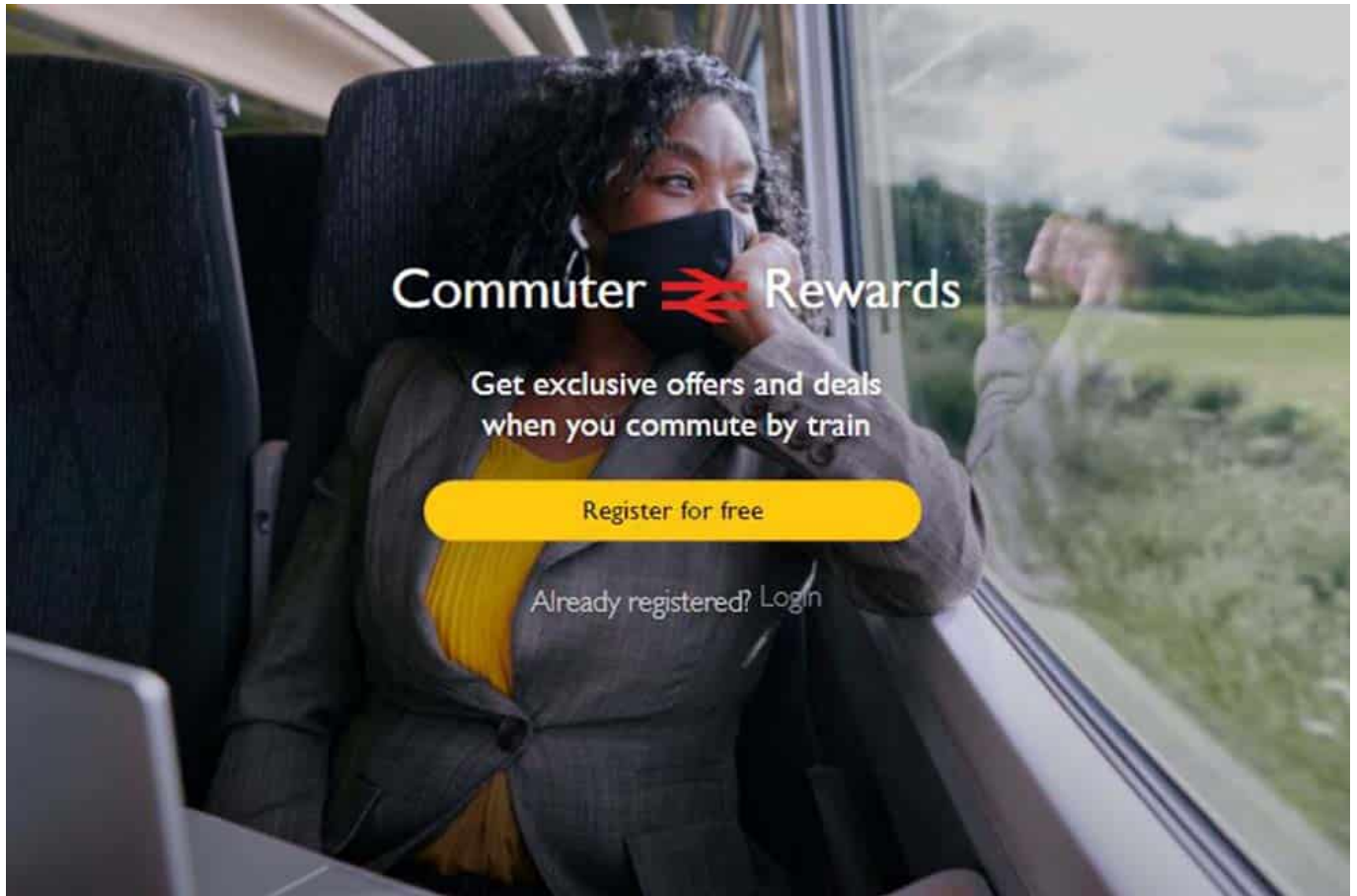


Rail industry unveils new passenger rewards initiative

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The rail industry has launched a new initiative to help get people back aboard now restrictions have mostly been lifted in England.

The Rail Delivery Group (RDG) has said operators are launching a rewards website to incentivise commuters to return to rail. The rewards centre around the feelgood factor for passengers, offering free hot drinks, mindfulness, course upgrades, music streaming, audiobooks and more.

The rewards being offered through the dedicated site are based around 'me time' because of a recent poll. The RDG said 48% of those working from home had been feeling the effects of 'work from home fatigue', with this resulting in less motivation (33%), finding it harder to focus (23%) and poorer sleep (25%). Almost half (48%) of those working from home whilst restrictions were enforced said they hoped to return to their place of work 2-3 times a week after they were lifted.

The RDG says that journeys have jumped up 5% since the government said people could return to work. Operating companies are adjusting their timetables according to the changes in their network's demand.

The rail industry has coordinated its promotional offers during the pandemic. Last June the industry worked with the Department for Transport to introduce the Flexi Season ticket, which provides commuters with a minimum of 20% discount on an equivalent Monthly Season, to give them the freedom and flexibility to divide their time between home and the office, if travelling during peak times 2-3 times a week. Rail users can also amend a booked journey, fee-free, up until 6pm the day before should their travel plans change with the Book with Confidence initiative.

With commuters surveyed saying learning a new skill (34%), reading a good book (27%) and having time to meditate (27%) would be beneficial, the rail industry has teamed up with the likes of FutureLearn, The Mindfulness App, audiobooks and others to offer customers free and discounted perks to help them make the most of their time when they commute. Other perks include free and discounted food and hot drinks from on-the-go brands like Pure and Greggs.

Jacqueline Starr, CEO at Rail Delivery Group, said: "Taking the train is more than just a journey – it benefits the environment, economy and local businesses. To encourage and support commuters as they return, the rail industry has launched a new commuter rewards website offering free hot drinks, mindfulness, course upgrades, music streaming, audiobooks and more to help enhance customers on-train and at destination experiences."

Spencer Craig, CEO at Pure, said: "Like most businesses that rely on the commuter market we saw our customer base drop by over 50% due to the work from home restrictions coming in to force, and rail commuters no longer coming into the city. We're delighted to be working with the rail industry on their commuter rewards platform and look forward to welcoming customers back and providing them with delicious, nutritious meals and drinks on the go."