



Airlines

Air Travel Numbers Keep Going Up

The International Air Transport Association reported that demand for air travel grew again in July. Overall revenue passenger kilometers (RPK), a standard industry measure, continued to go up, increasing 5% over July 2012. All regions were up, with emerging markets showing the biggest increases. July was not up quite as much as June, which saw a 6.1% increase. But IATA said that was in part due to the impact of Ramadan and in part a market correction. North American international traffic rose 3.7%. U.S. domestic traffic was up 1.5%, a decline from June's growth of 2.4% and below the year-to-date average of 1.9%. (Source: IATA press release).

United Recalls All Furloughed Pilots

Another sign of the current state of aviation: United Airlines said that it would recall nearly 600 pilots who have been on furlough in order to meet the airline's staffing needs. Training will begin next month. United has more than 12,000 pilots. The recall follows similar moves by American Airlines and Delta Air Lines. After 9/11, hard-hit airlines furloughed thousands of employees and United was no exception. It recalled many but then had to furlough 1,400 after oil prices spiked in 2008. It has recalled small groups of pilots since then. Earlier this year, about 600 furloughed United pilots took positions on Continental flights, which now flies under the United name. (Source: press releases, news reports).

Where to Find the Roomiest Seats

You don't always have to pay more for a roomier seat, according to Routehappy, a website that measures the quality of in-flight experience. It finds that 13% of seats in regular economy class have a seat pitch of 32 inches or more, room enough to open a laptop, even when the person in front of you pushes the seat back. If you're willing to pay more for a few more inches, you'll find seats with extra legroom in 40% of U.S. domestic flights and 47% of international flights. And, domestic travelers willing to pay for business class can enjoy lie-flat beds on more than 100 flights within the U.S. (Source: Routehappy)

Website Estimates Security Line Wait Times

A new web site, WhatsBusy.com, projects the wait times for Transportation Security Administration lines at 100 U.S. airports. It uses data provided by the TSA and airlines as well as data about weather and traffic patterns to forecast wait times. Travelers can check the forecast on the day that they travel before they leave for the airport. (Source: WhatsBusy press release and interview).

What Travelers Really Want From Airlines

What do travelers really want from airlines when flights are delayed or canceled? A new PhoCusWright report sponsored by the travel technology company Amadeus finds that the biggest problem for most travelers is lack of communication. In every market except China, what frustrated travelers the most was insufficient communication. The report recommended that airlines provide delayed passengers with personalized and proactive communication, so they don't need to turn to third parties to find out what's happening. It also recommended "intelligent re-accommodations for travelers. That is, a one-size fits all strategy doesn't work. Instead, airlines should give travelers a one-click solution that lets them pick among alternative solutions for the one that fits their needs best. And, it said that it's not the big disruptions like mega storms or volcanic eruptions that hurt the industry. It's the smaller more frequent delays that impact more travelers and matter most that hurt airlines. (Source: Amadeus press release).

Hotels

Marriott Makes Free Wi-Fi in Lobbies a Brand Standard

Free lobby Wi-Fi has become a brand standard in 300 Marriott Hotel and Resort locations in the U.S... The company has renovated Marriott lobbies over the past five years and began adding free Wi-Fi in lobbies this spring. Marriott was already offering free internet throughout hotels in its Courtyard, Fairfield Inn, Residence Inn, SpringHill Suites and TownPlace Suites properties. (Source: Marriott)

Car and Rail

Drive Electric in Orlando

Drive Electric Orlando is putting meeting attendees behind the wheels of plug-in electric cars as part of a partnership involving car rental agencies, hotels, area attractions, the Electrification Coalition and central Florida governments. Orlando's tourism corridor has one of the nation's most robust networks of electric car charging stations. Many meeting hotels are offering special amenities to Drive Electric participants. These vary and can include free valet parking, free overnight charging or discounted room nights. Vehicles are available through Enterprise Rent-A-Car. (Source: Drive Electric Orlando).



Spotlight On...

Taking Time Out on the Road

An American Express Global Business Travel survey finds that a majority of global business travelers balance work and play while on the road. It found that U.S. business travelers are traveling just as often, and some more frequently, than they did in 2012, but are increasingly taking time out for themselves while on the road.

- *Two-thirds of U.S. business travelers surveyed say they have extended a business trip to take a personal vacation in the past year.*
- *Despite Wi-Fi access in flight, 61% say they look forward to disconnecting while in flight in order to unwind.*
- *Twenty-three percent say they work on long-haul flights.*
- *Fifty-six percent say they use that time to watch a movie or read a good book.*
- *Almost half of these travelers use hotel gyms.*

Kevin Carey, vice president and general manager, global client group, American Express Global Business Travel, said that as millennials make up a larger portion of the global workforce, more corporate travelers are working to alleviate travel-related distress. "These travelers place a higher value on work/life balance and are savvy about how to travel efficiently," he said.

Source: American Express

Springdale Travel is committed to providing you with useful information on the latest developments in the travel industry.

The above information has been compiled from a variety of sources and is updated monthly.