



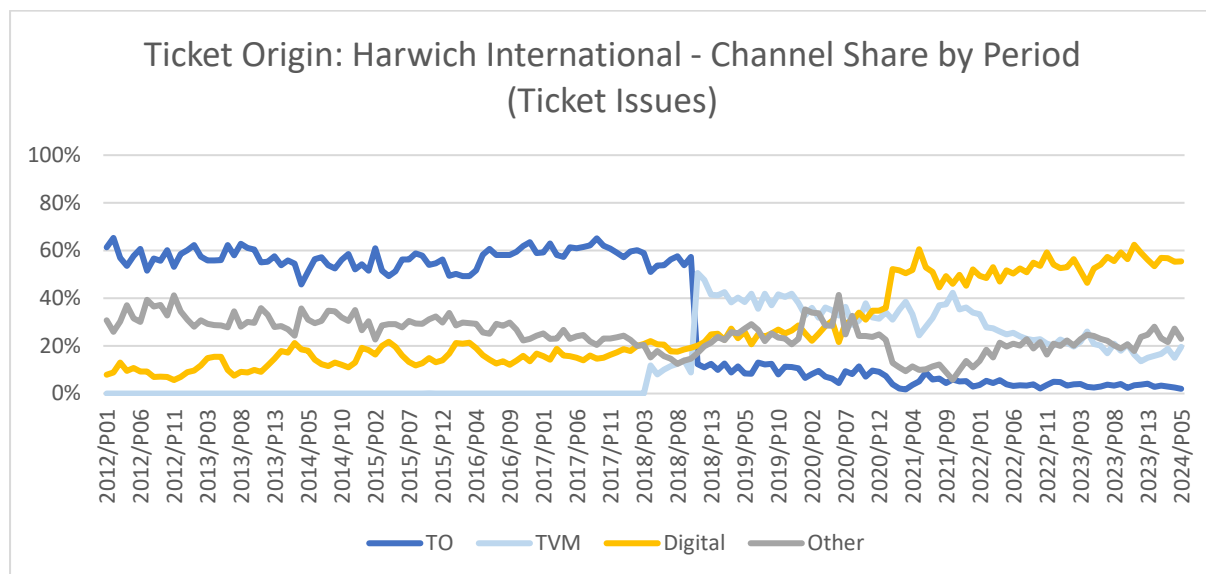
that fell well below minimum sales thresholds set by the Department for Transport as required before they would consider an application to alter the statutory opening hours.

All the ticket offices affected, except for Great Chesterford, are served by trains with on-board conductors who can also sell tickets to customers. Three welcome hosts remained at Thorpe-le-Soken, one at Walton-on-the-Naze and two at Harwich International and the hosts also provided customer service at other stations along the route. At Harwich International, a member of staff would be on duty at times of major demand, such as when there are cruise ships in port.

Following the closure of these ticket offices, all of stations have had a rapid increase in digital adoption despite the presence or introduction of the ticket vending machines. Digital channels are now the most popular ways of buying a ticket at these stations, with digital adoption accelerating through Covid and post-Covid, overtaking ticket vending machines.

