

STAY BEHIND THE YELLOW LINE

December 2021

UK RAIL PERFORMANCE REPORT

How do UK TOCs score on performance issues?

A Twitter Study Using Deep Learning, NLP & Linguistics
for Third Level Insight.

 **wordnerds**

 **3rd LEVEL INSIGHT**

3 FOREWORD

- 4. Third Level Insight
- 5. What we did and what we found

7 WE ARE SORRY TO ANNOUNCE...

- 7. Delayed on board
- 10. Delayed at the station
- 13. The aftermath of a delay

16 BEST PRACTICE SPOTLIGHT

- 17. What can you do right now?
- 28. The Third Level

20 THE TOC RUNDOWN

- 21. UK TOCs League Table
- 22. One-pager explainer
- 23. - 36. TOC one-pagers

37 WHAT NEXT?

Foreword

Warmest of welcomes to edition number two of **Third Level Insight**. This is a new kind of report, focussing not just on information, but on action.

On our sophomore report, we're going to focus on an area that is often discussed by insight companies and often in the least helpful ways imaginable - performance.

We've taken performance to broadly mean "when things go wrong in the progress of a journey from the passengers' perspective". Delays, cancellations, shortened trains, dropped reservations.

And we've found there are generally two types of reports that are put out in the world on the subject of performance:

1. **The blindingly obvious and impractical.** ("People like their trains to be on time. Have you thought of making the trains be on time?")
2. **The relentlessly negative.** (Reflecting back the anger that people do feel when their trains are delayed.)

And people obviously do feel anger. But there are also innumerable examples of people in rail, at an individual or an organisational level, making life better for passengers when they experience performance issues.

And when you get that right - and there are examples of every single TOC in the country getting it right - you can reduce complaints, improve customer satisfaction, and turn the most negative situations into a positive.

That's what we want to focus on with this report. The best practice that we see, the positive, practical things that you can do today, to make these situations better.

Please enjoy the report, let us know what you think, and if we don't see you, have a magnificent festive season.



Pete Daykin
CEO, Wordnerds

So what the hell is Third Level Insight?



If you asked someone what pizza toppings they liked, and they said "meats and vegetables", you'd think they were being monumentally unhelpful. Sadly this is what most text analysis tools on the market give you.

Wordnerds coined the phrase third level insight to describe the specific, actionable and measurable insight that a business requires to make the most of their text data.

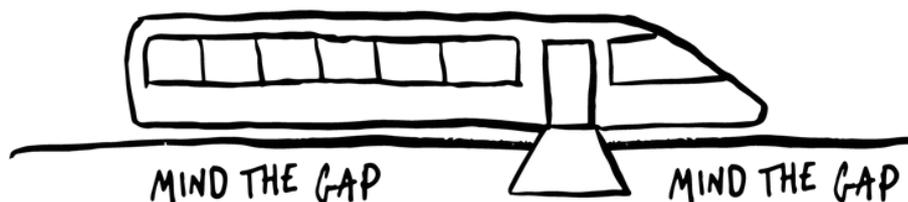
First level insight is sentiment analysis. How people feel about the general idea of things. An absolutely vital part of understanding text, but useless by itself.

Second level insight is categorisation. An AI putting your data into a pre-arranged list of generic categories. It's incredibly useful for tracking issues, but you need to know what you're looking for, and training to find something new is time-consuming and expensive. Plus, it doesn't give you actionable insight - specific things within those categories that you can actually do something about.

When it comes to finding insight in unstructured text, everyone focuses on levels one and two. How they do it has radically changed - Natural Language Processing has found new and exciting ways to establish sentiment and categorise data. But the outcomes remain the same - from the biggest megacorp to the edgiest startup, you're getting general feelings about general categories.

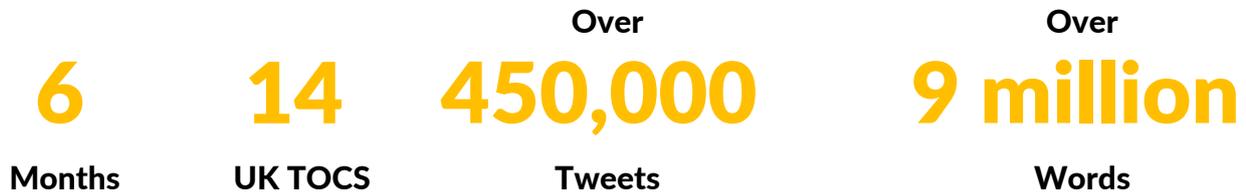
The Wordnerds platform uses first and second level analysis a lot. They're both super-important. But we have the only tool on the market that offers **third level insight**. We break the data down into topics that allow you to easily understand what's happening, and crucially, what you can do about it. These topics are completely unsupervised - no training, no waiting. It's just there for you, from the first time you add your data to the platform.

And with that, we're off for a meat and vegetable pizza.



What we did

We fed 480K (public) tweets mentioning 14 UK TOCs and conversations around rail performance through our text analysis and insight platform.



What we found



Caledonian Sleeper

Top the charts in performance sentiment



Hull Trains

Had the happiest passengers



London Northwestern

Had the unhappiest customers



Social media proved both a boon and a curse for TOCs looking to resolve customer concerns quickly; it allowed for **more rapid responses** to passengers in need but resulted in some passengers receiving **incorrect information** or **no response at all**.



Cancelled, late, or busy trains raised concerns around **social distancing**, especially prior to the recent mask mandate. Passengers frequently sought **clarification on rules and advice**, especially when travelling between Scotland and England.



Unstaffed stations, empty taxi ranks, or tough-to-find replacement buses left some passengers feeling abandoned and vulnerable, especially later at night.



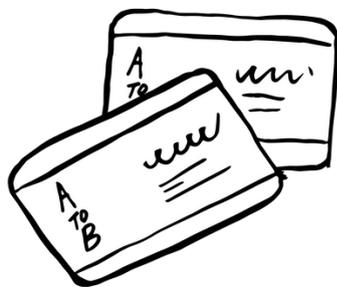
DELAYED ONBOARD

"Upgraded to standard premium because the train back from Manchester is elrammo and the onboard WiFi is down so can't do an at seat order and the shop is in coach c. "

- @BenitoHepton

Passengers are most mindful of delays when they're onboard a train - whether it's waiting at a signal or being diverted along an unfamiliar route. The reporting period saw frustrations around social distancing and seat reservations, but many passengers were sympathetic for onboard teams.

Top topics



- Seat reservations being cancelled
- Social distancing guidelines unclear
- Sympathy for onboard teams in difficult circumstances
- Inconsistent rules on buying tickets onboard
- Onboard services such as wifi and catering not consistently available

"Train booked from Leeds to London 4 weeks ago for an important meeting. Now been informed I have no seat reservation because of YOUR train change. I need to work on the train, therefore a table is essential. Why can't you rebook seats for travellers who have reserved?"

- @HeywoodVanessa

82.2%

of passengers travelled on non-season tickets Q1 2021-22 {ORR Passenger Rail Usage}

This is up from 67.5% for the same period 2019-20!

