

FlixTrain launches on Hamburg – Köln route

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GERMANY: FlixBus's first FlixTrain open access passenger service left Hamburg's Altona station for Köln on the morning of March 23. Services run from Thursday to Tuesday, with market-based prices starting at a headline fare of €9.99.

FlixBus has launched FlixTrain to build on its FlixBus long-distance coach network, using a similar model where it handles development, sales and marketing while operations and fleet management are provided by specialist partners.



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FlixTrain is operated by BahnTouristikExpress, which owns the rolling stock which was used on the same route by Hamburg-Köln-Express until it suspended operation last year. The coaches, of older compartment types, have been rebranded in FlixTrain's bright green livery. Traction is provided by MRCE.

Secretary-General of the Allrail association of open access operators Nick Brooks was onboard the first train, and said Allrail 'very much welcomed' FlixTrain's entry into the market. 'FlixBus has proven that it can achieve attractive affordable mobility in the long-distance coach market', Brooks said. 'It provided new choices for the passenger. We hope that it can apply its skills to the long-distance rail market too, providing new affordable choices and raising the attractiveness of passenger rail. We are convinced that new entrant rail operators like FlixTrain will help grow the rail sector as a whole, both in Germany and across the EU.'

The Berlin – Stuttgart open access service which was launched by Locomore and is now operated by LEO Express in partnership with FlixBus is also to become part of the FlixTrain brand from April.

<http://www.railwaygazette.com/news/passenger/single-view/view/flixtrain-launches-on-hamburg-koeln-route.html>