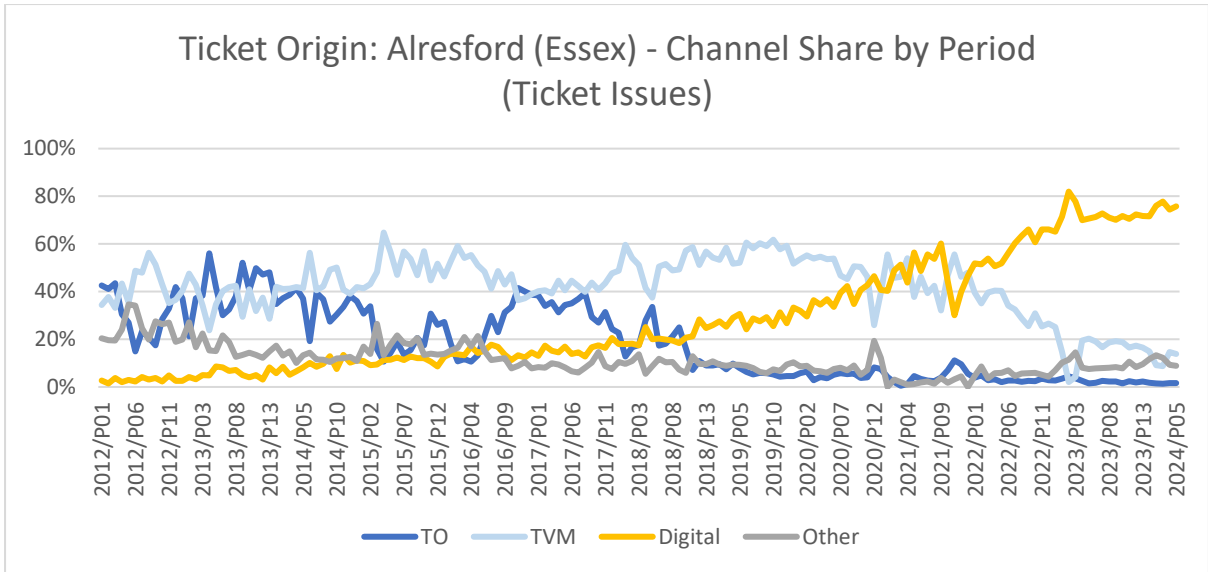
### Harwich International

Following the closure of Harwich International ticket office in January 2018, the digital channel has increased from 20% to 55% of ticket issues. TVM usage has decreased from 51% to 20% over the same time.



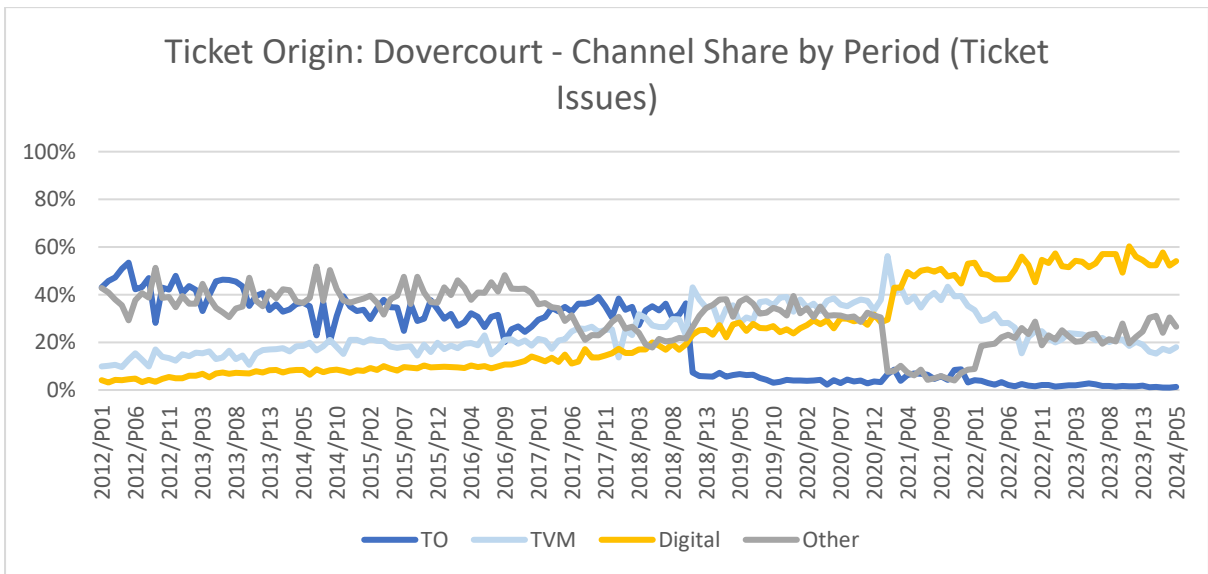
### **Alresford (Essex)**

Following the closure of Alresford ticket office in January 2018, the digital channel has increased from 19% to 76% of ticket issues. TVM usage has decreased from 49% to 14% over the same time.



