



DELIVERING COMPREHENSIVE PASSENGER INFORMATION SERVICE FOR THAMESLINK

With the incessant desire for an increase in accessibility to, through and from the heart of London, train operating companies (TOCs) are continually aiming to improve and expand existing train services. **Andy Mallors** from Linbrooke Services Ltd explains how the company is helping to facilitate this through detailed passenger information.

Targeting a reduction in the problematic overcrowding on platforms, within train carriages and around the station information desks, Govia Thameslink Railway and Network Rail are designing, developing and delivering a high-capacity infrastructure scope to ultimately enable 24 trains to run between Blackfriars and St Pancras every hour at a frequency of every 2-3 minutes.

With circa 117 million passengers travelling on the Thameslink route every year, it is essential that commuters receive as much information as possible in the shortest space of time. Hoping to alleviate station congestion and ensure maximised safety, Network Rail selected Linbrooke Services to install 225 new Customer Information System (CIS) displays across Blackfriars, City Thameslink, Farringdon and London St Pancras stations; the ultimate objective being to provide passengers with more comprehensive information regarding their train departures than the previously existing systems.

Contracted to establish and implement the innovative new CIS screens throughout the four station platforms, the additional information provided includes a diagram of all specific platform and train access points, every journey calling point and 30 minutes' worth of departure times. With the original screens only displaying three or four departures at any one time, the new model was explicitly designed to give passengers

more information, allowing a longer notice period for their journey and subsequently promoting less urgency, increased efficacy and to 'signpost' more passenger journey options.

Undertaking site surveys to ascertain the most suitable positioning for the CIS equipment, Linbrooke surveyed for locations that had adequate headspace to ensure a safe installation, placement and site for customers while maintaining the stations' aesthetics. Catering to the differing architecture of each station, displays with screen sizes of 32 inches and 42 inches were selected, building bespoke 'rapid-deployment brackets' to accommodate the differences in size while keeping the look and feel of the equipment the same.

Ensuring that the screen display could present information from various Network Rail and TOC train reporting services, Linbrooke worked in collaboration with Worldline and Infotec to develop a solution which streamlined the information. Creating innovative screen 'pairs' through the merging of traditional information, this also enabled logical presentation of the combinations of data for the first time, making it more accessible and useful for passengers.

Due to the substantial weight of each screen cluster, Linbrooke built and tested the equipment off-site in the storage and assembly facility adjacent to its state-of-

the-art National Training Academy. This allowed for a decrease in the amount of time spent on site, solidified the quality control, enabled safer and more efficient delivery and ensured that each of the screens could be safely installed and brought into service within a single shift.

The essential project requirement was to enable a time-efficient, on foot passage through the stations to enable accurate passenger placement and facilitate smoother embarkations. Providing the exact platform standing points for disabled access, cyclists, first class passengers and regular travellers, the CIS screens will also enable a more streamlined boarding and exit time which will facilitate the scheme's continual aim of increased safety and passenger risk reduction.

Delivering a more detailed and comprehensive passenger information service that successfully provides the right information to get passengers to the correct place within plenty of time, Linbrooke has established a strong groundwork for the effective delivery of the remainder of the Thameslink scheme outputs. Setting a fantastic precedent for more great things to come, the industry should be collectively excited for the future of Thameslink travel.

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