

# Rail Delivery Group



## RAIL DELIVERY GROUP

*Making customer experience the operating model for the rail industry*

CREATION OF THE WAVELENGTH PROGRAMME TO MEASURE CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE

FIVE CUSTOMER PROMISES IDENTIFIED

RECOMMENDATIONS SUBMITTED TO THE WILLIAMS RAIL REVIEW IN 2018

### THE BRIEF

CGA has been working closely with the Rail Delivery Group (RDG) since 2016. The organisation's newly-created customer experience directorate retained us to map the end-to-end rail customer journey. Traditionally, the industry measures the so-called hygiene issues, such as arrival at the station and the on-train experience. These remain critical to overall customer experience, but there is clearly more to a rail journey than on-time trains and clean toilets.



CGA was also asked to identify ways of closing the relationship gap that has widened between rail companies and their customers. We were tasked with bringing together all stakeholders and together developing a framework that the UK rail industry would cooperate on and apply to all their interactions with customers.

### OUR APPROACH

#### Insight and Implementation

There are now twice as many rail journeys being taken in the UK than there were at the time of privatisation some 20 years ago. This increase in demand has been met without any significant public investment in upgrading physical infrastructure. The industry has maintained safety standards but, alongside the steady reduction of taxpayer-funded subsidies, passenger density and costs on the UK rail network have risen. It is safe to say that the British public has fallen out of love with their rail companies.

CGA devised a robust methodology for measuring customer perceptions, understanding the pain points, and driving improvement in a consistent way across the industry. The primary issue we found was that service levels are far below the required standards and there is therefore a trust deficit between rail companies and their customers. This is a reputation as well as a delivery issue that has built up over years of sub-par performance by operating companies.



Customer expectations are growing, and CGA have been developing the methodology to help the industry meet these. RDG needs to understand what's important to customers and support the industry in meeting these needs. If rail transport can't do this, customers will choose alternative methods of travel. This will come at the cost of strain on other infrastructure and environmental pressures.

CGA mapped the customer journey using Heartbeat®, its proprietary journey-mapping solution, proven by global brands, which brings the voice of customer to life. Heartbeat® helps show existing pain points in real-time and identifying where proactive intervention and change will offer the greatest value. It is a tool for improvement and best practise sharing.

After analysing the gaps between expectations and reality, CGA developed a solution for the RDG which measures, in real time, the customer heartbeat – pain and pleasure points and delivery gaps – to track progress and ensure customer promises are being kept. Underpinning the industry framework is a specifically designed model to drive improvements in customer experience. This will see rail customers receiving a more positive and seamless experience, and they'll be therefore be more inclined to choose rail over other, less-optimal travel options.

## RESULTS

Putting customers first should be the industry's main priority. Out of the work done with RDG and other stakeholders, CGA developed Wavelength, the industry's customer service monitoring and measuring tool. Wavelength identifies opportunities for improvement through an ongoing process of assessment and improvement. Wavelength ensures the industry will build a deeper and more



**TUNING IN TO CUSTOMERS**

meaningful understanding of what drives customer experience.

Wavelength is the result of the whole industry – all the operators, RDG, DfT and Network Rail – being involved in the development of a consistent measurement and improvement programme culminating in five promises which are core to the industry meeting its commitment to improve experiences for customers.

The five promises are:



Put the customer  
**in control**



Ensure the customer is always  
**feeling loved**



Give the customer  
**clear value**



Let the customer  
**travel my way**



Enable the customer to be  
**always on**



The government and the Department for Transport (DfT) have recognised the value of the work RDG and CGA are doing, and has become an invested partner in the process of improving customer outcomes. RDG submitted papers to the DfT as an input to the Williams Rail Review. The Williams Rail Review was established in September 2018 to look at the structure of the whole rail industry and the way passenger rail services are delivered. The review will make recommendations for reform that prioritise passengers' and taxpayers' interests.

According to the paper submitted by the DfT to the Williams Review, Wavelength "aims to collect a wider range of information about the customer journey on a more regular basis, drawing on existing sources as well as new ones ... [it] aims to cover all passenger services across Great Britain's railways, tracking performance against a series of key commitments based on core passenger priorities; these are called 'Customer Promises' and they cover how customers feel, as well as how satisfied they are."