THE FUTURE OF RAIL MANIFESTO

The five pillars of customer experience modern rail depends on.

SILVERRAIL

Welcome to the worst-kept secret in the travel industry.

# RAIL IS ABOUT TO DOMINATE SHORT AND MEDIUM HAUL TRAVEL.

If you've been in and around travel, you've seen the signs…

High-speed rail is changing the game, inspiring more people to travel greater distances more often than ever before.

In its first year alone, high-speed rail in the Barcelona-Madrid corridor gained 1,380,000 new passengers – while air lost 800,000 passengers.

+ 1,380,000 PASSENGERS

− 800,000 PASSENGERS
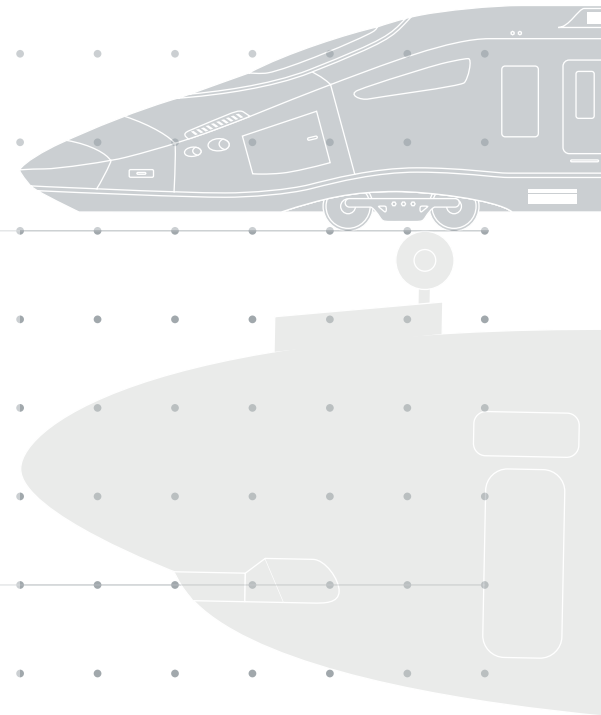
Continental deregulation is bringing private players into the train market for the first time, driving prices down and quality of experience up.

New entrants in countries like Sweden, Italy, Japan and the United Kingdom have blown their markets wide open with a renewed sense of competition and innovation.

+ QUALITY

SWEDEN

UNITED KINGDOM

JAPAN

FRANCE

ITALY

GERMANY

− PRICE

The internationalisation of rail is bringing whole countries closer together and spurring on a new wave of international travel.

EUROSTAR NOW DOMINATES THE CROSS-CHANNEL ROUTE

LONDON

PARIS

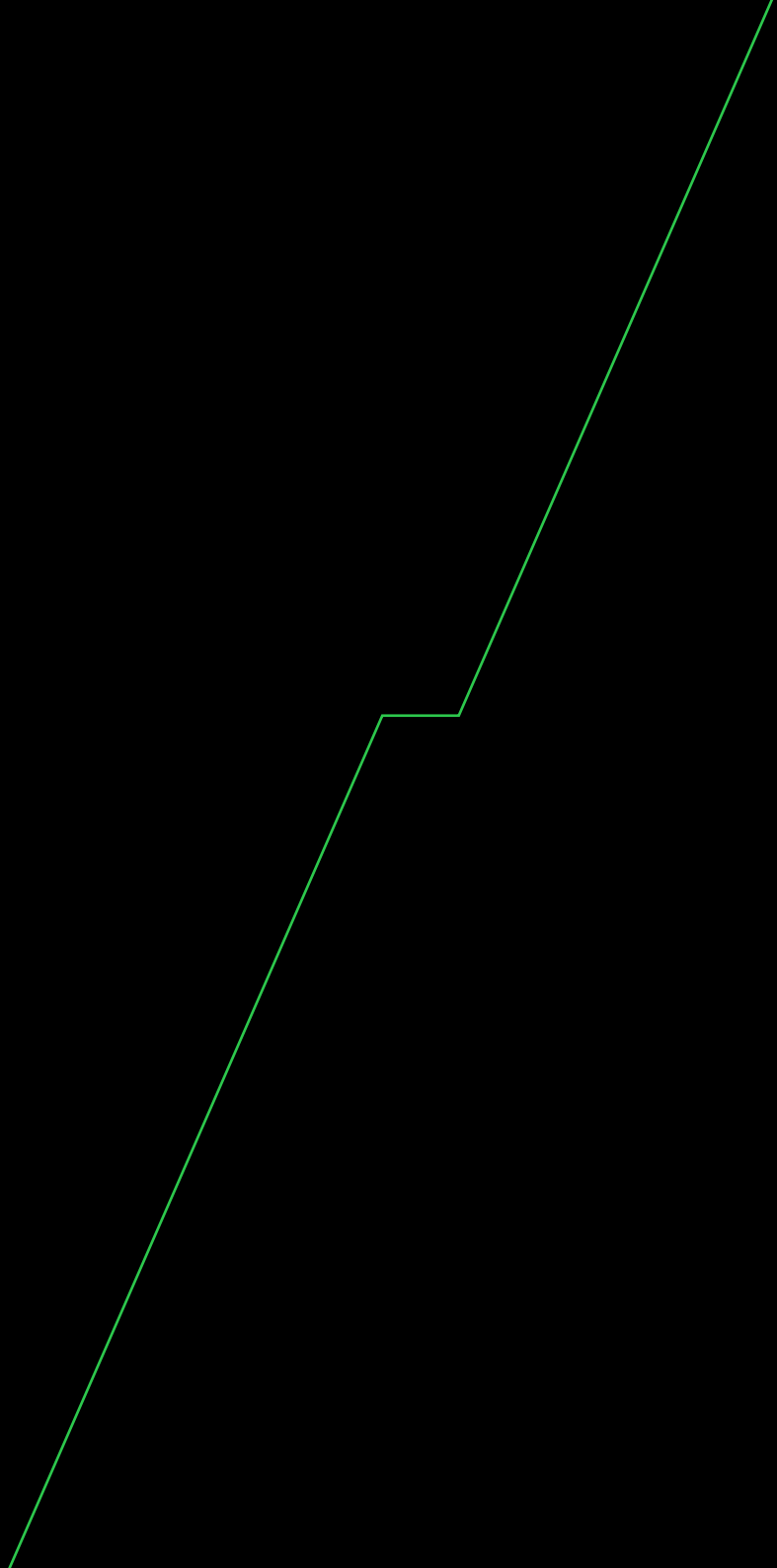Eurostar now dominates the cross-channel route, carrying more passengers than all competing airlines combined.
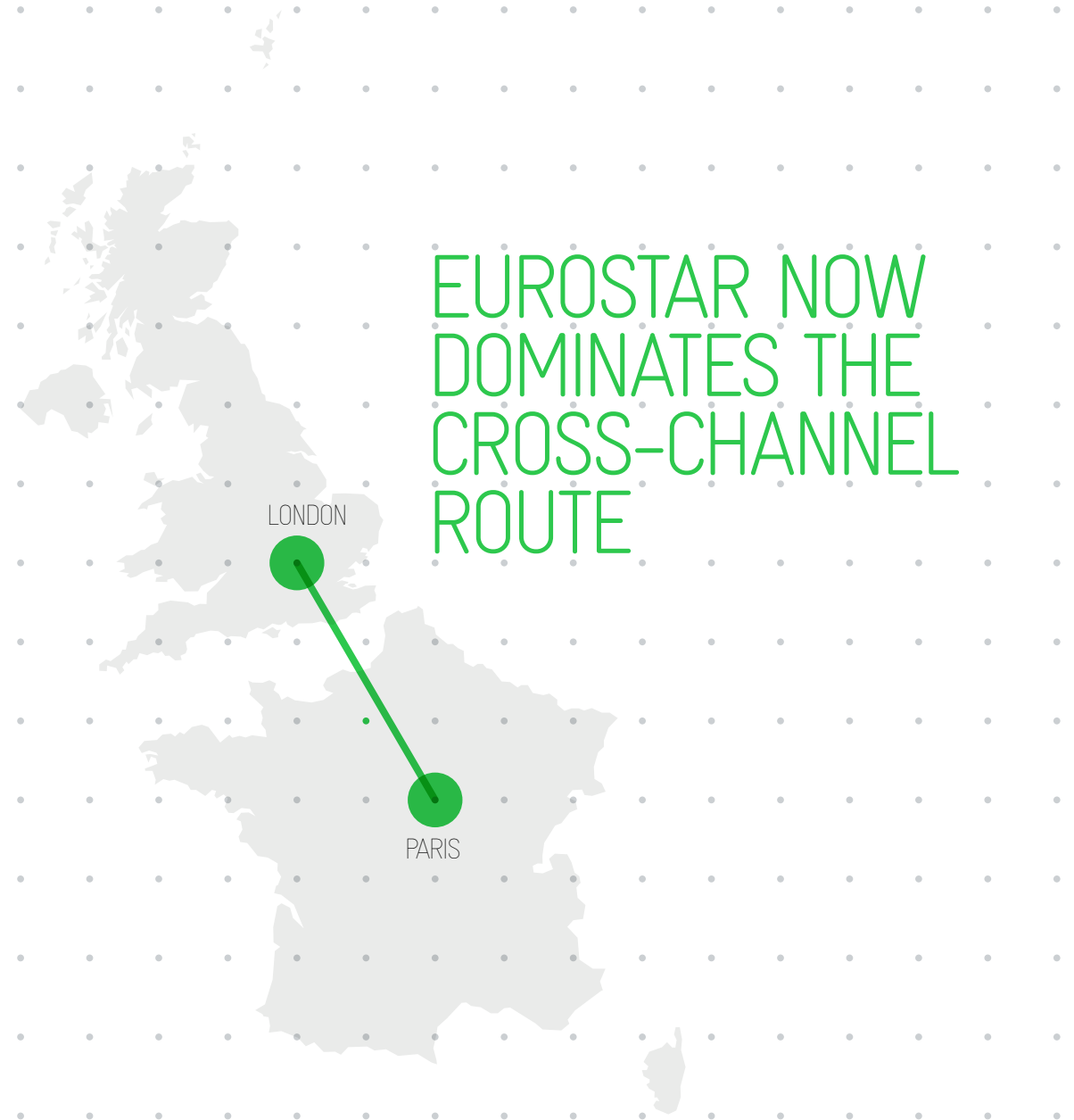
All of this means that rail is now primed to dominate short and medium haul travel as the mode of choice for businesses and consumers.

