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# “Delectable North Wales” and Stakeholders: The London & North Western Railway’s Marketing of North Wales, c.1904–1914

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DAVID A. TURNER

This article discusses the London & North Western Railway’s (LNWR) marketing activities before 1914. It extends our understanding of British railway marketing by examining how the company forged links with stakeholders in North Wales, particularly the resort authorities, in support of its development of the tourist trade there. While the company remained the dominant force in promoting the region, cooperative working facilitated the sharing of market intelligence, exchange of best practice, coordination of advertising efforts, coordination of services, and the harmonizing of a promotional message that appealed to middle-class discretionary travelers that North Wales was a place for health and pleasure. The article also shows how the LNWR deployed a system of integrated marketing communications, providing one of the earliest known examples within British business of such practice. The sum result was positive impacts on the development of the North Welsh tourist trade in the years before the World War I.

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## Introduction

Scholars have recently provided valuable insights into British railway marketing’s transformation between the 1890s and 1914. Companies

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abandoned their “take-it-or-leave-it” approach; to increase their share of an emerging discretionary travel market, they attempted to understand potential customers’ needs and desires, anticipate them, and then satisfy them.<sup>1</sup> This work has nonetheless predominantly focused on industrywide developments. This article considers how one company, the London & North Western Railway (LNWR), worked with external stakeholders to grow its North Welsh tourism business between 1909 and 1914, applying stakeholder theory as a prism through which to understand this growth. Stakeholder theory takes a broader outlook on what improves or hinders firms’ performance by considering their relationship with stakeholders, which may include the government (local or national), competitors, other businesses, residents, special interest groups, and media organizations. A firm’s policy and strategy development that focuses solely on decision making and production functions may be detrimental to performance, meaning that the objectives of stakeholders and those who might be impacted by selected policy and development choices are not considered. Stakeholder theory therefore suggests that companies should develop capabilities to manage their relationships with stakeholders; that is, company leaders should understand their stakeholders’ needs and objectives and develop procedures, practices and policies that are responsive to and encompassing of them. The achievements of the collective of stakeholders, not those of individual stakeholders, are the measure of success.<sup>2</sup> This theory is useful when analyzing the LNWR’s relationship with its North Welsh stakeholders before 1914. This article not only describes the railway’s marketing of the region but also demonstrates how, starting in 1909, stakeholder engagement became a significant facet of company policy. Cooperative working with stakeholders, most importantly the North Welsh resort authorities, resulted in the coordination of advertising efforts, exchange of market intelligence and advertising practices, and consistent messaging by all stakeholders that holidaymakers could find “health and pleasure” in the region. This resulted in increased tourist traffic to North Wales via the LNWR.

The growth in the British discretionary travel market, starting in the late nineteenth century, was the result of changes in society and the economy. Feinstein estimated that between 1882 and 1899, real employment income per worker increased by 1.71 percent per annum; while between 1899 and 1913, the growth rate was 0.58 percent per annum.<sup>3</sup> Specifically, the rise in stable work and growing incomes

1. Shin, “Art of Advertising Railways”; Divall and Shin, “Cultures of Speed and Conservative Modernity”; Medcalf, “Rethinking Edwardian Advertising,” 79–91.

2. Freeman, *Strategic Management*.

3. Feinstein, “What Really Happened to Real Wages,” 344.

in clerical and administrative posts resulted in the development of a growing middle class that possessed surplus money to spend on clothing, food, and, critically for the railways, leisure.<sup>4</sup> It has long been recognized that this surplus income was spent on consumer goods, which lead to the development of sophisticated marketing practices to secure a greater share of this new mass market. Companies understood the need to better understand consumer desires, and thus engaged in qualitative information-gathering.<sup>5</sup> This information then informed the development of new products targeted at different market segments.<sup>6</sup> The period also saw the spread of packaging, allowing a new retail structure to emerge that included the growth in chain and department stores.<sup>7</sup> The importance of a trademark applied to packaging also increased, which stimulated the Trade Marks Registration Act of 1875, protecting marks from being copied and the integrity of brands from being undermined.<sup>8</sup> Moreover, the development of brands resulted in companies making advertising and commercial activities integral to their business so as to influence consumers' habits in order keep or expand market share. New forms of advertising media also emerged.<sup>9</sup> Because of these developments, Hawkins labeled the period from 1850 to 1914 as one of "institutional development" in marketing in Britain that laid the bedrock for what followed later.<sup>10</sup>

The marketing of consumer goods dominates the literature, but how the marketing of intangible products such as travel and tourism fit into this picture has received limited attention. With rising incomes and a shortened workweek, the holiday became more popular in the late nineteenth century.<sup>11</sup> Britain's nearly 150 seaside resorts catered to different sectors of the public, but Walton argued that middle-class holidaymakers preferred destinations further away from the metropolitan centers; for example, in the far west of England and Wales. Here they could find a range of activities to suit their tastes: "the seekers

4. Fitzgerald, *Rowntree and the Marketing Revolution*, 18; Heller, *London Clerical Workers*, 2–3.

5. Church, "Salesmen and the Transformation of Selling," 713; Church, "British Market for Medicine," 294; Church and Clark, "Product Development"; Fitzgerald, *Rowntree and the Marketing Revolution*, 78; Goodall, "Marketing Consumer Products," 33.

6. Carnevali and Newton, "Pianos for the People."

7. Alexander, "Study of British Retail History."

8. Da Silva Lopes and Casson, "Entrepreneurship"; Duguid, da Silva Lopes, and Mercer, "Reading Registrations"; Higgins, "Trademarks and Infringement"; O'Connor, "For a Colleen's Complexion"; Williams, "Outward Facing."

9. Williams, "New Medium for Advertising"; Hawkins, "Marketing History in Britain," 320.

10. Hawkins, "Marketing History in Britain," 320.

11. Medcalf, "Rethinking Edwardian Advertising," 79–91.

after charm and local colour” and those seeking “golf, tennis and amusements as well as quaintness.”<sup>12</sup>

This article argues that up until 1914, the LNWR developed sophisticated strategies to sell North Wales to these middle-class individuals. The literature on the development of railways’ marketing practices has largely not focused on this period, instead focusing on the inter-war years when the railways competed with motor transport for a share of the discretionary travel market. For example, Medcalf argued that the Great Western Railway’s (GWR) management became “preoccupied with studying potential passengers’ needs, wants and desires” through qualitative means, divided its market into segments, and overall promoted train travel as something “abstract and life-enhancing” enjoyable by all.<sup>13</sup> Indeed, content analysis of railway advertising suggests that companies interacted with cultural understandings and projected sophisticated advertising messages in attempts to manipulate users’ responses and stimulate their desire to travel by train.<sup>14</sup> For instance, Medcalf has shown that for a middle class that was uneasy or even unhappy about the advancing tide of modernity, the GWR in the 1920s presented an idealized vision of a preindustrial, romantic, and rural England to which they could escape.<sup>15</sup>

As this article will demonstrate, these practices had their foundation before World War I and the railways’ more difficult financial circumstances. In the late nineteenth century, increased operating costs, a limited ability to raise rates for goods transit, and tram and omnibus competition in inner-suburban zones<sup>16</sup> diminished the estimated return on capital of the fifteen largest railways. Between 1889 and 1903, the return fell from 5.19 percent to 4.51 percent (five-year moving average).<sup>17</sup> Railways subsequently attempted to economize through more productive goods train loading, staff reductions, new technologies,<sup>18</sup> as well as working agreements that eliminated point-to-point

12. Walton, *English Seaside Resort*, 36–44; Walton, *British Seaside*, 27.

13. Medcalf, “Marketing the Great Western Railway,” 205–206.

14. Medcalf, “What to Wear and Where to Go”; Harrington, “Beyond the Bathing Belle”; Divall “Civilising Velocity”; Divall and Shin, “Cultures of Speed and Conservative Modernity,” 6–7; Watts, “Evaluating British Railway Poster Advertising.”

15. Medcalf, “What to Wear and Where to Go,” 85.

16. Cain, “Railway Combination and Government”; Cain, “Traders versus Railways”; Gourvish, *Railways and the British Economy*, 41–48.

17. Mitchell, Chambers, and Crafts, “Profitability of British Railways,” 806.

18. Crafts, Mills, and Mulatu, “British Railway Companies”; Dodgson, “Productivity Growth Estimates”; Gourvish, *Railways and the British Economy*, 41–48; Irving, “British Railway Investment and Innovation”; Irving, “Profitability and Performance”; Turner, “Managing the Royal Road”; Pollins, *Britain’s Railways*; Crafts, Mills, and Mulatu, “Productivity Growth on Britain’s Railways.”

competition and pooled resources and facilities.<sup>19</sup> To boost revenues, they also sought to secure greater market share in the growing discretionary travel market.<sup>20</sup> In 1910 Charles Owens, general manager of the London & South Western Railway, stated that Bournemouth, which it served, competed with the GWR's Penzance and Newquay resorts, and resorts in the French Riviera and Egypt. This "wider competition," he contended, was increasing. Frank Ree, the LNWR's general manager, concurred: "Instead of two or more companies fighting in the same district, I think a wider competition is now developing between widely separated districts, and even between English watering-places and the Continent."<sup>21</sup>

Consequently, railways established new approaches to passenger inducement that mirrored those found outside the industry. They began gathering information on potential customers' interests and desires,<sup>22</sup> and identified and then targeted advertising and products at market segments. This began in the 1890s with specialist rail tickets for walkers, cyclists, and anglers. Medcalf argued that starting around 1908, the Underground Electric Railways Company of London (UERL) identified different segments of passengers, such as "businessmen, women and Sunday travellers."<sup>23</sup> Advances in printing and photography brought the creation of innovative advertising media, for example, picture postcards, notebooks, and bookmarks. Additionally, existing advertising forms were enhanced, such as illustrated guides and pictorial posters.<sup>24</sup> Advertising also formed part of the companies' attempts to sell what Shin argued was a "more widely conceived travel experience."<sup>25</sup> For instance, Saler argued that the head of the UERL's Traffic Development and Advertising Department, Frank Pick, wanted to give the underground lines a "cohesive corporate persona." Expressed through posters, clear signage, uniform architecture, and, ultimately, a harmonized visual identity, he sought to increase passenger numbers by assuaging anxieties about travel through the deep underground and by easing mobility around the city.<sup>26</sup> On the

19. Cain, "Railway Combination and Government," 630–631; Reed, *London & North Western Railway*, 172–173.

20. Walton, *English Seaside*, 151; Shin, "Art of Advertising Railways."

21. *Minutes of evidence taken before the Department Committee* (referring to Charles Owens, March 9, 1910, m.12337–12347, 502–503 and Frank Ree, April 20, 1910, m.15843–15851).