Passengers are asking for:

Catering services

- Catering to be resumed, or clarity provided if not so passengers can stock up at the station

Bikes onboard

- Easy-to-access advice on if/where bikes can be stored on trains

First class upgrades

- Ensuring clarity on whether onboard upgrades to first class are available, especially on crowded services



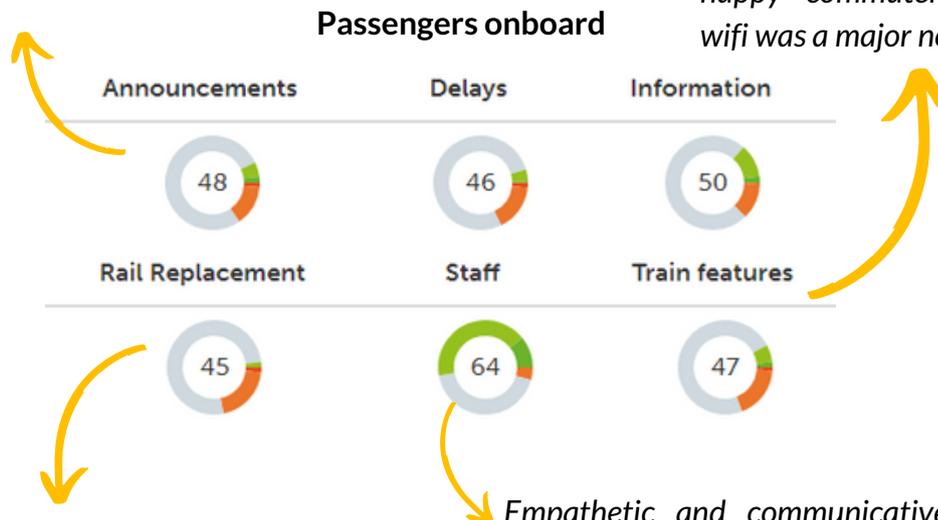
DELAYED ONBOARD

Key issues at this journey stage

The numbers here show the sentiment of passengers' comments in the dataset relating to their experience onboard delayed or cancelled services. For example, average sentiment around staff was quite high at 64 (well done!)

Almost all negative sentiment about announcements came from a lack of transparency. Passengers appreciated updates on delays, even if there was no further information.

Easy-to-book bike spaces made for happy commuters, but unreliable wifi was a major negative.



Aside from more obvious complaints about rail replacement services, passengers were mostly peeved about having to find out all information from overwhelmed staff at stations rather than onboard announcements.

Empathetic and communicative onboard staff were a big saving grace for sentiment around delays.

"Single class, universal service, at-seat catering & genuine care and willingness to go above and beyond delivering service made this a truly joyful @LumoTravel journey. It's an example of the way customer service should be & can be if there's a will to do it. Great job & thanks!

- @hussein_patwa



DELAYED ONBOARD

Key issue by topic

QOL issues like air conditioning suddenly become much more important when a service is delayed.

Staff onboard the train: Selected Topics



@CrossCountryUK Travelling on 11.45 from Bournemouth to Leamington, endured horrendous delays, but the staff on board were fantastic, please pass this on to the train manager and also the first class host, both dealt with a rubbish situation extremely well.

4:13 pm · 20 Jul 2021 · Twitter for iPhone

The major source of positive sentiment onboard delayed trains was staff. Passengers are far less likely to complain/request compensation after having a positive experience with staff.

Key issues onboard the train: Volume by percentage

	Onboard	
Announcements	5.87%	Rail replacement is the lowest issue by both volume and sentiment. While a small issue, it has an outsized impact on public perception.
Delays	6.43%	
Information	2.98%	
Staff	5.45%	
Rail Replacement	1.24%	
Train Features	3.63%	

"I have completed a complaints form - thank you for sending this through. Thanks to Natalie for being so kind on the train - this mistake should never have happened but she was the perfect professional and made the best of a terrible situation."

- @Alice_Hannah_17



DELAYED ONBOARD

Key issue by topic

Amenities onboard the train by delay

When a delay happens, it can exacerbate smaller annoyances, particularly the crowding on the train and the cleanliness of the carriage. Conversely, prioritising these smaller issues can improve sentiment.

Topic	Discussed alongside delay	Average Sentiment
Catering	2.35%	48
Cleaning	5.04%	43
Crowding	7.81%	53
First Class	2.50%	48
Staff	2.41%	45
Overall	3.77%	<i>Passengers highlighted these compounding issues on top of delays in 3.77% of their comments</i>

"Update on my train journey. We are still alive but the train has run out of food & drink because we have been delayed due to trees on the line. Looking to arrive 4 hours late on a 4 hour 15 minute journey. The train is the low carbon option but when it goes wrong it's a real drag."

- @Scoutsscarter



DELAYED AT THE STATION

"I saw that information [on the web page] and took it into account. It was not accurate. It was also contradicted by the even more inaccurate information on the electronic boards at the station."

- @dferguson1973

Passengers experience most of their delays at the station. During the reporting period, we found this frustration compounded by inconsistent announcements and information on the platform - but appreciation was shown for staff who showed kindness and empathy.

Top topics



- Rail replacement bus information lacking
- Quality customer service from individual staff members on the platform
- Mixed messages on wearing masks
- Announcements and notice screens not providing enough information

"There were no announcements at my station or on train for folk to continue using facemasks on the train this morning, have you stopped this? Fair few not wearing them on train, not good for commuter confidence!"

- @BigBarrybam

78%

of trains arrived on time in

Q1 2021-2022

{ORR Passenger Rail Performance}

Passengers are asking for:

Wearing masks

- Consistency between announcements, posters, and advice given by staff

Replacement buses

- Clear information on the website and platform on where/when replacement bus services are running

