

Celebrating five years of Rail Business Daily: Five years of major news

July 3, 2022



Rail has changed dramatically since Rail Business Daily first went online back on 4 July 2017. In that time, we have seen the best of rail and some of the most challenging times.

HS2 was given Royal Assent just prior to Rail Business Daily going live, in February 2017. By 17 July 2017, HS2 had revealed early plans for three of its stations: Birmingham Curzon Street, Birmingham Interchange and London's Old Oak Common.

Later that year, Hitachi revealed its Intercity Express Trains – the bi-mode trains which are a common sight today but which at the time were revealed as a sleeker, more environmentally friendly replacement to their forebears.

In 2018, there was the infamous May timetable revision, which saw the network severely disrupted, with two in three trains failing to run on some occasions. But as the best and brightest grappled with trying to fix the problems, the seeds for major rail reform were planted.

However, changes continued before any reform could be set out. Virgins Trains East Coast became [LNER](#),

and **Northern** was also taken under the DfT's remit.

And just months later, **COVID-19** tested the resolve of the railways like never before. Those behind the scenes had to constantly **rethink timetables** and procedures to cater for **a constantly switching new normal**, and those on the frontline had to deal with the extreme stresses any public-facing role came with during that time.

By 2021, as rail began seeing passenger numbers build back, a fresh focus on how rail could be responsive to changing passenger trends whilst addressing issues with the franchise system coalesced into the **Williams-Shapps Plan for Rail**. It promised a new way of running things, helmed by Great British Railways.

2022, meanwhile, has brought a whole new set of headlines. **The Elizabeth Line** has opened, **Women in Rail has celebrated ten years**, and **disputes have seen unions in tense discussions with bosses and politicians** – as frontline staff deal with cost-of-living issues and managers try and manage the post-lockdown recovery of the railways. Challenging times, but as has been seen before, this is a resilient industry that always finds a positive way through.

Rail Business Daily MD, Chris Leech MBE, said: “Rail Business Daily set out to do something good for rail people, and in doing so is making a really positive difference to the whole industry.

“It is a privilege to lead a team that is so committed to helping rail emerge stronger than ever from an unprecedented couple of years, ensuring every business we work with is set to build successfully on what the Great British Railways era will bring. Here’s to the next five years.”