22. Medcalf, "Rethinking Edwardian Advertising."

23. *Ibid.*, 84; Simmons, *Victorian Railway*, 305–306.

24. Shin, "Art of Advertising Railways," 197; Jackson, *London's Metropolitan Railway*, 238–239.

25. Shin, "Art of Advertising Railways," 197.

26. Saler, *Avant-Garde in Interwar England*, 41.

main lines, although Shin argued that companies' "branding efforts remained fairly elusive until the inter-war years," they promoted positive service images through the wider application of corporate identities. The Great Central Railway, for instance, applied its coat of arms to "locomotives, passenger coaches, crockery, ashtrays, and uniform buttons." Meanwhile, the period saw the development of named trains.<sup>27</sup> As will be argued in this article, the LNWR developed its activities in these directions, and by the end of the period it had a sophisticated approach to passenger inducement.

One area that requires more research is when and how railways cooperated with stakeholders in the pursuit of common objectives. For instance, starting in 1900, railways promoted suburban living to develop commuter traffic from districts not reachable by tram.<sup>28</sup> They were, however, just one of numerous stakeholders involved in this process. Heller has argued that previous histories of suburban development have treated different stakeholders' activities separately. Applying stakeholder theory, he showed that Ilford's success as a suburb before 1914 was the result of four main stakeholders—developers, Ilford's council, its local community, and the Great Eastern Railway—pursuing a cooperative strategy. Underpinned by an understanding of the desires and interests of the target market, that is, clerical workers, homes were built and an environment created that met their needs. Stakeholders, in their promotions, repeated consistent messages that Ilford was "healthy, respectable, convenient, economic and ideal for city workers."<sup>29</sup> Heller argued, "Much of what has been considered as marketing—the selling, advertising, pricing and development of a product—was predominantly an outcome of this approach."<sup>30</sup>

Similarly, research on British seaside resorts' marketing before 1914 has given limited attention to how resort authorities and railways forged links and cooperated in trade development. While calling the GWR a "vital partner" in resort promotion in the West Country, Morgan and Pritchard only briefly describe the partnership schemes it established.<sup>31</sup> Walton highlighted the divergent interests of resorts and railways, arguing that the latter's advertising was "aimed at the passenger first and the holidaymaker second, tending to focus on a group of resorts rather than a single town."<sup>32</sup> While this might be so, this

27. Shin, "Art of Advertising Railways," 191, 197.

28. Jackson, *Semi-Detached London*, 202–203; Ward, *Selling Places*, 117–118; Jackson, *London's Metropolitan Railway*, 134–143.

29. Heller, "Suburbia, Marketing and Stakeholders," 79.

30. *Ibid.*

31. Morgan and Pritchard, *Power and Politics at the Seaside*, 105.

32. Walton, *English Seaside Resort*, 151; Ward, *Selling Places*, 41–42.

article demonstrates it perhaps underplays how cooperative working relationships between railways and resorts supported the development of the tourist trade.<sup>33</sup> The LNWR was always the dominant force in the promotion of North Wales to tourists between 1900 and 1914,<sup>34</sup> but starting in 1909, its efforts benefitted from the building of relationships with resort authorities and other stakeholders.<sup>35</sup>

## Advertising Spending and Management

Stretching from Euston Station in London in the south to Carlisle near the Scottish border in the north, the LNWR possessed three main tourist districts: North Wales, Central Wales, and the Lake District. The development of the tourist trade to and within these regions from 1900 onward was underpinned by the railway's greater commitment of financial resources to its advertising efforts, indicating that senior company decision makers progressively recognized advertising's power to influence holidaymakers' discretionary choices.<sup>36</sup> Advertising spending increased from £25,319 in 1903 (0.28 percent of total company expenditure) to its highest level before World War I in 1910 of £58,312 (0.59 percent of the total) (Figure 1). This investment made the LNWR a leading spender on advertising; Sandow's Cocoa and Chocolate spent £33,977 in 1912; and between 1905 and 1912, Bass, Ratcliff, and Gretton, the brewers of Burton-on-Trent, invested, on average, £55,258 annually.<sup>37</sup>

At the same time as the LNWR increased its spending on advertising, it also centralized and specialized its advertising management to better oversee the expanding operation, which Shin identified as also occurring in other railway companies.<sup>38</sup> Before 1909 various LNWR

33. Morgan and Pritchard, *Power and Politics at the Seaside*, 105.

34. First through fifth annual reports of the North Wales Advertising Board: 1910, 34; 1911, 88; 1912, 136; 1913, 196; 1914, 232, Caernarfon Record Office, Caernarfon, (hereafter, CRO).

35. The LNWR's files in the National Archives rarely describe the details of how decisions were made, usually only mentioning what was decided. As such, this article uses additional information from the files of the North Wales Advertising Board—which are also not always very fulsome—and journal and newspaper articles.

36. Reed, *London & North Western*, 216; Shin, "Art of Advertising Railways," 202.

37. "Sandow's Cocoa and Chocolate," *The Scotsman*, October 8, 1913, 5; Bass, Ratcliffe & Gretton, accounts 1905–1912, A139, A143, A145, National Brewery Centre Archive, Burton-on-Trent, UK.

38. Shin, "Art of Advertising Railways," 199–202; also see Medcalf, "Rethinking Edwardian Advertising," 79–91.



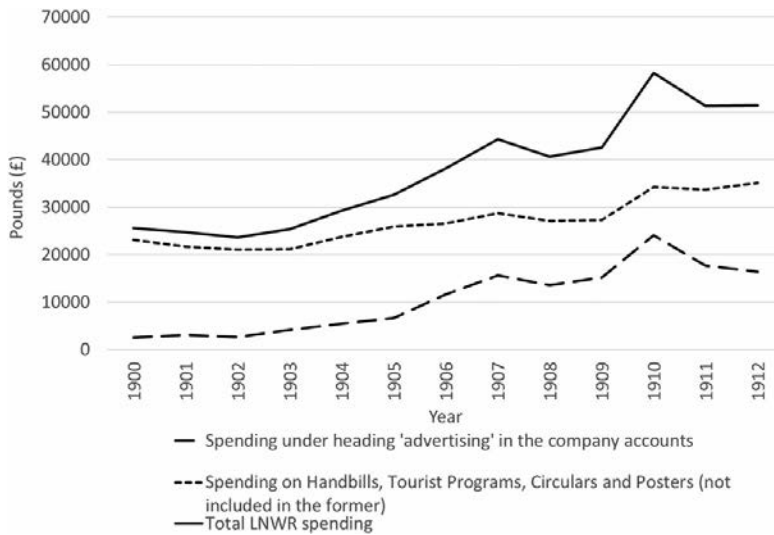


Figure 1 Advertising expenditures, 1900–1912, London & North Western Railway.

By the author based on RAIL 410/72-75, various Reports to the Board, “Expenditure on Stationary,” 1899–1912; RAIL 410/10 and 410/11, Minutes and Reports, Court of Proprietors’ Reports, TNA. Data for 1913–1914 are not available.

offices oversaw advertising output. District passenger officials oversaw localized tourist programs, timetables, handbills, and bill posters,<sup>39</sup> while an Excursion and Advertising Department, within the office of the Superintendent of the Line—the chief passenger train operating official—managed companywide and London advertising.<sup>40</sup> As competition for the discretionary travel market grew, what emerged starting around 1904 was what *Railway Magazine* called “pictorial novelties” and “special [passenger] advertising,” which encompassed pictorial postcards, pictorial posters, guidebooks, and bookmarks. These, rather incongruously, were managed by the Outdoor Goods Manager’s Office, which was headed by C. F. Grasemann,<sup>41</sup> and the responsible section was directly under Alec Feiron, who by 1909 had earned the epithet “publicity expert.”<sup>42</sup>

39. RAIL 410/598, Officers’ Meetings, July 17, 1894; RAIL 410/72–75, Reports to the Board, 1900–1914, the National Archives (hereafter, TNA).

40. “What Our Railways Are Doing—Death of John Hartley Excursion & Advertising Dept.,” *Railway Magazine*, May 1906, 438; “What Our Railways Are Doing—James W. Harris Appointed Chief of Publicity Dept.,” *Railway Magazine*, May 1906, 440; RAIL 410/1850, Salaried Staff Register, No. 1, 1601–2139, 1850, TNA; RAIL 410/1848, Salaried Staff Register, No. 2, 3089–3568, 3478, TNA.

41. *Railway Engineer*, January 1909, 171; “What Our Railways Are Doing—Reorganisation of Advertising Dept. under Alec Feiron,” *Railway Magazine*, May 1909, 438.

42. “Railway Notes,” editorial, *Financial Times* June 25, 1906, 3.

Further centralization of the advertising operation occurred in 1909 when Frank Ree became general manager. He put greater emphasis on building the tourist trade in noncompetitive districts,<sup>43</sup> with his initial priority being an increase of the North Welsh tourism traffic. L. A. P. Warner, the Chester and Holyhead district superintendent, stated in early 1909 that the company was going to advertise the region “in a manner never before attempted.”<sup>44</sup> Reflecting these objectives, and as part of companywide organizational reforms,<sup>45</sup> Ree consolidated all advertising management within a new Advertising Department, supervised by Feiron. He also raised advertising’s status within the company by making the department directly answerable to him rather than another department, as had been the case previously. This position gave Feiron broader scope to develop advertising strategies independent of other departments’ concerns. *Railway Magazine* commented, “The wider sphere which the new position opens to Mr Feiron’s initiative will result in the London and North-Western Railway’s publicity announcements attracting even greater attention than the wide notice that they have already commended.”<sup>46</sup> Feiron’s department immediately exerted greater control over the production and distribution of advertising and launched carefully managed advertising campaigns. Feiron was also involved in the company’s emergent public relations (PR) activities. The new department designed and redesigned advertising materials to ensure they repeated consistent messages about the company’s destinations and services. In both image and word, from 1909 onward, the LNWR repeatedly advertised that North Wales contained opportunities for “health and pleasure,” that it had much to offer for a range of interests, and that holidaymakers could reach it by the LNWR’s quick and comfortable services.

## The Resorts

As part of Ree’s strategy, the LNWR began to build closer relationships with the authorities in the resorts it served in North Wales. These authorities welcomed the support because they felt at a competitive

43. *Minutes of evidence taken before the Department Committee*, 672 (referring to evidence given by Frank Ree, April 20, 1910, m.15844).