This is
the rise
of rail.
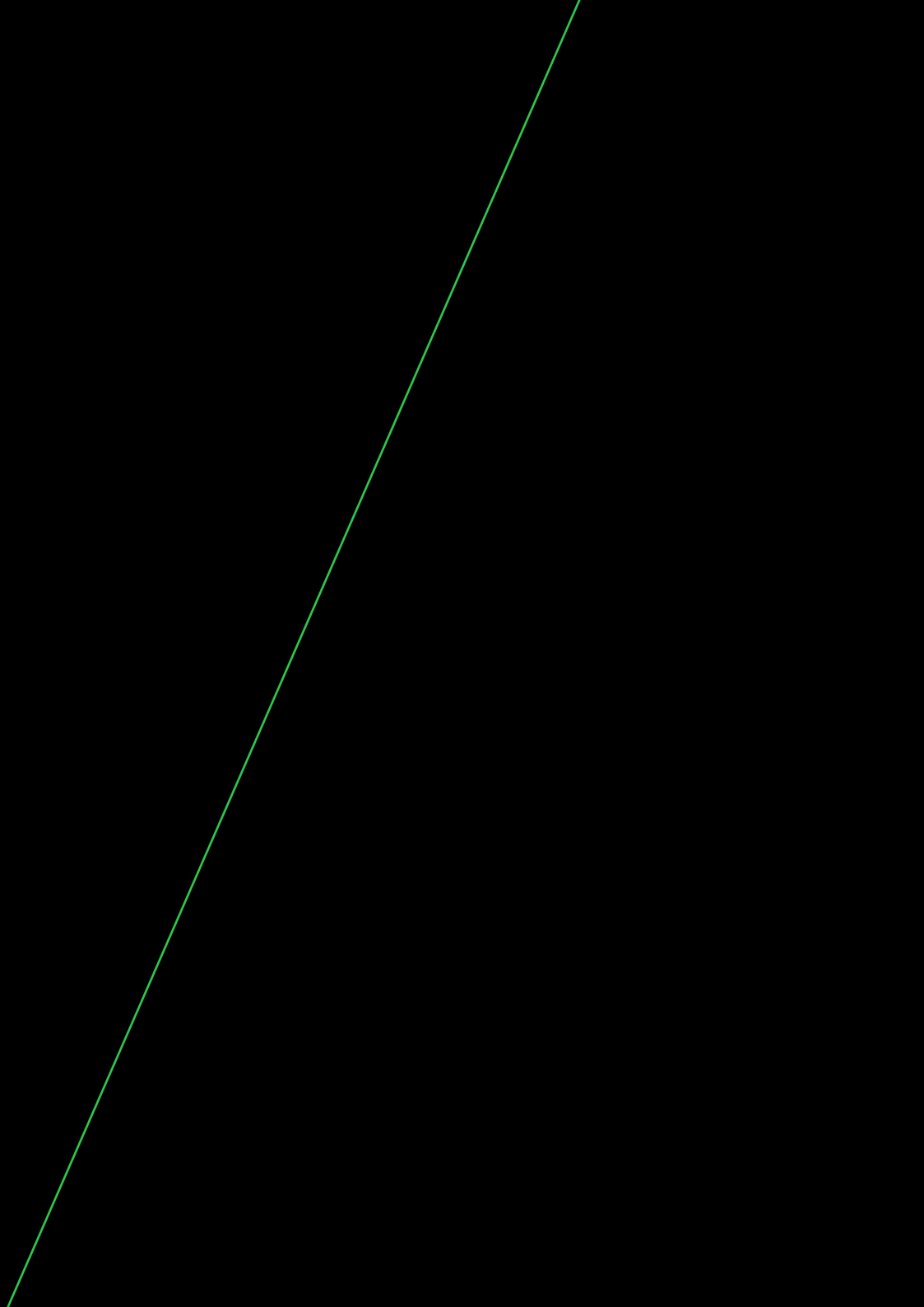
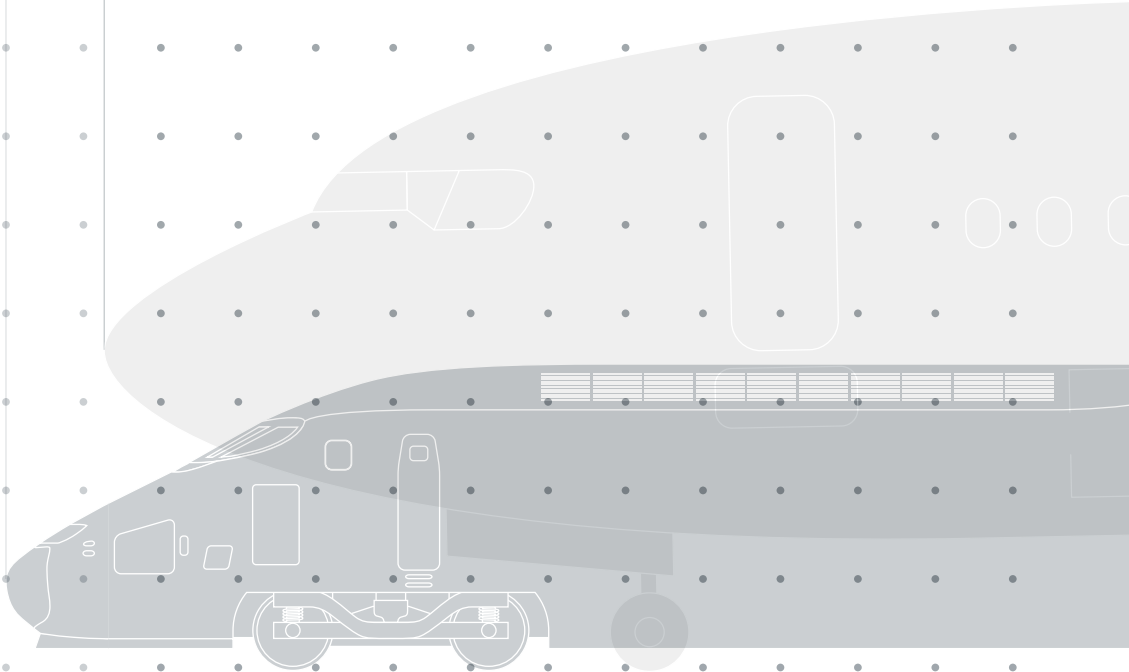# But there's just one small hitch.

Even though trains are faster than flights,

PARIS
LONDON

12% FASTER

In Europe, passengers take 12% longer to get from city centre to city centre when they travel by plane.

Even though trains are cheaper than flights,

€/$

222% CHEAPER

Across some of the most popular routes in North America and Europe, trains were found to be 222% cheaper.

