

November 2007



## Current Events

### Don't wait until the new year to apply for passports

The U.S. Department of State last month advised travelers who need new or updated passports to apply this fall, given it is typically the time period of lowest demand. Application levels are expected to rise again in January.

Implications from the U.S. Western Hemisphere Travel Initiative caused an unprecedented spike in passport demand and delays in processing throughout this year. The State Department said it is now back on track, completing passport applications in four to six weeks, and within three weeks for rush orders.

Travelers interested in more information should visit [www.travel.state.gov](http://www.travel.state.gov).

Sources: U.S. Department of State, *The Seattle Times*

### Cell phones to be used for flight check-in

In the next few years, printed boarding passes may not be required at the airport. A bar code, scanned from a traveler's cell phone, may be the way of the future.

Last month, the International Air Transport Association (IATA) announced that major airlines had agreed upon a global standard for such a bar code, which could be text-messaged to a traveler's cell phone or PDA. An alternate option would be that the passenger could receive the bar code by email and print it.

Establishing the global standard for the bar codes is the first step, followed by the creation of standardized processes and guidelines for global implementation.

The deadline for implementing 100 percent bar-coded boarding passes is 2010. If successfully deployed, this option could help the airline industry greatly reduce the need for paper boarding passes and save more than \$500 million USD annually.

Sources: *International Air Transport Association, msnbc.com*

## Travel Tips

### Democratic and Republican National Conventions coming in 2008

In August and September 2008, the Democratic and Republican National Conventions will be taking place in Denver, Colo., and Minneapolis/St. Paul, Minn., respectively. Given the size of these events, the impact on travel and business within the two cities is predicted to be significant on and around the days of the conventions.

Organizations headquartered in Denver or Minneapolis/Saint Paul—as well as organizations that have frequent travel to either city—should prepare accordingly to reduce the impact that the conventions have on their daily business operations. Travelers should anticipate that hotel rooms and rental cars will be in high demand, and flights into and out of these cities will sell out quickly.

Businesses and their travelers may want to avoid scheduling any non-essential meetings in these cities during the conventions. If business travel to these cities must take place, flights and hotels should be booked early to secure space. Travelers should also prepare to spend more than usual on hotel rooms during this time, and may have additional challenges securing restaurant reservations and meeting space throughout the cities.

Details of the conventions are as follows.

#### **Democratic National Convention**

- August 25-28, 2008—Denver, Colo.
- Expected guests—35,000
- Website— <http://www.demconvention.com/>

#### **Republican National Convention**

- September 1-4, 2008—Minneapolis/Saint Paul, Minn.
- Expected guests—45,000
- Website— <http://www.gopconvention2008.com/>

Sources: <http://www.demconvention.com/>, <http://www.gopconvention2008.com/>

## **Big vs. small when it comes to airport convenience**

When making travel arrangements, travelers should consider all available options regarding which airport to choose—Hobby vs. Bush, Dallas Love vs. Dallas/Fort Worth, Midway vs. O'Hare. Small airports may offer fewer restaurants, shops and services, but they are preferred by many business travelers.

J.D. Power and Associates conducted a consumer study this past May involving more than 10,200 air passengers, some traveling through 19 of the smaller U.S. airports. The survey found that even though the smaller airports didn't have all the amenities and services of the larger airports, many of the frequent business travelers preferred the smaller airports because of convenience, less traffic getting to and from the airport, cheaper parking, shorter security lines, easier gate-to-gate connections, quicker luggage delivery, and fewer crowds.

#### **Top small airports in the U.S.**

According to the study, Houston's Hobby ranked as the No. 1 small airport in customer satisfaction for the second consecutive year. Some of the airport's recent improvements include a new central concourse along with new restaurants, shops, signage, music in the terminal, electronic toll-collection in the parking garage and an outdoor walking/fitness trail.

Hobby, as well as Dallas Love, San Antonio, El Paso, and Hartford (Conn.) Bradley— all earned high marks for customer satisfaction.