44. “North Wales Resorts—London Exhibition Pictures,” editorial, *Llandudno Advertiser and List of Visitors*, April 10, 1909, 7.

45. “Obituary, Sir Frank Ree,” *Railway Times*, February 21, 1914, 175; Obituary, Sir Frank Ree, *Railway Engineer*, January 1909, 171; “Obituary, Sir Frank Ree,” *The Engineer*, February 20, 1914, 208.

46. “What Our Railways Are Doing—Reorganisation of Advertising Dept. under Alec Feiron,” *Railway Magazine*.

disadvantage as compared with overseas resorts and, in Britain, Blackpool.<sup>47</sup> In 1879 Blackpool's council had secured powers to levy 2d on the rates for advertising. The funds available rose from around £1,000 in 1891 to £4,000 by 1914,<sup>48</sup> and the town's trade boomed as a result. Cross and Walton argued that "a great deal of Blackpool's success can be ascribed to its town government which using this money acted as a business in competition with rival tourist towns and treated local taxpayers as shareholders."<sup>49</sup> Seeing Blackpool's success, and the success of overseas resorts, British resorts desired the same powers. Alfred Conolly, clerk of the Llandudno Council in North Wales, argued in 1900 that the levying rates for advertising were "absolutely necessary if only to enable us to compete with foreign resorts, who advertise very largely, and appear to have no lack of funds for that purpose."<sup>50</sup> Nevertheless, when they tried to secure powers, they were rebuffed by Parliament, except in a few cases.<sup>51</sup>

Other methods, therefore, had to be found to fund advertising.<sup>52</sup> Usually with the support of local government, resorts established advertising or mutual improvement associations administered by Chambers of Commerce or voluntary committees that were funded by donations,<sup>53</sup> which allowed for the creation of handbooks, posters and placement of newspaper advertisements.<sup>54</sup> However, these organizations struggled to raise funds.<sup>55</sup> In North Wales, Betws-y-Coed

47. Morgan and Pritchard, *Power and Politics at the Seaside*, 105.

48. "Does Advertising a Town Pay?," editorial, *North Wales Chronicle and Advertiser for the Principality*, April 11, 1891, 5; "Advertising Blackpool," editorial, *Aberystwyth Observer*, June 14, 1894, 5; "Councillor Briggs and Blackpool Corporation," editorial, *Lancashire Evening Post*, October 30, 1903, 4; Walton, *English Seaside Resort*, 151.

49. Cross and Walton, *Playful Crowd*, 27–28.

50. "Llandudno Council & the Advertising Question—Proposed Parliamentary Action," editorial, *Carnarvon and Denbigh Herald and North and South Wales Independent*, July 13, 1900, 3.

51. Walton, *British Seaside*, 184.

52. Walton, *English Seaside Resort*, 150–151; "Holiday and Health Resort Advertising," *Advertising World*, February 1914, 264; see also XM 1213/237, Report of the North Wales Advertising Board Executive Committee, January 4, 1910, 4, CRO; "North Wales Resorts—London Exhibition Pictures," editorial, *Llandudno Advertiser and List of Visitors*, April 10, 1909, 7.

53. Walton, *English Seaside Resort*, 151.

54. "Advertising the District: The Colwyn Bay and Colwyn Town Advancement Association," editorial, *Weekly News and Visitors' Chronicle for Colwyn Bay, Colwyn, Llandrillo, Conway, Deganwy, and Neighbourhood*, May 26, 1892, 4; "Advertising Rhyl," editorial, *Rhyl Record and Advertiser*, November 25, 1905, 5; "Proposed Improvement Association for Bettws-y-Coed: Meeting of the Ratepayers," editorial, *Welsh Coast Pioneer and Review for North Cambria*, May 30, 1907, 5.

55. Beckerson, "Marketing British Tourism," 9; see also Ward, *Selling Places*, 41–42.

eventually formed an association in 1908, but the year before only seven of its one thousand residents attended a planning meeting.<sup>56</sup> A canvass of potential donors at Colwyn Bay in 1909 also “failed to exhibit a satisfactory response.”<sup>57</sup> The advertising budgets of resorts in North Wales therefore remained small as compared with that of Blackpool. Colwyn Bay Town Advertising Association spent £1,300 between 1904 and 1908, while *The Welsh Coast Pioneer* in 1905 called Llandudno’s £200-a-year advertising budget “the best effort on the North Wales seaboard.”<sup>58</sup>

This is why the resort authorities welcomed the support of the well-financed railway companies, which started working with them after 1900.<sup>59</sup> In 1914 Grasemann explained that the LNWR had pursued cooperation so it and the resorts could “stand together, act together and advance together.”<sup>60</sup> To support its own objectives, the LNWR initiated the formation of organizations so that resorts could subscribe money into a central fund that would be used to advertise their regions. It established the Central Wales Advertising Board in 1909<sup>61</sup> and a Lake District board sometime before 1913.<sup>62</sup> In North Wales the company initiated the establishment of the North Wales Advertising Board (NWAB). Formed in September 1909, this represented the pooled resources of twenty-one resorts that contributed based on their ratable value (£1 for every £1,000) and population (£1 for every one thousand people).<sup>63</sup> The NWAB’s first annual report demonstrated that the LNWR’s initiative met resorts’ desire to redress

56. “Proposed Improvement Association for Bettws-y-Coed: Meeting of the Ratepayers,” editorial, *Welsh Coast Pioneer and Review for North Cambria*, May 30, 1907, 5; “Popularising Bettws-y-coed: Lack of Public Enthusiasm,” editorial, *Welsh Coast Pioneer and Review for North Cambria*, October 24, 1907, 8.

57. “Colwyn Bay Town Advertising Association,” *North Wales Weekly News*, February 5, 1909, 8.

58. “Colwyn Bay, Advertising the town,” editorial, *Rhyl Journal*, April 4, 1908, 4; “Advertising North Wales Resorts,” editorial, *Welsh Coast Pioneer and Review for North Cambria*, May 7, 1905, 16.

59. “The Views of Leading Railway Companies,” *Advertising World*, February 1914, 270–278; “The Man on the Spot,” *Advertising World*, January 1914, 74–84.

60. RAIL 410/1890, Salaried Staff Record Cards, (for) Graseman, Cecil Frederick, TNA; “The Federation of British Health and Holiday Resorts,” *Railway Magazine*, May 1914, 351–352.

61. “Advertising Central Wales,” editorial, *Evening Express*, October 22, 1909, 2; XM 1213/238, Some Suggestions as to the Constitution of the Advertising Authority (Central Wales Board of Advertising), November 12, 1909, CRO.

62. “Pertinent Paragraphs—LNWR Publicity Dept,” *Railway Magazine*, May 1913, 427.

63. XM 1213/237, North Wales Advertising Board Minutes, CRO. The first page of the minute book states that L. A. P. Warner founded it, not as Berckerson argues the Llandudno Improvement Association (and in 1910). Beckerson, “Marketing British Tourism,” 62.

their competitive disadvantage: "The cooperation of all the districts is urgently needed to enable the board to carry out this undertaking, and to compete with our British and Continental rivals."<sup>64</sup>

The LNWR did not directly contribute to NWAB's funds. In 1909 it spent between £3,000 and £4,000 on advertising North Wales,<sup>65</sup> and in 1913 Feiron argued that because of such spending, the railway was "entitled to the cooperation of the public authorities and local residents in the work."<sup>66</sup> The creation of the NWAB nonetheless benefitted all parties. After 1909 the LNWR reduced its North Wales advertising budget by an unknown amount,<sup>67</sup> but the NWAB made up some of the difference, its spending rising from £539 in 1910 to £812 in 1913.<sup>68</sup> The advertising board also facilitated exchanges of information, ideas, and resources to inform the thinking and development of advertising and publicity materials by all parties. Indeed, in its first few years, the LNWR provided the NWAB with strategic leadership, with Feiron and other officials supplying guidance.<sup>69</sup> The LNWR and NWAB were also able to coordinate their advertising so that effort was not duplicated; in 1910 the LNWR agreed to handle all advertising of North Wales in London, including in newspapers, tube carriages, and omnibuses, meaning the NWAB only had to advertise in the "provinces."<sup>70</sup> The railway also agreed to distribute the board's materials, posters, and guidebooks across and beyond its network.<sup>71</sup> Cooperative working also ensured that all parties repeated consistent messages in advertising. Broadly in line with the central messages the LNWR

64. XM 1213/237, Report of the North Wales Advertising Board Executive Committee," January 4, 1910, 4, CRO.

65. XM 1213/237, North Wales Advertising Board Executive Committee Minutes, November 19, 1909; XM 1213/238, Executive Committee Minute Book, September 27, 1910, 7, all in CRO.

66. "The Observation Car—The London and North-Western Railway's Experiment," editorial, *Manchester Guardian*, August 30, 1911, 4.

67. "Advertising North Wales—Interesting Meeting at Colwyn Bay," editorial, *Welsh Coast Pioneer and Review for North Cambria*, September 2, 1909, 2.

68. XM 1213/238, first and fourth annual reports of the North Wales Advertising Board: 1910, 34, and 1913, 232, CRO.

69. XM 1213/237, Special Committee, October 7, 1909; General Meeting, November 18, 1909; Executive Committee, January 4, 1910, and January 31, 1910, CRO. XM 1213/238, Executive Committee, September 27, 1910; General Committee, October 20, 1910, CRO. Untitled editorial, *Berwickshire News and General Advertiser*, December 3, 1912, 4.

70. "News from the Health Resorts," *Advertising World*, March 1910, 364. XM 1213/237, North Wales Advertising Board Executive Committee Minute Book, February 3, 1910, reprint of article from *Welsh Coast Pioneer*; XM 1213/238, North Wales Advertising Board Executive Committee Minutes, September 27, 1910, 1, both in CRO.