Even though there are way more trains than there are flights,

50   0

33 MORE VIRGIN TRAINS THAN VIRGIN PLANES

On weekdays in the UK, travellers between London and Manchester can choose from 47 Virgin Trains – or just 14 Virgin Atlantic flights.
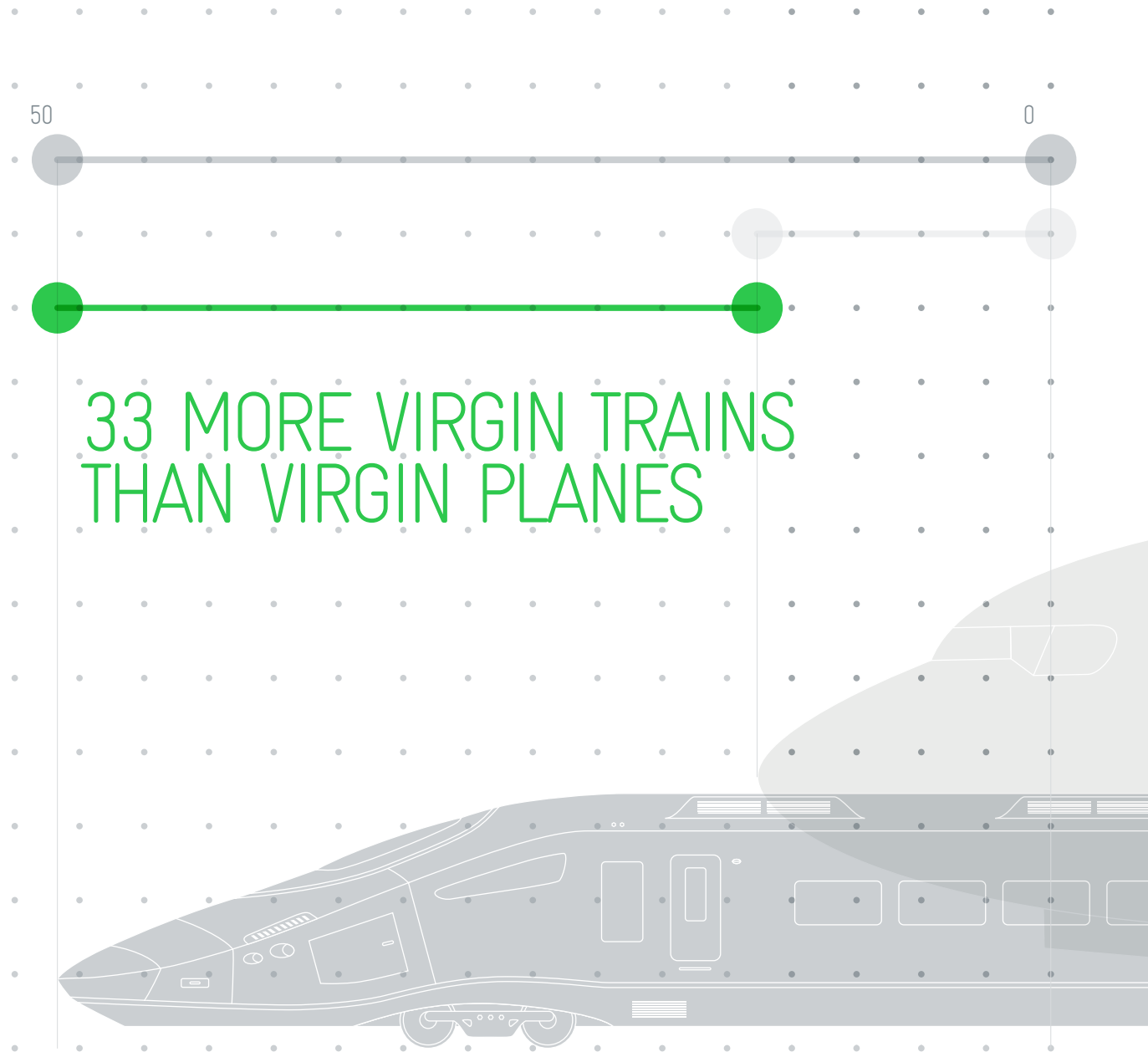
Even though trains are just plain better for the environment,

A train between London and Glasgow gives off just 25% of the CO2 emissions that would come from an equivalent flight or car ride.
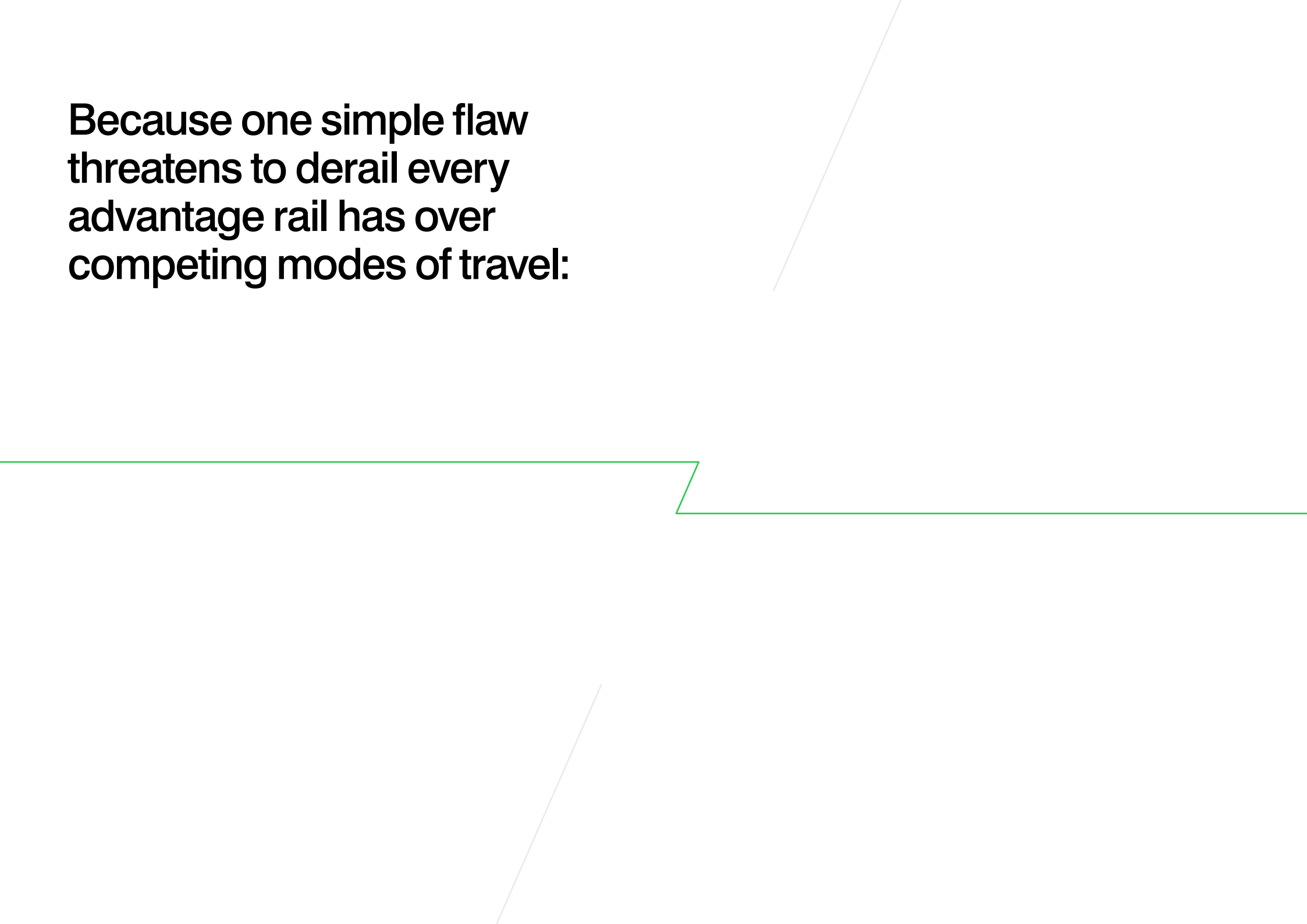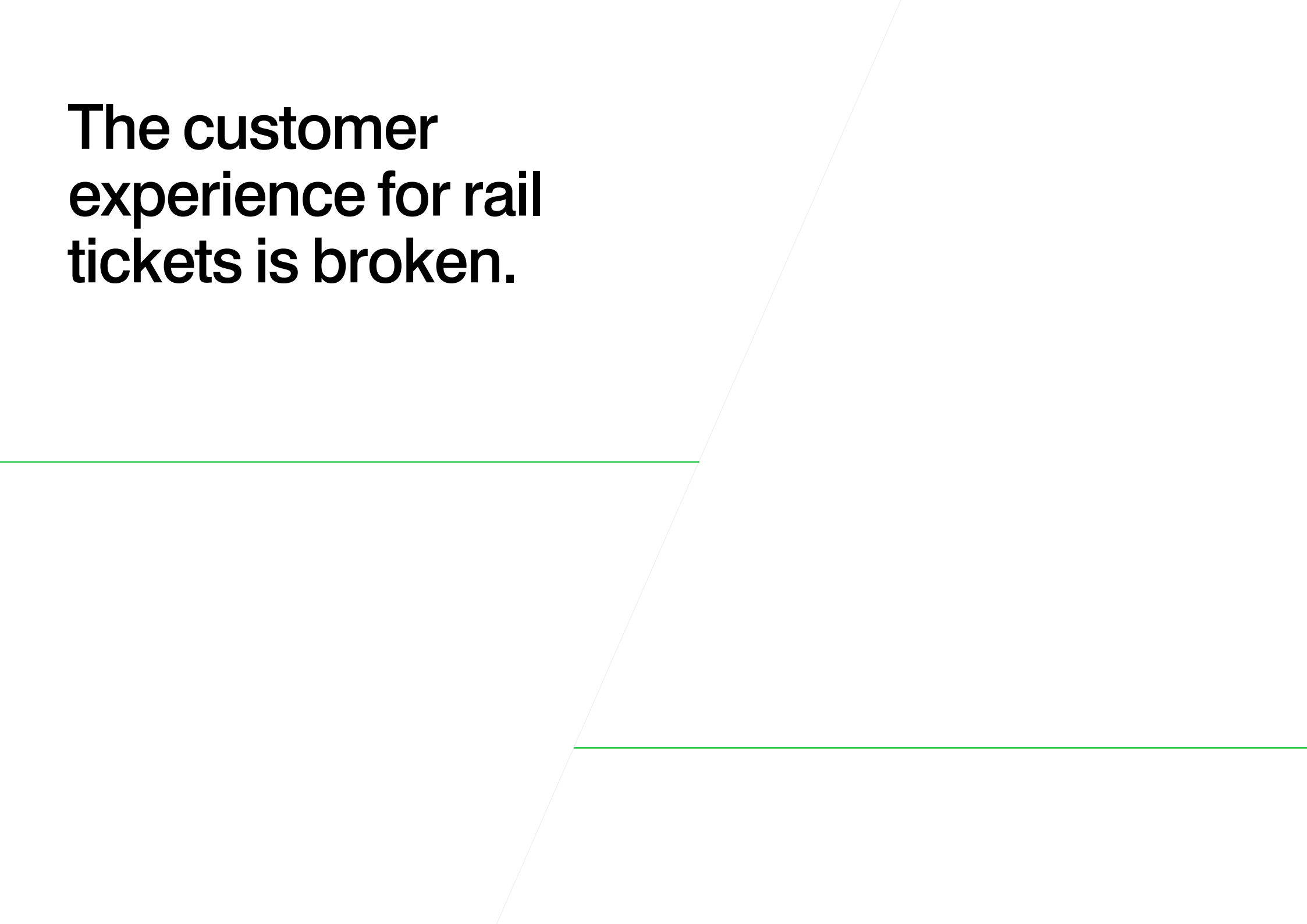
25%
OF THE CO$_2$
EMISSIONS

