

Discussion: Task 76 – HS2 Station

Imagine that your existing mainline station will be one of the HS2 stops. What would you change to make it a HS2 experience? Would it have to be a 'high speed service' from your local station to make it a HS2 experience? Please consider all of the elements of the journey, from the car park, buying a ticket and boarding the train. How would your station differ from how it is now? What would stay the same? What would you expect to see within the station? How would it differ from non-HS2 stations? This task will run for two weeks so please consider carefully all the elements within this, about how it will look, interactions with staff, interactions with technology, facilities etc.

Task 76, posted 12/02/2016

Design, amenities and information were the three key factors involved in creating the HS2 experience within stations

For the panel, the HS2 experience is **not just about being on a high speed train**, but is about the **entire journey**;

- Booking the tickets, arriving at the station, using station facilities, waiting on the platform, boarding the train and beyond.

The panellists paid particular attention to the design of the station, the amenities available and information provided.

- **Design**
 - Modern – lots of technology, modern materials
 - Traditional – Old station buildings are cherished by locals and passengers
- **Amenities**
 - Shops, food outlets, toilets, ATMs
- **Information**
 - Departure/arrival information, maps, news

*“If Leeds became HS2, I would expect a 24 hour service with good signs, loads of information and 24 hour staffing with visible staff members on the platforms. This would be useful for information and also will help passengers feel safe and secure at the station”
(Leisure, Leeds, 31-40)*

HS2 stations are expected to be **unique** places that both the locals and passengers can be **proud** of. If existing stations are used by HS2, there is the expectation that they will be **transformed** into modern, efficient spaces whilst also retaining some of the **character** of the original building.

The panel thought HS2 stations should be a modern design

HS2 is a futuristic service – this should be reflected in a very modern design

“To make it very HS2ish you would need lots of modern spaces - roomy and bright - informative and easy access platforms that direct you to your exact train without needing to heavily rely on train information boards.”
(Commuter, London, 18-30)

“Compared to a non HS2 station, it should have that brand new, fresh and state of the art feel but not be off putting”
(Commuter, Birmingham, 31-40)

“If we’re talking HS2, the future of rail, then the station should be no exception- it should be designed to impress!”
(Business, Birmingham, 31-40)

“Blend of atmospheric sensory installations and hi-tech user friendly information systems to recognise that HS2 is a project for the future”
(Commuting, Leeds, 51-60)

Branded

- HS2 is perceived to be a **high quality brand**
- Panellists likened their expectations of HS2 to the look of the **Virgin** passenger area at Euston
- There is the expectation that the station will be **branded** and distanced from existing rail services
- HS2 employees should be recognised by a **distinctive uniform**

What does this modern design in a station look like?

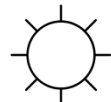
- Fresh



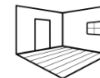
- State of the art



- Bright



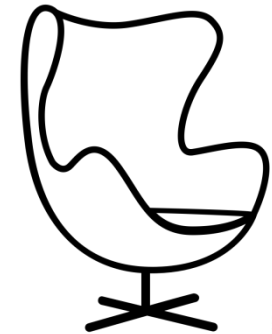
- Roomy



- Brand new

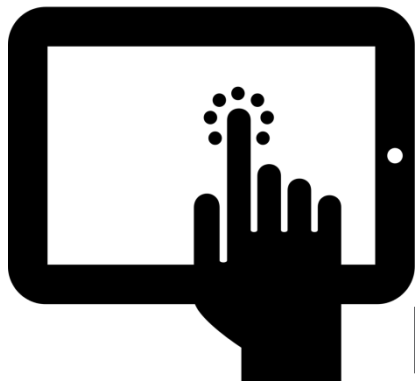


- Futuristic



This modern design should not replace architecture of existing station buildings

Blending 'Modern' and 'Traditional'



Existing old station architecture could be restored and preserved. This is important for the history of the surrounding town/city

Inside the station, modern materials, new technologies and futuristic designs could be incorporated



Heritage

"I would recommend restoring Edwardian train stations in their original style to keep the heritage of the town"
(Business, Birmingham, 51-60)

"Keep historic façade, like at Victoria station in Manchester, which included the entrances from which soldiers embarked on their way to Belgium in WW1"
(Leisure, Manchester, 61-70)

