



CWT Traveler

CURRENT NEWS AFFECTING TODAY'S BUSINESS TRAVELER

October 2008

Survey

***CWT Traveler* wants to know**

Beginning in 2008, *CWT Traveler* would like to give readers the opportunity to weigh in on topics of relevance to travelers. Each month will highlight a single survey question, and the following month will reveal the results. Readers also have the option to submit potential survey questions to be highlighted in future issues of *CWT Traveler*. October's question is below, along with the link to submit your response.

Does your company have a business travel policy?

- Yes, and I know where I can reference it
- Yes, but I don't know where to find it
- Not that I know of
- No, we don't have a formal policy

Submit your response [here](#).

September survey results

The September survey question and results were as follows:

Have any of your recent travel plans been modified or cancelled due to tropical storm and/or hurricane warnings?

- 20% responded "Yes"
- 80% responded "No"

Green tip of the month

At the office:

When bringing a lunch to work, pack it in a reusable container rather than a disposable paper or plastic bag.

Current Events

More baggage carried on board as checked-bag fees become the norm

The U.S. Department of Transportation recently released data showing checked-bag fees have produced significant revenue since they were implemented last spring. With the majority of airlines now requiring travelers to pay such fees, travelers are increasingly taking more and more on board with them. So much more in fact that those boarding last are finding overhead bins stuffed and are required to gate check legitimate carry-ons.

Boarding behavior changes include travelers rushing to board first and placing carry-ons in overhead bins as close to the entry as possible rather than taking them to the area of their assigned seats. Passengers are also attempting to bring oversized luggage on board.

U.S. airlines have implemented and modified various fees for the first and/or second checked bag throughout 2008. An overview of such baggage policies can be found on the [CWT Web site](#). Such policies are subject to change at any time, and travelers should check with their airlines for the most current policies.

Sources: atwonline.com, USA TODAY

Green initiatives taking off at airports across the country

U.S. airports are including environmentally responsible practices more and more because of social awareness, new technologies, high fuel prices, and future cost savings. Initiatives include using alternative energy, recycling, giving hybrid vehicles preferred parking, and seeking LEED—Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design—certification (a third-party verification that a project is environmentally responsible...healthy place to live and work).

The first LEED-certified terminal is Boston's Logan International, which has installed 20 wind turbines, each of which is expected to generate about 100,000 kilowatt-hours per year, on the roof of its headquarters. Approximately 20 percent of the building materials in Terminal A were locally manufactured.

A sampling of green projects and airports adopting them include the following.

Cleaner vehicles: Mineta San Jose reports having fully converted all of its 34 shuttles to run on compressed natural gas, eliminating the use of more than 1.3 million gallons of diesel fuel since 2003.

Green buildings: Atlanta's Hartsfield-Jackson is in the process of a restroom upgrade to conserve water. New toilets that use 1.28 gallons of water per flush versus the 1.6 gallons used by existing toilets will help to create a 13 percent reduction in airport water usage.

Recycling: Denver will begin a composting trial for biodegradable wastes in January. It currently has 22 trash collection and recycling practices—last year it collected more than 104,000 pounds of cooking oil that was reused for biodiesel fuel and manufacturing pet foods.

Airfields: Boston Logan will be the first U.S. airport to reduce toxic emissions by using runway asphalt heated at temperatures up to 75 degrees lower than is required for usual “hot mix” asphalt.

Airlines: According to the Air Transport Association (ATA) 2008 Economic Report, U.S. airlines reduced 2.5 billion metric tons of CO2 from 1978 to 2007—the equivalent of removing 18.7 million cars from the road over 29 years.

For direct links to the many, many aviation related sustainable initiatives underway or planned, go to sustainableaviation.org.

Sources: abcnews.go.com, environmentalleader.com, USA TODAY, sustainableaviation.org

Travel Tips

Traveling to South Africa

Editor's note: Global business, and subsequently, global business travel, continues to expand rapidly. In response, CWT Traveler will provide to readers each month in 2008 insights and tips on traveling from North America to other countries around the world. This month's installment focuses on South Africa.