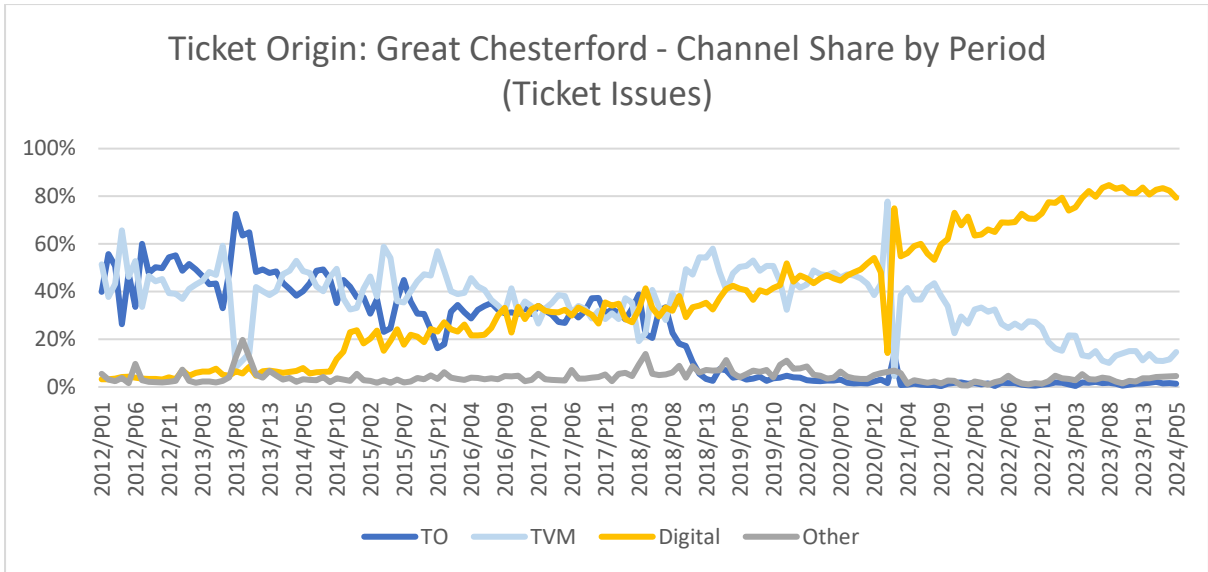
### Dovercourt

Following the closure of Dovercourt ticket office in January 2018, the digital channel has increased from 23% to 54% of ticket issues. TVM usage has decreased from 43% to 18% over the same time.



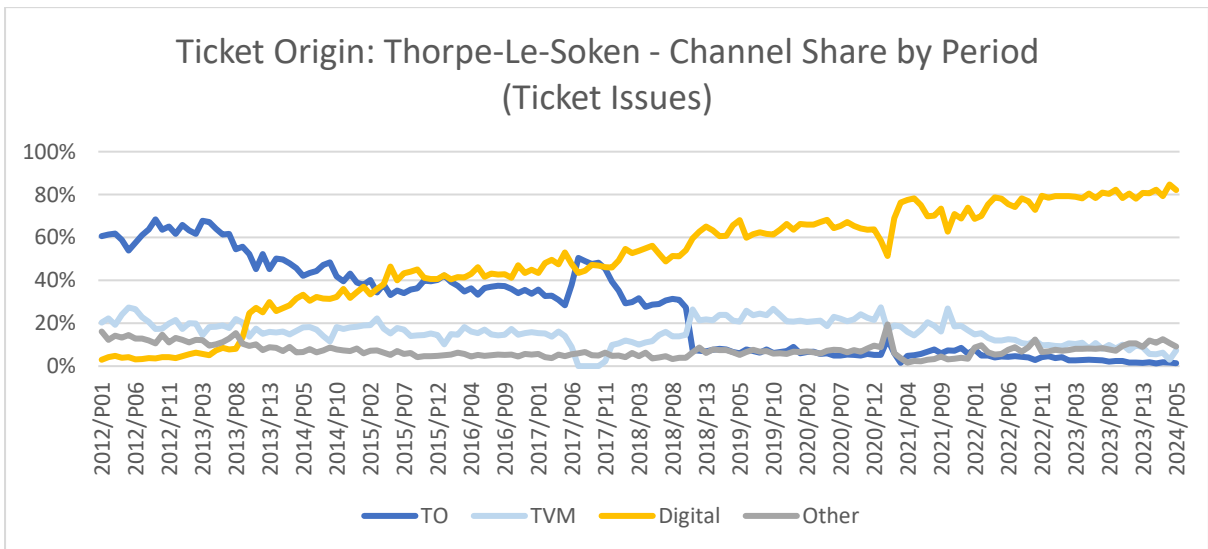
### Great Chesterford

Following the closure of Great Chesterford ticket office in January 2018, the digital channel has increased from 29% to 79% of ticket issues. TVM usage has decreased from a high of 58% (post closure) to 15%.