And even though the combined benefits of trains represent one of the most important opportunities for corporate travel management today

NONE OF THIS WILL MATTER.

Because one simple flaw
threatens to derail every
advantage rail has over
competing modes of travel:

The customer experience for rail tickets is broken.

Rail travel data is a fragmented, siloed, duplicated, disorganised, inconvenient and expensive mess.

Travel managers and distributors have to rely on massive, unwieldy, offline operations that cost them more than the travel content they're booking is worth.

Companies and consumers have to pay
the many penalties that come with the
painfully slow, manual, hard-to-scale
processes needed to plan, book and
manage rail journeys.

TIME

One thing is clear: until we figure out how to make booking simpler and more convenient than air, rail is going to be stuck in a sorry rut.
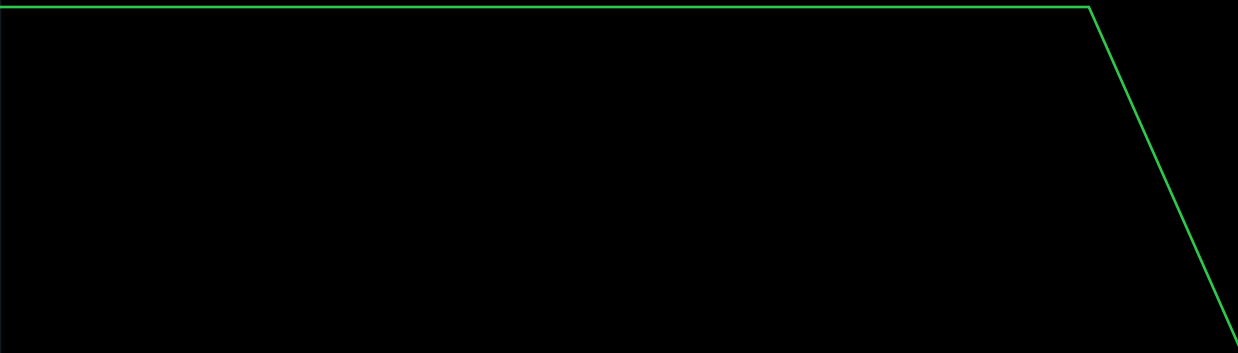
When a market expands, the best customer experience wins.

So as long as rail has to rely on outdated, expensive and impossible-to-scale systems and processes to discover and distribute rail tickets, the massive opportunity facing the entire industry is going to remain just out of reach.

Travel managers and distributors will be forced to give their customers a slow, expensive booking experience.

And rail carriers will struggle to serve the massive amounts of traffic coming their way with the old-school technology stacks that have held them back for so long.
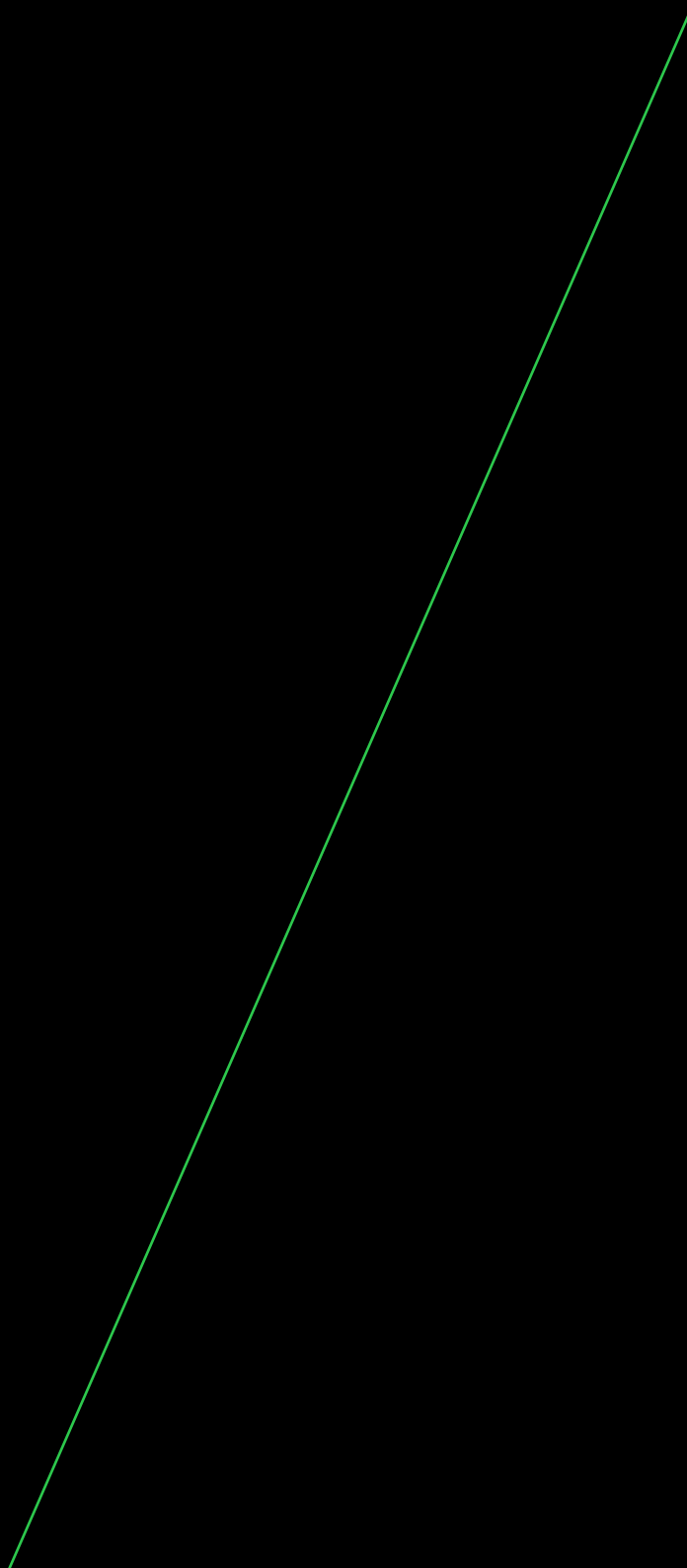
In short, the fastest, most cost-efficient, sustainable and convenient way to travel is stuck with the slowest, most expensive, wasteful and inconvenient way to book.