In business:

- Business visitors are expected to make appointments ahead of time and arrive to meetings on time.
- South Africa is eight hours ahead of U.S. Eastern Standard Time.
- The ideal business deal is a “win-win situation” and therefore highly competitive behavior is not respected.
- South African business people are cautious and most would rather let a deal fall through than be rushed.
- When addressing someone, it is important to use professional titles.
- South Africa remains a male-dominated society. Foreign businesswomen are usually accepted, but may be referred to as “girls” or “my dear girl,” regardless of age or job title.
- Business cards are frequently used, but visitors should not be offended if they're not given one in exchange.

Good to know:

- When scheduling visits: The seasons are reversed from those in North America and therefore summer vacation is centered around the Christmas and New Year holiday season. Most business people take a long vacation during that time.
- Freedom Day is the national holiday and is celebrated on April 27.

- Typically, weekends are reserved for leisure, and few South Africans work during that time.
- South Africans are early risers (the morning is most comfortable due to the hot daily temperatures) and typically are at the office by 8 a.m. However, business breakfast meetings are relatively uncommon. Most business entertaining will be done in a restaurant, after hours.
- Eleven different languages are designated as “national” or “official” in South Africa. Fifty-seven percent of South Africans speak some English.
- While violence may be common in some townships and urban areas, international business visitors are relatively safe in well-patrolled public areas. Most hazards come from the wildlife in the nearby bush or wilderness areas.
- “Cafes” are similar to North American convenience stores and will carry all the basic necessities.
- Good topics of conversation are sports, outdoor recreation, travel, food and music.

Source: "Kiss, Bow, or Shake Hands: The Best-selling Guide to Doing Business in More Than 60 Countries," by Terri Morrison and Wayne A. Conaway. Published by Adams Media of Avon, Massachusetts.

Supplier News

Foreign and domestic airlines: factors impacting operations

While economic factors have impacted airlines in the United States, some foreign airlines are ordering larger planes with more amenities to add to their fleets. It seems unlikely that such differences should be seen in one industry, but explanations abound.

First, the distance flown per route is significant. Long overseas flights are more profitable for airlines than domestic routes and two-thirds of flights flown by U.S.-based carriers are domestic. Additionally, business- and first-class seats are where profit is generated, so foreign airlines often cater to these travelers.

Moreover, economic principles are at work. While the U.S. is on the verge of recession, Middle Eastern economies are not slowing at such a pace. These economies need to import goods and labor—by plane. The common denominator for all airlines is the cost of oil, which is traded in dollars. Because the U.S. dollar has weakened significantly in the world market, the U.S. airlines suffer the most.

Finally, differentiators are apparent in service. U.S. carriers fly fleets of older, larger planes making them less efficient. And, at a time when U.S. carriers are charging for services previously thought to be basic, Asian and Middle Eastern airlines are focusing on service and special amenities to make travel easier.

As is becoming more apparent day by day, the world economy is in a time of shift. This is an interesting era to keep an eye on the skies and see

several factors that can affect not only how travelers get from one place to another, but how the industry alters to flux with the times of change.

Sources: ABC News, Worldnews.com

Regional

Baltimore Airport offers incentives for continued BA operations

British Airways (BA) will continue to fly between Baltimore-Washington International Thurgood Marshall Airport and London Heathrow for at least two more years, thanks to a subsidy the carrier will receive from the Maryland Board of Public Works. While fuel prices had made it difficult for BA to operate profitable flights on this route, the subsidy will serve as an incentive to continue this route. If BA's rate of return on sales out of Baltimore falls to less than 8 percent, it will receive up to \$5.5 million in subsidies per year for two years to offset the impact.

