

Signing on to work – right time, right place

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Since the start of the pandemic in 2020, many workplaces have adapted their working practices to keep both staff and employees safe. Within the rail industry, the sign on process for rail staff has benefited over the last 12 months by increased digitisation to improve the experience for both manager and train crew.

With the launch of MyIntegrale Sign On by [Worldline](#), employees are able to sign on to their work shift from a mobile device from within the depot, making the user experience far more efficient, reliable and safe.

Kathy Newell, product manager, said: “Previously, train crew needed to sign on to work at the start of their shift using a landline phone from within the train depot and within a set timeframe. For train operators around the country, this could mean 1000’s of employees having to call in throughout the day.

“Many of these phone calls also required the person to be transferred to speak to the resource manager in order for them to be advised of any new information they needed to know before starting their shift. Of course once the pandemic struck, there was an increased risk as staff congregating in the same area and using the same phone to sign on.”

The old solution relied upon landlines being installed whenever new depots were created which caused

additional delays and expense. This coupled with the old technology becoming expensive to maintain and increasingly unreliable also highlighted the need for change.

Kathy continued: “MyIntegrale Sign On was developed to improve this process. It utilises mobile phone location services to verify whether the person is in the correct location to sign on by checking whether it is within a geofence around a GPS location. This is configured by the train operating company, so they can specify sign on locations and how large the geofence is. They also specify how early or how late a person can sign on to their shift.

A further improvement provided by MyIntegrale Sign On is the provision of sign on notes. Notes can be created by resource managers and displayed to train crew when they are signing on to work, this enables managers to share information or make them aware that they must make contact with a manager before starting their shift. The train crew must confirm that they have read the note before they can sign on. If a resource manager needs to speak to the person, they can flag this within their operation system and when that person attempts to sign on it will inform them and open the phone dialler with the number pre-populated ready for them to call.”

MySign-on requires no physical equipment to be installed on site meaning it can be configured to work at any new location within minutes. It supports concurrent use allowing multiple people to sign on at the same time which is especially important during the morning peak.

Kathy added: “Whilst signing on could be seen as a small part of a work day, its impact on business is significant in terms of finance, technology requirements and process.

“This project enabled Great Western Railway to remove their landlines and old RSS technology from train depots resulting in reduced operating costs and the requirement to maintain old technology which was starting to become very unreliable.

“For the train crew, it speeds up the sign on process, and gives them all the information they need in one place. Importantly it enables the crew to use their own device, further reducing COVID transmission risk . It frees up Resource managers from the phones and instead they can spend more time speaking to those staff they really need to and focus upon making important operational decisions for the running of the railway.”

Some key statistics:

- Over 1,500 Great Western Railway train crew use this to sign on during a typical day
- Only 16% of train crew signing on have their calls transferred to the resource manager
- An average of 258 in-person calls per day are no longer required to be made
- Even if each call only lasts 60 seconds this saves resource managers over 4 hours per day.

Feedback from Dan Wilcox, GWR: “GWR has now switched off the old RSS service so all crew can only book

on via MyIntegrale. This has meant we no longer need to transfer the majority of calls to the Resource Team, which has helped cut down on duplication and increased the Resource Teams ability to focus on monitoring train service. The Resource Team are extremely pleased with the Sign On functionality and are really singing its praises.”

Photo credit: GWR