

Northern recognised for initiatives to significantly reduce 'ticketless travel'

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Train operator, Northern has been recognised for streamlining the process by which its conductors and revenue protection team retail and validate tickets as well as report fare evasion incidents.

They were Highly Commended in the 'Ticketing Enabler of the Year' category at the eleventh annual Transport Ticketing Awards - a scheme that celebrates smart ticketing across the UK.

The system that Northern has deployed, working with four different suppliers, brings previously standalone systems into one handheld device.

It is already in-use by 1,500 colleagues on-board Northern's 2,500 services per day - allowing them to pass through the train more quickly, carry out their checks and process any travel incident reports much quicker than the old paper system would allow.

This software is part of a package of measures introduced by Northern that has helped halve the level of ticketless travel on their services over the last four years.

Mark Powles, commercial and customer director at Northern, said: “The technology we’re using has everything our revenue protection team needs to be effective in their role – and the results are clear. Ticketless travel has been reduced from 10% in 2019 to just under 5% today.

“This switch to a streamlined digital solution also helps our journey towards a greener railway by reducing the amount of waste paper created by the old system.

“We’re really proud to have been recognised for this work, which is now available for other train operators to adopt if they wish.”

As the handheld devices automatically sync with the train operator’s Debt Recovery & Prosecutions Unit systems, customers can now pay their Penalty Fare or Unpaid Fare within 15 minutes of the report being issued, whereas previously they would have had to wait for a notice to arrive in the post.

For the benefit of all customers, Northern says it has invested in the largest network of digital ticket infrastructure of any train operator in the country, making it easier than ever to buy a ticket via their app, website or one of more than 600 ticket machines across the network.

Photo credit: Northern