



Network 41: the right platform at the right time

The SBB has commissioned Network 41 to replace the visual display panels at Zurich main station. The new system will ensure travellers throughout the station can find the right departure times and platforms.

Anyone who uses public transport will have seen the digital display panels in SBB stations. They provide departure times and platforms for departing trains plus additional information. The old display panels in Zurich main station are no longer fit for purpose and need to be replaced. Network 41 has been mandated by SBB Region East to assume the overall management and electrical planning for this major project.

Coordination between stakeholder groups

“We have to replace over 80 display panels”, says Gregor Felder, project coordinator for electrical planning at Network 41. We have to build new mounting panels for some of them and we’ll put the rest up on the walls. Besides dismantling the

old monitors and putting up the new ones, Network 41 will plan and coordinate the exchanging of the hardware and replacement of the current copper cables by fibre optic cable for the supply line. This will ensure secure forwarding of the data from the central station depository to the monitors.

The three-person Network 41 project team has put together the installation schedule, which will now be reviewed by the client. The project does not pose any major problems from a purely technical and practical perspective, however it is not a conventional proposition. As project coordinator Gregor Felder points out: "Zurich main station is a very sensitive location with large visitor streams and specific processes." As a result, the project has a relatively large number of stakeholder groups: besides the client, there is the Change Team that is involved in all structural amendments in the station area, the station manager and the station architect. As overly lengthy outages are not acceptable, good cooperation with the technicians and manual workers is a priority. There is also the Canton Zurich Blindenverein (Association for the Blind), as the new display panels must not disadvantage the visually impaired.

Another special feature of the project: every location has its own specific features, meaning we have 80 individual plans, some of which need other participants, such as structural engineers, glaziers or tenants.

Implementation must be planned

These challenges make precise planning all the more important. The deployment of manual workers needs to be closely coordinated. A logistics concept will ensure that the right material arrives at the right place at the right time. Intervention applications must be issued plus access requests for the requisite rooms behind the scenes, structural calculations are also required for the construction site.

Once the construction programme has been approved, Network 41 will request offers for the works and organise the coordination with electricians, metalworkers, architects, tilers and materials suppliers until the SBB TC connects the servers.

Work will start in August 2019 and is expected to take one to two days per location. Most of the work will be at night to minimise disruption. The work is scheduled for completion by December 2019, followed by the acceptance inspection, the safety verification and handover to the SBB.



Gregor Felder

Project coordinator electrical engineering at Network 41

"A project at such a location as Zurich main station mainly requires good organisation and coordination due to the many stakeholder groups and large pedestrian flows."