60 Seconds with Lucy Dean, Head of Revenue, East Midlands Railway

Hi Lucy, please tell us a bit about your role and your involvement with smart ticketing?

I'm the Head of Revenue for East Midlands Railway and so am primarily responsible for revenue delivery. Recognising the link between Retail Strategy and Revenue, I sponsored both the M-ticketing and Smart Ticketing on National Rail (STNR) programmes for East Midlands Trains (now Railway). For us this meant the upgrade or replacement of all of our gatelines and the roll out of handheld scanners to staff to accept barcode tickets and a move to the RDG Central Back Office (CBO) and upgrade of all of our Retail Systems, to allow us to sell and accept ITSO Smartcards.

I am now responsible for all Retail Systems for East Midlands Railway and continue to be involved in industry developments and engagement projects such as Smart Week and Account Based Ticketing.

What do you see as the key benefits of smart ticketing for rail customers?

It gives customers a choice and removes the inconvenience of having to collect and carry a paper ticket. It makes it easier to buy last minute tickets and also enables new product innovation which would not be possible with traditional retail methods.

What do you see as the biggest challenge to realising these benefits?

Changing habitual customer behaviour. Whilst there are few rational reasons for wanting a paper magstripe ticket in place of a smart ticket we still see customers choose them because it's what they're used to. There is work for the industry to do on customer education e.g. benefits of smart tickets, what they can use and where.

As a customer, what would be the one piece of innovation you'd like to see in the rail industry and why?

Simple, easy to understand and purchase of tickets. This may be an output of ongoing fares reform but could also be delivered by presentation, for example; airline fares are not simple either but when buying them we are only shown the fares that are right for us along with a clear explanation of what that ticket includes. For smart specifically, we need a smart ticket that works for everyone, everywhere.