#### **Potential drawbacks**

Frequent flyers acknowledge that there can be some drawbacks when traveling into and out of the smaller airports. There may be limited or no flight options if flights are canceled or delayed, and fewer or lower quality restaurants, shops, and services to use during a delay. They also may not have airline club lounges. All are factors to consider when selecting an airport.

Travelers should remember to consult their company's travel policy when choosing between flight, airline, and airport options.

Source: USA TODAY

## **Traveling to Germany**

*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 2007 insights and tips on traveling from North America to other countries around the world. This month's installment focuses on Germany.*

**In business:**

- Punctuality is highly important in Germany. Visitors should be on time for all appointments, whether for business or social engagements.
- Appointments should be made well in advance, with at least one week's notice for an appointment made by telephone or by email. Visitors should also be aware that if their email (or posted letter) is addressed to an executive who is on vacation, the response may be significantly delayed since most Germans take at least six weeks of vacation per year.
- In business situations, most Germans shake hands at both the beginning and the end of a meeting.
  - Extended, direct eye contact is important when conversing, and failure to hold eye contact may come across as the sign of someone untrustworthy.
  - Visitors should not carry on a conversation with their hands in their pockets, as this can be insulting to Germans.
- Business lunches are customary in Germany. Business may be discussed before and (sometimes) after a meal, but never during the meal itself.
- Avoid asking personal questions of a German executive. Family life is generally kept separate from work in Germany. Sports can be a good topic for conversation, since many Germans are passionate soccer fans. Skiing, hiking, cycling, and tennis are also popular.
- Corporate decision-making takes time in Germany. This methodical approach to business decisions is often much slower than in the United States or Great Britain. Sudden, unexpected changes are generally unwelcome.
- The trade show was largely invented in Germany. Germany hosts the majority of the international trade fairs, so participation in their conferences is important.

#### Good to know:

- The official language of Germany is German - called *Deutsch*.
- Germany is one hour behind Greenwich Mean Time (G.M.T.-1), or six hours ahead of U.S. Eastern Standard Time (E.S.T. +6).
- When identifying a half-hour, the usage in German is unlike the usage in English. Where an Englishman might refer to 9:30 a.m. as "half-nine," a German may call the same time "half-ten." If in doubt, ask for clarification.
- There are significant regional variations in behavior throughout Germany. For example, Bavarians have a reputation for being warm, hospitable, and casual: they tend to progress quickly from formal to informal speech and from surnames to first names. Do not expect northern Germans to behave this way.

Source: "Kiss, Bow, or Shake Hands: The Bestselling 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

### Delta requires 45-minute domestic check in at JFK

Delta Air Lines has increased the minimum check-in time at New York's John F. Kennedy International Airport for domestic travelers who are checking their bags: previously 30 minutes prior to scheduled departure was required; now a minimum of 45 minutes is required. Delta currently has the 45-minute policy in place at Atlanta, Denver, Los Angeles, and Orlando.

The baggage check-in requirement for international travel on Delta remains unchanged: 60 minutes prior to scheduled departure.

As check-in times vary from carrier to carrier, and differ on such criteria as domestic or international travel, online check in, carry-on as opposed to checked bags, airport requirements, and situational circumstances, travelers might wish to check their ticketed airline Website for its current policies for planning an appropriate airport arrival time.

Sources: *Travel Weekly*, *msnbc.com*

## Airline News – Top new routes

As business travel expands throughout North America and internationally, airlines are continuously adding new routes to keep up with the increasing demand. The chart below outlines some of the top new routes recently announced by the airlines.

Top new airline routes			
Airline	From	To	Effective date
Delta Air Lines	Atlanta (ATL)	Lagos, Nigeria (LOS)	December 3, 2007
Delta Air Lines	New York (JFK)	London, United Kingdom (LHR)	March 29, 2008
United Airlines	Denver (DEN)	London, United Kingdom (LHR)	March 30, 2008
Northwest Airlines/KLM	Minneapolis/St. Paul (MSP)	Paris, France (CDG)	April 8, 2008
Delta Air Lines	New York (JFK)	Nairobi, Kenya (NBO) - via Dakar	June 2, 2008

Sources: CWT Industry Relations and CWT Solutions Group

## Regional

### Montreal's Trudeau airport increases airport fee

Aéroports de Montreal last month announced an increase in the airport improvement fee charged on all flights departing Montreal-Trudeau airport. The fee, currently \$15 CAD, will increase to \$20 CAD beginning January 4. The additional funds will go toward managing debt and making additional improvements to modernize and expand the facility.