Warmth

"Warmth and welcome of the good old days"
(Commuter, Birmingham, 31-40)

"The character of the station buildings hark back to a more leisurely age"
(Leisure, Leeds, 18-30)

Culture

"Important that the look of London stations remain the same as that is what makes them stand out and define London"
(Business, London, 18-30)

Some of the key features of a HS2 station

High quality food

- Healthy and locally sourced food
- Vending machines
- HS2 to have its own catering outlet
- Kitchen and a microwave



"The café and takeaway coffee facilities are run by local people, not a chain, and they are friendly and have a community"
(Leisure, Leeds, 18-30)

Excellent communication of information

- Information touch screens
- Maps
- Signage on the floor
- Free newspapers, magazines and internet



"High tech user friendly information systems to recognise that HS2 is a project for the future"
(Commuter, Leeds, 51-60)

Great facilities

- Retail outlets
- Efficient parking organisation
- Free toilets
- Free Wi-fi
- VIP comfort lounge



'A retail destination in it's own right'- (Business, Birmingham, 51-60)

Modern ticketing system

- Contactless ticketing
- Smart ticket machines that know the customer's journey
- Access through barriers with smartphone



"You always have to press loads of buttons at ticket machines before actually getting what you want, if I do the same journey all the time I should just be able to swipe my phone or something"
(Leisure, Nottingham, 31-40)

The HS2 Station Experience

Customers want HS2 stations to be identifiable as 'HS2'. The panel have identified points of differentiation to achieve this goal; A HS2 station should be exclusive in the way the station looks, its position as a separate entity to current stations and the extra amenities provided to give customers an entertaining, seamless and comfortable journey

When designing HS2 stations, there are key factors to focus on

- **Unique design**
(distinguishable from non-HS2 stations)



"For me its about being able to find your way around a big station, but it's also introducing a bit of the HS2 experience before you get on the train"
(Business, Liverpool, 41-50)

- **HS2 Branded**



"You want to make the experience special and you want people to aspire to travelling on HS2. I would expect there to be a significant HS2 presence...separate platform and a significant difference in the customer experience."
(Leisure, Newcastle, 18-30)

- **Seamless flow**



"I want my HS2 experience to be hassle -free, stress-less, and as comfortable as possible"
(Leisure, Birmingham, 51-60)

- **Entertaining**



"It becomes a fun experience and not just a commute"
(Leisure, London, 41-50)

- **High Speed** (efficiency is not exclusive to the train)



"Dedicated fast track lane to take you to a separate hs2 lounge where there is ample comfortable seating, free tea, coffee machine and free Wi-Fi"
(Business, Nottingham, 61-70)

Discussion: Task 77– Customer Feedback

- How would you like to give customer feedback? Think about different situations in which you usually give customer feedback to any organisation. Also think about situations in which you would like to give customer feedback to any organisation but are unable to. Can you give an example of a time when you have given customer feedback? What medium did you use? What would be your preferred medium for providing feedback? How would you like to give feedback to HS2?

Task 77, posted 26/02/2016











Being able to give feedback is important to the panel. It reassures them that companies are willing and eager to evolve to the needs of their customers

Customers want the feedback system to be:

- Quick
- Convenient
- Personal
- Evidenced
- Simple
- Detailed

*"I don't mind either way of giving feedback, I do prefer when it is direct and quick. I don't like 20 minute surveys when I spent 3 minutes on a site booking something asking the same question 4 different ways."
(Leisure, London, 41-50)*

The challenge is to find mediums that achieve this criteria

- | | | | |
|------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| • Online reviews |  | • Ballot / paper survey |  |
| • Face to face |  | • Social Media |  |
| • By Post |  | • Email |  |
| • On the phone |  | • Smiley face machines |  |
| • Text |  | |  |

Whilst there are a variety of ways in which feedback could be organised, there is no single method appropriate for all types of feedback

	Quick	Convenient	Personal	Evidence	Simple	Detailed
Email	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Face to face	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓
Phone			✓			✓
Social Media	✓	✓		✓	✓	
Paper Survey				✓		✓
Online Review				✓		✓
Smiley Face Machines	✓	✓			✓	
Text	✓	✓			✓	

Drill down into different mediums

Email

- **Pros:** Feels personal, can use any time of the day, quick response, easy and quick, evidence of complaint, private
- **Cons:** Cannot be sure whether the company has received the feedback
- **Conditions:** Feedback needs to be reviewed within 48 hours. There must also be an instant reply to confirm receipt

"I contacted Starbucks on Sunday as I was unhappy with the service that I received in one of their coffee shops. I went onto their website and there was a contact us section I just filled in a form with all of the details and then I received an email to confirm that my email had been received, within 24 hours I had had a response and an apology. I would like to use this format to be able to contact HS2."