71. "North Wales as Autumn and Winter Resorts," editorial, *North Wales Express*, September 3, 1909, 5.

was repeating about North Wales, at a special committee meeting in October 1909, the NWAB confirmed that its overall purpose was to promote the region as a place of “health, pleasure and residency,” which Feiron agreed with by letter.<sup>72</sup> Cooperation was therefore the critical aspect of the relationship between the LNWR and the NWAB. Indicative of this, and to put the relationship on even firmer footing, in early 1913 James M. Frith, of the Chester District’s Superintendent’s Office, was appointed to the board’s Executive Committee and its new Advertising subcommittee.<sup>73</sup>

### Learning about the Market

The NWAB also supported LNWR officials’ efforts to build a more complete understanding of the market it served. Starting in 1900, LNWR officers had become interested in gathering intelligence from an expanding range of sources. Since its formation, company officials had always gathered basic information on ticket sales and passenger numbers,<sup>74</sup> but now they carefully noted the number of guides requested as a result of particular press campaigns.<sup>75</sup> Qualitative information was also gathered through front-line sources. Canvassers were the LNWR’s commercial travelers who attempted to convince businesses inside and outside the company’s territory to send goods by their line.<sup>76</sup> Senior LNWR officials from 1900 onward, possibly because the canvassers worked in the field, consulted the Canvassers’ Conference—an approximately quarterly assembly overseen by senior goods managers—on a range of matters pertaining to competitors’ activities and how to improve services. For instance, in 1903 canvassers submitted to the board examples of other companies’ advertising materials,<sup>77</sup> and in May 1904 canvassers were explicitly solicited for ideas for better “placing London and North Western facilities and arrangements before the public.”

72. XM 1213/238, North Wales Advertising Board Executive Committee Minutes, August 16, 1910, CRO; XM 1213/237, Special Committee Meeting, October 7, 1909, CRO.

73. XM 1213/238, Executive Committee Meeting, February 3, 1913, 157; and March 17, 1913, 161, CRO.

74. Gourvish, *Mark Huish*; Reed, *London & North Western Railway*.

75. RAIL 410/601, Officers’ Meetings Minute Book: July 13, 1909, Minute 42594; RAIL 410/215, Passenger Traffic Committee, August 11, 1909, Minute 10602; RAIL 410/74, Reports to the Board, “Expenditure on Stationary,” February 11, 1910, 2, all located in TNA.

76. Chauncy, “Confessions of a Canvasser,” 42–43; Pole and Milne, “Economics of Passenger Traffic,” 233.

77. RAIL 410/723, Canvassers’ Conference Minutes: January 22, 1903, Minute 3043; May 21, 1903, Minute 3080; September 29, 1903, Minute 3186, all located in TNA.

Suggestions included the “supply of circulars to town offices giving particulars of marshalling of principal express trains, departure platforms, &c., distribution of maps to schools, good pictorial posters and a Monthly publication of important events.”<sup>78</sup> Gracemann chaired the meeting and Feiron attended, occasionally acting as secretary, and thus it can be suggested that these and other ideas informed the development of the company’s advertising strategies.<sup>79</sup> Canvassers were also used to gauge whether services were effectively meeting customers’ needs. In February 1904 LNWR managers asked them to pass to the Superintendent of the Line “suggestions for improving passenger train services, or where this Company’s arrangements compare unfavorably with those of competing routes.”<sup>80</sup> Unfortunately, the minute books do not describe any of the suggestions forwarded to the superintendent.

While company sources continued to supply intelligence starting in 1909,<sup>81</sup> LNWR officials enhanced their understanding of the market through regular communication with the NWAB, which shared information on where trains and ticketing might be improved, the efficacy of advertising, and the habits of tourists. The NWAB also provided information on events at resorts that could be promoted.<sup>82</sup> In early 1912 the NWAB Executive Committee also took steps to understand the efficacy of advertising in different newspapers so as to identify which advertisements elicited the most responses, and ordered that “when placing adverts, ‘keyed’ addresses should be used.” What precisely “keyed addresses” meant is unclear. However, the executive committee subsequently urged advertising associations when receiving such “keyed” advertisements to note which newspapers had generated the most requests for additional literature and to forward this information to the executive committee to support the development of advertising strategies. It is unclear if such practices were the result

78. RAIL 410/723, Canvassers’ Conference Minutes: May 19, 1904, Minute 3258; September 27, 1904, Minute 3293; November 22, 1906, Minute 3488, all located in TNA.

79. RAIL 410/723, Canvassers’ Conference Minutes: January 5, 1901, Minute 2630; May 21, 1903, Minute 2952; September 29, 1903, Minute 3186, all located in TNA.

80. RAIL 410/723, Canvassers’ Conference Minutes: February 4, 1904, Minute 3229, and September 27, 1904, Minute 3293, both located in TNA.

81. RAIL 410/601, Officers’ Meetings Minute Book: March 16, 1909, Minute 42490, TNA.

82. XM 1213/237, first meeting of representatives, September 29, 1909; XM 1213/238, North Wales Advertising Board Executive Committee Minutes: October 29, 1910, 9; March 2, 1911, 24; February 8, 1912, 102; March 4, 1912, 107; October 30, 1912, 141; October 29, 1913, 200; December 16, 1913, 203; June 30, 1914, 218, all located in CRO.



of the LNWR's influence; nonetheless, after Frith joined the executive committee, he would have been privy to this information.<sup>83</sup>

In line with industry trends,<sup>84</sup> starting in 1904, LNWR officials therefore became interested in expanding their understanding of market conditions, their customers, and the efficacy of advertising through gathering information from a range of sources. How this information shaped company policy is, unfortunately, not clear because of limited details in the company's surviving files. LNWR officials nonetheless wrote to the NWAB five times in early 1910 regarding the GWR and Cambrian Railways' advertising methods, indicating that such information was of utility in the objective of influencing holidaymakers' discretionary choices.<sup>85</sup> They possibly felt that to ensure the NWAB's competitiveness, it should understand competitors' advertising practices.

### New Services and Attractions

How such information informed new service development also remains obscure. However, the company's enhancement of existing service provision and the development of new offerings that met holidaymakers' interests and tastes, in some cases very successfully, demonstrates that LNWR officers had an understanding of the desires and interests of the targeted middle-class market.

To develop traffic to North Wales, in 1909 the LNWR enhanced accessibility of the region from major metropolitan districts in the summer months, and new direct services were established from Birmingham, Liverpool, and Manchester.<sup>86</sup> However, indicative of the company's keenness to tap the London market, the most promoted service was a new express train, complete with luncheon car that started from Euston Station at 11:15 a.m. each weekday. It ran nonstop to Rhyl in North Wales in four hours, with subsequent stops at other resorts.<sup>87</sup> Similar services were established from other towns in later years,<sup>88</sup>

83. XM 1213/238, North Wales Advertising Board Executive Committee Minutes: February 8, 1912, 102, and March 4, 1912, 108, both located in CRO.

84. Medcalf, "Rethinking Edwardian Advertising," 79–91.

85. XM 1213/237, North Wales Advertising Board Executive Committee Minutes, reference to letters sent from Warner, January 5, January 8, January 10, January 26, January 28, 1910, CRO. No detail is given.

86. "The North Wales Express," editorial, *North Wales Weekly News*, July 9, 1909, 8; "A long non-stop run," editorial, *Northampton Mercury*, June 11, 1909, 2; "Beauty Spots in North Wales," *Illustrated London News*, July 10, 1909, 58; advertisement, *Manchester Courier and Lancashire General Advertiser*, June 5, 1909, 5.

87. RAIL 945/40, London & North Western Railway Public Timetables for July, August, September 1909, A and VIII, TNA.

88. RAIL 945/42, London & North Western Railway Public Timetables, July, August, September 1911, A, TNA.



and to ease holidaymakers' transit to North Wales, in 1911 a train for passengers' luggage sent in advance was established from London.<sup>89</sup>

Within the region, the LNWR developed new facilities that allowed tourists to travel around the district with ease, these aligning with the promotional message repeated by all stakeholders: North Wales was a place of health and pleasure that needed to be visited. Existing train services within the region were "accelerated, improved and augmented" so as to facilitate tourists' mobility.<sup>90</sup> The company's motor-touring operation was expanded and railway services were coordinated with other bus and charabanc operators to expand the routes available.<sup>91</sup> The objective of all the company's road services was, as an advertisement in the *New York Tribune* claimed, to enable "travellers to reach many painteresque villages and see rural England [*sic*]<sup>92</sup> far from the regular line of the railway."<sup>93</sup> The major innovation of note, or so the company proclaimed, was two observation cars that were originally attached to trains that ran from Llandudno to Blaenau Ffestiniog in 1911.<sup>94</sup> A seat cost 6d in addition to the standard ticket, a guide was on hand to describe the surroundings through which the train passed, and the complete glass surround allowed passengers to engage in photography, an emerging middle-class pastime.<sup>95</sup>

The growing ridership of these two offerings demonstrates that LNWR officials were effectively meeting the interests of tourists in North Wales. The number of bus tickets sold rose from 72,980 in 1908 to 559,305 in 1913; and in 1911, 2,521 passengers used the observation cars. These did not, however, adequately meet demand, so a third car was constructed in 1912.<sup>96</sup> Precise operating figures for these services are unavailable; however, they were not financially successful. The first two observation cars each cost an estimated £975 to build,

89. Untitled editorial, *Banbury Guardian*, August 3, 1911.

90. "The Railway Services," *Rhyl Journal*, June 29, 1909, 8.

91. "Beautiful L&NW Railway Routes—Acme of Pleasure," editorial, *Monmouth Guardian and Bargoed and Caerphilly Observer*, July 31, 1914, 1.

92. This advertisement was principally talking about all the company's services in England and Wales, and so using "England" was not strictly correct.

93. Display advertisement, *New York Tribune*, April 20, 1910, A3.

94. RAIL 410/602, Officers' Meetings Minute Book: October 17, 1911, Minute 43307; RAIL 410/216, Passenger Traffic Committee: May 17, 1911, Minute 11580, and March 12, 1912, Minute 12576, all located in TNA.

95. "The Observation Car—The London and North-Western Railway's Experiment," editorial, *Manchester Guardian*, August 30, 1911, 4; *Illustrated London News*, image caption, September 9, 1911, 422; Preston, "The Representation of Women and Gardens."

96. RAIL 410/216, Passenger Traffic Committee, March 12, 1912, Minute 12576; RAIL 410/602, Officers' Meetings Minute Book: July 13, 1909, Minute 42589; RAIL 410/603, Officers' Meetings Minute Book: February 24, 1914, Minute 44289, all located in TNA.

and in 1911 one earned gross revenue of nearly £54. This equated to a return of only 5.5 percent before operating costs were taken into account (these are not given).<sup>97</sup> Each year the buses also lost money, in the amount of £455 in 1908; by 1913 there had been only marginal improvement, the loss decreasing to £397. These figures suggest that the services were not introduced to add to the LNWR's profits directly. They can be characterized as loss leaders that were designed to enhance the overall attractiveness of North Wales as a destination and encourage patronage of train services in and to the region.