PA and info boards

- Ensuring information displayed and announced is consistent to reduce confusion



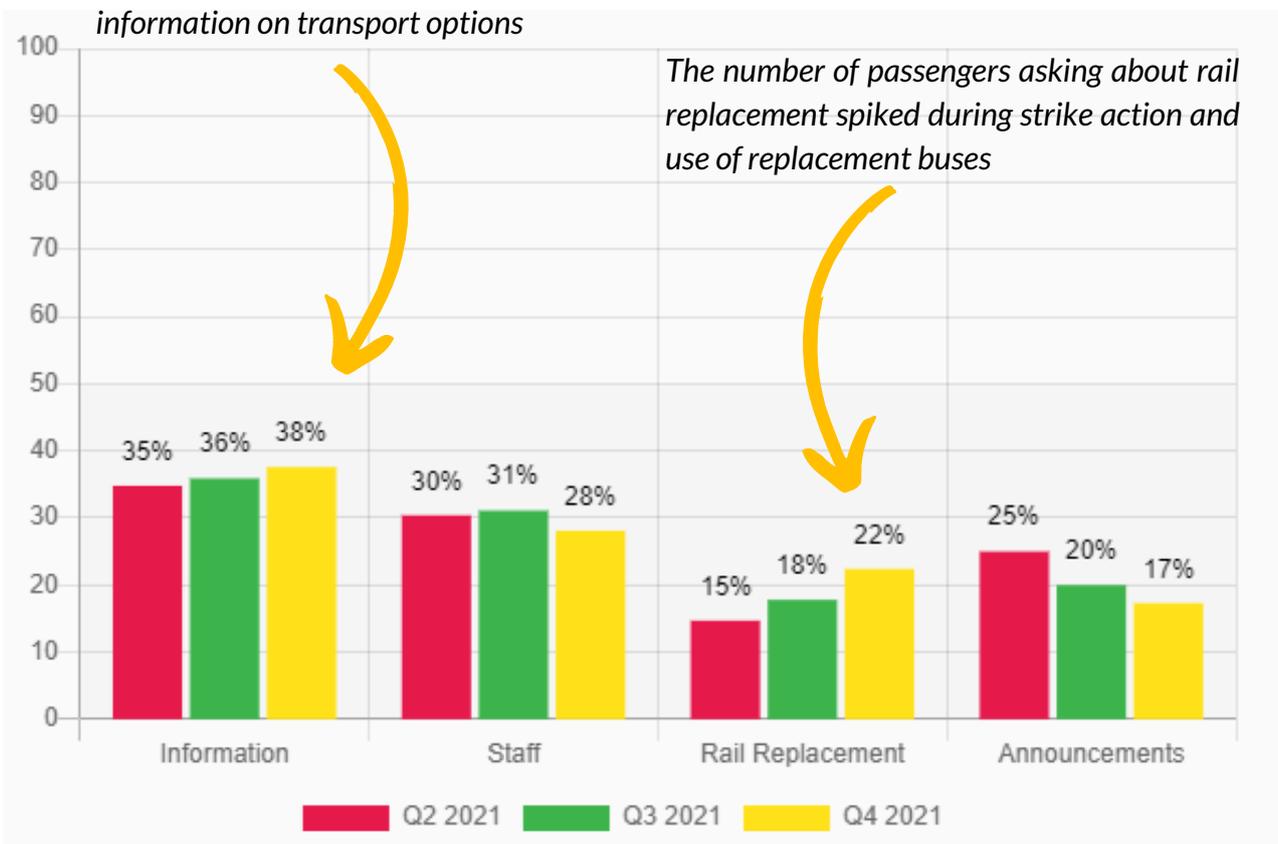
DELAYED AT THE STATION

Key issues at this journey stage

The percentages here show the proportion of the comments in the dataset from people delayed at a station that pertain to each issue. For example, 31% of comments from passengers mentioned staff during Q3.

Conversation around information was driven in large part by passengers stranded late at night with limited information on transport options

The number of passengers asking about rail replacement spiked during strike action and use of replacement buses



"Struggling to get home from Birmingham International after flight back to UK. No staff on platform to advise and no bus replacement. No option but to arrange taxi. Just quite worrying late at night."

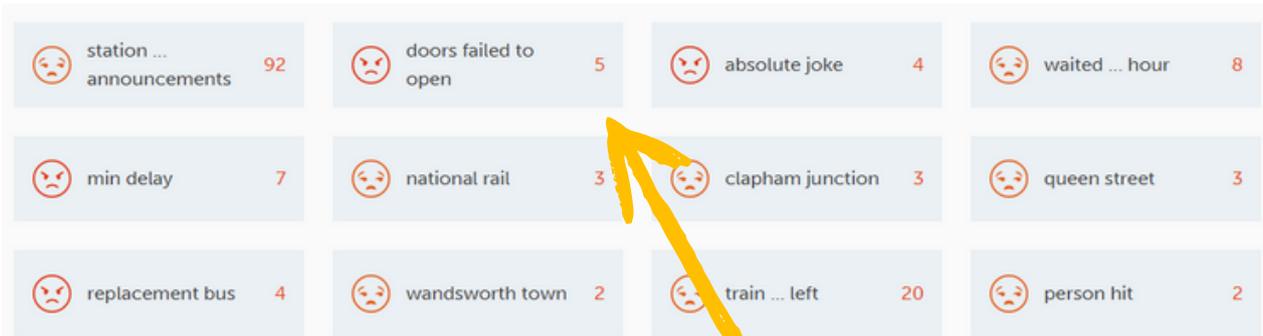
- @D9ece



DELAYED AT THE STATION

Key issue by topic

Announcements at the station: Selected Topics

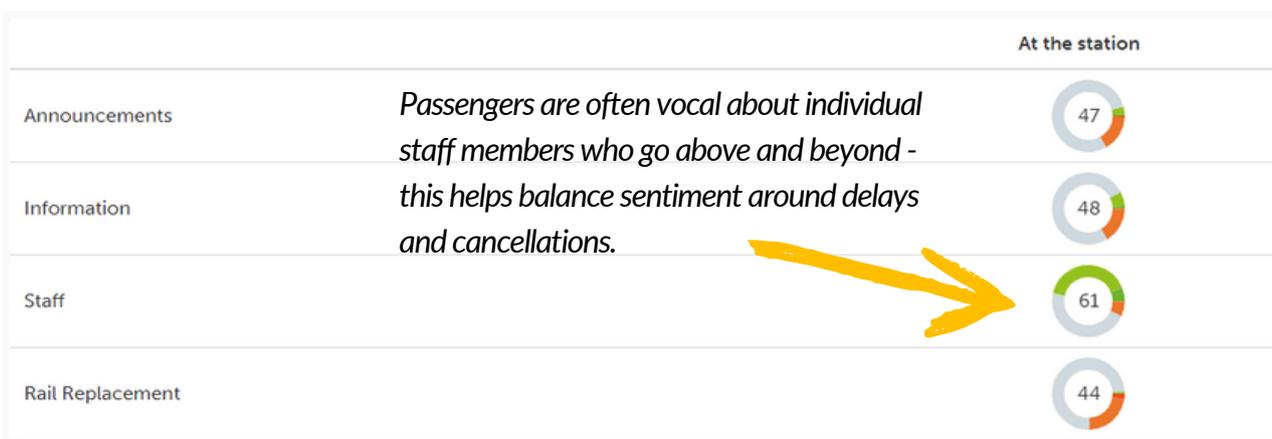


A lack of announcements in time-critical situations like this prevent online teams from alleviating passenger frustration.

John Earls @EarlsJohn · 31 Oct
 Replying to @LNRailway
 Thanks, but the lack of info to customers at Berkhamsted has been dismal over the 45 mins we've been waiting for trains. Nobody at the station, no announcements when trains suddenly move from Delayed to Cancelled. Delays happen. How you communicate them matters.