This is the single barrier preventing the glorious renaissance of rail.
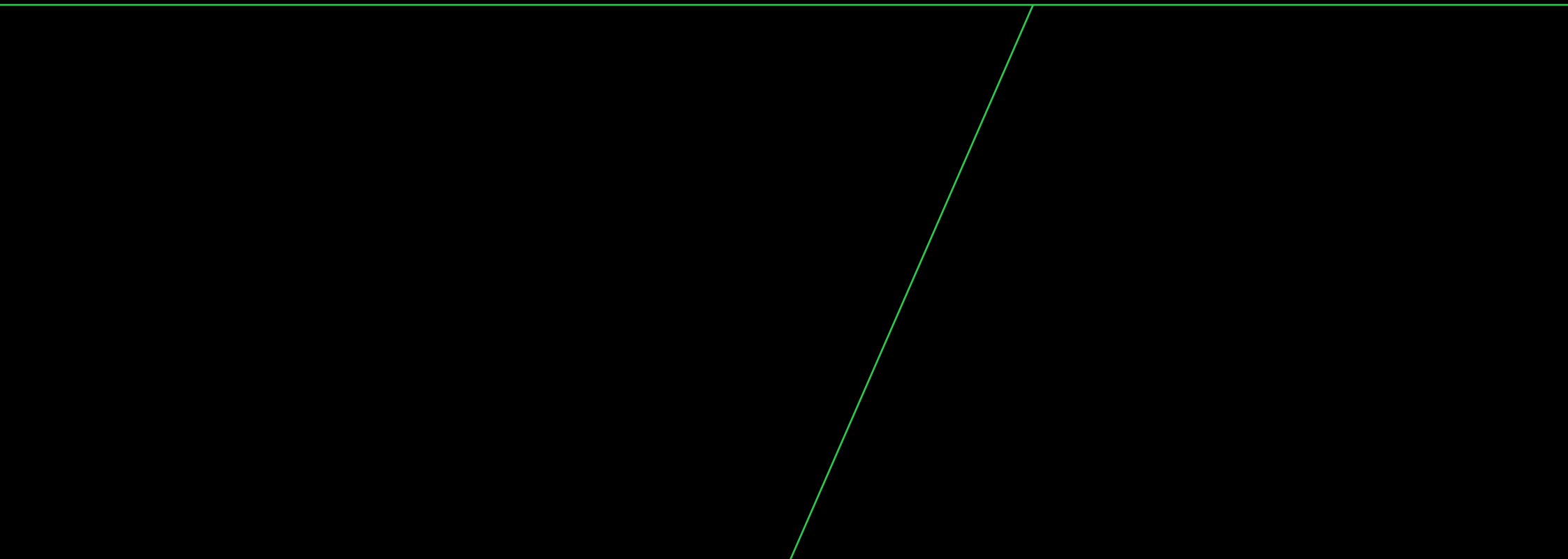
Fortunately, it's a barrier
that can be overcome.

If we can unite around a new set of standards for the simple, smooth and scalable customer experience the future of rail needs.

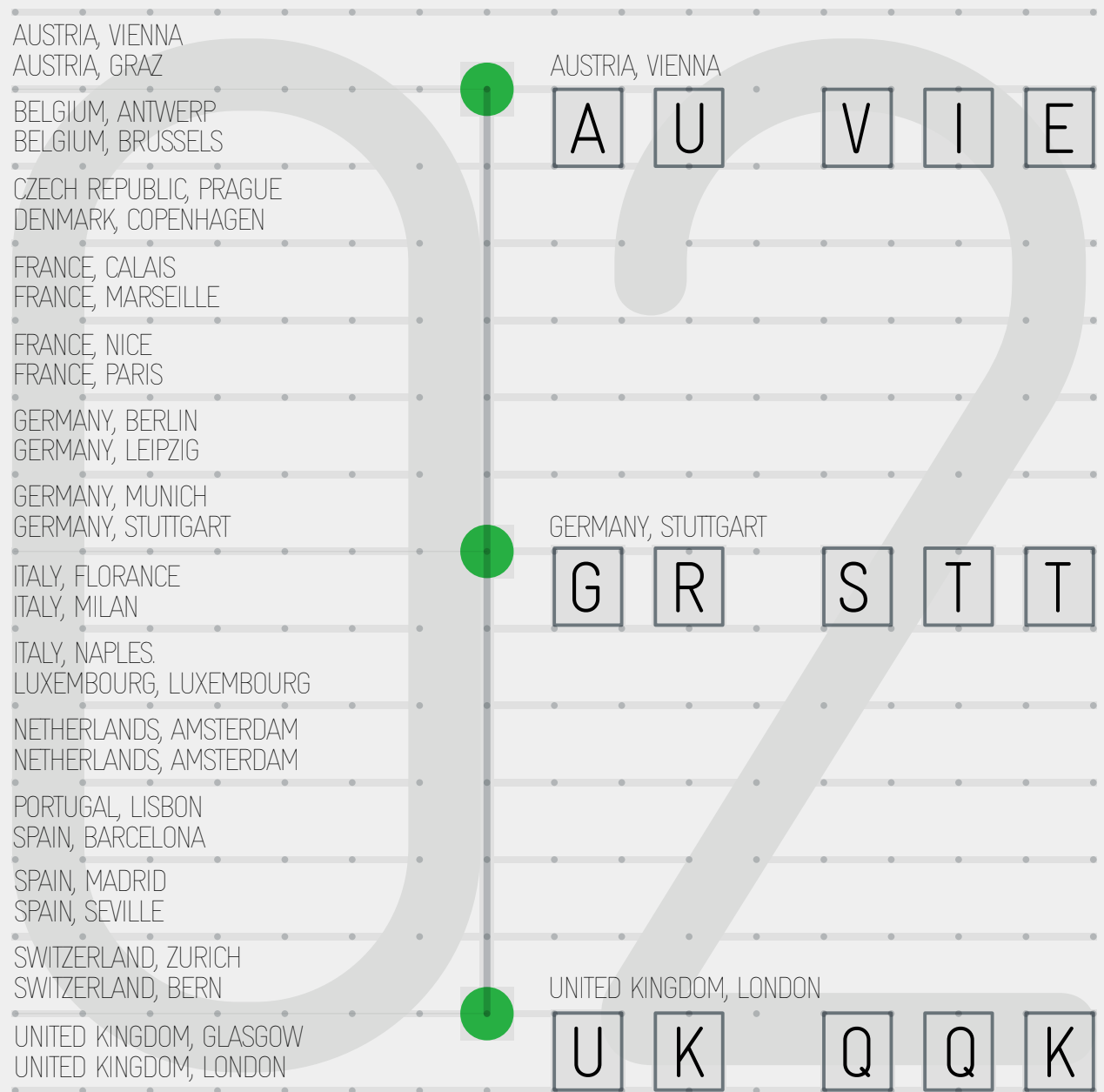# The new customer experience for rail depends on five things:

A unified code structure for all train stations

So that every station name can be accessed and managed consistently – without duplication and redundancy – using a common language.