Sources: Associated Press, The Baltimore Sun

Delta offers short-term \$45 JFK helicopter shuttle

During the month of October, Delta Airlines is offering certain coach-class customers a one-way helicopter shuttle between Manhattan and JFK Airport for about the same cost as a cab ride. Regular cost for this service is about \$159, plus taxes and fees.

The helicopter ride (provided by U.S. Helicopter Corp., the only helicopter operator in the United States that offers regular scheduled service) takes about eight minutes to get from its two heliports in downtown and midtown Manhattan to JFK and Newark airports. This service began in March 2006; and the company says it plans to expand its routes and schedule in New York, and to establish new routes in other major cities.

Sources: USA TODAY, flyush.com

International

Avoid roaming fees when using a mobile phone overseas

Traveling overseas can cause high cell-phone bills due to roaming charges. One way to cut these costs is by renting a Subscriber Identity Module (SIM) card at your destination. SIM cards are easily replaceable and can be swapped out to give travelers a local phone number and avoid roaming fees.

Before travel, the cell phone needs to be unlocked to accept another carrier's SIM card—once this is done, the process is very easy to use. Also, if a phone does not use a SIM card, oftentimes carriers will rent local phones at the destination of choice.

Different carriers have different restrictions and abilities in regard to these practices, so it is important to contact the appropriate carrier to find out the possibilities. Simple measures can help keep roaming charges to a minimum during business travel.

Sources: StarTribune.com, Washington Post

Government/Legislation

Passenger bills of rights get attention internationally

In Canada, travelers lost one more option for flying last month with the sudden failure of Zoom Airlines. Since 2000, Harmony Airlines, Jetsgo, CanJet/Canada 3000, and now Zoom, have all ceased operations, each time leaving travelers with useless tickets and little recourse.

The Canadian Transportation Agency (CTA) has stated that its role in these cases is to work with travel operations and airlines to get travelers to their destinations, and the traveler's obligation is to pay for the newly arranged flight and seek a refund from the original airline.

Last June, Parliament tabled the Airline Passenger Bill of Rights in a 249-0 vote for drafting new regulations that would compensate travelers for negative flying experiences including lost luggage, cancelled and delayed flights, bankruptcies, and interrupted operations—similar to those passed by the European Union in 2005, and currently being considered in the U.S. Congress.

The European Union's air passenger rights specify compensation based on length of journey and delay time for travelers who become victims of overbooking, lengthy delays, and sudden cancellations of flights that are "within the airline's control."

In the United States, the Airline Passenger Bill of Rights Act of 2007 introduced in February 2007, and still under consideration "requires each air carrier in the case of a delayed departure, to provide passengers with: (1) adequate food, potable water, and restroom facilities; and (2) an option to deplane, with exceptions, if more than three hours have elapsed, and during any subsequent three-hour periods of delay." Progress on the bill—S. 678—can be tracked—as well as an opportunity to participate, can be found at govtrack.us.

Sources: canada.com, ec.europa.eu/transport, govtrack.us

New bill addresses search and seizure of electronic equipment

New legislation, called the "Travelers' Privacy Protection Act of 2008" was introduced on September 26, 2008 in the United States (Senate bill S. 3612 and House bill H.R. 7118).

This legislation is described as "A bill to protect citizens and legal residents of the United States from unreasonable searches and seizures of electronic equipment at the border, and for other purposes."

The Association of Corporate Travel Executives (ACTE) has endorsed the bill, stating that it "introduces a much higher, and necessary, level of accountability to the laptop examination process."

Features of the proposed legislation include:

Search

- The requirement that the U.S. resident transporting the electronic equipment be allowed to be present for the search.
- Guidelines relating to the scope of the search and the environment in which it is conducted.

Seizure

- A requirement regarding application for a warrant describing the equipment to be searched and the content to be seized.
- Established timelines for how long the equipment or copies of its content can be retained while application for a warrant is pending.

Additional information regarding this bill can be found at govtrack.us.