1 | 1 | 1

Key issues at the station: Passenger Sentiment



"Thank you to the excellent @TPEXpressTrains and station staff at #Hull and #Huddersfield for looking after my mum on Saturday and today. She's not in the best of health and you really looked after her on both journeys #ThankYou"

- @CleggPhilip



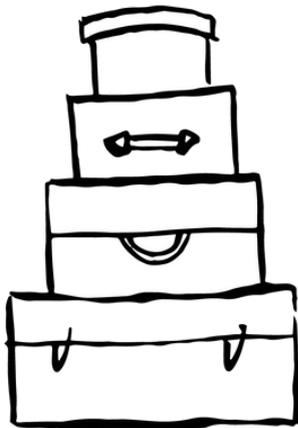
AFTERMATH OF A DELAY

"Just want to say I'm very impressed today, train got cancelled this morning but the next train had an extra stop put on for Peterborough so we didn't have to change trains and I got an almost instant Delay Repay refund! #goodservice"

- @SarahShally

The aftermath of a delay can leave passengers in challenging situations, and this is often where they are left most vulnerable. During the reporting period, confusion about TOCs' obligations to passengers caused worry, but clear communication on refunds led to more positive experiences.

Top topics



- Confusion over the "taxi obligation" from TOCs
- Season ticket partial refund enquiries
- Passengers stranded late at night
- Delay repay - 15 or 30?

"My daughter is at Milton Keynes after leaving Euston on her way home to Stockport. She has now been told all trains are cancelled. Please tell me you are not going to leave a young, lone female (or anyone for that matter) stranded with no where to go."

- @bouffant1

46%

of eligible DR30 passengers claim compensation

{DfT Rail Delays and Compensation 2020}

Passengers are asking for:

Clarity on TOC obligations in the event of cancellations

- Passengers will often refer to TOCs' "legal obligation" to provide taxis or hotels

Simpler delay repay

- Many passengers don't realise they can claim, or find the process too complex

More accessible late-night advice/staff

- The most vulnerable situations for passengers generally unfold late at night



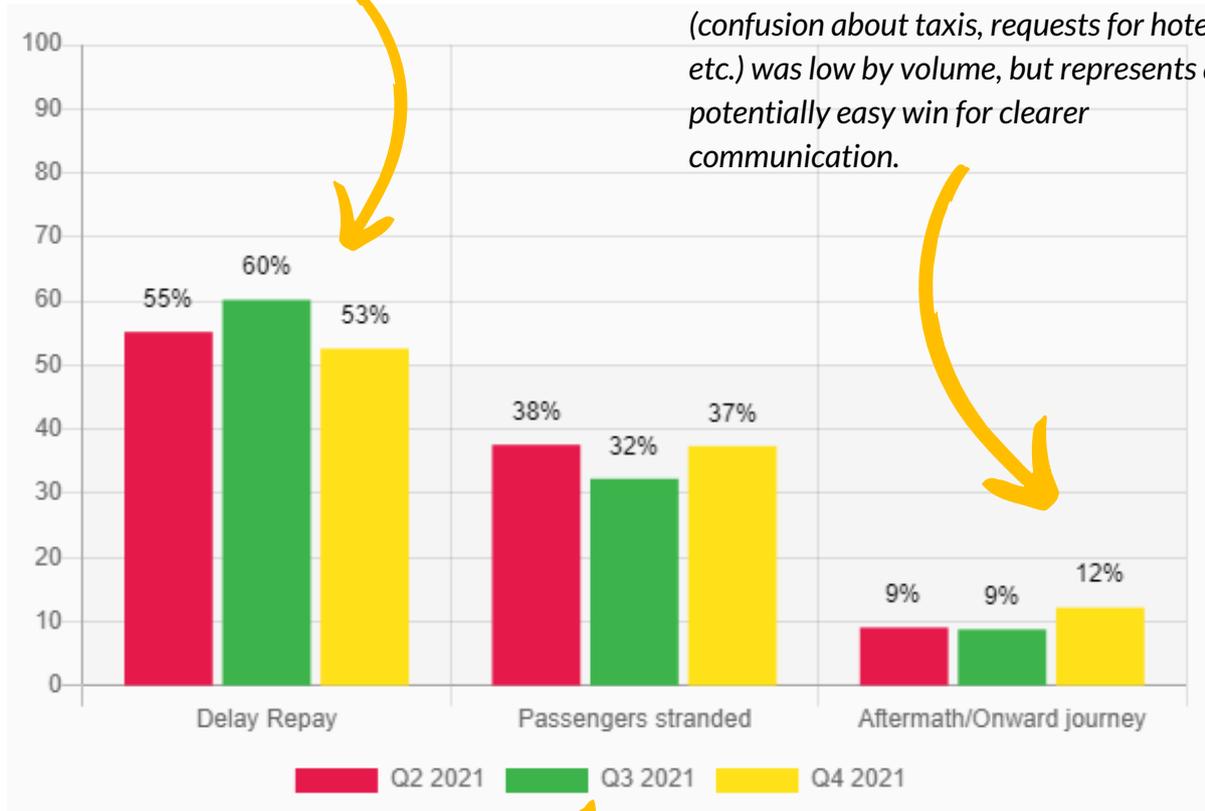
AFTERMATH OF A DELAY

Key issues at this journey stage

The below chart shows which topics passengers talk most about in the aftermath of a delay or cancellation (volume by percentage). Many of these conversations revolved around Delay Repay and compensation payments, but some more interesting topics could be found in the

"Delay Repay" conversations were predictably sour in tone, but not all were complaints - compatibility with Trainline tickets was a more constructive concern hidden in the weeds.

The aftermath of a delayed journey (confusion about taxis, requests for hotels, etc.) was low by volume, but represents a potentially easy win for clearer communication.



Clear lines of communication (or a lack thereof) was the major concern for stranded passengers. Most that took to Twitter in these situations were struggling to find replacement buses or couldn't locate on-site staff members.



AFTERMATH OF A DELAY

Key issue by topic

Announcements at the station: Selected Topics

train was cancelled 135	tickets bought 101	reach a resolution 3	fingers crossed 2
week ago 29	request a refund 63	quick reply 3	things happen 2
confirmation email 24	submit ... claim 41	help ... welcome 2	advance single 3

Customers unable to find the appropriate "booking number" or "ticket number" in confirmation emails proved a major hurdle.

While it may not seem like it, passengers often understand that delays happen - the communication and empathy shown in the moment and the aftermath matters.

Key issues in the aftermath: Volume and Sentiment

	Volume	Sentiment
Delay Repay	5,274	
Passengers stranded	3,225	
Onward journey	900	

"You've cancelled all trains before 1am last night and then made us, all passengers wait for taxis 2 hours. Me and other passengers had to take a PHV to Luton and finally got home at 4am! How do I claim compensation for my share of the phv bill?"

- @JamesOlabre

We saw a statistically significant number of passengers thanks and praising the social media team for advice and support when things go wrong. It's become an important resource for passengers, especially during a performance issue.

The big challenge is: **when that resource is at its most important, it goes away.**

The vast majority of social media teams work office hours. But we saw numerous examples of people - including young teenagers - being stranded at stations without help, and no response available from social.

With support from the WM5G initiative, West Midlands Metro are testing a new innovation to combat this problem - using artificial intelligence to alert staff when social teams can't.