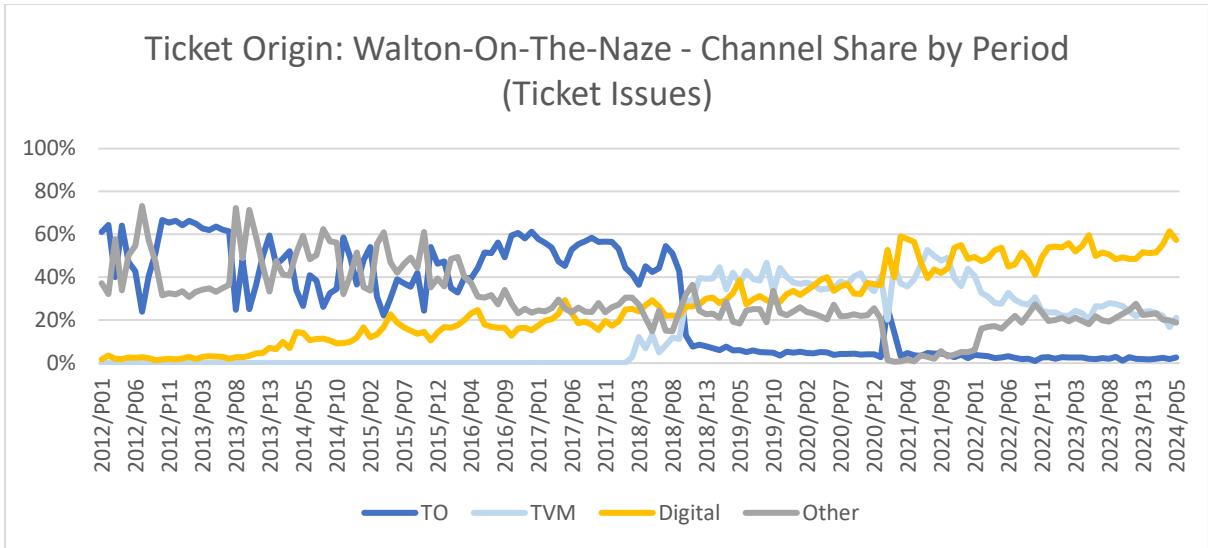
### Thorpe-Le-Soken

Following the closure of Alresford ticket office in January 2018, the digital channel has increased from 54% to 82% of ticket issues. TVM usage has decreased from 26% to 7% over the same time.



### Walton-On-The-Naze

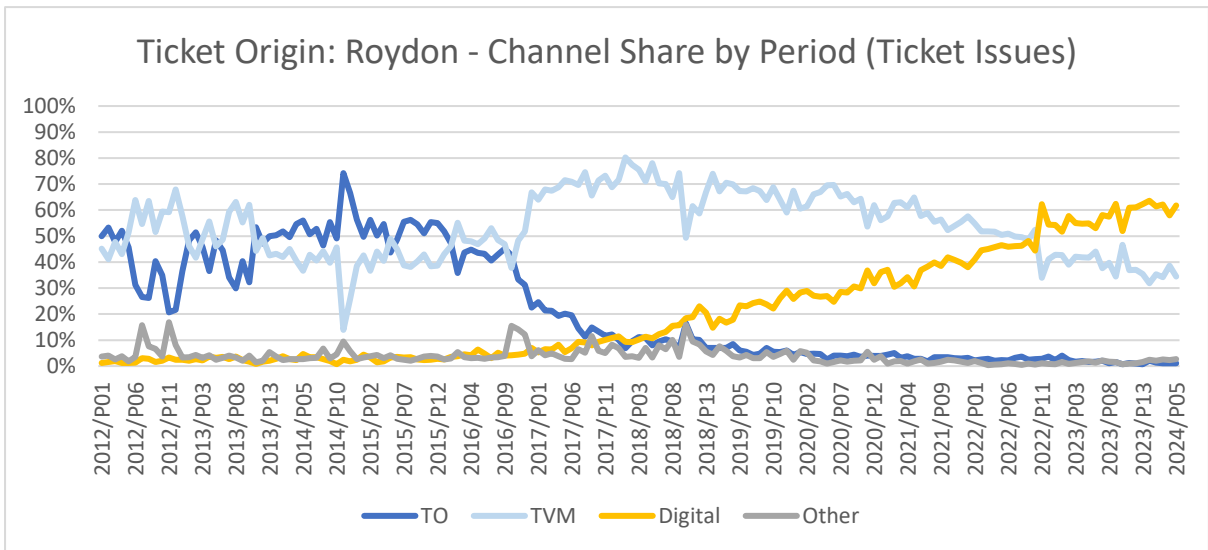
Following the closure of Walton-On-The-Naze ticket office in January 2018, the digital channel has increased from 26% to 57% of ticket issues. TVM usage has decreased from a post-closure/ pre-Covid high of 47% to 21%.