In the early 1900s, the LNWR also developed new types of ticketing that allowed customers to see more of the district, keeping them within the railway's orbit and on its services. The standard ticket prices to, from, and around North Wales did not change except when the company abolished second-class accommodation in 1912. However, in 1905 the company introduced contract holiday tickets for all classes.<sup>98</sup> By 1909 these entitled holders to travel around the district that stretched from Rhyl to Holyhead, and could be purchased for the duration of a week or a fortnight. For a higher price, the ticket could also include unlimited travel on the services of another stakeholder, the Liverpool and North Wales Steamship Company, which ran pleasure trips around the coastline.<sup>99</sup> How ticket prices were set and related to revenue is unclear from the available records. However, in 1907, *Freeman's Journal*, in what might have been a piece of supplied copy, mentioned that the cost of contract tickets was "remarkably low," and thus the tickets were tempting to those seeking "a holiday amidst nature untouched by the hand of man."<sup>100</sup>

The LNWR also developed facilities beyond transport services to attract customers. Golf was a leading middle-class activity before World War I,<sup>101</sup> so to entice golfers, in 1912 it opened a course near its Holyhead Hotel, on the Welsh Island of Anglesey, which was expected to "bring additional business to the Hotel and the Railway." It was a success, and in October 1912 the board ordered that the

97. RAIL 410/602, Officers' Meetings Minute Book: July 13, 1909, Minute 42589 and October 17, 1911, Minute 43307; RAIL 410/603, Officers' Meetings Minute Book, February 24, 1914, Minute 44289, all located in TNA.

98. RAIL 945/39-45, London & North Western Railway Public Timetables for July, August, September [multiple periods], 1908–1914, TNA. This was a companywide abolition and led to a very slight increase in third-class ticket prices. A contract ticket allowed travel for a fixed period of time.

99. "A Go As You Please Ticket," editorial, *Weekly News and Visitors' Chronicle for Colwyn Bay, Colwyn, Llandrillo, Conway, Deganwy, and Neighbourhood*, August 15, 1905, 3; RAIL 945/40, London & North Western Railway Public Timetables for July, August, September 1909, 28, TNA.

100. Untitled editorial, *Freeman's Journal*, May 15, 1907, 7.

101. Thompson, *Gentrification and the Enterprise Culture*, 110.

clubhouse be enlarged. A year later the board ordered that fourteen more acres be added, and the clubhouse was again expanded, this time to provide a “ladies room.”<sup>102</sup> The LNWR was not alone in providing new attractions for tourists, as some resorts expanded their offerings on their own. In 1913 the town of Rhyl purchased the local pier to add “a municipal lake, funfair and bands”;<sup>103</sup> and in May 1914 Pwllheli revived its gala and athletic festival, which had not been staged for some time.<sup>104</sup>

Prior to 1914, the LNWR therefore sought to create an environment in North Wales that met the needs and desires of the middle class, and which aligned with the positive service images and messages repeated by all stakeholders. Starting in 1909, North Wales became easily reachable from the major populated centers, and its various delights and attractions were made more easily accessible for individuals.

### Promoting North Wales

The facilities and attractions on offer were brought to holidaymakers’ attention by the LNWR’s use of diverse and innovative marketing communications. Its approach provides the earliest identified example in Britain of Integrated Marketing Communications (IMC), which has found considerable favor in both academic and professional marketing spheres. IMC advocates the integration of different marketing channels and tools to provide across them consistency and clarity in messaging throughout a campaign, the resulting synergy amplifying the impact on consumers’ discretionary spending choices. Moreover, IMC has been closely interwoven with understandings and models of the various stages that consumers pass through when deciding to make purchases. The Buyer Readiness Stage model, for instance, suggests that consumers are first made aware of a product, and then they pass through the stages of knowledge, liking, preference, and conviction. This ultimately results in the consumer making a purchase. The application of IMC principals to campaigns can support the consumer through this pathway with different yet integrated marketing communications being deployed at different points. As Darley has argued, “In terms of reaching the consumer, marketing communications efforts

102. RAIL 410/216, Passenger Traffic Committee Minutes: May 15, 1912, Minute 12117; RAIL 410/41, LNWR Board Minutes, October 18, 1912, Minute 24994, and October 17, 1913, Minute 25537, all located in TNA.

103. Walton, *English Seaside Resorts*, 149.

104. “Cardigan Bay Coast,” editorial, *Liverpool Echo*, May 30, 1914, 3. The newspaper report does not specify in how many of the previous years it had not run.

should reflect the *buyer-readiness* stage and the stage in the consumer's decision journey."<sup>105</sup>

The history of the use of IMC is, however, disputed. It has frequently been characterized as being a new concept in marketing, only being widely articulated and gaining traction since the start of the 1990s.<sup>106</sup> Some have argued, however, that such practice has a longer heritage. Spotts, Lambert and Joyce argued: "IMC proponents take credit for developing theories that have been housed in marketing discipline for more than 50 years."<sup>107</sup> Indeed, Heller has recently shown that in the 1930s the British General Post Office used IMC in successful campaigns to increase uptake of the telephone, inaugurate the Anglo-Japanese international telephone service, and to launch the Empire Airmail Scheme.<sup>108</sup>

Examination of the LNWR's marketing communications pushes the history of IMC within British companies back to before World War I. Even before 1909, LNWR officials recognized the synergistic benefits that the integration of marketing communications and consistent messaging could have on influencing consumer choice, and how IMC guided consumers from their initial interest in a product to its purchase. Particularly from 1909, and with the creation of LNWR's new Advertising Department, this approach was further facilitated through the department having complete control over advertising output and delivering better managed and coordinated operations. The development of different marketing communication tools was also enhanced by cooperative working with, or at least by consulting, the NWAB and other stakeholders. This facilitated the creation of a unified vision of an environment that appealed to middle-class holidaymakers across marketing communications. Stakeholders consistently repeated the message that North Wales was a place for health and pleasure to which holidaymakers could be conveyed in speed and comfort, and where their varied interests would be satisfied.<sup>109</sup> Finally, Feiron's new department improved and redesigned advertising and publicity materials to increase their impact on different segments of potential customers.

To demonstrate the different dimensions of the LNWR's approach, this section focuses on five forms of marketing communications. These are press advertising, which consumed the largest proportion of the

105. Darley, "Brand Building," 215; Heller, "Integrated Marketing Communications," 1036. Another behavioral model is AIDA (Attention, Interest, Desire, and Action); see Barry and Howard, "Hierarchy of Effects in Advertising."

106. Šerić, "Empirical Research on IMC," 1–2.

107. Spotts, Lambert, and Joyce, "Marketing Déjà Vu," 210.

108. Heller, "Integrated Marketing Communications," 1049.

109. "What Our Railways Are Doing: LNWR Holiday Services and Guides for North Wales," *Railway Magazine*, August 1909, 173.

LNWR and NWAB's advertising spend; guidebooks, which delivered individuals more detailed information about North Welsh attractions; direct selling, through kiosks, inquiry offices, and national exhibitions; the LNWR's (perhaps pioneering) use of cinema; and finally, the development of PR activities. The sum result was a dynamic and integrated publicity operation that demonstrates LNWR officials' effective understanding of how to manipulate the selling process to appeal to potential customers with diverse interests.<sup>110</sup>

### *Newspaper Advertising*

After the creation of the Advertising Department in 1909, Feiron developed what *Railway Magazine* called "new methods" in newspaper advertising.<sup>111</sup> It is unclear exactly what these were; however, the company minute books reference press campaigns for the first time, suggesting a more closely managed operation.<sup>112</sup> The first campaign noted ran from April to July 1909 and promoted North Wales. Advertisements and descriptive advertorials, sometimes placed alongside or near each other, were placed in multiple outlets, such as the *Illustrated London News*, local newspapers, and national dailies. All repeated the same messages about North Wales being a site of health and pleasure, the attractions available to different interests, and the comfortable and quick railway services to the region, with the new Euston to North Wales express being promoted heavily. The language of advertisements placed in major newspapers also became more compelling, whereas previously the largest full-page ads consisted of simple, straightforward announcements.<sup>113</sup> For example, in the *Daily Mail*, an advertisement under the heading "North Wales Calls to You" appealed to different market segments in an evocative manner:

What is it you seek? Bathing sailing, boating, angling? Find them all in North Wales. Is it cycling? The roads in North Wales are superlatively good and the whole country picturesque in the extreme. Are you fond of walking? Then go to North Wales for finer walks and view cannot

110. "Pertinent Paragraphs—LNWR Publicity Department," *Railway Magazine*, May 1913, 427.

111. *Ibid.*, 427.

112. RAIL 410/601, Officers' Meetings Minute Book: July 13, 1909, Minute 42594; RAIL 410/215, Passenger Traffic Committee, August 11, 1909, Minute 10602, both in TNA; display advertisement, *Daily Mail*, June 10, 1909, 1.

113. Display advertisement, *July 17, 1905*, 3, and *June 28, 1906*, 3, *Manchester Guardian*; display advertisement, *Irish Times*, March 17, 1908, 4; "Public Notices," editorial, *Leamington Spa Courier*, June 26, 1908, 1; advertisement, *Northampton Mercury*, August 7, 1908, 4.

be found. Is it golf? Then go to Bangor, Colwyn Bay, Conway, Ruthin, Holyhead, Llanberis, Llandudno, Llanfairfechan, Llanrwst and Trefriw, Old Colwyn, Prestatyn, Ryl or Rhosneigr. Perhaps it is the children of whom you are thinking most. On the level beaches of the North Wales coast they will find a pleasure, gathering shells and coloured pebbles, playing cricket or castle building on the sands.<sup>114</sup>

There were also improvements in the overall design of the ads. The *Daily Mail* advertisement contained sketches of northern Welsh attractions and scenery, and included a map of the region. The LNWR's newspaper advertising, starting in 1909, therefore embodied many positive advances in practice, so much so that in 1913 the usually highly judgmental *Advertising World* stated that an ad for the Lake District was "one of the most satisfactory announcements of its kind that we have seen."<sup>115</sup>

The LNWR's newspaper advertising efforts were also enhanced by participation in cooperative schemes organized by the NWAB. The executive committee formed the Advertising subcommittee, which included Frith, in 1913 to manage this operation; at the meetings, the board, railway, and resorts agreed how many lines they would take in the advertising space. Running in four national newspapers for thirteen weeks, the insertions consisted of small advertorials describing different resorts, under which were one-line ads for the railway and local businesses, which the NWAB arranged through its member resorts.<sup>116</sup> In 1913, under the heading "Delectable North Wales," one column of insertions contained paragraphs on Colwyn Bay, Conway Valley, Llandudno, Rhyl, Prestatyn and Abergel, Snowdonia, Anglesey, and South Carnarvon, and a "Grand Welsh Tour," arranged by a tour company. Under the paragraphs were ads for LNWR train services and the observation car, hotels and boarding houses, Silver Motor Coach Tours, the NWAB's handbook, and the guides of Abergel, Bettwys-y-coed, Llanfairfechan, Llandudno, and Pwllheli.<sup>117</sup> The sum result was an impactful piece of collective advertising that enabled holidaymakers to consider multiple dimensions of their holidays while informing them how more literature could be obtained.

