

# ➔ Raileasy joins the party

BTMS NEWS

**THE** face of corporate rail travel is changing and travel buyers have more options than ever before. While Click Travel has launched its own rail tool to muscle in on a market currently dominated by thetrainline and Evolvi, a host of consumer-facing new entrants are now turning their hand to the corporate market too.

Raileasy is the latest supplier to do just that, launching Raileasy4business at the Business Travel & Meetings Show. Developed in partnership with DataFlexNet, the new corporate tool features a flexible administration system, travel policy setting, management information and a choice of payment methods.

Like other tools on the market, a key feature is the



ability to show fare savings. "It will show how much is being saved by getting users to book in advance and buy discounted advance purchase fares," says DataFlexNet managing director, Reza Satonger. Raileasy MD, George Sicking, adds,

"Business travellers waste millions of pounds each year by continuing to use the railway station to purchase their tickets. That's probably the most expensive way to buy them and, frankly, in the present economic climate, that's hugely wasteful."

## EUROSTAR LAYS TRACKS FOR 2011 ENHANCEMENTS

**EUROSTAR** is expected to make a series of amendments to both its onboard product and wider business services later this year, with an emphasis on greater flexibility all round.

"We have been working with feedback from our Business Premier customers and over the coming year they can expect to see a number of exciting changes to the Class," says Eurostar's head of product and partnerships, Chris Jenkin. "These improvements will be both off- and onboard, and are all designed to make journeys even more seamless and productive than ever before."

The cross-channel rail operator posted an increase in revenues of 12 per cent in 2010 compared with 2009. It says the increase is down to the continued recovery of the business market as well as overall growth in the shift from short-haul air travel to international rail travel, particularly to onward destinations across Europe.

## POINTS MEAN PRIZES



**TURNING** its attention to the corporate market, redspottedhanky.com has launched a new loyalty scheme for corporate users of its rail booking portal.

It claims to be the first rail booking tool to offer loyalty points to corporate users which can be redeemed against future travel – and there are no credit card fees or delivery charges with the new business account.

With the average cost of fares rising by 7.4 per cent in the last 12 months, total rail spend by corporate UK is estimated to hit £1.4billion in 2011. However, the organisation says a company with annual rail expenses of £1million can save around 50 per cent by booking in

advance – rather than at the station – and gain £10,000 in loyalty points in doing so.

"The launch of the corporate booking site will mean businesses can better manage their train travel spend. Organisations will be able to monitor and report on their spending, set spend limits and implement new travel policies," says Andrea Morgan, director of redspottedhanky.com.

"By booking tickets in advance, businesses can make significant savings. The added benefit of loyalty points means they will be saving money over the long term, with every pound spent by companies earning one point to be spent on future train tickets," adds Morgan.

# Five minutes with... Lorraine Holdcroft

PROFILE

VIP Hosted Buyer  
Programme Director  
BUSINESS TRAVEL MARKET



Lorraine is responsible for the Business Travel Market's VIP Hosted Buyer Programme. Her role is to work with industry partners throughout Europe to recruit 500 hosted buyers from over 20 European countries, ensuring they meet the stringent criteria to participate.

### What is your most memorable business travel trip and why?

I cannot specify just one as I have been fortunate over the years to have many fond memories. However, any business trip where I am able to see more than the airport and the hotel is a good one!

### What is your worst business travel experience and why?

Returning home from Tokyo via Alaska, with flight delays, diversions and missed connections through too many time zones. I felt as though I was unconscious but with my eyes open!

### What is your favourite destination worldwide and why?

It has to be New Zealand. I spent a month there recently and was blown away by the stunning scenery, friendly people, fantastic lifestyle and litter-free streets.

### What three items do you never leave home without when on business?

Apart from the usual boring phone charger, laptop etc, I never leave home without my Estee Lauder, Jimmy Choos and a sense of humour – well, I am from the North East!

### What single thing could be done to improve your business travelling life?

For me it's all about maximising my time efficiently – something I take very seriously and am mindful of in looking after the buyers we host at BTM. I'd also love to see more direct flights between Newcastle Airport and destinations across Europe.

### What destination would you like to visit next and why?

I'd love to go to Jordan, particularly to visit Petra. I guess the other place on my list is the Arctic Circle to see the Aurora Borealis. It should be even better than seeing my native Durham Castle and Cathedral at night when my train from London pulls into Durham Station!