

# GoodMaps at TransPennine Express

## Success at UK Railway Stations



*"If we had chosen a technology that needed installation of beacons or equipment, we would need site access permits, complex risk assessments, and other requirements for heritage buildings. But with GoodMaps, you just have one surveyor scanning the station with a small piece of handheld equipment, so none of that is needed. And that means you can get it set up quickly, and when you make updates to stations you can arrange site visits to update your maps at short notice as well."*

**Chris Jeffery, Accessibility & Transport Integration Manager, TransPennine Express**

In the United Kingdom, TransPennine Express (TPE) has expanded its use of GoodMaps, providing inclusive indoor/outdoor wayfinding to its 19 railway stations as of April 2023. The app provides travellers with precise turn-by-turn directions from their smart device – from entrances to toilets, shopping, and cafes and on to their train platforms. Offering a more convenient and stress-reducing travel experience for all, GoodMaps also empowers TPE station visitors with partial vision, blindness, and other disabilities to find their way safely and independently around the station and to their destination.

## Challenges & Opportunities

Addressing safety for blind and partially sighted travellers, promoting independent travel, lowering travel stress and anxiety for customers, and providing comfortable and convenient journeys for all – these goals of UK's TPE rail stations have converged in recent years, leading to advanced technology as part of the solution. First, against the backdrop of a UK accident involving a blind passenger falling onto the tracks after overstepping the platform edge, TPE and other train operating companies moved to implement safety measures including tactile platform edge paving and tactile maps. But with lengthy installation processes, operators were looking for solutions that could address safety on an accelerated schedule.



In addition, TPE was facing another challenge: travellers experiencing increased anxiety in returning to rail travel post COVID-19. These challenges came alongside a desire to increase overall enjoyment for all passengers, helping them find their way not just to their platforms, but to comforts like cosy cafes and shopping along the way – making a train journey not just an exercise of getting from point A to point B, but a true experience.

## GoodMaps at TPE Train Stations Fast Facts

- Number of annual passenger journeys: 5.4+ million
- Total stations mapped: 19
- Station LiDAR scanning process: 2-4 hours
- Digital map creation process: 2 months
- On-site hardware: None
- Maintenance: Simple updates as needed to secure digital maps
- No hardware maintenance required

## The Solution

TPE found that indoor, app-guided navigation with GoodMaps could address both safety concerns as well as ease anxiety and increase convenience. In choosing GoodMaps, TPE zeroed in on the technology's rapid rollout free of any physical infrastructure, helping them sidestep delays in heritage building permits since there was no equipment to install. They were also impressed with GoodMaps' accuracy: within a meter of any point of interest.

After an initial rollout to seven stations in 2021, TPE has now extended GoodMaps to all 19 of its stations, giving travellers access to the technology along more routes and longer journeys. For small stations, site visits to take advanced LiDAR scans took only a few hours, and even the largest stations were scanned in half a day. From there, the LiDAR images were composed into maps that feed into the GoodMaps app accessed from users' mobile devices. This process took just a few months – a much shorter timeframe than anticipated for all stations. Now, TPE's Accessibility Team meets with GoodMaps once per quarter to make updates following any station layout changes or additions to keep the app up to date and accurate.

## Success & Looking Ahead

Once TPE rolled out GoodMaps, they worked to make sure visitors knew about the app and how to download and use it by educating station teams about the technology, adding information to the accessibility section of their website, and engaging specialist media. Looking ahead, TPE hopes to encourage other train operators to implement the technology as well – so even if a traveller starts their journey with TPE but ends at a station managed by another operator, they can count on GoodMaps the entire way. TPE hopes to take advantage of GoodMaps outdoor wayfinding capabilities as well for travellers who may use buses to replace train routes when out of service for improvements and maintenance.