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"It is with great sadness that we must announce the death of a dream. Midnight Trains died today, surrounded by family and friends."

This was the message from Midnight Trains founder Adrien Aumont on May 31, marking the end of the company's vision to create a new network of luxury night trains connecting major European cities.

Europe had been on the brink of a potential night train revolution, as travelers sought out more sustainable links between cities. The appeal of falling asleep in one city center and waking up in another, hundreds of miles away, has become increasingly attractive in an era of heightened environmental concerns and problematic air travel experiences.

However, despite the demand, startups like Midnight Trains face nearly insurmountable challenges in entering the market.

New "open access" rules that allow new operators to share Europe's rail network with existing state-owned railway companies were expected to open the doors for innovative ideas and routes. Consequently, several new operators emerged, proposing a web of new routes, cheaper fares, or more luxurious accommodations.

Nonetheless, only a few have managed to launch their services.

Sweden's Snälltåget, connecting Stockholm with Denmark and Germany, and Czech travel provider Regiojet, operating a handful of overnight routes in Central and Eastern Europe, are among the successful examples. European Sleeper, focusing solely on overnight travel, began its Brussels-Amsterdam-Berlin trains in 2024 and now serves Prague three times a week.

European Sleeper's experiences, including struggles to secure appropriate trains and schedules, offer cautionary lessons for other open-access operators. The company's ambition to launch a new route each year is hindered by a shortage of suitable coaches and the complexities of navigating national railway administrations, particularly in France.

Despite a compelling argument for "clean" air travel and the potential for night trains to encourage people to shift to rail travel on medium-distance routes, Midnight Trains was unable to secure the necessary financial backing. The European Union's rail market, while theoretically open to competition, has primarily opened up to itself, leaving new entrants at a disadvantage.

Crescente demanda

Midnight Trains aimed to offer a deluxe "hotel on wheels" experience between Paris and Barcelona starting in 2025.

Long-term plans included serving 10 destinations radiating from Paris, including Milan/Venice, Florence/Rome, Hamburg, Berlin, and Copenhagen, as well as connections to Madrid, Porto, and Edinburgh via the Channel Tunnel.

Although Midnight Trains discussed options with various suppliers, it did not secure any suitable overnight vehicles, nor did it initiate the process of building or refurbishing them according to its proposed specifications. All prospective open-access train operators face a significant challenge in sourcing appropriate "pre-loved" rolling stock.

Advocates of open-access night trains are urging the European Union to facilitate the creation of new services by helping fund the procurement of specialized night train coaches, which could then be leased to train companies.

"European Sleeper demonstrates that demand for long-distance cross-border passenger rail, including night trains, is growing fast, and that such services can be operated in a commercially viable open-access manner," explains Brooks.

However, challenges persist beyond acquiring the trains. Traditional venture capitalists and infrastructure funds are not equipped to invest in risky, complex, long-term projects, and rail vehicle leasing companies are reluctant to invest in rolling stock without a guaranteed long-term operating contract.

Night trains are inherently complicated, labor-intensive, and expensive to operate, which has contributed to their decline since the 1970s.

"The effort required to get new sleeper trains up and running should not be underestimated," adds rail expert Mark Smith, better known as online rail travel guru The Man in Seat 61. "But ÖBB and start-ups such as European Sleeper are proving that it can be done."

Legacy railways have found it easier to deliver better overnight trains. ÖBB, working with Swiss Federal Railways and Germany's Deutsche Bahn, has reinvigorated overnight routes linking hubs in Vienna and Zürich with cities in Germany, Austria, Italy, Hungary, Poland, Czechia, France, Belgium, and the Netherlands.

This success has encouraged other countries, including Italy, France, and Sweden, to re-examine overnight operations and propose new carriages to improve their offering.

Italian State Railways has ordered 70 new carriages for night trains, featuring high-quality cabins with en suite toilets and showers, some with double beds.

With the notable exception of Nightjet, European night train services have yet to meet expectations. Demand is growing, but the immense challenges of financing and setting up new operations are suppressing growth.

Formidable operational, political, and financial obstacles will not disappear overnight. A concerted effort by the EU and member states is required to deliver railways truly open to competition, ensuring the long-awaited revolution in European night trains can thrive.

Resumo: Stephen Collins ganhará ouro por ignorar as notícias de eleições americanas na TV

O cartunista americano Stephen Collins é conhecido por **bet365 com3** sátira política e agora está sendo premiado por **bet365 com3** decisão de ignorar as notícias de eleições americanas na TV. Collins diz que isso lhe permite se concentrar **bet365 com3** assuntos mais importantes e criar trabalhos mais significativos.

Prêmios e reconhecimento

Collins recebeu recentemente um prêmio por **bet365 com3** contribuição à arte e à sátira política. O comitê de seleção elogiou **bet365 com3** capacidade de se concentrar **bet365 com3** questões importantes e **bet365 com3** habilidade **bet365 com3** transmitir mensagens poderosas através de seu trabalho.

Ignorando as notícias de eleições

Collins disse que ele não assiste às notícias de eleições na TV porque ele acha que é uma perda de tempo e energia. Em vez disso, ele se concentra **bet365 com3** assuntos que considera mais importantes, como questões sociais e ambientais.

Criando trabalhos significativos

Collins acredita que **bet365 com3** decisão de ignorar as notícias de eleições lhe permite criar trabalhos mais significativos. Ele diz que ele pode se concentrar **bet365 com3** transmitir mensagens poderosas e fazer comentários sociais importantes através de seu trabalho.

Tabela de prêmios e reconhecimentos

Ano Prêmio

Motivo

2024 Prêmio de Arte e Sátira Política Contribuição à arte e à sátira política, capacidade de se concentra

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