114. Display advertisement, *Daily Mail*, June 10, 1909, 1.

115. "In the Dailies," *Advertising World*, July 1913, 24.

116. XM 1213/238, North Wales Advertising Board Executive Committee Minutes: February 3, 1913, 156, and March 17, 1913, 161; North Wales Advertising Board, Advertising Subcommittee Minutes, March 31, 1913, 163; fourth and fifth annual reports of the North Wales Advertising Board, 1913, 196, and 1914, 232, all located in CRO.

117. "Delectable North Wales," advertisement, *Daily Mail*, August 4, 1913, 8.

### Travel Literature

LNWR and NWAB officials considered guidebooks to be a major plank in selling the North Wales offering. Over time, the former changed its output to enhance their guidebooks' influence on holidaymakers. First, the guidebooks were made more easily obtainable. For many years, external providers had sold authorized guidebooks to the LNWR's territory.<sup>118</sup> From around 1903, though, the LNWR brought the design in-house, enabling the company to integrate them with newspaper advertising. Ads generated interest in guidebooks by proclaiming that they were free and available at the company's town offices and stations, or on application (with postage).<sup>119</sup> Starting in 1912, ads in major dailies contained coupons that interested parties could cut out, fill in, and mail off, making the process of guidebook acquisition even easier.<sup>120</sup> Such integration allowed LNWR to maximize its impact on holidaymakers' discretionary choices. For instance, the LNWR's Passenger Traffic Committee noted that in 1909 the newspaper campaign promoting North Wales had generated 82,704 requests for literature; this was an increase of 20,000 from 1908.<sup>121</sup>

The company also developed guidebooks to different areas of its territory, demonstrating that its officials were attempting to cater to different interests. By 1909 the LNWR was publishing sixteen guides for British travelers—including guides to Ireland, the Lake District, Scotland, and Wales, and overseas tourists were catered to separately;<sup>122</sup> the LNWR published a guide to its territories for American tourists in 1908, and in the next year produced *La Suisse Anglais* for French visitors to the Lake District.<sup>123</sup> Those interested in visiting Wales could obtain four different guidebooks: *North Wales Guide*, *Coach Tours in North Wales*, *North Anglesey Guide*, and *Four Welsh Spas*. The latter particularly, which described spas in Central Wales, highlights how guides were carefully crafted to appeal to market segments; in this case, those looking to improve their health. In addition to information on

118. "Official Railway Guides," advertisement, *Cornubian and Redruth Times*, October 31, 1890, 8; "Official Railway Guides," editorial, *Salisbury and Winchester Journal*, August 24, 1895, 2; advertisement, *North Wales Times*, April 1897, 1.

119. Display advertisement: *Graphic*, August 5, 1905, 161; *Illustrated London News*, July 28, 1906, 138; *Manchester Guardian*, August 17, 1907, 7.

120. Display advertisement, *Daily Mail*, June 13, 1912, 1; "In the Dailies," *Advertising World*, July 1913, 24.

121. RAIL 410/215, Passenger Traffic Committee: August 11, 1909, Minute 10602; RAIL 410/601, Officers' Meetings Minute Book, July 13, 1909, Minute 42594, TNA.

122. Frontispiece to TNA, RAIL 410/2012, *Ireland for the Holidays*, 1909, TNA; London and North-Western Railway, "The George Eliot Country," <https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=wu.89099923567>.

123. "Railway and Other Notices and Publications," *Railway News*, September 15, 1906, 483. "What Our Railways Are Doing," *Railway Magazine*, October 1909, 349.



LNWR train services and fares, local attractions, hotels, and golfing links, it also contained a quote from *The Lancet* about spring waters' healing qualities, details of the different springs' mineral compositions, and that medical professionals directed their patients to the spas.<sup>124</sup> Celebrity patronage was also highlighted to increase the appeal to an aspirational middle class, the guide mentioning that Lord Lester and the late Sir Spence Wells had recently visited the spas at Llandrindod Wells.<sup>125</sup>

After the creation of the LNWR's Advertising Department, all existing guides were revised to enhance their impact on holiday-makers' choices.<sup>126</sup> In 1911 the North Wales guide was completely redesigned, rewritten by Frith, and retitled *Holidays in North Wales: For Health and Pleasure*. Previously, North Wales guides had been revised by simply adding more information. The 1905 guide contained detailed descriptions of the resorts: information on golf links, ticket prices, combined rail and road tours, and a map.<sup>127</sup> By 1909 details of train services and facilities had been added, as had a guide to Anglesey, and there were ads for hotels, restaurants, attractions, shops, and hydropathic baths.<sup>128</sup> In an evolution of practice, however, Frith's new guide moved away from simply telling potential customers what was on offer; instead, it created a vision of an environment that appealed to middle-class holidaymakers, which could be reached easily and in comfort by the LNWR. The 1905 and 1909 guides had simply described the delights of the different resorts, named in alphabetical order by place-name. *Holidays in North Wales*, by contrast, grouped similar attractions to more effectively appeal to holidaymakers with different interests, such as "The Golfer in North Wales," "Inland Resorts for Country Holidays," and "Relics of Feudalism." To appeal to families, there was a "chapter for the young folk," entitled "The Legends and Fairy Tales of North Wales." To heighten the emphasis on North Wales's heritage and beauty, details were included of "Illustrious Painters and Artists" who had worked there; notable tourists, such as Charles Dickens, who had visited; and royal events that had

124. *Minutes of evidence taken before the Department Committee*, 673 (referring to evidence given by Frank Ree, April 20, 1910, m.15849).

125. RAIL 410/1991, *Four Welsh Spas*, TNA.

126. XM 1213/237, *Report by the Welsh Coast Pioneer and Review for North Cambria*, undated (c. February 3, 1910), CRO.

127. London and North Western Railway, *Tourist Guide to North Wales*. (Note that this source is a guidebook, while a previous London and North Western Railway and the following source are Internet-only sources.)

128. London & North Western Railway, *Tourist Guide to North Wales, 1909*, <https://archive.org/details/touristguidetono00lond>.



occurred.<sup>129</sup> Moreover, the title *Holidays in North Wales: For Health and Pleasure* was similar to that of the NWAB's own handbook of 1910—a guide to the region's hotels, boarding houses, and attractions—titled *North Wales for Health and Pleasure*.<sup>130</sup> Thus, the guide repeated the central message all stakeholders were projecting.

### *Direct Selling*

The integration of marketing communications and tools was also apparent in the company's direct selling activities. From 1909 onward, the LNWR expanded the opportunities for potential customers to obtain travel literature and for company officials to sell tickets. The company expanded the number of its offices and agents in London from 96 to 145 outlets between 1908 and 1914, from where tourist tickets and guides could be obtained.<sup>131</sup> The railway industry's first general inquiry office was opened by the LNWR at Euston Station in 1910.<sup>132</sup> For those arriving in North Wales on holiday, the company opened kiosks and offices to provide information on "train services, connections, excursions etc."<sup>133</sup> In 1909 and 1910 the LNWR agreed to share offices with the North Wales Steamship Company at the Llandudno, Rhos, and Rhyl piers.<sup>134</sup> In 1912 and 1913 kiosks were placed with council support in prominent positions in Llandudno, Colwyn Bay, and Rhyl.<sup>135</sup> The sum result was that within the target markets and tourist districts, the LNWR's closer control of direct sales and travel product promotions afforded it more opportunities to shape holidaymakers' discretionary choices.

Another aspect of the LNWR's direct selling operation was regular attendance at exhibitions, usually in cooperation with its Scottish

129. Frith & London and North-Western Railway, *Holidays in North Wales*.

130. North Wales Advertising Board, *North Wales for Health and Pleasure*, 1910; "North Wales for Health and Pleasure," advertisement, *Belfast Telegraph*, April 8, 1910, 2.

131. RAIL 945/39, London & North Western Railway Public Timetables, July, August, September 1908; RAIL 945/45, London & North Western Railway Public Timetables, July, August, September 1914, TNA.

132. "What the Railways Are Doing: New Enquiry Office at Euston," *Railway Magazine*, December 1910, 526.

133. "New London and North-Western Enquiry Kiosk, Llandudno Promenade," *Railway News*, October 19, 1912, 909.

134. RAIL 410/601, Officers' Meetings Minute Book: June 15, 1909, Minute 42563; RAIL 410/602, Officers' Meetings Minute Book: June 14, 1910, Minute 42900, TNA.

135. RAIL 410/602, Officers' Meetings Minute Book: July 29, 1913, Minute 44133, TNA.

ally the Caledonian Railway.<sup>136</sup> The company had sent display stands to international exhibitions since 1893, when it sent a locomotive and carriage to the Chicago Exhibition.<sup>137</sup> However, it was the domestic exhibitions that afforded it the greatest opportunity to promote its services and destinations (Figure 2). The 1911 Scottish National Exhibition in Glasgow had 6.6 million visitors in 106 days; meanwhile, on September 12 alone, half a million visitors attended the 1908 Franco-British Exhibition.<sup>138</sup> Greenhalgh argued that after the 1880s, such great international exhibitions transitioned away from being solely educational to having a more populist tone, at which entertainment was a major, if not dominant, offering.<sup>139</sup> The company's stands therefore melded the selling of an overall message of quality destinations and services and appeals to different market segments with entertainment that kept exhibition-goers' attention. The stand at the Edinburgh National Scottish Exhibition of 1908 was typical. It contained models of a sleeping car, one of the company's steamships that operated from Holyhead, entire locomotives, photographic views of the company's tourist districts, and a bioscope machine that showed three-dimensional views of the same. The company also highlighted its history with a model of *Rocket* (a steam locomotive designed by Robert Stephenson);<sup>140</sup> other exhibitions displayed letters by Robert Stephenson and his father, George Stephenson, an engineer considered by many to be the father of the railways.<sup>141</sup> In later years, the LNWR asked the NWAB to supply framed views of North Wales for exhibitions.<sup>142</sup> Starting in 1907, the company also began including model railways supplied by Bassett-Lowke, a model engineering firm, which in return benefited from the favorable attention. Reflecting the purpose

136. The company attended the 1905 Engineering Trades Exhibition, the 1907 Dublin International Exhibition, the 1909 Imperial Exhibition at White City, and the 1913 Children's Welfare Exhibition at White City. "International Exhibition—Record Attendance," editorial, *Dublin Daily Express*, May 22, 1907, 6; "Railway Exhibits at the Edinburgh Exhibition," *Railway Magazine*, July 1908, 52; Cecil J. Allen, "The London & North Western's Model Railway at the Franco-British Exhibition," *Railway Magazine*, August 1908, 137–141; Lowko, "Railway Exhibits at the Imperial Exhibition," *Model Railways* 1, no. 8 (1909): 264. "Scottish National Exhibition," editorial, *The Scotsman*, September 5, 1911, 6; "A Popular Advertisement," *L&NWR Gazette*, February 1913, 58.