### Roydon

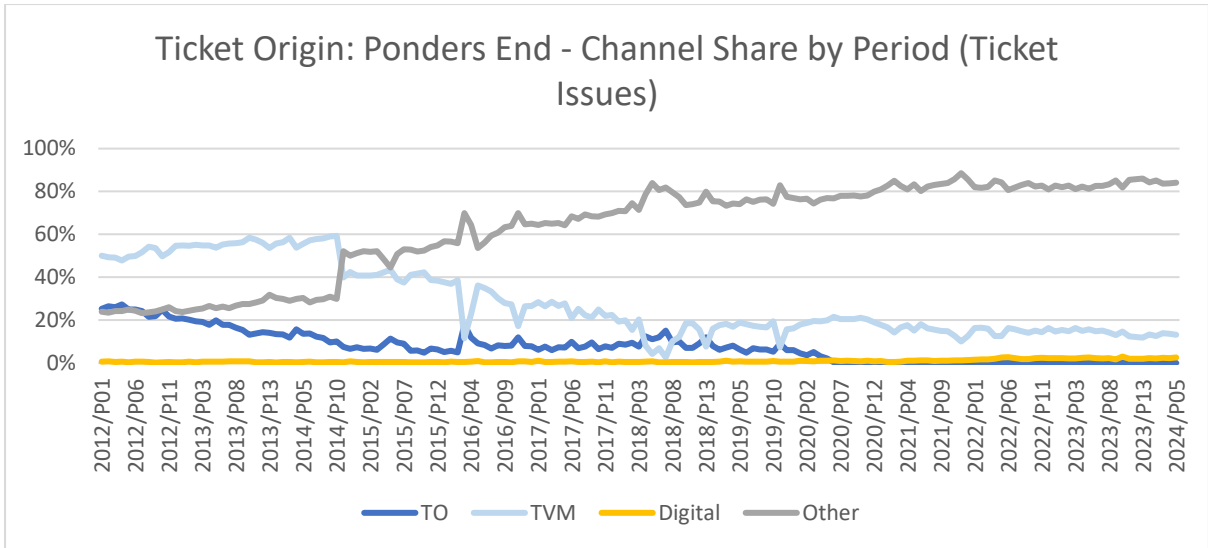
In 2016 the station's ticket office closed, and a waiting room was built on its foundations. Additional customer information screens, ticket machines, and improved CCTV and lighting were added at the same time. ([MP Robert Halfon to visit Roydon rail station to view improvements \(greateranglia.co.uk\)](http://greateranglia.co.uk)).

Digital channels have increased from 6% to 62% of tickets being issued, and TVM usage has decreased from a peak of 81% to 34%.



### Ponders End

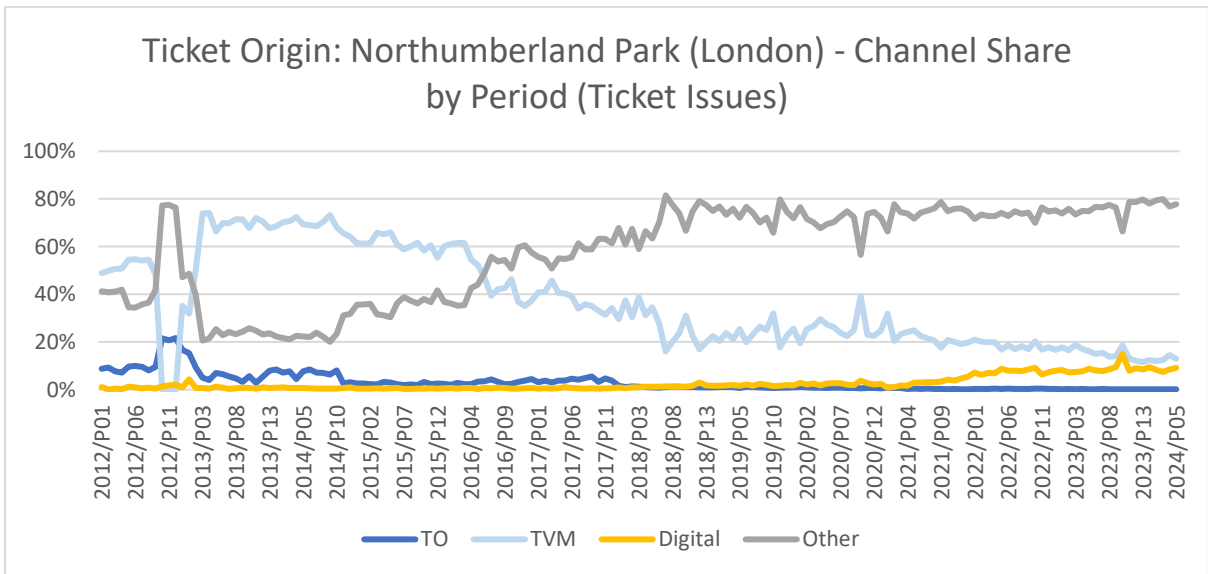
Ponders End ticket office was closed in 2020, with 'Other' (Contactless/ Oyster) being the preferred choice by customers. Due to the dominance of short journeys from this station, digital channels are not widely used.



