



Elydium

One Timetable. One Truth.

A franchise agreement binds an authority and an operator legally. Elydium's Rob West argues the timetable acts as a three-way contract between the authority, the operator and the passenger.

Picture what keeps a bus network running – the crews, the depots, the vehicles, the technology, the branding. In 2026, data integration belongs on that list too; it has become part of the critical infrastructure powering every successful network.

Zoom in further and one type of data matters more than any other: the timetable. Why so much weight on one document? Because it's the foundation that everything else is built on. *"People often talk about 'singing from the same hymn sheet,'" says Rob West, Founder and CEO at Elydium. "For bus services, it's more about 'reading from the same timetable'."*

As new franchise deals are negotiated and attention turns to procurement, the timetable needs to sit front and centre, stitching together the authority, operator

and passenger. That dependency amounts to something more formal than a shared document, Rob asserts – it is, in effect, the contract between all three.

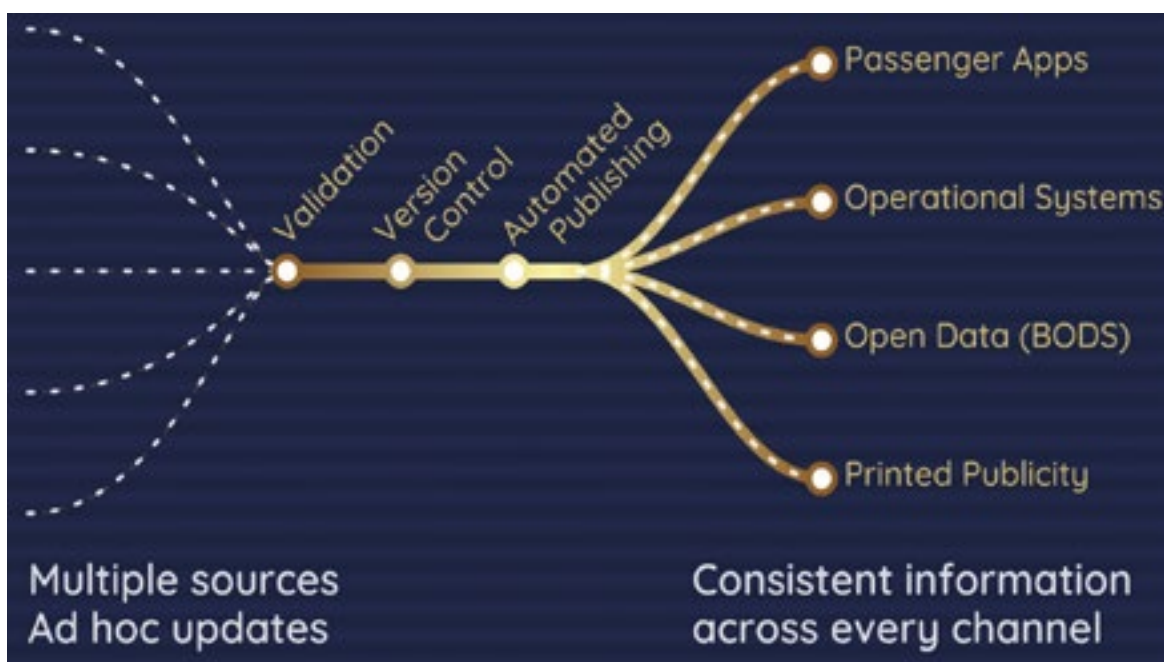
"Any authority that is procuring bus services – whether through franchising, BSIP funding or other contracts – needs to specify frequencies and locations served. A timetable is the best way to achieve this."

From the operator's perspective, a timetable is necessary to deliver the service. *"They need to understand the timetable in order to schedule buses and crew, have enough staff and vehicles available, plan fuelling and servicing, etc."*

Finally, there's the passenger, who needs a timetable to use the service. *"The timetable is also a contract with*



Elydium helps operators and authorities to navigate the network of data standards and dependencies



Elydium's platform improves data quality and ensures consistency between passenger-facing apps, operational systems and contracts

them," Rob points out. *"It's the timetable that underpins printed departure lists, journey planning apps and electronic passenger information displays."*

More Choice, But Less Consistency

While shared understanding of the timetable is crucial, it's also increasingly rare. In the past that mattered less, because a single supplier often provided all the software powering a network end to end, but that's no longer how the industry works.

