persero) Tbk was retained to construct a new bridge connecting the first-floor mainline track to a new, second-floor mainline. Additionally, they were required to ensure they adhered to current industry standards, maintained train operations during construction, and controlled cost on prestressed concrete bridge segments accounting for 30% of the project budget.

Using OpenRail Designer, OpenBridge Designer, and ContextCapture, PT. WASKITA Karya established a digital twin that incorporated existing site conditions and a federated BIM model of the designed structure, boosting productivity and enabling more timely and accurate decision-making. Using OpenBridge Designer they provided accurate geometry and coordinated information for each bridge segment, avoiding miscalculations and reducing the chance that segments would be incorrectly ordered. Simulating construction sequences in SYNCHRO 4D helped them optimize resources and coordinate delivery of the project while railway operations continued.

Project Playbook: ContextCapture, LumenRT, OpenBridge®, OpenRail Designer, OpenRoads Designer, SYNCHRO 4D
Predictive Decision Support System (PDSS)
SMRT Trains Ltd
Singapore

SMRT Trains operates and maintains over 282 kilometers of rail track in Singapore. With an average daily ridership of over 2 million people in 2019, SMRT needs to keep the tracks in good condition to avoid delays. Previously, however, they had used intensive, time-consuming, and manual maintenance planning using millions of data points per year across multiple systems and separate data silos. SMRT realized that they needed to upgrade their inefficient processes.

To optimize the engineers’ decisions using all relevant data, SMRT used Bentley’s AssetWise Linear Analytics as the basis of their predictive decision support system (PDSS). The PDSS enables them to overlay multiple data sources within seconds rather than hours. The design allows for easy access to data, significantly streamlining multiple analyses. Now, SMRT can optimize the efficiency of a work crew’s maximum work capacity during one shift, ensuring the reliability of the rail network.

Project Playbook: AssetWise® Linear Analytics
Stone Arch Bridge Rehabilitation
Collins Engineers, Inc.
*Minneapolis, Minnesota, United States*

Collins Engineers was tasked with rehabilitating the iconic Stone Arch Bridge in Minneapolis. The 22-span, 2,100-foot-long masonry arch bridge became a pedestrian bridge in the 1980s and is the most historically significant bridge in Minnesota. With its age and size, the team faced challenges when developing repair plans. The bridge is in a busy urban environment that makes access difficult. They previously used reality modeling, but it lacked the quality required for inspecting and modeling complex structures. To collect sufficient data and accurately model the bridge, they needed an integrated survey, modeling, and inspection solution.

Collins Engineers selected ContextCapture to generate a high-fidelity 3D model from over 13,000 images, improving the quantity and quality of data. By creating a digital twin, the team could record field inspection notes directly in the model. Using iTwin applications facilitated real-time model access, saving 20% of field time. The solution is expected to save 10 to 15% in construction costs due to improved project and bid data. Because of the digital twin’s high level of detail, they will use it throughout the bridge’s lifecycle for planning and maintenance decisions.

**Project Playbook:** AssetWise Inspections, AssetWise Digital Twin Services, ContextCapture, ContextCapture Insights, iTwin Immersive Asset Service, MicroStation, ProjectWise
Bentley Systems offers a comprehensive software portfolio for your rail and transit projects to cover the entire lifecycle of your asset, from planning to operations. Click here to learn more!

Discover more about the key applications applied across each stage of the asset lifecycle:

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About Bentley Systems
Bentley Systems (Nasdaq: BSY) is the infrastructure engineering software company. We provide innovative software to advance the world’s infrastructure – sustaining both the global economy and environment. Our industry-leading software solutions are used by professionals, and organizations of every size, for the design, construction, and operations of roads and bridges, rail and transit, water and wastewater, public works and utilities, buildings and campuses, mining, and industrial facilities. Our offerings include MicroStation-based applications for modeling and simulation, ProjectWise for project delivery, AssetWise for asset and network performance, Seequent’s leading geoprofessional software portfolio, and the iTwin platform for infrastructure digital twins. Bentley Systems employs more than 4,500 colleagues and generates annual revenues of approximately $1 billion in 186 countries.

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