

Press Release
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Taking rail ticket distribution to the next level: railways and ticket vendors launch the 'Full Service Model' initiative

Yesterday, European passenger rail operators and ticket vendors active on the European territory formally committed to a joint initiative to radically enhance rail booking opportunities: the 'Full Service Model' (FSM). Building on modern IT developments, this initiative will strengthen business partnerships by making it easier and cheaper for both railways and ticket vendors to provide accurate and transparent information about available rail products, for the benefit of their customers.

The signature of the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) by companies from both sides, respectively represented by the ticket vendors associations ETTSA and ECTAA and by the railway association CER, marked the formal kick-off of FSM. During a period of 16 months, FSM will concentrate on the functional requirements and specifications for an open, interoperable IT framework designed to be used by a wide number of applications. More choice and information for passengers and additional business opportunities for both rail operators and ticket vendors will be the main outcomes of this outstanding initiative.

This is the result of a common decision from railways and ticket vendors to join forces to enhance end-to-end journey information and make it easier to book train and intermodal journeys on a diversity of distribution channels, from operators' websites to both 'High Street' and online travel agencies. This initiative will be run jointly by train operators, members of CER, and ticket vendors, members of the associations ETTSA and ECTAA. The associations will provide support to FSM in an advisory capacity.

ETTSA Secretary General Christoph Klenner said: *"ETTSA and its member companies are delighted at the prospect of working with railways and travel agents on this important initiative. The Full Service Model will create an environment which makes the distribution of rail products more cost effective for rail undertakings, and lets consumers across Europe enjoy a better shopping experience delivering more choice, transparent pricing and better service."*

ECTAA President Boris Zgomba said *"The travel agent community strongly supports this industry initiative. We welcome the collaborative spirit that has brought the railway undertakings and the ticket vendors, including travel agents and tour operators, at a table to work together on shaping the future of the European rail distribution."*

CER Executive Director Libor Lochman welcomed the start of this initiative: *"CER supports the decision to launch the Full Service Model initiative, taken jointly by ticket vendors and railway operators. This is a crucial initiative for rail customers, who will be provided with a better shopping experience regardless of how and where they buy their tickets. FSM will take rail ticket distribution to the next level while respecting the commercial freedom of the various parties involved in the*

distribution process. Importantly, it also demonstrates that the rail sector is not afraid of collaborating with others on a voluntary basis in order to further improve its products and better meet passengers' expectations."

Notes to the Editor:

- CER is the Community of European Railway and Infrastructure Companies
- ETTSA is the European Technology and Travel Services Association.
- ECTAA is the European Travel Agents' and Tour Operators' Associations.

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The Community of European Railway and Infrastructure Companies (CER) brings together more than 70 European railway undertakings and infrastructure companies. CER represents the interests of its members towards the European institutions as well as other policy makers and transport actors. CER's main focus is promoting the strengthening of rail as essential to the creation of a sustainable transport system which is efficient, effective and environmentally sound. For more information, see www.cer.be

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ECTAA regroups the national associations of travel agents and tour operators of 30 European countries, of which 26 are within the European Union, and represents some 70.000 enterprises.

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ETTSA, the European Technology and Travel Services Association, was established in 2009 to represent and promote the interests of global distribution systems ("GDSs") and online travel agencies ("OTAs") towards policy-makers, opinion formers, consumer groups and all other relevant European stakeholders. Our OTA Members include Expedia, lastminute.com, eBookers/Orbitz, Opodo, Go Voyages, eDreams, and Travellink, which represent the vast majority of OTA travel sales in the European Union.

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