



CASE STUDY



Industry

Transportation: infrastructure

Company Size

10,000-plus

Site

Eight microsites including ThamesLink Programme and Crossrail 2

Monthly Traffic

140,000 visitors

Challenge

Issues with ease of use and time spent publishing

Results

Improved performance and speed of publishing and lowered costs

“WP Engine’s technical expertise and hosting services are vital, but so too are its consultancy and value-added services.”

- Sacha Law,
Head of Digital Marketing,
Communications,
Network Rail

On the Fast Track to Website Success

NETWORK RAIL IMPROVES FLEXIBILITY AND SPEED OF PUBLISHING ACROSS 8 MICROSITES WITH WP ENGINE

The Company

Network Rail runs, maintains and develops Britain’s rail tracks, signalling, bridges, tunnels, level crossings, viaducts and 18 key stations. In October 2002, Network Rail took over the running of Britain’s rail infrastructure with a mandate from the Government to improve the safety, reliability and efficiency of the railway.

Like many large organisations, Network Rail’s communication with its many stakeholders is vital to the smooth running of the company. Through its main website (www.networkrail.co.uk), project and campaign microsites and internal intranets, Network Rail engages with thousands of individuals on a daily basis spanning both consumer and B2B environments.



The Challenge

Over the last 12 months Network Rail has gone through a major evolution in how it builds, manages and maintains its portfolio of web assets. The company has responded to the need to shift from being a broadcaster of information, to a publisher of engaging content. At the heart of this transition has been the shift to WordPress as the CMS of choice, and the appointment of WP Engine, a WordPress specialist, as hosting and managed service provider.

Sacha Law, Head of Digital Marketing, Communications, Network Rail comments, “12 months ago we made the decision to investigate new ways to manage our website assets. We wanted a solution that was easy to manage and simple to use, where non-technical experts could create new microsites quickly and publish new content instantly. We wanted the flexibility to react quickly to the needs of our users, ultimately devolving responsibility away from IT towards marketing and our content area experts.”



The Solution

Network Rail chose to use WP Engine and WordPress for its new microsites. WP Engine is now responsible for the managed hosting of 8 sites for Network Rail including Crossrail 2 and Thames Link Programme. Network Rail’s sites receive:

- Flexibility through an easy-to-use platform that empowers marketing and content area experts to react quickly to user needs.
- Simplicity through a content management system that enables users to quickly create and publish new content.

- Performance via WP Engine's advanced proprietary EverCache technology that makes highly-cacheable sites up to 1,000 times faster.
- 24x7 technical support including a dedicated account manager who strategically consults with Network Rail and proactively provides best practices for optimized site performance.

The Results

Network Rail's website transformation began with selecting WordPress as its new CMS, hosted and managed by WP Engine.

Network Rail started the testing process with a simple "brochure-ware" microsite. Impressed by how easy it was to build – live in just a couple of days – the company has rolled-out the project to a series of further microsites, project sites and internal promotion sites. These include the sites for major rail infrastructure projects [ThameslinkProgramme](#) and [Crossrail 2](#).

In total Network Rail has launched eight sites using WordPress with WP Engine, the sites receive a combined total of 140,000 visitors per month.

Sacha Law continues, "WordPress has proven to be a simple but highly-intuitive, robust solution. We are able to develop and launch new sites in a fraction of the time it previously took and post new content quickly and with minimal administration. The intelligent functionality and design features – such as themes and plugins – are ideal for our needs. Furthermore, the WordPress community is an active and dynamic resource, constantly innovating and enables us to utilise open source technology."

The appointment of WP Engine as managed services and hosting provider is an invaluable component in the ongoing success of Network Rail's WordPress rollout. WP Engine provides secure, robust, scalable hosting environments. It manages crucial security and patch updates as well as ensuring the bandwidth and availability which Network Rail needs to roll-out sites in a short period of time which many attract tens of thousands of visitors simultaneously.

WP Engine has become a crucial partner of Network Rail's digital marketing function. "Technical support is excellent; we always deal with subject matter experts who can solve issues first time, every time – it pays to deal with a specialist rather than CMS generalist," says Law. "They are also not afraid to push us to try new things and to innovate. I'm excited by the company's product and service roadmap and keen to learn more about how we can integrate technologies such as geo-targeting, personalisation and greater mobility functionality into future projects."

Network Rail will continue to use WP Engine as its strategic partner across all new sites.

About WP Engine

WP Engine is a leading platform as a service for websites and applications built on WordPress. Founded in 2010, WP Engine is headquartered in Austin, Texas and has recently launched in Tech City, London.