USING WORDNERDS TO PROVIDE 24/7 SUPPORT ONLINE

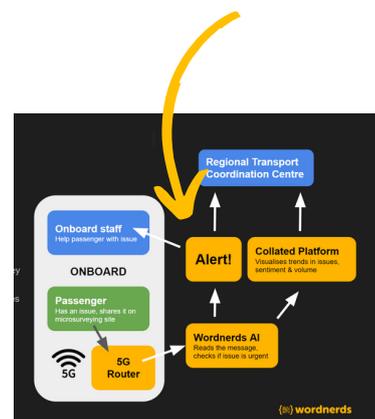
Trialled by WMM using the West Midlands' unrivalled 5G network, social posts out of hours are instantly whipped off to the Wordnerds platform where they are categorised through context instead of vocabulary, to stop any colloquialisms or misspellings from preventing people being heard. Any urgent issues trigger an alert directly to the operator, so that they can be dealt with immediately on board.

With this innovation, travellers will always have somewhere to go to give their feedback, and vulnerable passengers never feel alone.

"(The project) allows us to act upon customer feedback more quickly, which is particularly beneficial should customers find themselves in a vulnerable situation."

Sophie Allison, Head of Business Transformation, West Midlands Metro

With an AI sending email alerts out of hours, West Midlands Metro will be able to support passengers via social 24/7.



What can you do right now?

Many of things that need to happen in railway performance are long term, complex and expensive. We get that advice like “have fewer cancellations” isn't the most helpful. We should all be aiming for it, but no matter what there will always be unforeseen circumstances that make that goal difficult.

To that end, we have selected some key ideas from passenger feedback that should be simpler to implement and could make a huge difference to passenger experience.



Ensure timely social media replies. Some of the most positive feedback from customers dealing with delays and cancellations has been around the swiftness of replies on social media. Can you ensure passengers feel heard and supported in the moment?

Acknowledge empathetic staff. Staff members who go above and beyond to help passengers in need, or who keep passengers' spirits up in case of delays, make a huge impact on sentiment. Are their actions being recognised?



Publish catering limitations well in advance. When passengers are stuck on trains or at stations for extended periods of time, it can get even more frustrating when they can't find some food or a drink to tide them over. Can you publicise catering availability on trains and stations further in advance, so passengers can pick up a snack elsewhere?

Increase the frequency of announcements during delays. Uncertainty in the event of a delay is frustrating for passengers. Many are understanding if staff haven't been provided with more information. Could train staff be encouraged to give more frequent updates to passengers, even if no new information is available?



Use technology to enhance response times for vulnerable customers. For many passengers, the experience of being stranded - especially late at night - can be stressful and frightening. Could AI alerts in the event of out-of-hours requests for help aid response times in these situations?

The Third Level

Wordnerds' definition of a third level insight is something that is:

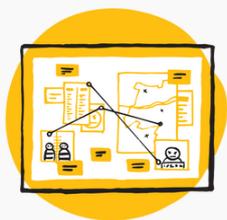
- **Specific:** it has to move beyond a vague generalisation ("problems with ticketing" is not third level)
- **Actionable:** You have to be able to actually do something with the information
- **Measurable:** You must be able to quantify, track and measure the insight over time

These are the Top 12 Third Level Insights in rail performance that you should be aware of. All have possible solutions, and all have come directly from the opinions of passengers experiencing issues with their journeys.

Third level insight	Relative Volume	Sentiment Score	Most common for
Make regular announcements, even when there's no new information	54	53	GTR
Signage and announcements about rail replacement bus services	156	51	ScotRail SCOTLAND'S RAILWAY
TOCs must provide taxis to passengers	126	47	GTR
Passengers not expecting strike disruption	46	49	ScotRail SCOTLAND'S RAILWAY
Social media teams thanked for quick responses	243	56	TRANSPENNINE EXPRESS
Lack of public responses to passengers drawing negativity	126	46	AVANTI WEST COAST

The Third Level {cont...}

Third level insight	Relative Volume	Sentiment Score	Most common for
Individual staff members going the extra mile*	496	66	
Delay Repay booking information confusion	138	44	
Passengers understand that delays happen	71	49	
Delays compound issues with onboard amenities, especially cleaning	347	45	
Staff not wearing masks**	242	48	
If your train is late, can you board another?	256	46	



For more insights like these, visit wordnerds.ai/demo

*See: Eddie from ScotRail

**Masks were not mandatory during reporting period



14



The TOC Rundown

Every issue, along with our deep dive into a key area, we give you an overview of what's been going on with the top talked about UK TOCs.



UK TOCs League Table

Based on tweets 1st Oct - 31st Oct 2021

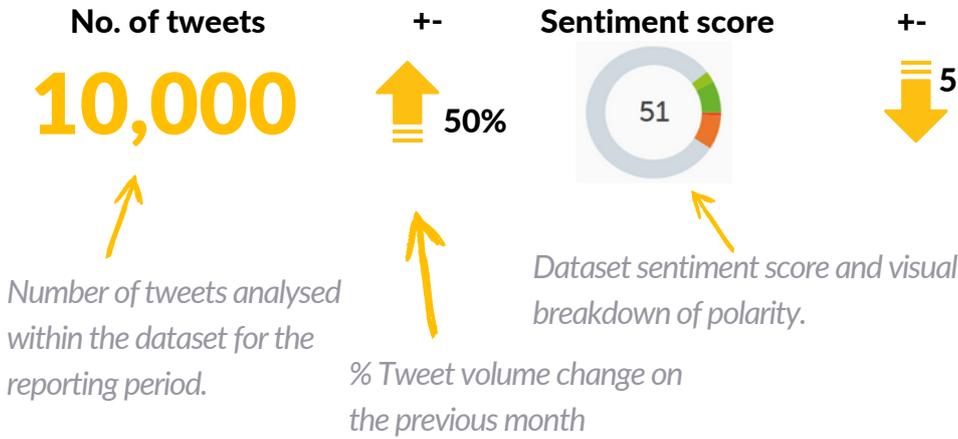
League table of a selection of UK TOCs based on a weighted average of Wordnerds' generated sentiment score out of 100. We can track this every month, so check in with us if you want real-time stats on which TOCs are where.



One-pager explainer

Based on tweets 1st Oct- 31st Oct 2021

Sentiment change on the previous month



Here will be highlighted the most common and most positive topics our platform picked out of your data for the given period

Most Common Topics

train ... london	191	+65	42
train ticket times	167	+63	39
seat reservations	147	+65	36

Most Positive Topics

quick reply	28	+5	70
support growth	13	+7	69
staff ... help	24	+9	69



Report Topic Focus

X%

Percentage of Tweets aimed at your TOC that related to performance, and how you rank relative to other TOCs.

Your average sentiment score around performance issues, and how you rank relative to other TOCs.

