Gant Travel achieves greater agent efficiency with FlightStats Travel Waiver Services

Disruption has a significant and costly impact on the travel industry. Airlines lose $35 billion every year to irregular operations and Travel Management Companies (TMCs) responsible for managing their customers' costs and travel plans also struggle to avoid losing business because of these disruptions.

Customer expectations are evolving to demand more personalized, timely service and failing to deliver this high level of service means TMCs will struggle to increase revenue. To be at the forefront of this challenge, TMCs must look for ways to make their agents more efficient and effective.

Automation of services and integration of disparate sources of data is key for successful TMCs looking to address the challenges of providing superior customer service and evolving their operations to scale for future growth. Now is the time to address critical problems, such as mitigating the impact of disruptions and seamlessly getting busy travelers where they need to go, while still controlling costs.

TMCs need to provide services that not only differentiate them from the competition but also position them as an essential element of a successful corporate travel program and build their customer loyalty. At FlightStats, we help TMCs stay relevant and prove the value of their services to their corporate clients.

Consider this: What if it was possible for TMCs to get ahead of disruption and efficiently serve travelers in a way that reduces costs?

Gant Travel, a forward-thinking and innovative TMC that focuses heavily on overcoming challenges for their agents and helping them solve problems for customers, realized that one of their primary inefficiencies was the time their agents spent manually researching and applying airline policy exception waivers.

Every minute an agent spends looking up waiver information and evaluating whether a waiver applies means more travelers waiting on hold, more unhappy customers, and increased costs for the TMC. Since airlines usually issue policy exception waivers in times of significant disruptions, this waiver evaluation and research time often increases when agents can least afford it—during large-scale disruptions at busy airports when many travelers are calling for help from a finite team or support staff.

FlightStats worked with Gant Travel to automate their manual waiver process.

FlightStats' Travel Waiver Services not only accelerates the process of identifying travelers affected by a disruption, but it also increases agent efficiency by providing the details agents need to implement a waiver in a consistent format across all supported airlines.

The challenge

Gant Travel sought to streamline the process of allocating waivers to travelers to save costs and provide a superior level of service for travelers affected by disruption.

The solution

Travel Waiver Services automated the process of matching trips to waivers, making it easier for agents to find waiver details and reducing the average handle time for incoming calls.

Our primary focus was to decrease talk time as it is our most significant expense.

Penny Spangler
Technical Project Manager
Gant Travel

Before Travel Waiver Services

Gant Travel received waiver notifications via email and posted them on an internal electronic bulletin board, requiring a disjointed and one-by-one validation process for each traveler.

1 |

They would not update any information in their Passenger Name Records (PNRs). If travelers called to change their flight due to a disruption, agents had to remember what waivers existed or had to search the bulletin board just to find out if a waiver applied to a traveler's trip.

2 |

If an agent did find an applicable waiver, they would spend even more time searching for and interpreting the details because every airline publishes their waivers in a unique format.

**3** |

After Travel Waiver Services

Travel Waiver Services not only automates the process of matching waivers to trips, but it also provides details of the waiver in a consistent format, with a link to the waiver details page that makes access quick and efficient.

1 |

Gant Travel passes all of their trips to FlightStats as they book them, and the FlightStats system matches new or updated waivers to Gant Travel's trips, sending an alert for each PNR that qualified for a waiver.

2 |

Gant Travel takes each of these alerts and adds remarks to the GDS PNR, including the waiver title and a link to a FlightStats web page that contains a standardized version of the airline waiver.
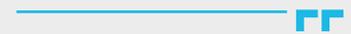
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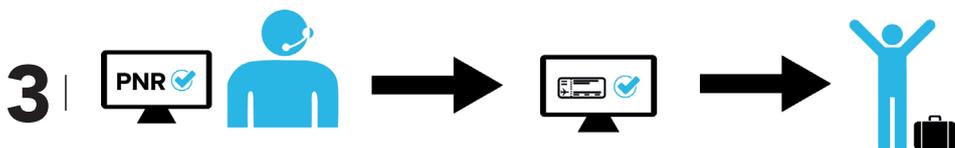
Client says:

Feedback from staff at Gant Travel about the new waiver management system has been positive to date as they are already seeing the benefits of having the **right information** at the **right time**, providing a convenient way to do their jobs better.

This is going to make our lives so much easier.

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Thank you so much, this is awesome.

Gant Travel Agents

"Agents know immediately, based on the PNR remarks, whether a waiver applies. Then they can easily hone in on the information they need," *said Spangler.* "Having all of the information structured and in the same area every time they look at a waiver saves the agents time because they know exactly where to look."

The impact to date:

After Gant Travel implemented Travel Waiver Services, a series of snowstorms hit the east coast during March 2017. During these storms, Gant Travel's new process of managing waivers resulted in:

✈ **3300 trips** matched to waivers

✈ **6 weeks** of agent's time was saved on handling traveler inquiries

"It's just the beginning. We implemented the program on the tail end of the winter season, and if we had implemented in January, then I'm confident the impact would have been even more significant," *said Spangler.*

> The integration of waiver information into the passenger information system has allowed Gant Travel to:

Make it easier for agents to find waiver details

Reduce the average handle time for incoming calls

Increase agent job satisfaction

Provide a more seamless traveler experience

FLIGHTSTATS

FlightStats' Travel Waiver Services make Travel Management Companies (TMCs) more effective by automating the process of matching trips to airline policy exception waivers and providing convenient access to all the details agents need to process a waiver in a single location. Agents can be more productive when it's most important — during large disruptions when many travelers are calling for service. **Contact us today to learn more about** Travel Waiver Services.

FlightGlobal

FlightGlobal, incorporating FlightStats and Diio, helps aviation and travel related businesses drive growth, assess risk, improve efficiency and customer experience.

Our unique combination of databases, technology and expertise power online tools, feeds, APIs, industry insight and expert advice. Our solutions reduce passenger delays and improve traveler experience, validate and inform long-term planning, minimise exposure and risk using reliable information and provide the most complete view of the industry.

We help organizations connect by providing routes to market through our insight channels and face-to-face events. A strategic partner of IATA, the association of world airlines, we are recognized as the Aircraft Appraiser of the Year, an Aviation 100 Award.
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