The supplier landscape is far more fragmented today, says Rob: more choice for authorities, operators and passengers, but less consistency. As new digital systems for scheduling, ticketing, passenger information and open data are introduced, bespoke point-to-point interfaces are created. *"This leads to a spaghetti-like network of interconnecting data feeds"* Rob comments. *"In this environment, it's no wonder that data streams begin to diverge and the notion of a 'single source of truth' starts to evaporate."*

Elydium highlights three common procurement assumptions that don't hold up under scrutiny:

The first is that for any given digital system, incoming data will be clean, accurate and trustworthy. *"As a result, most systems are susceptible to 'garbage in – garbage out'."*

The second is that 'clean' means the same thing to

everyone. *"Different digital systems have different needs, a ticketing platform's idea of a 'clean' timetable is unlikely to be the same as a journey planner's or a publicity engine's"* says Rob.

The third is that standards compliance guarantees interoperability. *"It often doesn't: two suppliers can each follow the same standard's guidance correctly and still implement it in ways that don't quite line up,"* he notes.

From Chaos to Control

This is where Elydium can help. It provides a Timetable Management Platform – a data integration layer which acts as the thread that binds all the pages together to create the single source of timetable truth – replacing all of the bespoke point-to-point interfaces.

Founded in 2019 and self-funded, Elydium does not compete with vendors of the digital systems that it connects – which is what lets it sit in the middle of them. *"We're vendor agnostic,"* Rob says. *"Our job is to improve data quality and consistency across the entire ecosystem – ensuring that authorities, operators and passengers have a common understanding of the timetable."*

The platform performs three key functions: validation, version control and automated publishing.

Timetable files are ingested automatically or submitted through an online portal and checked against stand-



ards and profiles as well as any local rules built for a specific client. Anything that doesn't meet requirements is rejected and sent back before it can reach a journey planner, printed publicity or a contract. *"If the data coming in is ambiguous or non-compliant, the platform is going to say so, and tell you why," Rob says.*

Timetables also change constantly, and unevenly – publicity data might update once a year, operational data every week, even though both describe the same service. Elydium's platform tracks exactly where each version sits in time, whether it's an urgent overnight fix, a routine change or a short-lived special timetable, how it fits against what's already live and which downstream systems need to be updated.

Updates are published automatically, either immediately or on a schedule set by the client, and is reshaped into whatever format each downstream system needs, while ensuring that accuracy is preserved. *"Every digital system has its own requirements – most commonly in how it understands 'exceptional' dates such as public holidays, school terms and market days" explains Rob. "All of the standard data exchange formats have 'profiles' or 'extensions' that vary between suppliers. We have built quite a library of export rules so that we can ensure that everyone receives the timetable in a way they can understand."*



The timetable as a three-way contract

Consistency Pays Off

The result is consistency: every system working from the same timetable revision, at the same time. Without it, nobody can say for certain which system holds which version of a timetable, or from which date. Elydium facilitates the ability to report against data that authori-

ties, operators and passengers can all agree on.

For an authority, this is crucial. Franchise contracts run on service-level agreements (SLAs), and reporting is how those get enforced. If the parties cannot agree which version of the timetable was live on which date, holding an operator to account becomes guesswork rather than fact.

For a passenger, the win is more immediate: with mobile apps, electronic signs and printed publicity all working from the same source timetable, the passenger experience is improved.

One Document, Every Decision

The timetable is the constant, the single source of truth every other decision has to be checked against. Lose sight of that, and everything downstream drifts, however good the vehicles or the systems built around it.

That's the role [Elydium](#) plays, keeping the timetable consistent and trustworthy as it moves through validation, version control and automated publishing, so it can actually function as the [single source of truth](#) rather than just an aspiration. *"It's a crucial piece of the jigsaw... if the centre piece of your jigsaw is missing, you'll never have the full picture," Rob explains.*

Every physical or digital asset an authority or operator buys – whether it's a vehicle, a ticketing platform or a journey planner – still needs the timetable behind it. *"It's right that franchising authorities place a lot of emphasis on procuring vehicles, depots, digital systems and branding" admits Rob, "but it's equally important that they procure data integration too. It's a small price to pay to maximise the return on their big-ticket investments".* The timetable is the one document every party is reading from, whether they realise it or not, and having a consistent view of it is what makes everything built on top of it actually work.

To find out more about how Elydium can support your organisation [get in touch](#), or visit Stand 154 at [Euro Bus Expo](#), 3-5 November, Birmingham NEC.

