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# Autolog strives to fill Auto Train's void

Special to The Herald

JERSEY CITY, N.J. — Autolog Corp., hoping to fill the void left last spring by the bankrupt Auto Train, has entered into an agreement with two major railroads to haul cars by train from the Tampa area to Washington, D.C.

Until now, Autolog has been hauling cars to and from Tampa aboard huge tractor trucks — the same type Detroit uses to transport new cars.

The new rail operation comes on the heels of Autolog's success with its rail line that opened last October between Washington, D.C. and Miami. In five months, the rail line helped boost normal traffic by 25 percent, Autolog spokesmen say.

Autolog President Myron Levine said that the two railroads involved — Seaboard Coast Line and Richmond, Fredericksburg and Potomac — will provide Autolog with an "unlimited capacity to handle (auto freight) traffic between Tampa and the Northeast."

The Tampa hookup by rail is expected to reduce current Autolog trucking fares into Washington (from \$400 to \$275), New York/Philadelphia (from \$425 to \$370), and Boston (from \$519 to \$450), due to the increased volume.

The first train is scheduled to leave the Tampa area March 15 from the Autolog terminal adjacent to Tampa International Airport.

Though the expanded Autolog service resembles the old Auto Train concept, which ended last April, there are several major differences.

Auto Train's main line ran from Sanford (20 miles north of Orlando) to Lorton, Va. (15 miles south of Washington), while the new Autolog rail service extends into terminals in Tampa and Alexandria, Va.

Vehicles can be dropped off (or picked up) at numerous Florida terminals where trucks will take them to Tampa's rail yard for loading on to express trains.

Currently, Autolog has terminals at the Bradenton-Sarasota Airport and in Tampa, Fort Myers, Orlando, Miami, Fort Lauderdale and West Palm Beach.



Photography: Autolog

## Car arrives via Autolog's rail service

Also, a truck shuttle service delivers Autolog's vehicles from the north-south main line to terminals in Boston, Hartford, New York, Albany, Buffalo, Pittsburgh, Philadelphia and other Northeast cities.

Unlike Autolog, the now defunct Auto Train was an exclusive rail carrier of cars and passengers. But "under Autolog's new Tampa service, customers will not be forced to travel on the same train as their automobiles. Instead they will simply turn their vehicles over to Autolog and then travel in leisurely comfort by air," Levine said.

Levine said his 5-year-old company will continue to expand in the next year by adding rail lines to its existing nationwide trucking operation.

Currently, Autolog is negotiating with several railroad companies to open a rail service between Miami and the Midwest and Tampa and the Midwest.

Autolog currently serves most Midwest cities by truck.

Toledo, Ohio, would be the northern rail terminus with truck shuttle service available to and from Autolog terminals in Chicago, Detroit, Cleveland, Pittsburgh, Cincinnati, Indianapolis and other major Midwest cities.

"We want to continue adding rail services, because it enables us to handle the volume required to lower fares for customers," Levine said.

The new Tampa rail line is expected to serve Bay-area residents who spend their summer months in the North.

Autolog's toll-free reservation number is 1-800-526-6078.