50

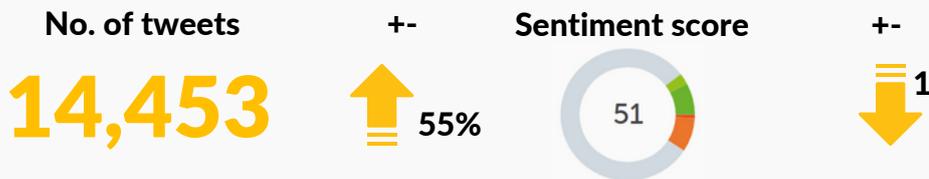
Highlights

Here we will examine **particular topics** that arose relating to issues of performance.

One thing people loved: Here we'll highlight something positive we found in the data

Avanti West Coast

Based on tweets 1st Oct- 31st Oct 2021



Most Common Topics

train ... london	191	+65	42
train ticket times	167	+63	39
seat reservations	147	+65	36

Most Positive Topics

quick reply	28	+5	70
support growth	13	+7	69
staff ... help	24	+9	69

UNIQUE TO AVANTI

What passengers talk about more with Avanti than with anyone else

climate change	133	+133	46
standard premium	61	+13	41
tree fell	83	+83	43

Avanti have been posting recently about climate change, leading to debates raging on their Twitter pages.



Performance Focus

3.5%

of Tweets aimed at Avanti were about a **performance issue**. This is the **4th lowest in the dataset**.

The **average sentiment score** around performance issues was **46**, **6th highest in the dataset**.

46

Highlights

Passengers timing their arrivals for onward travel was a particular issue for Avanti, with some complaining that they had missed lifts or been charged for car parking.

Excellent passenger assistance was highlighted multiple times.

One thing people loved: Passengers highlighted Avanti's rapid response times on social media, which went a long way to alleviating their concerns.

Caledonian Sleeper



Based on tweets 1st Oct- 31st Oct 2021

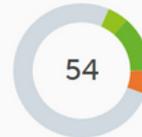
No. of tweets

1,275

+-



Sentiment score



+-



Most Common Topics

scotrail ... strikes	28	+27	51
sleeper ... trains	23	-9	54
fort william	20	+7	51

Most Positive Topics

late-night services	13	-5	56
sleeper service	10	+5	55
sleeper to glasgow	10	+10	55

UNIQUE TO CALEDONIAN SLEEPER

What passengers talk about more with Caledonian Sleeper than with anyone else

cop26 by the sleeper	18	+18	46
strike during cop26	22	+22	48
caledonian ... staff	10	+10	52

Lots of discussion centred on the **strikes scheduled over COP26**.

This was broadly a mixture of solidarity posts and concern over increased road travel to COP.



Performance Focus

3.6%

of Tweets aimed at Caledonian Sleeper were about a **performance issue**. This is the **6th lowest in the dataset**.

The **average sentiment score** around performance issues was **48**, **2nd highest in the dataset**.

48

Highlights

Passengers were particularly pleased with **staff on late-running sleeper trains**. This did much to offset frustration at delayed services.

One thing people loved: The chance to get a good night's sleep on the late-night services between Scotland and London was much-beloved of customers, many of whom **regretted that their journey had to end**.

Chiltern Railways

Based on tweets 1st Oct- 31st Oct 2021



No. of tweets

1,219

+-



Sentiment score



+-



Most Common Topics

carriage train 🚂	22	+3	32
wearing masks 🧐	15	+4	37
season ticket purchases 🎫	15	-4	29

Most Positive Topics

moor street 🏠	12	+5	57
High Wycombe station 🚉	11	+3	50
got ... train 🚂	10	-3	48

UNIQUE TO CHILTERN

What passengers talk about more with Chiltern than with anyone else

moor street 🏠	12	+5	57
High Wycombe station 🚉	11	+3	50
trains ... marylebone 🚂	10	-7	25

Passengers not wearing masks, busy trains and no social distancing was a top concern for many passengers.



Performance Focus

5.7%

of Tweets aimed at Chiltern Railways were about a **performance issue**. This is the **5th highest in the dataset**.

The **average sentiment score** around performance issues was **46**, tied **3rd highest in the dataset**.

Highlights

Delays caused **crowding problems** on several occasions, especially when trains had **fewer carriages** than advertised.

Passengers praised **drivers** for keeping up **communication** onboard.

One thing people loved: Birmingham Moor Street was the focus of a lot of praise from passengers, both for the sights and the staff.

CrossCountry



Based on tweets 1st Oct- 31st Oct 2021

No. of tweets
2,042 15%

Sentiment score
50 1

Most Common Topics

seat reservations	53	+31	37
new street	32	+7	44
wearing masks	26	+2	39

Most Positive Topics

train manager	21	+4	58
Bristol Temple Meads	17	+4	52
service ... running	10	+3	49

UNIQUE TO CROSS COUNTRY

What passengers talk about more with Cross Country than with anyone else

seat reservations	53	+31	37
new street	32	+7	44
train ... birmingham	26	+5	46

Dirty trains were a significant complaint from Cross Country passengers during the reporting period.

Passengers appreciated the **bike booking** system on social media.



Performance Focus

4.8%

of Tweets aimed at Cross Country were about a **performance issue**. This is the **7th highest in the dataset**.

The **average sentiment score** around performance issues was 45, tied **8th highest in the dataset**.

45

Highlights

Timing **connecting trains** is cited as a common problem for delayed Cross Country passengers.

Customers were happier when train managers made **regular announcements**.

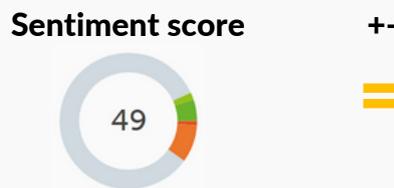
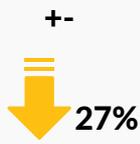
One thing people loved: Train managers on numerous different services were shouted out for their **helpful attitude and support** - from ensuring aisles were clear of baggage to recovering lost personal items.

Govia Thameslink Railway



Based on tweets 1st Oct- 31st Oct 2021

No. of tweets
7,639



Most Common Topics

train ... cancelled	153	-140	27
the late running train	126	-65	39
london bridge	110	-79	43

Most Positive Topics

quick reply	17	-1	72
save money	62	-4	63
accepting tickets	13	-6	56

UNIQUE TO GTR

What passengers talk about more with GTR than with anyone else

london bridge	110	-79	43
oyster contactless	65	+2	44
Thames Link trains	97	-35	39

Drivers lacking information about cancellations caused frustration with passengers offloaded partway through their journey.



Performance Focus

8% of Tweets aimed at GTR were about a **performance issue. This is the highest in the dataset.**

The **average sentiment score** around performance issues was **46**, tied **4th highest in the dataset.**

Highlights

Stops being **skipped** to compensate for **late running** services frustrated passengers travelling to/from underserved stations.

One thing people loved: Speedy replies to enquiries on social media drew praise from many passengers, especially on Southern Rail. This helped offset frustrations with performance issues.

