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WORLD PASSENGER FESTIVAL



SPEAKER INTERVIEW

Interview with:

Femke Woudstra

Director, Station Management and Operation
NS



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Can you introduce yourself and your role at NS Stations?

I am Femke Woudstra, Director of Station Management & Exploitation at the Dutch Railways. I am responsible for the daily operations of all 400 train stations in the Netherlands.

In your eyes, how has customer experience & expectations changed regarding transport hubs and stations, especially as we emerge post-covid?

Due to covid, some of our customers have found themselves other transport options or they work from home more often. Our main focus is to get people back onto the trains and to use the facilities on the stations more often.

To seduce customers to use the facilities at our train stations more, we did broad research to find out more about current customers' expectations and needs. This research shows us that customers have opposing expectations of stations. On the one hand, they want a station in which they can easily and quickly find their way. On the other hand, they expect bustle, distinctiveness, and excitement. They want the station to be familiar, but at the same time they expect each station to be unique. It is our goal to meet all the expectations: to make an efficient hub and, at the same time, to give the customer an enjoyable and unexpected experience.

What has NS Stations focused on and prioritized to meet these new customer demands and travel patterns?

NS is focusing on creating successful mobility hubs, where travelers can easily and efficiently transfer from one mode of transport to another. We have our own station services for bike and car parking and a popular shared bike system. By innovating these various stations services, we make the door-to-door journey of our customers more seamless.

In addition, we're prioritizing surprising the customers with nice shops, great station facilities and local public initiatives.

What is one key factor that you think underpins a successful customer experience at stations?

I hope that our customers not only experience our stations as efficient hubs, but also find themselves at home and use all the facilities at our stations. We want them to experience how easy it is to buy your groceries or a nice present at the train station or to meet someone in one of the several nice places to eat & drink. To get customers to fully experience the station and make them an ambassador for their own local stations, we have to create a positive vibe around the whole facility and tell the customers that there's more to catch on the station than just the train.

What do you think the next 5 years holds for transport hubs and stations? What does the station of the future look like in your eyes?

The station of the future is not only a place where people efficiently transfer from one modality to another but is also a lively place to meet and stay for some time; to get surprised by, for example, a nice art exhibition or to relax in a green zone. With this in mind, I hope each station will become the central point of each town or city.



Femke Woudstra is taking the World Passenger Festival stage on the 17th of November to discuss:

"More than just functional mobility hubs: Uncovering the stations of the future with NS."

[See who will be joining Femke at the World Passenger Festival this November >>](#)

[Visit our website here.](#)