

The Airline Industry and Social Media - A Review & Analysis

A comprehensive report that reviews and analyses social media use among airlines has been completed by Innovation Analysis Group, TheTravelStrategist.com and CAPA.

The report provides a comprehensive analysis of numerous airlines and their use of social media. The analysis is based on primary and secondary research. The report details the short and evolving impact of social media on travel generally, and airlines specifically. It also provides a detailed road map for successful deployment of social media. A number of airlines' use of Twitter is analyzed – demonstrating how these airlines have done well or are falling behind. The report lists the Top Three Twittering Airlines; jetBlue, Southwest and Virgin America. It analyzes Twitter activities at: Air Baltic, Air New Zealand, Alaska Airlines, British Airways, Cathay Pacific, Continental Airlines, Delta Air Lines, jetBlue, Kenya Airways, Qantas, Southwest Airlines, United Airlines, and Virgin America.

“It is our aim that the report educates and helps you to formulate strategic responses to a branding and distribution opportunity that is too big to ignore. Right now, this is the best informed and most useful handbook on what is happening and what you can do. We hope it will help you improve your business”, said Peter Harbison, Executive Chairman, Centre for Asia Pacific Aviation.

"Many airlines appear to start up their Twitter streams without much research into how to effectively engage customers and potential customers. Most importantly, the majority of airlines on Twitter do not appear to have a defined strategy for addressing customer complaints and concerns", said Frischling.

“Some airlines have moved quickly and effectively to exploit social media,” said Schonland. “We believe that despite early successes, many airlines may be at risk because of the rapid changes in social media. Fortunately there are simple guidelines that, if followed, could ensure even late starters can catch up and succeed.”

About the authors:

Steven Frischling is a recognized airline travel expert and global photographer who has a knack for making sense of detailed, complex travel scenarios and understanding the intricate nature of the commercial airline industry. Steven's involvement in social media dates back to working with Kodak as an original forum moderator in their America Online forums in 1994; creating a direct online customer interaction and content search facilitation pilot program for global photographic equipment manufacturer Tamron-Bronica in 1996; and with the Discovery Channel Online to pioneer the widespread online usage of iPix interactive photography in 1998. In the interest of sharing Steven's in-depth knowledge of travel logistics and the intricate workings of business travel, he founded the popular broad-based nuts-and-bolts travel blog Flying With Fish (www.flyingwithfish.com) in 2006. Additional information can be found at www.thetravelstrategist.com.

Addison Schonland heads Innovation Analysis Group, an aviation focused market-research and consultancy based in the United States, and has worked with aircraft manufacturers, engine manufacturers, airlines and the air travel sector. Addison has been an innovator in new media, and publishes a successful aviation blog and on-line information resource. He holds degrees in Sociology, Economics and Finance for the University of Cape Town, South Africa and a doctorate in business administration from Rushmore University. He was previously with PA Consulting Group and has been involved with commercial aviation for over twenty years. Additional information can be found at www.iag-inc.com

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