137. "Railway Advertising," *Railway Magazine*, September 1906, 178.

138. "Scottish National Exhibition," *The Scotsman*, September 5, 1911, 6; untitled editorial, *Exeter and Plymouth Gazette*, September 15, 1908, 5.

139. Greenhalgh, "Education, Entertainment and Politics," 84–86.

140. "Railway Exhibits at the Edinburgh Exhibition," *Railway Magazine*, July 1908, 52–53.

141. "Franco-British Exhibition," *Morning Post*, July 28, 1908, 3.

142. XM 1213/238, third annual report of the North Wales Advertising Board, 1912, 136, CRO.



Figure 2 London & North Western Railway Exhibit, Bingley Hall, Staffordshire, c.1907.

Reprinted with permission from the National Railway Museum/Science Museum Group.

of the stands generally, in 1913 *Railway News* described how the model railways attracted visitors' attention and afforded the company's agents an opportunity to discuss the company's offerings and to distribute literature.<sup>143</sup>

### Film

The LNWR also exploited new media to spread its message. The use of film for advertising has usually been considered an interwar development;<sup>144</sup> however, before 1914 the LNWR acknowledged the power it had to reach potential customers within its target market. Cinema attendance boomed immediately before 1914, and the number of venues of all types showing films increased from 2,450 in 1910 to 3,800 in 1914. National attendance in 1914 stood at seven to eight million people a week. Principally, though, because of its appeal among the working class, it had a reputation as a low-class form of entertainment.<sup>145</sup> Documentary filmmaker Charles Urban sought to change this by easing

143. "Exhibition at Birmingham," *Locomotive Magazine*, 1907, 92; Lowko, "Railway Exhibits at the Imperial Exhibition," *Model Railways* 1, no. 8 (1909): 264; "A Popular Advertisement," *L&NWR Gazette*, Feb 1913, 58; "The London and North-Western Railway at Olympia," *Railway News*, January 1913, 153.

144. Hawkins, "Marketing History in Britain," 324; Heller, "Corporate Brand Building," 204.

145. Hanson, *From Silent Screen to Multi-Screen*, 25, 47.

the disquiet middle-class individuals felt about the medium by turning it into an entertaining yet educational tool. His Charles Urban Trading Company (CUTC) distributed high-quality documentary films and films detailing newsworthy or sporting events. In 1903 he also showed films at Leicester Square's high-class Alhambra Theatre. Technological developments also were part of his efforts to change perceptions; for example, the Alhambra films were of microscopic subjects, a revelation at the time,<sup>146</sup> and in 1908 he developed Kinemacolor, an early color film process. The result was his celebrity and acceptance; indicative of this, by royal command he filmed the Delhi Durbar in 1911, which King George V attended.<sup>147</sup>

As part of his work, Urban engaged in sponsored filmmaking. Railways granted him facilities to film a subject, bolstering his film portfolio and in return they received free advertising.<sup>148</sup> In 1905 Urban approached the LNWR to produce a film of its locomotive works at Crewe. Subsequently, the company recognized the potential of this new medium to reach a large number of potential customers, especially given that Urban was attempting to broaden film's appeal to the middle class—the same group to which the LNWR was attempting to sell destination holidays. By 1907 the CUTC was issuing films “by courtesy of the LNWR” that were overt pieces of advertising, including *Bonnie Scotland*, *Beautiful Erin*, and *Picturesque North Wales*.<sup>149</sup>

Reflecting the Advertising Department's exertion of greater control over the LNWR's advertising output, from 1909 it began itself issuing the films on request to “theatres, picture palaces etc.” For a small fee, and to ensure that the show would go on, an operator would be provided if required.<sup>150</sup> Films were also shown at exhibitions, and in 1911 the LNWR built a purpose-built cinema at the Coronation Exhibition, at London's White City. To entice its millions of visitors, the theatre offered free admission (Figure 3).<sup>151</sup>

146. McKernan, “A Yank in Britain,” 75–76; Luke McKernan, “Charles Urban” website, [www.charlesurban.com/history\\_cutc.html](http://www.charlesurban.com/history_cutc.html).

147. “Mr. Charles Urban and L&NW Railway Bioscope Films,” *L&NWR Gazette*, January 1913, 21–22; “Kinemacolor at the Scala Theatre, *The Times*, March 30, 1911, 14.

148. McKernan. “A Yank in Britain,” 77.

149. Display advertisement, *The Era*, August 3, 1907, 27.

150. “Railway Enterprise,” *The Era*, July 10, 1909; “Lantern Lectures Free,” editorial, *Bedfordshire Times and Independent*, December 10, 1909, 7.

151. “What Our Railways Are Doing—LNWR Cinema Hall at Imperial International Exhibition,” *Railway Magazine*, July 1909, 81; “LNW Cinema at Coronation Exhibition at White City,” *Railway Magazine*, July 1911, 88; “Cinematograph Exhibition of the L. and N.W. Railway,” *Railway Times*, July 1, 1911.



Figure 3 The LNWR's purpose-built theatre, 1911 Coronation Exhibition, White City.

Reprinted with permission from the National Railway Museum/Science Museum Group.

The LNWR also commissioned Urban's new company, Kineto,<sup>152</sup> to expand the number of films available to appeal to a broader range of interests.<sup>153</sup> By 1913 thirteen films were available for hire, including *Dublin and the Wicklow Coast*; *Scenes in Shakespeare's, Franklin's and Washington's Countries*; *Scenes at Blackpool*, and, after consulting with the NWAB, more films of North Wales were made, such as *Holiday Haunts in North Wales*.<sup>154</sup> The films contained the messages and narratives that the company wanted to sell; a surviving film from 1912, *Glasgow and the Clyde Coast*, showed trains at speed ("Racing the Scotch Express"); the luncheon facilities onboard; Glasgow city center, Dumbarton Castle, and other towns along the coastline; and activities including boating, daytrips by steamer, families on the

152. McKernan, "Charles Urban" website.

153. "What the Companies Are Doing—LNWR Lantern Slides and Films," *Railway Magazine*, December 1911, 488.

154. XM 1213/237, North Wales Advertising Board Executive Committee Minutes, December 9, 1909; January 31, 1910; XM 1213/238, North Wales Advertising Board Executive Committee Board Minutes, February 2, 1913, 157; September 1, 1913, 187, CRO; "Mr. Charles Urban and L&NW Railway Bioscope Films," *L&NWR Gazette*, January 1913, 21–22.

beach, and entertainments on Rothsey Pier.<sup>155</sup> The films were repeating and reinforcing the positive service messages found in LNWR's guidebooks and highlighting destinations' varied delights. Precisely how successful the LNWR's films were as advertising is unclear, although the *L&NWR Gazette* commented that they were extremely popular and frequently were booked months in advance.<sup>156</sup>

### *Public Relations*

The LNWR also began nascent PR activities before 1914. Heller has recently argued that PR relates to three phenomena: "the management of relations with various groups of the external public, the institutional management of the media, and the protection and enhancement of corporate reputation."<sup>157</sup> The LNWR, at times with the NWAB's support, engaged in all of these to project and maintain a positive image of its services and destinations.

It began managing relationships with groups of potential customers before 1909, using canvassers to deliver publicity materials. In 1906, for example, canvassers were ordered to distribute *Four Welsh Spas* to hospitals, doctors, and nursing homes to ensure that it reached the target market. This was integrated with the distribution of book-marks promoting the guidebook to schools and libraries.<sup>158</sup> Indeed, over time, the LNWR distributed hundreds of bookmarks to educational facilities, helping to promote its various services, destinations, and guidebooks. These were apparently well received, "especially by public librarians."<sup>159</sup>

Seemingly, the company was one of the first organizations to understand how film might cultivate a more generalized positive service image. First, in 1907, it cooperated with Urban on a publicity stunt that benefitted the profile of both parties. After filming the Grand National, at Aintree (near Liverpool), Urban processed the film on a specially outfitted southbound train. At Euston Station, the film was rushed to a waiting motor vehicle, and then to his production facility

155. Scotland on Screen, "Glasgow and the Clyde Coast (clip 1): Holiday trip down the Clyde by train and then steamer," undated film, <https://scotlandonscreen.org.uk/browse-films/007-000-002-011-c>; "Glasgow and the Clyde Coast (clip 2): Holiday trip down the Clyde by train and then steamer," undated film, <https://scotlandonscreen.org.uk/browse-films/007-000-002-013-c>.

156. "Mr. Charles Urban and L&NW Railway Bioscope Films," *L&NWR Gazette* January 1913, 21–22.