Sources: *traveldailynews.com, travelweekly.com, govtrack.us*

Technology

TSA tests new communications method for security checkpoint workers

In an effort to increase efficiency and create a calmer environment at airport security checkpoints, the U.S. Transportation Security Administration (TSA) is currently piloting "whisper wireless" radios that allow security personnel to quietly converse across distances, rather than shout back and forth to one another. Some of the radios include earpieces, shoulder-mounted microphones, or microphones tucked in the officer's shirtsleeve.

The pilot program is currently underway at Bradley International Airport in Connecticut and Norfolk International Airport in Virginia. In addition to improving communications between airport employees and the overall atmosphere at security checkpoints, the TSA said it believes the reduction in noise levels will make more noticeable those passengers who may pose a security threat.

Source: *The Hartford Courant*

Industry Trends/Innovations

Eco-friendly key cards

Will plastic hotel key cards go by the wayside? It could be possible, as some companies are now experimenting with eco-friendly key cards made of wood, paper, corn, and other recyclable or biodegradable materials.

Typically, a 200-room hotel will go through about 12,000 plastic keys per year, which inevitably end up in landfills. For American hotels alone this adds up to roughly 1,300 tons of wasted plastic per year. Proponents of the biodegradable cards state that use of these cards could dramatically reduce the amount of plastic waste being generated, while also enriching the soil with eco-friendly materials.

European hotels have been using these cards for the past 10 years, but the product is relatively new in North America. Sustainable Cards is the manufacturer of the first wooden hotel key cards in the United States. In September, the cards were highlighted at Denver hotels, which used them during the Democratic National Convention.

On the downside, since they're not as strong as plastic, some of the cards may tend to crack, break, or become warped. Card manufacturers are working to improve the durability of their product.

Sources: Sustainablecards.com, Washington Post, greendaily.com

Riding the rails in the United States?

According to the U.S. Department of Energy, Amtrak is 17 percent more fuel efficient than air travel and 21 percent more fuel efficient than automobile travel. But when considering rail travel as an efficient mode of transportation in the United States, the decision depends largely on the part of the country being traversed.

On the East Coast between New York, Boston, and Washington, D.C., train travel is often quicker than flying or driving and eliminates the hassles of airport security and traffic-clogged highways. Travelers also face fewer additional surcharges and restrictions regarding such things as liquids and electronic devices. With more personal space available, travelers often find train travel more comfortable than economy air travel. In addition, train schedules are less impacted by inclement weather than airline schedules are.

Train travel outside the Northeast corridor is another story. In California, and in most other parts of the United States, train travel is a completely different product offering. In the Northeast, trains can operate at speeds as high as 125 to 150 miles per hour, while operating speeds between Oakland and Los Angeles average between 25 and 35 miles per hour, making the scheduled travel time more than 13 hours on that route. The mountainous terrain, combined with the fact that passenger trains often share the tracks with freight trains, contribute to the slower speeds.

With the rising cost of fuel, Amtrak ridership increased by 12 percent in the past 10 months. However, most travelers still opt for plane or automobile travel—for reasons including convenience and accessibility.

Source: USA Today

Children welcome in many airport lounges

More and more families are taking advantage of the airport lounge facilities that were not too long ago recognized only to cater to business travelers and adults.

Many travelers have found that the use of these lounges by a combination of business travelers and families can work out comfortably for both groups. Some lounges include separate areas that cater specifically to children—including rooms with toys, games, and kid-size furniture. Other amenities such as food and Internet access continue to be available to all guests.

Specific examples include the following:

- **British Airways'** expansive \$60 million Executive Lounges in Heathrow's new Terminal 5 have a separate KidZone room built into the facility.
- **Continental Airlines** has designated family rooms at its President's Clubs in Houston, Newark, and Los Angeles.
- **American Airlines** will have children's rooms in nine of its Admirals Clubs in various cities, including Miami, Dallas, Los Angeles, and Chicago by the end of the year.

Source: The Ledger.com