Great Western Railway



Based on tweets 1st Oct- 31st Oct 2021

No. of tweets
9,590

Sentiment score
50

↑ 47%

=

Most Common Topics

train ... cancelled	107	-1	31
industrial ... revolution	106	+105	50
wearing masks	94	+23	41

Most Positive Topics

thoughts ... involved	24	+24	71
enjoyed my journey	14	+5	68
train ... happy	14	+9	64

UNIQUE TO GREAT WESTERN

What passengers talk about more with Great Western than with anyone else

industrial ... revolution	106	+105	50
train ... paddington	68	-8	42
hot air	54	+54	45

Navigating **delay repay** for **multi-legged** journeys proved difficult for passengers



Performance Focus

3.8%

of Tweets aimed at GWR were about a **performance issue**. This is the **7th lowest in the dataset**.

The **average sentiment score** around performance issues was **44**, **tied 4th lowest in the dataset**.

44

Highlights

Alternative travel arrangements promised in the **passenger charter** proved difficult for passengers to access, especially later at night. Not all passengers were aware they were entitled to this.

One thing people loved: Passengers enjoyed **off-beat onboard announcements** from drivers and train managers, with some wishing they could stay on for longer to hear more!

Based on tweets 1st Oct- 31st Oct 2021

No. of tweets +-
10,583 ↑ 1%

Sentiment score +-
↓ 1

52

Most Common Topics

kings cross	262	49
train ... manchester	115	42
seat reservations	114	34

Most Positive Topics

proud ... teams	10	89
staff ... brilliant	12	82
staff ... friendly	10	79

UNIQUE TO LNER

What passengers talk about more with LNER than with anyone else

lner ... manchester	336	43
kings cross	262	49
train ... manchester	115	42

Differing rules between England and Scotland re: masks and distancing confused passengers.



Performance Focus

2.8% of Tweets aimed at LNER were about a **performance issue**. This is the **3rd lowest in the dataset**.

The **average sentiment score** around performance issues was 46, tied **4th highest in the dataset**.

Highlights

Passengers **travelling around COP26** raised concerns around communication of disruptions. **Larger crowds** over this period exacerbated the problem.

One thing people loved: Onboard staff, especially on busy services, were commended for their **friendly attitude and courteous behaviour**. Several passengers made favourable comparisons to other TOCs.

London Northwestern

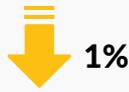


Based on tweets 1st Oct- 31st Oct 2021

No. of tweets

1,490

+ -



Sentiment score



+ -



Most Common Topics

train ... cancelled	34	+4	28
no rail replacement services	29	-6	45
the London Euston train	29	-12	41

Most Positive Topics

crewe to northampton	12	+9	70
London Euston - Liverpool Lime Street	13	+6	70
euston, from crewe	14	+1	64

UNIQUE TO LONDON NORTHWESTERN

What passengers talk about more with London Northwestern than with anyone else

liverpool ... crewe	14	+9	65
the London Euston train	29	-12	41
no rail replacement services	29	-6	45

Crowds at Euston were exacerbated by last-minute **platform announcements**.



Performance Focus

7.1%

of Tweets aimed at London Northwestern were about a **performance issue**. This is the **2nd highest in the dataset**.

The average sentiment score around performance issues was 44, **tied 4th lowest in the dataset**.

44

Highlights

Passengers stranded at Euston late at night expressed **appreciation** for staff who organised taxis for their onward journey.

One thing people loved: Passengers shouted out staff who were **working hard to keep them updated** on the best way to navigate delays and cancellations on the ground - especially at Rugby Station.

Based on tweets 1st Oct- 31st Oct 2021

No. of tweets

5,351

+-

474%

Sentiment score



+-

=

Most Common Topics

edinburgh to london	313	+239	51
train ... london	201	+171	50
new ... service	165	+131	58

Most Positive Topics

excited ... train	11	+9	79
enjoy the trip	10	+10	79
comfortable seats	20	+18	72

UNIQUE TO LUMO

What passengers talk about more with Lumo than with anyone else

edinburgh to london	313	+239	51
train ... launches	82	+76	49
low-cost	79	+53	49

Praise for **low fares** dominated the narrative around Lumo's trains during the reporting period.



Performance Focus

1.7%

of Tweets aimed at Lumo were about a **performance issue**. This is the **2nd lowest in the dataset**.

The **average sentiment score** around performance issues was **47**, tied **3rd highest in the dataset**.

47

Highlights

Passengers struggled to get help with delay repay queries that didn't fit into a precise category.

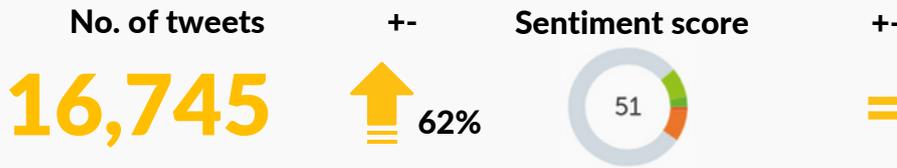
Observers on social media got very invested in the Simon Calder/Mark Smith race to Edinburgh.

One thing people loved: Lumo trains' comfy seats were a winner among passengers, who appreciated a place to rest their heads on the long east coast journey.

ScotRail



Based on tweets 1st Oct- 31st Oct 2021



Most Common Topics

taking photos	330	+322	39
wearing masks	206	+63	39
the late running train	160	+64	41

Most Positive Topics

man eddie	20	+20	83
working ... winner	10	+9	76
loving ... train	12	+6	75

UNIQUE TO SCOTRAIL

What passengers talk about more with ScotRail than with anyone else

taking photos	330	+322	39
seat reservations	13	+11	43
strike action	79	+43	46

A debate has emerged around the **one passenger photographing another passenger** without consent. What should a TOC do in this situation?



Performance Focus

2.4% Of Tweets aimed at ScotRail were about a performance issue. This is the second lowest in the dataset

The average sentiment score around performance issue was **45**, 10th highest in the dataset.

Highlights

Late trains were particular difficult for **late night services** from ScotRail.

There were also issues with both trains stopping - and not stopping - unexpectedly.

One thing people loved: The selfless actions of one driver caught the imagination of Twitter. Eddie waited behind after his shift to take care of a woman who was stranded.



South Western Railway



Based on tweets 1st Oct- 31st Oct 2021

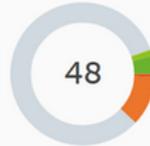
No. of tweets

5,348

+-



Sentiment score



+-



Most Common Topics

trains ... waterloo	70	+7	41
the late running train	62	+16	37
replacement buses	50	+26	30

Most Positive Topics

small stations	12	+10	66
guard ... waterloo	14	+8	61
rail works	10	+1	53

UNIQUE TO SOUTHWESTERN

What passengers talk about more with Southwestern than with anyone else

trains ... waterloo	70	+7	41
trains ... salisbury	22	+17	45
waterloo ... portsmouth	17	+12	47

There were lots of queries about whether services would have **wifi** during the reporting period.

Lots of love dished out to the **social team** for being so speedy on their replies.