157. Heller, "Foucault, Discourse," 653.

158. RAIL 410/723, Canvassers' Conference Minutes: March 20, 1906, Minute 3422, TNA.

159. Ibid., November 20, 1905, Minute 3391; March 20, 1906, Minute 3423; July 10, 1906, Minute 3447, TNA.



for reprinting. The film was shown in multiple London venues that evening, 7.5 hours ahead of Urban's competitors.<sup>160</sup> The LNWR also worked with Urban to create films of prestige events that projected a positive image of the company's services. In 1909 the first journey and arrival of the London to North Wales nonstop express train was filmed,<sup>161</sup> and in 1911 so was the five-thousandth locomotive to be manufactured by the Crewe locomotive works, in a film entitled *Building the Coronation Engine*.<sup>162</sup>

Attempts to generate favorable press coverage of the LNWR's offerings also began before 1909. For instance, in addition to distributing *Four Welsh Spas* to medical institutions, canvassers were ordered to distribute it to newspaper editors for review.<sup>163</sup> Starting in 1909, the LNWR, followed by the NWAB, began managing the press relationship more closely. On the first run of the London to North Wales express in 1909 and the observation car in 1911, Feiron was in attendance and spoke to journalists present.<sup>164</sup> Most notably, in mid-1914, the LNWR and NWAB arranged for two-dozen journalists from all over England to tour North Welsh resorts. They were met at Bangor by Mr. Frith and Mr. Davies, chairman of the NWAB Advertising subcommittee. Over the next few days, they visited the resorts and travelled to places not on the railway by motor services run by local operators.<sup>165</sup> The board organized stakeholders to support the venture, with representatives of councils and improvement associations meeting the party at different stops and hoteliers providing hospitality.<sup>166</sup> The press wrote

160. "How the London North-Western Assisted to Bioscope the Grand National," *Railway Magazine*, May 1907, 374–375; "The Grand National," *Sporting Times*, March 30, 1907, 7.

161. "Railway Enterprise," *The Era*, July 10, 1909; "Lantern Lectures Free," editorial, *Bedfordshire Times and Independent*, December 10, 1909, 7.

162. "What the Companies Are Doing—LNWR Lantern Slides and Films," *Railway Magazine*. "Mr. Charles Urban and L&NW Railway Bioscope Films," *L&NWR Gazette*, January 1913, 22.

163. RAIL 410/723, Canvassers' Conference Minutes: March 20, 1906, Minute 3422, TNA; untitled editorial, *Dundee Courier*, July 7, 1906, 7; "Four Welsh Spas," editorial, *Waterford Standard*, May 12, 1906, 3; "Local and District Intelligence," editorial, *Derby Daily Telegraph*, May 18, 1906, 2.

164. "The North Wales Express," editorial, *North Wales Weekly News*, July 9, 1909, 8; "The North Wales Express," editorial, *Carnarvon and Denbigh Herald and North and South Wales Independent*, July 9, 1909, 6; "The Observation Car—The London and North-Western Railway's Experiment," editorial, *Manchester Guardian*, August 30, 1911, 4.

165. XM 1213/238, North Wales Advertising Board, Advertising Subcommittee Minutes: March 23, 1914, Minute 210; fifth report of the North Wales Advertising Board, 1914 232, CRO.

166. "English Journalist's Tour," editorial, *Liverpool Daily Post*, April 14, 1914, 6; "English Journalists Tour," *Liverpool Echo*, April 14, 1914, 5; "Journalists at Criccieth," editorial, *Cambrian News and Merionethshire Standard*, April 17, 1914, 5.

favorably of the tour and extolled the various virtues of the region and the transport in it.<sup>167</sup> This tour was a prime example of what the LNWR's ambitions had achieved since 1909. The LNWR, NWAB, and stakeholders had cooperated to promote a vision of North Wales as an accessible region where the public could find health and pleasure.

## Impact

Measuring with complete accuracy the impact of the LNWR's attempts to develop the North Wales trade before 1914 is difficult, although some information is available. There seemed to be consensus that the LNWR and NWAB's advertising efforts positively generated interest in visiting and spending holidays in the region. In 1914, E. K. Oldman, the NWAB's secretary, stated that applications for literature from Britain and all over the world were "further proof (if such was needed) of the value of systematic and well-considered advertising."<sup>168</sup> Some evidence also indicates that between 1909 and 1914 this interest was translated into visits. Ree deemed LNWR's efforts in 1909 particularly successful, stating in February 1910 that the company "gave such advertisement and such a service to North Wales, a purely local district on their system, as to bring very numerous additional visitors into the district."<sup>169</sup> Significantly, the NWAB's five annual reports up to 1914 all recorded increased visitors to the region over each preceding year. While highlighting the positive outcomes from its own advertising, the board credited much of the success to the LNWR's efforts. Its 1914 report stated the "result of ... [the railway's] progressive and public spirited policy has been to secure an increasing quota of visitors for all the different resorts year after year."<sup>170</sup>

The result was positive for the LNWR's finances, too. Income from traffic to North Wales grew by £21,000 from 1908 to 1909, and there was with another increase of £8,700 in 1910.<sup>171</sup> In 1913 and 1914 Feiron wrote to the NWAB citing increased passenger numbers in the previous

167. "What North Wales Can Offer," editorial, *Belper News*, June 5, 1914, 3; XM 1213/238, fifth report of the North Wales Advertising Board, 1914 232, CRO.

168. Untitled editorial, *Berwickshire News and General Advertiser*, December 3, 1912, 4; untitled editorial, *Bexhill-on-Sea Observer*, November 2, 1912, 3; "The Man on the Spot—North Wales—E. K. Oldman," *Advertising World*, January 1914, 78–82.

169. *Minutes of evidence taken before the Department Committee*, 672–673 (referring to evidence given by Frank Ree, April 20, 1910, m. 15843–15851).

170. XM 1213/238, first through fifth annual reports of the North Wales Advertising Board: 1910, 34; 1911, 88; 1912, 136; 1913, 196; 1914, 232, CRO. No figures are given.

171. XM 1213/238, first annual report of the North Wales Advertising Board: 1910, 34.



years.<sup>172</sup> In 1911 the company's chairman, Gilbert Claughton, could thus claim that advertising expenditure was "entirely justified by results."<sup>173</sup> Indeed, the development of its marketing activities overall seemingly contributed to improving the company's fortunes, as dividends rose steadily from a low of 5.85 percent in 1903 to 6.6 percent in 1913 (five-year moving average).<sup>174</sup> In 1913 *Railway Magazine* identified what, and who, in its opinion was partially responsible for this: "Mr. Feiron may be heartily congratulated upon this splendid record of work, which has ... done as much as anything else to raise the earnings of the company to their present unrivalled level."<sup>175</sup>

## Conclusion

The LNWR's marketing of North Wales prior to 1914 was a significant factor in developing the region's tourist trade. The company's financial investment in advertising, creating a specialized Advertising Department, widening its sources of market intelligence, developing new services, and innovating or enhancing marketing communications promoted a vision to middle-class holidaymakers of an environment that would satisfy their diverse desires and that could be reached easily by high-quality rail services. As compared with other companies in the railway industry at the time, the LNWR was therefore broadly typical in how it sought to grow its share of the discretionary travel market.<sup>176</sup> What this article has importantly revealed is an early example of IMC in Britain, demonstrating the sophistication of the LNWR's marketing communications before 1914. By integrating its marketing communications, the LNWR moved consumers through different stages toward purchase in a manner similar to the buyer readiness stages. It raised interest in its destinations and services via PR and film; provided information through advertising, advertorials, and direct sales; and provided detailed travel literature that contained carefully crafted appeals to consumers' interests and desires to elicit a commitment to purchase. The result was a dynamic and impactful approach to marketing communications, similar to practices advocated in the modern marketing literature. Future research should therefore explore how

172. XM 1213/238, North Wales Advertising Board Executive Committee Board Minutes, March 31, 1913, 166, and February 27, 1914, 208, CRO.

173. RAIL 410/11, London & North Western Railway Court of Proprietors Meeting, August 17, 1911, TNA.

174. Calculated from Reed, *London & North Western Railway*, 230.

175. "Pertinent Paragraphs—LNWR Publicity Dept," *Railway Magazine*, May 1913, 427.

176. Shin, "Art of Advertising Railways," 197; Medcalf, "Rethinking Edwardian Advertising"; Jackson, *London's Metropolitan Railway*, 238–239.

common such sophisticated practices were before World War I, or whether this might be an isolated case.

This article has also expanded an understanding of British railway marketing before 1914 by demonstrating how cooperation with stakeholders benefitted the LNWR's publicity efforts. Stakeholders, including local newspapers, companies such as Bassett-Lowke, and individuals such as Charles Urban, benefitted from increased publicity or content. It was, however, the transport operators, small businesses, and resort authorities in North Wales that gained the most from this collaboration. By identifying the North Welsh resorts' difficulties in raising funds for advertising, and by initiating the creation of the NWAB as a partial solution, the LNWR created a partner that became a unifying force for stakeholders in the region that supported positive outcomes for all. Through the board, parties shared market intelligence and coordinated and harmonized promotional messages that delivered synergistic impacts on potential visitors' discretionary choices, and thus fostered the development of North Wales's tourist trade. This case study thus supports the premise of stakeholder theory. Understandings of internal business strategies and policies cannot sufficiently explain why some companies succeed but others fail. This article has established a well-rounded picture of why a region thrived as a tourist destination by analyzing how relationships between different stakeholders were forged, how they cooperated to achieve common objectives, and how this brought success to those involved and the region itself.

Nonetheless, what is presented here would benefit from comparative analyses of how the relationships between other railways, resort authorities, and stakeholders influenced their fortunes. The LNWR's relationship with the NWAB was broadly productive, but evidence suggests that similar dealings elsewhere were not. Mr. Jewell, the publicity manager of another major British railway, the Great Northern Railway, argued in 1914 that "in the majority of cases the man in whose hands the advertising is located knows little about the practical side of the work. A council can mar much of the good work that has gone before by insisting on inflicting an unattractive poster on the public."<sup>177</sup> E. A. Evans, of the Great Eastern Railway, argued that in many resorts they encountered "apathy and obstinacy," and that getting resort authorities to advertise was a "running fight."<sup>178</sup> It would be useful to know if such difficult relationships had implications for the success of tourist destinations.

177. "The Views of Leading Railway Companies," *Advertising World*, February 1914, 270–278.

178. *Ibid.*

This case study has also suggested a line of inquiry for the analysis of interwar railway marketing, which so far has largely focused on the actions of companies alone.<sup>179</sup> The 1921 Health Resorts and Watering Places Act, which allowed councils to levy 1d on the local rates for advertising, also enabled them to make advertising agreements with railways. These agreements were signed nationwide—the London, Midland & Scottish Railway, the LNWR's successor company—had 101 by 1928. As Ward has argued, though, while the railways remained dominant in resort advertising, the relationships with the authorities were difficult, with tensions arising over each party's responsibilities.<sup>180</sup> More detail would be welcome on how these relationships worked, the advertising and marketing strategies that were developed through them, what information stakeholders exchanged, and if these factors influenced resorts' success or failure.

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179. Divall, "Civilising Velocity"; Divall and Shin, "Cultures of Speed and Conservative Modernity"; Harrington, "Beyond the Bathing Belle"; Medcalf, "What to Wear and Where to Go"; Watts, "Evaluating British Railway Poster Advertising."

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