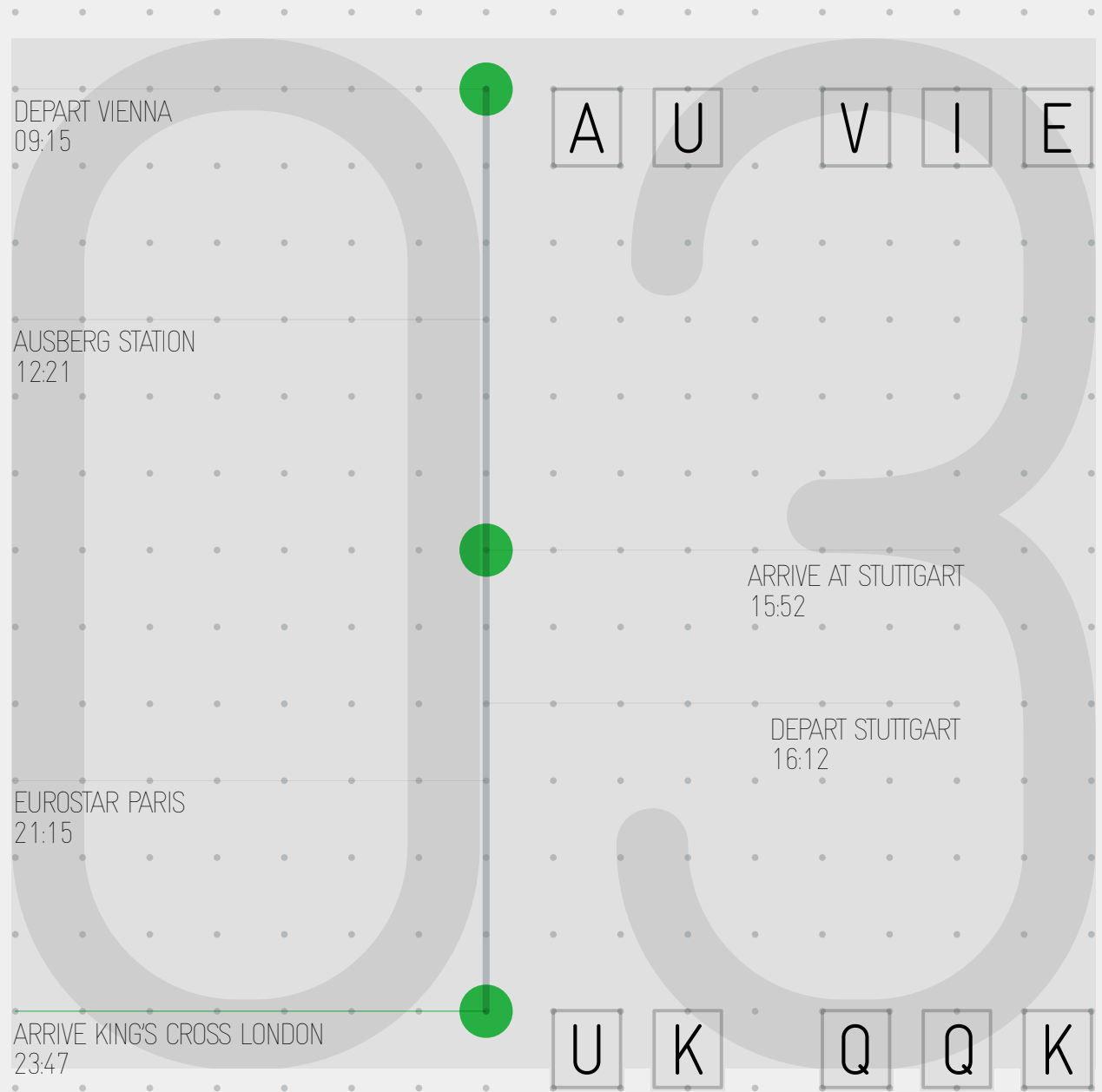KING'S CROSS
UNITED KINGDOM

G B Q Q K
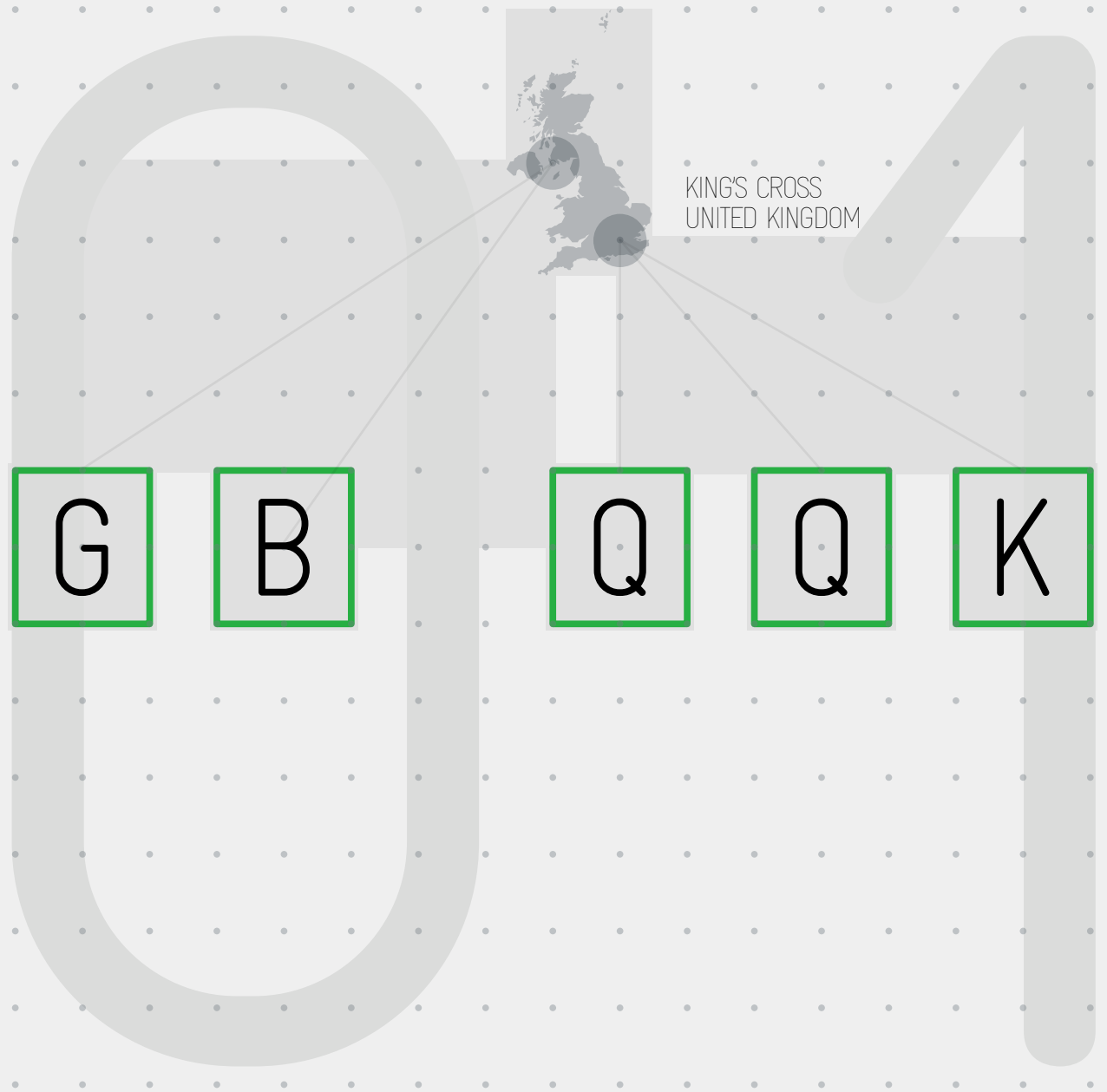
A common method for indexing journeys

So that journeys can be planned from any station to any other station, while accounting for the millions of permutations and options in between.

AUSTRIA, VIENNA
AUSTRIA, GRAZ

BELGIUM, ANTWERP
BELGIUM, BRUSSELS

CZECH REPUBLIC, PRAGUE
DENMARK, COPENHAGEN

FRANCE, CALAIS
FRANCE, MARSEILLE

FRANCE, NICE
FRANCE, PARIS

GERMANY, BERLIN
GERMANY, LEIPZIG

GERMANY, MUNICH
GERMANY, STUTTGART

ITALY, FLORANCE
ITALY, MILAN

ITALY, NAPLES.
LUXEMBOURG, LUXEMBOURG

NETHERLANDS, AMSTERDAM
NETHERLANDS, AMSTERDAM

PORTUGAL, LISBON
SPAIN, BARCELONA

SPAIN, MADRID
SPAIN, SEVILLE

SWITZERLAND, ZURICH
SWITZERLAND, BERN

UNITED KINGDOM, GLASGOW
UNITED KINGDOM, LONDON

AUSTRIA, VIENNA

A U   V I E

GERMANY, STUTTGART

G R   S T T

UNITED KINGDOM, LONDON

U K   Q Q K

A transparent, compliant approach to traveller and journey data

So that customer data and relationships can be managed with granularity, precision and responsibility.

DEPART VIENNA
09:15

A U   V I E

AUSBERG STATION
12:21

ARRIVE AT STUTTGART
15:52

DEPART STUTTGART
16:12

EUROSTAR PARIS
21:15

ARRIVE KING'S CROSS LONDON
23:47

U K   Q Q K

A modern infrastructure for real-time booking

So that the industry can begin to process transactions in a way that offers real-time routing and pricing options to travellers.

PADERBORN

PADINA

PA |

PARIS

PALI

PATROS
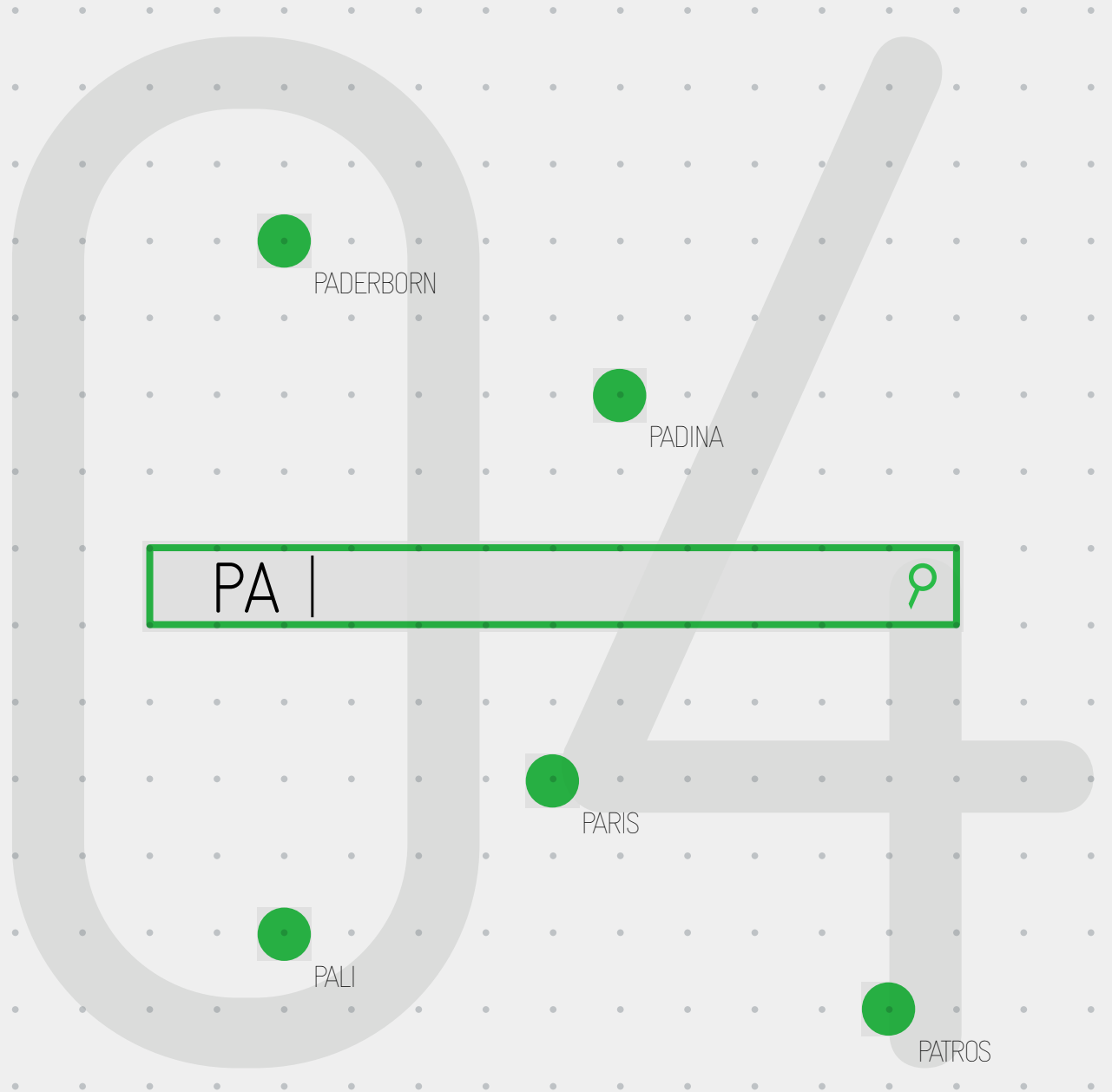
A seamless and convenient solution for ticketing