Performance Focus

6.2%

of Tweets aimed at South Western were about a **performance issue**. This is the **4th highest in the dataset**.

The **average sentiment score** around performance issues was **45**, tied **8th highest in the dataset**.

45

Highlights

Communication of delays to services at **Waterloo** was highlighted as an issue for many passengers.

Delay repay proved difficult to access for customers on **multi-legged** journeys.

One thing people loved: Train guards on various services from Waterloo received praise for paying close attention to passengers in need of help and keeping the atmosphere light with announcements in a friendly tone.

Transpennine Express



Based on tweets 1st Oct- 31st Oct 2021

No. of tweets
2,508 4%

Sentiment score
52 2

Most Common Topics

season ticket purchases	36	-	37
manchester airport	33	+20	49
seat reservations	26	+8	37

Most Positive Topics

train ... airport	10	-	59
Manchester Victoria service	12	-2	56
the lovely station staff member	20	+4	55

UNIQUE TO TPE

What passengers talk about more with TPE than with anyone else

manchester airport	33	+20	49
leeds ... manchester	17	+3	53
replying ... post	10	+10	48

Passengers praised **onboard communication** screens and announcements, noting how much easier it was to understand what was going on and where they were.



Performance Focus

4.2% of Tweets aimed at TPE were about a performance issue. This is the 9th highest in the dataset.

The average sentiment score around performance issues was **47**, 3rd highest in the dataset.

47

Highlights

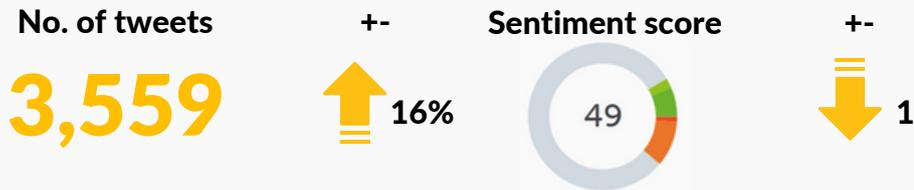
Delayed and cancelled services led to **crowding**; several passengers noted that their seats had been **double-booked**.

Missed connections was a particular area of consternation for other passengers.

One thing people loved: A passenger asked for his thanks to be passed along for off-duty staff members helping get his pram and shopping up the stairs at Liverpool Lime Street.

Transport for Wales

Based on tweets 1st Oct - 31st Oct 2021



Most Common Topics

wearing masks	89	+15	38
train ... cancelled	86	+40	31
replacement buses	50	+19	38

Most Positive Topics

the Trent Valley line	12	-7	61
trains ... shrewsbury	14	+4	53
today at cardiff	17	+10	51

UNIQUE TO TFW

What passengers talk about more with TfW than with anyone else

cardiff central	40	-	49
wearing masks	89	+15	38
train from chester	21	+2	42

Cardiff Central's friendly and helpful **staff** were given numerous shout-outs by passengers.



Performance Focus

6.2% of Tweets aimed at TfW were about a performance issue. This is the 3rd highest in the dataset.

The average sentiment score around performance issues was **43**, tied 3rd lowest in the dataset.

43

Highlights

On-the-ground **communication** about **cancellations** caused frustration for some passengers.

Overcrowding was also an issue in the reporting period, causing delays and concerns about social distancing.

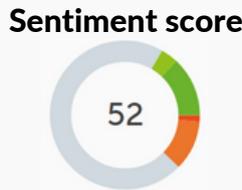
One thing people loved: Trainspotters and leisure travellers enjoyed time on the Valley Lines for the scenery and unique trains.

West Midlands Railway



Based on tweets 1st Oct- 31st Oct 2021

No. of tweets
2,548



+-
41%

+-
2

Most Common Topics

train ... cancelled	98	+15	30
snow hill	47	+20	35
vote ... george	42	+42	72

Most Positive Topics

stourbridge ... station	10	+10	74
vote ... george	42	+42	72
the lovely station staff member	14	+8	62

UNIQUE TO WEST MIDLANDS

What passengers talk about more with West Midlands than with anyone else

snow hill	47	+20	35
vote ... george	42	+42	72
new street	43	+9	43

George the Cat and **Stourbridge Junction** drew masses of positive sentiment during the **World Cup of Stations**.

Birmingham's **Snow Hill** drew flak for its greater share of delays and cancellations.



Performance focus

4.8% of Tweets aimed at West Midlands Railway were about a performance issue. This is the 8th highest in the dataset.

The average sentiment score around performance issues was **43**, tied 3rd lowest in the dataset.

43

Highlights

Customers noted the differential between morning and afternoon services, with **rush hour** in the evening seeing **overcrowding** and delays.

One thing people loved: The Stourbridge Junction Twitter page caught the imagination of the country, with George the Station Cat's words of affirmation and wisdom drawing attention from around the country.

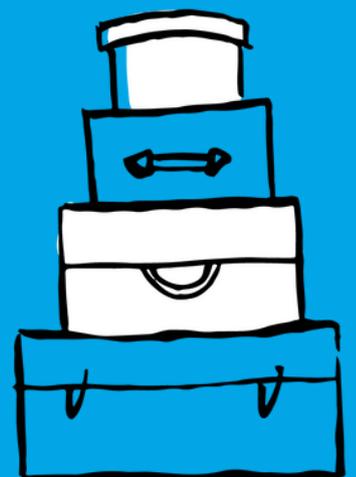
Get **Third Level** **Insight** with **Wordnerds**



Thank you for reading the sophomore edition of Third Level Insight. This is the start of a new way of disseminating insight from the Wordnerds platform, based on what you can measure and what you can action.

In the new year, we'll be delivering a deep dive into Passenger Care - looking at everything from complaints to costs to catering. Plus, as ever, we'll be giving you the lowdown on the major players in the UK rail sector.

Take your insight to the third level.



All this from a sample of Twitter data only.

What could you achieve with a **layered view of social, customer, product and employee data?**



Discover the stories behind the data

Wordnerds gives you real-time, actionable insight to:

Objective measure of CX

Track and monitor changing customer expectations and shifts in priorities. Understand how seismic shifts in public opinion is impacting CX and what you can do to improve.

Better strategic decision-making

Chart progress against strategic objectives. Then improve it.

Measure the true impact of change

Monitor what your customers or the market are talking about right now and see the issues that are impacting sentiment or being talked about most.

Competitor insight & benchmarking

Measure how you are doing relative to the other brands in your space and spot opportunities to delight or where you need to improve.

If you're not acting on what your passengers say about you, speak to **Wordnerds**.

Abstract sentiment scores are meaningless. Social listening software is great for measuring impact but it won't tell you what people say.

Wordnerds is different.

Our linguistics-first approach to the latest AI/NLP techniques, produces a SaaS platform that genuinely understands language... in all its misspelt, sarcastic, colloquial glory.

Wordnerds helps brands make better strategic decisions with an objective, accurate and actionable understanding of what customers and employees are **really** saying.

wordnerds.ai/demo

 **wordnerds**