### Northumberland Park

In March 2017, following consultation with local authorities and the public, the decision was made to permanently close the ticket office at Northumberland Park. The station is now unmanned with assistance reached via station help points. The new Northumberland Park station was constructed without a ticket office.

80% of customers now use other methods of payment at the station, which in this case is largely “Contactless”. Ticket vending machine usage has dropped from around 35% to 10% since the ticket office closure and is set to be surpassed by digital which is at 9%.



### **Question 3 - Do you have any existing programmes designed to help people migrate to digital and if so, how effective have these been?**

To date Greater Anglia (GA) has run a multi-channel marketing strategy with revenue generation activity being the primary objective. A secondary objective to this activity has been to start encouraging a shift toward the digital channels.

This approach has proven to be a highly effective marketing strategy to date, with GA marketing activity having a high revenue return which has helped GA to be a good and efficient operator with a strong revenue recovery. However, an enhanced focus on shifting customers into the digital channels will now be required and is already being planned.

#### Taking lessons from previous successes

Pre-Covid, GA had already successfully migrated most regular commuters from paper tickets onto smart cards by the end of 2019.

Through a concentrated programme to convert paper season ticket holders onto smartcards, GA moved from 16% of annual season ticket holders using smartcard at the start of franchise (October 2016) to over 88% by December 2019. Across all season ticket types, including monthly and weeklies, which were the hardest to convert, GA converted 76% of all season ticket holders onto smartcards.

The sharp increase in penetration came in 2018 and 2019, when GA announced the 'end of the line' for paper seasons. This approach, supported by cross functional work that included the ticket office colleagues, helped to nudge customers onto smartcards.

The result of this challenging target shows that GA can develop programmes to effectively change customer behaviour and gives reassurance for the future.

#### Laying the foundations for a digital migration

Over the last two years there has been an increase in the frequency of channel shift messaging within our marketing activity, with a larger drive to 'Digital First' taking place in the last quarter of 2023 (after the end of the public feedback period of the ticket office consultation programme, which ended on 1 September 2023). Activity promotes online channels and provides customers with unique selling proposition (USP's) and reasons to book online as well as developing our channels to make them easier to use.

This has laid robust foundations for the potential closure of ticket offices, at which point there would be a significant step change with the introduction of multi-skilled hosts who would be trained to help educate customers on how to book a ticket on their phone through either using the app, website, or scanning a QR code at a station.

#### A summary of existing and/or planned activity:

**Marketing investment** – GA and Stansted Express invest heavily in marketing, using a mix of paid, owned and earned channels. An increased weighting of the investment will go towards migrating customers into the digital channels.

**Online exclusive price promotions** – GA has successfully developed the Hare Fares online price promotion mechanic which offers value for money promotional fares via digital channels. These have been hugely successful, driving increased revenue, generating new online customers, and increasing value for money scores. These promotions are planned throughout the year, with three

occurring/currently planned for 23/24. GA also supports national marketing activity that has in the past included a 'Great British Rail Sale'. Further national promotions are likely to occur.

GA is actively exploring other ways to improve use of its app, via a price promotion for first time purchases, by adding a banner on its website with an app download call to action (CTA).