So that a customer can get a single ticket for their entire journey, regardless of how many carriers are delivering the experience; regardless of whether that ticket is paper or electronic.
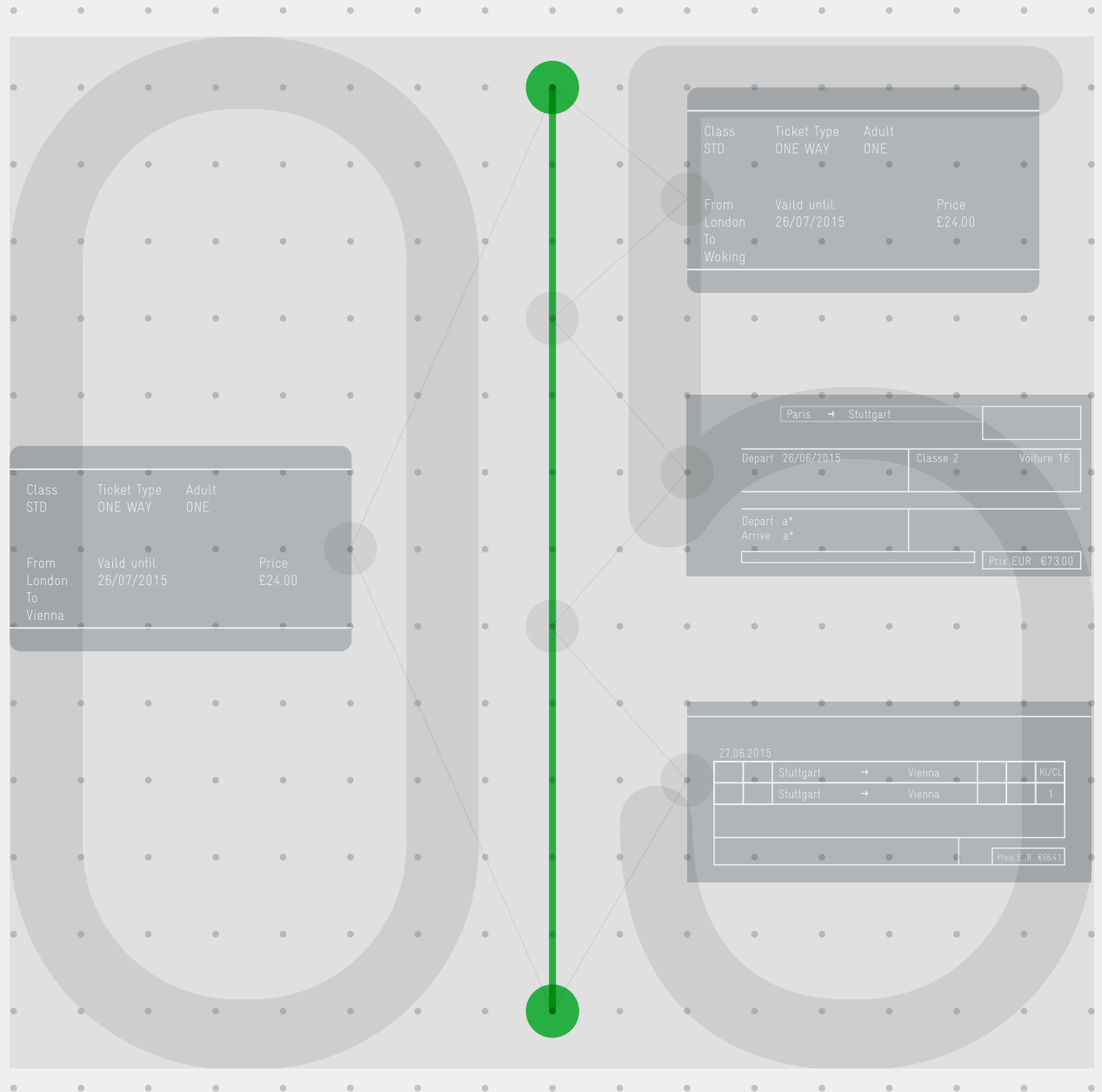
If these criteria sound familiar to you, it's because they are.

They're the same standards pioneered by organisations like IATA and Global Distribution Systems like Sabre, when they successfully blew the market wide open for airlines around the world.

It's because of these standards that air travel has become available, affordable and accessible to millions of travellers around the world.

AVAILABLE

AFFORDABLE

ACCESSIBLE

Now it's time to apply those standards to make the speed, convenience, cost-effectiveness and sustainability of rail a viable option for travellers today.

SPEED
CONVENIENCE
SUSTAINABILITY

Make no mistake – a few pretty websites will not be enough to make rail travel available, affordable and accessible to international travellers.

SPEED

CONVENIENCE

SUSTAINABILITY

This massive opportunity demands a fundamental re-engineering of the underlying standards and structures that drive customer experience.

If, as an industry, we can do this, a lot of great things become possible.

For the first time, travel management companies can give their travellers the choice to travel faster, cheaper, better, safer and cleaner.

Without sacrificing their margins for doing so.

