

## WHSmith opens curi.o.city in Belfast City Airport



WHSmith, the leading global travel retailer, has officially opened curi.o.city, its unique specialty retail format, in Belfast City Airport.

Curi.o.city offers today's travelling customers a high-quality range of gifts, stationery and souvenirs, categories where there is high customer demand, as well as locally sourced products. In the new Belfast City Airport store this includes products like a handmade miniature wooden model of the iconic Samson and Goliath gantry cranes that dominate the Belfast skyline from local family run business Cowfield Design, which is expected to be a bestseller. Products are also showcased in a store environment which reflects the culture of Belfast and Northern Ireland including local artwork.

The launch marks the first curi.o.city to open in Northern Ireland and is the eighth WHSmith owned store across the market. The retailer currently operates stores across key travel locations including Belfast Victoria Station, Belfast International Airport, and Belfast City airport, which has also recently refurbished and its airside WHSmith store into its popular one-stop-shop format, and officially opens alongside curi.o.city in the airport today.



Curi.o.city was first launched by WHSmith in 2023 and today the concept has expanded into 23 locations across the UK and internationally. In the UK, curi.o.city stores are located in London Gatwick airport, Bristol airport, St Pancras station and Selfridges in Birmingham and Manchester. In addition, as part of WHSmith's strategy to enter new markets and scale the group's retail formats, curi.o.city also recently expanded internationally for the first time with its partner Al Maya, opening two standalone stores in the UAE and 15 concessions within Al Maya's Borders stores across the Middle East.

WHSmith's Travel business continues to invest in its store estate through new openings and refurbishments in existing stores so that it is well set up to serve today's travelling customers. The retailer recently delivered four store refurbishments in one week across multiple different formats including WHSmith Gatwick South, WHSmith Bookshop in Bristol Airport, WHSmith in Glasgow Central Station and an M&S Food in Plymouth Derriford Hospital.

**Andrew Harrison, Managing Director WHSmith Travel said:** "Since launching curi.o.city last year we've had great feedback from customers, and we're delighted to start offering our ranges of high quality stationery and localised gifting and souvenirs to the travelling customers of Belfast City Airport for the first time. The growth of curi.o.city shows how WHSmith can adapt and innovate to create strong new, bespoke brands and retail formats and we've been pleased with progress to date and excited about what's next."

**Michael Jackson, Head of Commercial at Belfast City Airport, added:** "At Belfast City Airport, we are passionate about supporting local suppliers and giving our passengers a choice of high-quality products.

"Therefore, we are pleased to welcome curi.o.city to our Departures Lounge, which will meet the demand for excellent products with a real sense of place while allowing passengers to shop for unique and modern, gifts and souvenirs.

"We look forward to working in partnership with curi.o.city to enhance the range of retail options available at Belfast City Airport and to deliver an airport shopping experience that celebrates some of the best of Northern Ireland."

**-ENDS-**

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### **Notes to Editors:**

#### **About WHSmith**

WHSmith is a leading global retailer in news, books and convenience for the world's travelling customer. With more than 1,700 stores across 30 countries worldwide, WHSmith offer customers a wide range of books, newspapers & magazines, travel and digital accessories and food and drink. The Company has a growing international business with over 600 stores primarily across the world's leading airports. In November 2018, WHSmith acquired InMotion, a leading global technology retailer in US airports, now operating over 120 stores, including stores in the UK, Spain and Australia. In December 2019, WHSmith acquired Marshall Retail Group, a leading and fast-growing US travel retailer with over 170 stores.