The increase aligns Trudeau's fee with other major Canadian airports—Toronto and Calgary. It is expected that 12.4 million passengers will travel through the airport in 2008, with that number increasing to 15 million by 2018.

Travelers may want to take note of whether airline improvement fees are included in the cost of their tickets. Vancouver Airport (YVR) is one airport where the fees are collected at the airport at the time of departure if the cost has not already been included in the ticket price.

Sources: *The Gazette (Montreal)*, *Aéroports de Montreal*, *Vancouver Airport Authority*

### New rental car facility planned for San Jose

Mineta San Jose International Airport plans to build a rental-car garage with 3,000 spaces featuring eight rental-car companies by the end of 2011. The garage will also include more than 300 spots for short-term parking.

The seven-story garage will cost \$251 million USD, and construction is projected to start in early 2008. The garage is one part of a \$1.7 billion USD modernization project to the airport. The project also includes renovating Terminal A, eliminating Terminal C, building Terminal B, and straightening the airport roads. In order to fund this project, the per-rental charge that customers pay will double on January 1 from \$5 to \$10 USD. This rate is on top of possible rate increases rental-car companies may start charging to leverage an increase in rent at the airport.

Travelers will be able to walk to the new garage as it will be located across the street from Terminal B, which is currently under construction. Travelers will no longer have to be shuttled to the rental-car locations.

Sources: *USA TODAY*, *The Mercury News*

## International

### Reminder: New entry requirements for Japan take effect

As previously reported in *CWT Traveler*, the Japanese government will begin requiring all foreign visitors to be fingerprinted, photographed, and interviewed by immigration officials at Japanese airport customs offices before gaining access into the country. The new requirements will take effect November 20, 2007.

The full article from the September issue of *CWT Traveler* can be found at the following link:  
[http://www.carlsonwagonlit.com/en/countries/us/cwttraveler/2007\\_09/international/index.html](http://www.carlsonwagonlit.com/en/countries/us/cwttraveler/2007_09/international/index.html).

*Source: Immigration Bureau of Japan*

### Dynamic currency conversion stings international travelers

More and more international travelers are being exposed to a common practice called dynamic currency conversion. This currency conversion service is becoming prevalent in many popular international destinations and is often offered in shops, restaurants, rental-car companies and hotels that cater to international visitors.

When making a purchase in a foreign country, the clerk may offer to convert the purchase to the traveler's home currency rather than the local currency. Accepting this offer can mean that the traveler will be subject to higher exchange rates and/or service fees compared to those charged by the credit card companies.

However, some merchants are not even asking the question. Therefore, travelers are advised to check any slip or bill before signing or entering their PIN. If the charge was converted to the traveler's home currency without the traveler's consent, the traveler should request that the charge be voided and rerun in the local currency.

Corporate travelers are advised to check their company travel and expense policy regarding credit card usage and follow those guidelines. In the absence of a corporate travel policy, travelers should avoid attempts by foreign merchants to convert purchases to dollars on the spot. These conversion fees can be up to 7 percent more than those charged by the credit card issuer.

And finally, this service is offered to merchants by technology providers through the merchants' banks. It happens at the point of sale, so neither credit card companies nor the banks that issue the cards have anything to do with it. Therefore, travelers cannot dispute these high service fees and/or exchange rates upon their return to their home country.

*Source: The Seattle Times*

## Government/Legislation

### Nexus now available in Edmonton

Edmonton recently became the final Canadian airport to launch the NEXUS program since its expansion into Canada in February 2007. Designed to speed up the border clearance process for low-risk, pre-approved travelers into Canada and the United States, the program is currently available at eight major Canadian airports (Vancouver, Toronto, Montreal, Ottawa, Halifax, Calgary, Winnipeg and Edmonton) and 11 land border crossings.