**Integrated Channel Shift TV campaign** – GA has launched an integrated channel shift TV campaign in September 2023 that promotes the benefits of buying via digital channels. The campaign messaging is focused solely on channel shift, a first for GA and the industry at this scale (apart from Trainline.com). The TV campaign called 'Anywhere to Anywhere' highlights the convenience of the customer being able to buy their ticket at their convenience in any location and being able to buy tickets to any destination in Great Britain; whilst also highlighting that GA don't charge booking fees, unlike some other online retailers. This addresses recent brand tracking insight that there is confusion regarding which tickets can be bought from which operator when buying online. A quarter believe only journeys made using that specific train company can be purchased. The reach of this campaign across TV, Outdoor and Digital is 1.16m people, and this campaign will continue and evolve into 2024.

**Encouraging the switch to Smart Ticketing with Station 'takeover' activity** – GA has been doing this since early 2022 at our larger stations and it has continued through 2023 with messages about the app, e-ticket, and Smart card. GA has strategically placed messaging around station ticket offices, ticket machines and entrances, targeting the busiest stations across the GA network to make the biggest impact. This includes station posters, leaflets, ticket machine screensavers and on train posters.

**Evolving into an online brand** – In 2023 both GA and Stansted Express have subtly evolved the brand logos in each of their main advertising campaigns to include ".co.uk" into the logo. This will help position both brands as online retailers.

**Developing Station Specific 'Quick Tickets'** – In 2023, GA launched Station Specific 'Quick Ticketing' across the network. Promoted through posters with bespoke station QR codes, customers can scan the QR code (with their mobile device) which will take them to a station specific landing page with top journeys from that station. This means customers will effectively have a mini ticket machine in their hand. Beginning a purchase via a QR code is quite common post-Covid, especially in the travel, leisure, and hospitality industries; and this 'Quick Ticketing' development has followed a very successful trial at Stansted Airport in March 2023 which has since been expanded. 'Quick Ticketing' is expected to be expanded to all GA Stations, targeting customers in and around the TVM locations.

**Website/App development** – GA and Stansted Express have developed their online channels over the past two years to improve the user experience and offer more benefits to buying online. GA partners with Trainline, the leader in retailing train tickets online. GA launched a new app in 2022, and sentiment on app stores has shifted in a positive direction with ratings increasing from 1.8/5 to 4.2/5 (Apple) and 2/5 to 4.6/5 (Android). GA is also currently using Hotjar surveys to proactively collect feedback from customers to improve its website. GA is planning to conduct a navigation user test which will make it easier for users to find content. GA's current e-ticket fulfilment restricts e-tickets from being purchased 5 minutes before a train departure. GA is now working on allowing customers to make last minute bookings on the app, less than 5 minutes before departure.

Other future improvements include GA redesigning its websites typography to make it easier to read and improving accessibility. GA is also working on app push notifications, improving feedback



capture on the app, improving the PlusBus purchase experience on the website, adding sign up to advance ticket alerts in the web booking flow, and allowing customers to quickly add e-tickets to their Google and Apple wallet from the app.

**Digital railcard promotion** – GA actively promotes Railcard products and has recently improved the customer experience by selling railcards on the GA website. A promotional campaign has been developed and launched recently online and at the station. This was introduced in August 2023 (P6) and has shown an increase in sales of over 100% (to 738) by using GA branded marketing as opposed to National Rail marketing.

**Digital marketing and promoting Digital Tickets and App downloads** - Display, social and pay-per-click (PPC) advertising promote the benefits of purchasing tickets online, including the ease of e-tickets. Specific app download campaigns will also ramp up in order to increase app adoption. Insight shows that once the app is adopted, the usage of the app continues with regular purchases.

**Promoting Flexi-Seasons** – GA has been an industry leader in promoting the recently introduced (2021) Flexi Season ticket and has been one of the top sellers of this digital only product.



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**Station experiential** - Marketing activity in support of channel shift will also include activity at stations, reaching all customer segments that need additional support and education. GA will target customers in a highly specific geographical area, through targeted, hyper-local activity. GA will target ticket offices with the highest sales; intercept customer journeys by engaging with customers face-to-face to explain the benefits of digital and assist customers to make the switch to digital.

Experiential is the best method for establishing relevance, and promotional teams will be sited at selected stations, advising customers of changes impacting them and giving essential information and advice. GA will signpost where they can get additional help and information.

This type of experiential promotion has been successfully undertaken as part of the smartcard conversion activity and also during the promotion of new trains.