

Provision of Distracted Driver Prevention Case Study

Customer: National Express Rail GmbH

Sector: Rail – Passenger Train Operating Company

Scope: Safety – Provision of mobile technology safeguarding employees and customers from connectivity-based distractions

Customer

National Express Rail GmbH operates the Rhine-Münster Express and the Rhine-Wupper-Bahn contracted rail services in Germany and have been awarded further contracts to operate Rhine-Ruhr Express (RRX) services.

National Express's vision is to earn the lifetime loyalty of its customers by consistently delivering frequent, high performing public transport services which offer excellent value. Underpinning this Vision National Express has a standard set of values focusing on Excellence, Safety, Customers, People and Community.

Requirement

To further enhance National Express's commitment to safety, customer service and excellence. Their drivers are issued with tablets to enable improved safety information, better communication for passengers and improved fault reporting.

It is of critical importance that the tablets do not introduce any additional associated risks. Before operational use, National Express had to ensure that the issued tablets are not functional for use while the trains are in operational service.

National Express required a solution that met the following criteria:

- Ensure tablets are locked while trains are in operational service
- Limit tablet functionality while in operational service only
- Satisfy internal I.T. and data protection policies
- Provide a means of ensuring compliance backed up by evidence
- Able to be swiftly introduced and tested
- Meet and respect staff privacy
- Cost-effective

A Potential Supplier Identified

Drive Commander received an enquiry from National Express Germany's Head of Safety, identifying them as a potential solution provider.

Nick Evans, Director of Drive Commander, was delighted to receive the enquiry, as it provided an ideal opportunity to demonstrate the benefits of the Distracted Driver Prevention package in a new application, rail vehicles.

Approach and Delivery

National Express wished to assess the suitability of the Drive Commander solution swiftly. With both organisations committed, progress was decisive:

Day 1 - Thursday:

- Enquiry received
- Match as potential solution identified
- Software supplied and downloaded on to a tablet
- The initial test occurred that evening

Day 2 - Friday:

- Parameters discussed
- Software modified in Canada to meet bespoke requirements
- Further licenses set up for an extended trial

Day 3 & 4 – Saturday and Sunday:

- An extended trial occurred utilising 30 tablets in live operating conditions
- Feedback received on Sunday evening, requiring minor alterations

Day 5 & 6 – Monday and Tuesday:

- Further, live testing post alterations

Day 7 - Wednesday:

- Approval secured
- Additional required licenses purchased

Day 8 & 9 – Thursday and Friday:

- Full role out achieved

Outcome and Benefits

The solution has been in operational service since September 2019, enhancing safety for customers, staff and the public.

The full rollout took only nine days to achieve, from the point of enquiry. The trains operate in Germany, the solution offered from the United Kingdom and the technical support provided by Canada; testament to the commitment of the stakeholders and the technology utilised.

To date, the system has operated trouble-free. Drive Commander continues to provide automated updates and is ready to assist National Express and the product as required.

The software was installed on existing mobile devices, removing the need for additional equipment to be bought and tested, saving both money and time.

The dashboard functionality effectively confirms compliance, ensuring that people, assets, brand and reputation are proactively protected.