In addition, effective December 1, the application fees for NEXUS will be reduced to \$50 CAD (from \$80 CAD) in response to the strong Canadian dollar. This brings the application fee in line with the current cost of application fees in the United States at \$50 USD. The NEXUS cards are also accepted as alternative documents to the passport under the U.S. Western Hemisphere Travel Initiative (WHTI).

*Sources: Canadian Border Services Agency, [www.travelpress.com](http://www.travelpress.com)*

## Technology

### Check-in kiosks serving more than one airline

More and more U.S. airports are installing common-use kiosks that enable travelers to self check in with different airlines. Many of these common-use kiosks are replacing airline-specific self check-in kiosks.

Nine U.S. airports currently have the capabilities to use common kiosks. Some of those are: San Francisco, Las Vegas, and Dallas/Fort Worth. None of the airlines in Las Vegas have their own individual kiosks. Dallas/Fort Worth has 51 common-use kiosks and plans to install more.

Common-use kiosks keep airlines' counters from becoming crowded. They are generally placed in terminal areas not used by an airline, improving the flow of people.

*Source: USA TODAY*

### Phoenix airport tests innovative screening technology

Phoenix Sky Harbor International Airport passengers who are asked to undergo in-depth airport security screening, whether randomly or by failing metal detector tests, now have a less invasive option available to them. Rather than undergo the "pat down" method of screening, travelers may opt to go through a scanner that produces three dimensional, nondescript images of their body as part of the Transportation Security Administration's testing of this technology.

An individual's face is not shown, and only an outline of their undergarments is visible to the system operator sitting in a private room. What the scanner does detect is any potentially threatening materials they may be carrying, including explosives, weapons, narcotics, and bomb detonators.

*Sources: Phoenix Business Journal, Los Angeles Times, CQ Homeland Security*

### Flight-status alerts available from multiple sources

With the number of delays and flight cancellations affecting business travel today, travelers often seek out flight status updates offered in convenient formats.

Following are some ways to access current flight status information.

**Updates from the airline**—Most airlines offer an optional service that sends the traveler an email or text message regarding flight status and sometimes gate information.

**Flight-tracking/status Websites**—Websites such as FlightExplorer.com and FlyteComm.com provide real-time flight location and estimated time of arrival. FlightStats.com offers flight status alerts to email addresses or mobile phones.

**Phone**—Travelers can call the airline directly to get updated flight status and gate information. Some frequent travelers save time by programming their most frequently used airlines' customer service numbers into their mobile phones.

Depending on the airline or the Website used to receive updates, the accuracy and frequency of the alerts can vary. Travelers who question the accuracy of the flight information received should consider checking more than one source to confirm that the information is correct.

*Sources: The Wall Street Journal, The Washington Post, FlightExplorer.com, FlyteComm.com, FlightStats.com*

## Industry Trends/Innovations

### JetBlue goes cashless for on-board purchases

Effective November 1, JetBlue will accept only credit or debit cards for passengers' in-flight purchases via handheld card readers used by flight attendants. As previously reported in *CWT Traveler*, many U.S. carriers have experimented with electronic payment for the various food, beverage, and entertainment purchases travelers make. Many airlines have simply

expanded payment options to include both cash and electronic payment, while others such as JetBlue and newly-launched Virgin America are entirely cashless.

JetBlue passengers will only need to use their credit or debit cards if purchasing alcoholic beverages or in-flight movies on flights two hours or longer, because all other snacks and beverages are free and unlimited.

*Sources: Travel Weekly, Business Travel News*

## **Test flight for biofueled 747 planned**

A test flight using an Air New Zealand (ANZ) 747-400 partially fueled by a biofuel/kerosene blend is planned for late 2008 or early 2009, by ANZ, Boeing, and Rolls-Royce, jointly.

The aircraft will not carry any passengers and only one engine will run on the blended biofuel/kerosene mix. ANZ officers say the airline is encouraging research in alternative fuels in New Zealand.

*Sources: msnbc.com, Air Transport World*