(Leisure, Birmingham, 51-60)

Online Review

- **Pros:** Detailed, customers can provide feedback 'in their own time'
- **Cons:** It can be time consuming for the customer and it is often difficult to find the review section on a website

"There have been times I have wanted to provide feedback but taking the time to go to my laptop, go to the website and find a feedback form or somewhere to give feedback has seemed like too much effort"

(Commuter, London, 18-30)

Small Paper survey/ feedback card

- **Pros:** Passengers can fill it in whilst on the train. It can be convenient if the card is picked up at the station and returned at next station
- **Cons:** seen as a 'gimmick' and feels impersonal
- **Conditions:** Ballot boxes must be provided around stations

"Personally I would like to do it via a simple feedback card. The reason for this is due to time constraints and I am always on the go"

(Leisure, Newcastle, 18-30)

"On paper would suit me better maybe so I can fill it in on the train whilst it's fresh and pop it in a box on exiting the platform."

(Leisure, London, 41-50)

Drill down into different mediums

Face to face

- **Pros:** Quick response back
- **Cons:** No evidence of the complaint

*"At restaurants, I complain, politely to the waiter, and very often it is resolved satisfactorily pretty immediately."
(Business, Nottingham, 61-70)*

Text

- **Pros:** Easy to use and you are prompted for feedback
- **Cons:** Can irritate customers because they don't want to be pestered.

*"Tesco home delivery... texts you after the delivery and asks for a score of 1-5 with a reason for your. It asks for the feedback so you don't have to remember to do it"
(Business, Nottingham, 31-40)*

Social Media

- **Pros:** Complaints are public (evidenced), meaning company has to respond. Can have quick dialogue with company
- **Cons:** Impersonal and cannot provide sufficient detail in 'a tweet'

*"I have used social media i.e. twitter to complain about a product - in this case a Beville home appliance - this was so I could make a more public complaint that would guarantee a response from the company as they monitor their twitter handle, bingo quick response and action"
(Business, Liverpool, 41-50)*

Voting Systems/ Machine

Buttons with smiley faces often found in canteens, to rate the food and service

- **Pros:** Instant, high usage
- **Cons:** Not detailed. No response

*"At my place of work there are smiley terminals in the coffee/sandwich shop where you can rate the service immediately. I don't often use it though as I am not sure if it is actually acted upon"
(Business, Birmingham, 51-60)*



Pitfalls to be avoided...

Long over-complicated online survey



“Some organisations miss the point and devise overly complicated and time consuming surveys which only serve to prejudice me towards them”

(Business, Birmingham, 51-60)

Frustrating phone calls



“I would like to say phone and talk to customer service at HS2, but from past experience, that conversation disappears in the ether and you have to explain the same scenario umpteen times”

(Business, Nottingham, 61-70)

‘Meh’ Response



“I recently emailed a company about a problem with their product and to be honest, if they could have just emailed me a film of them shrugging saying 'Meh!' the effect of their reply would've been the same. I won't be using them again.”

(Business, Nottingham, 31-40)

Good customer feedback would...

- Be available to give through a number of channels
- Be quick and simple
- Be effective (quick response back)
- Possibly be incentivised
- Be handled in a professional and personal manner

*"I would like it to be acknowledged quickly, and in the event that it contained a concern or complaint dealt with efficiently and in a non-patronising way."
(Business, Leeds, 61-70)*

*"In a consumer driven world a little extra back in return leaves customers very happy. An appropriate incentive could be maybe a discount in buying on broad goods/services? Pending on the level of feedback given this seems fair."
(Commuter, Nottingham, 18-30)*

Providing a good customer feedback system is essential. Customers want to see companies show willingness to evolve and adapt to the changing needs of the people they are providing the service for. If customers/passengers really are at the heart of the service, then companies must be proactive in proving this