And for the first time, rail carriers can scale their booking operations and meet the demand of customers and partners from around the world.
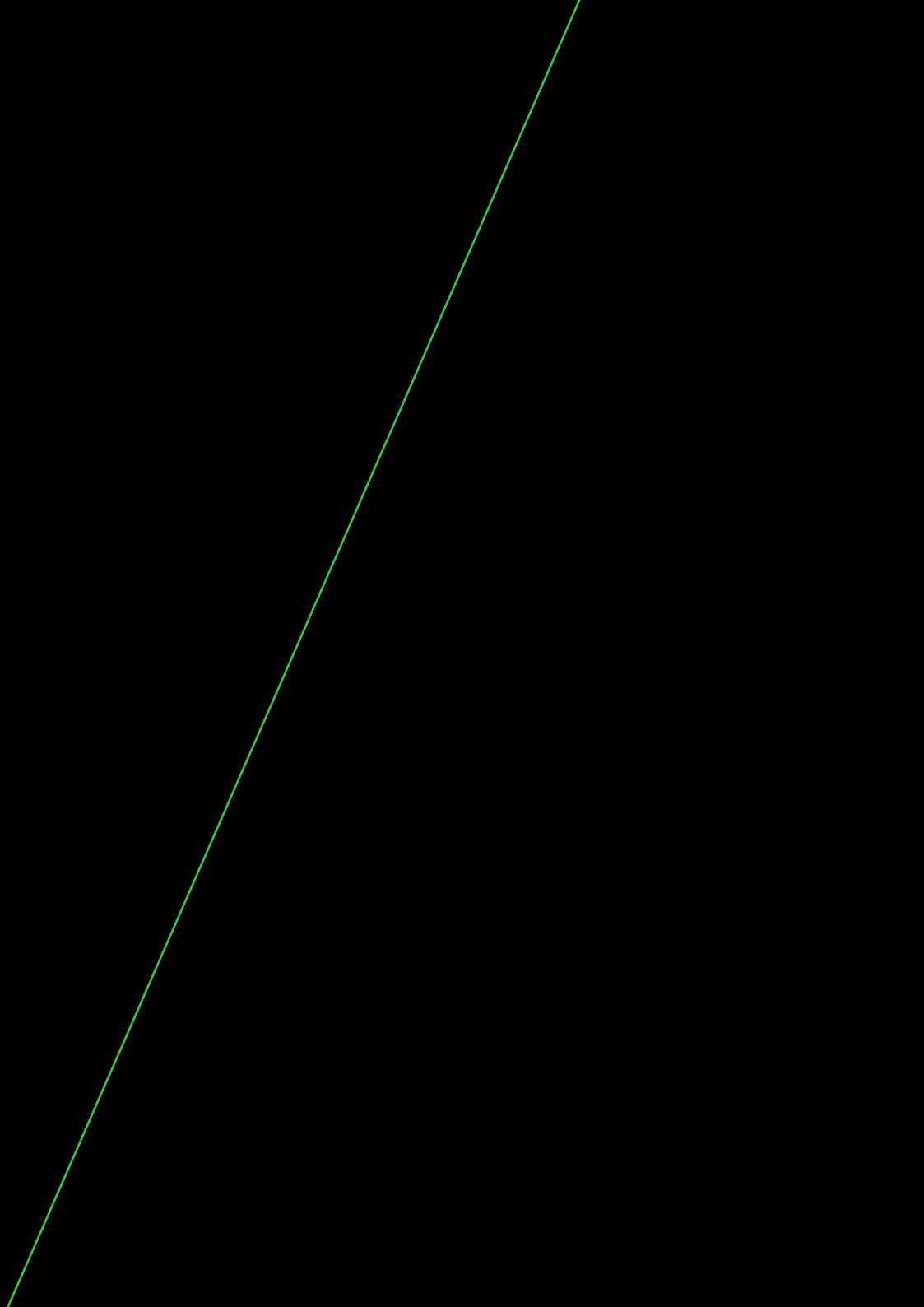
Without having to invest billions to do it.
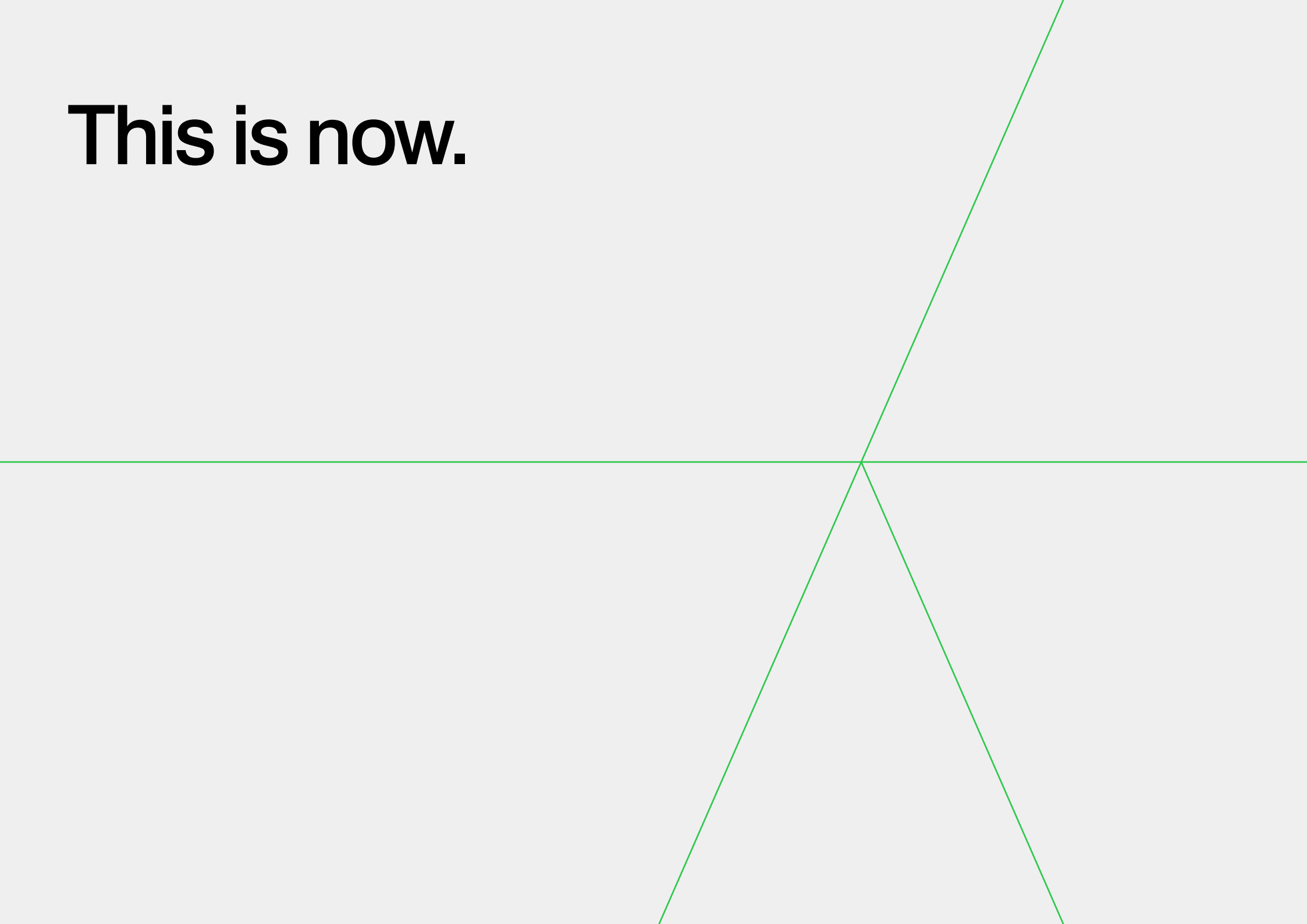
THIS IS THE OPPORTUNITY.

To remodel the ecosystem
of travel distributors and
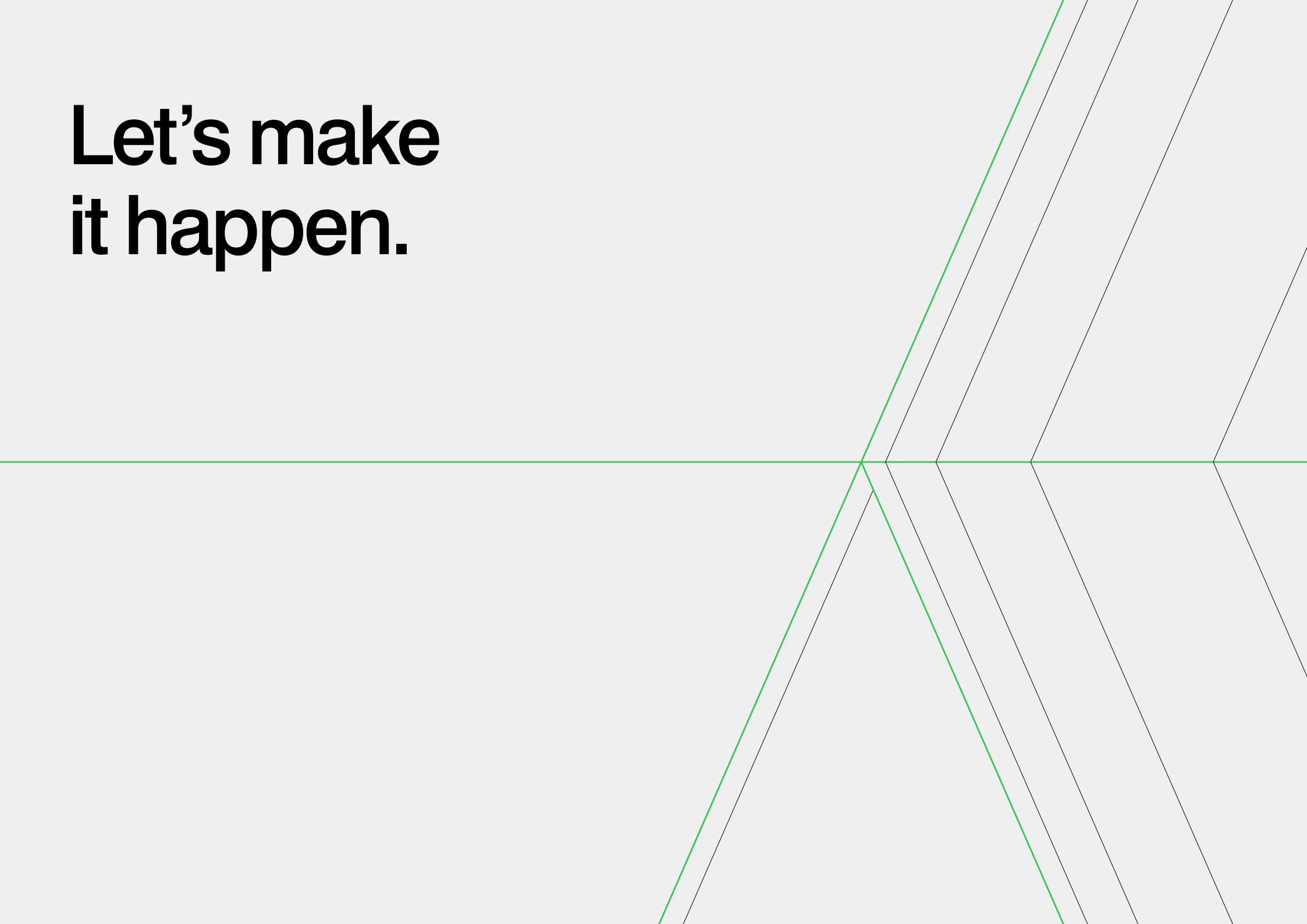rail carriers so, together,
we can spearhead
the renaissance of rail.

This is
the rise
of rail.

This is now.

Let's make
it happen.

We're SilverRail. And we're
uniting the ecosystem of rail
carriers and travel distributors
around the world's most
comprehensive Silver Search
and managed platform
for rail content.

We exist to fuel the renaissance
of rail.

If you want to see that happen,
we should talk.

SILVERRAIL