



RIFF

BE DIGITAL, STAY HUMAN

THE AVIATION INDUSTRY

FROM CRISIS TO CARE

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JUST ANOTHER DAY

AT THE AIRPORT

Picture this: you're at the airport, patiently waiting to board a flight headed to your hometown, for one of the most important events of your life. You've planned more than enough time for your transfer between flights, because if there's one thing you can't be late for, it's your own wedding.



Just another day at the airport

The journey has been surprisingly smooth sailing so far, with nothing except some pre-wedding jitters to worry about. That is, until you realize your passport is missing...

It happened to a passenger at Schiphol airport, travelling with KLM from Winnipeg, Canada to Kigali, Rwanda in the Summer of 2020. Realizing he must have lost his passport somewhere at the airport during his transfer, the young man instantly went to look for help. He quickly stumbled upon a Self-Service Unit, where he selected the 'Lost & Found' instructions. The digital kiosk referred him to the National Military Police for an emergency passport, which would take around an hour. Knowing that he didn't have that long, the young man desperately pressed the Live Assistance button.

MOBILE PASSENGER ASSISTANCE

Within minutes, a Mobile Passenger Assistant arrived at his location to offer support. The assistant immediately requested an airport-wide broadcast for the missing passport, and promptly received a response that the young man's passport had been located. As she helped the flustered husband-to-be collect his travel documents, the assistant noticed he didn't have the right COVID-19 documents for his destination. At this point, his flight was set to depart in 40 minutes, and his wedding was scheduled only 2 hours after landing! Luckily, the assistant was prepared for situations like these, and retrieved a small carry-on printer from her backpack. Using her mobile phone, she swiftly selected and printed the required documents for Rwanda. Once the papers had been properly filled in, the pair hurried towards the gate. As they ran through the airport, the assistant made a call to inform the Gate Departure Agent that the passenger was on his way.

In all the commotion, the traveler had forgotten to update his wife-to-be, who was now calling the airport in a frenzy. Fortunately, the Customer Care Agents, who are in close contact with the on-site Mobile Personal Assistants, were able to reassure her: her husband had boarded the plane and would make it to the ceremony right on time.



***Knowing that he didn't have that long,
the young man desperately pressed
the Live Assistance button.***



The passenger care ecosystem

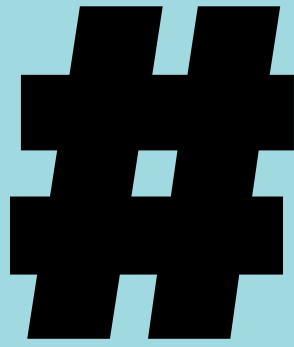
The Rwandese traveler's story is only one example of the countless hurdles that passengers may face during their journey. If tales like this offer one lesson, it's that providing the best passenger care requires a thoughtful combination of digital and human support. Being primarily dependent on human support is inefficient and unnecessary in most cases, whilst relying exclusively on technology does not allow for the kind of flexibility or compassion that complex consumer care cases require. Only through a well-designed ecosystem, interweaving digital and human channels, airports and airlines can deliver the level of consumer support and experience that leaves a lasting mark on passengers.



What's in this guide...

This guide will provide research-based insight into the current trends influencing consumer experience in the aviation industry, as well as the lessons that can be drawn from them. Most importantly, it explores our main tips for designing a future-proof consumer experience strategy and ecosystem, based on years of experience in implementing intricate passenger care operations for airports like Schiphol and airlines like KLM.





TRENDS THAT IMPACT

OUR CUSTOMER CARE

The aviation industry has suffered a great deal of turbulence in the past few years. Several new trends will play a key part in shaping the future consumer experience within the field.



COVID-19

ADAPTING TO A NEW REALITY

The COVID-19 pandemic caused unprecedented disruption to tourism and air travel, with a significant drop in international demand due to lockdowns, as well as travel restrictions put in place by countries to contain the spread of the virus. As international tourism slowly started to rebound in the second half of 2021, thanks to easing travel restrictions, the passenger journey had completely transformed. What was once an intuitive and smooth travel experience had now become a stressful expedition involving health checks, vaccination papers, Passenger Locator Forms, and COVID-19 test results. Airports had to quickly adapt to this new reality by introducing new health and safety measures, adding a series of unwelcome touchpoints to the passenger journey.

Despite popular belief, several countries still maintain COVID-related entry restrictions, including testing and quarantine mandates. And while experts predict the virus will lose its 'pandemic' status in the near future, it is expected to keep circulating throughout parts of the world for years to come, causing peaks in infections during specific times of year, such as the fall and winter months. Moreover, research shows that while passengers are feeling much more comfortable flying, health and safety continues to be a major concern. In their **2021 Rebuild Travel Survey**, travel technology company Amadeus reported that fear of catching COVID-19 while traveling and quarantine were the biggest concerns about traveling in light of COVID-19. The survey also revealed that many travelers agree that the international restrictions and guidelines around where and how to travel are confusing and unclear. As a result, many of them are less likely to book and travel (35%), while others even refuse to travel altogether (27%).

As such, it's essential that airports and airlines pay attention to both passenger concerns and international regulations, to provide clear and accurate COVID-19 information at each step of the passenger journey, both now and in the future.

KEY LEARNINGS:

- The COVID-19 pandemic has strongly altered the emotional conception of (air) travel.
- Fast-changing rules and regulation will continue to make air travel more complicated than it was in the recent past. Airports and airlines will have to attune to these changes and passenger concerns by offering clear information at every step of the passenger journey.



Post-Covid

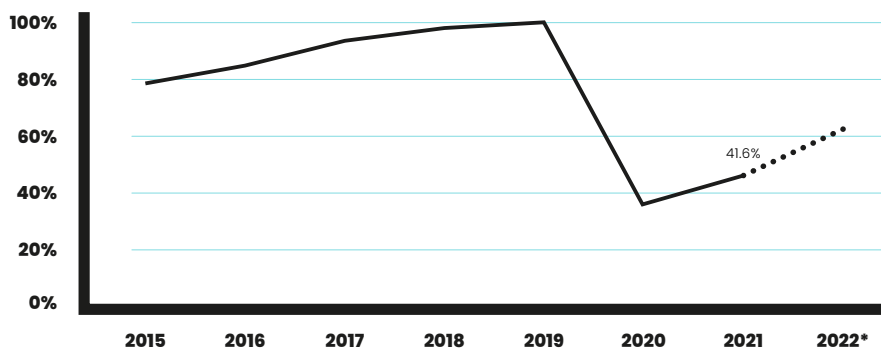
WHEN IRREGULAR OPERATIONS BECOME A BIT TOO REGULAR

In the Spring of 2022, the ebb in COVID-19 infection rates cleared the way for a new wave of aviation challenges. After more than a year of restrictions, eager globetrotters all over the world jumped at the opportunity to travel again. The aviation industry saw air travel for business and pleasure pick up significantly – a development for which we would soon learn many airports and airlines were significantly underprepared. In the Summer of 2022, **London Heathrow Airport** reported having experienced 40 years of traffic growth in just 4 months.

Faced with a sudden surge of passengers desperate to travel again to make up for lost vacations, a trend that has been dubbed “revenge travel”, numerous airports and airlines found themselves severely overrun and understaffed – an issue that is still present to this day. According to Aviation Benefits Beyond Borders, the aviation industry lost **2.3 million jobs** globally during the pandemic. Not only did airports and airlines struggle to make up for the employees that had been laid off, many European airports like **Paris Charles de Gaulle** and airlines like **Ryanair, Lufthansa, and EasyJet were also hit with crew strikes**. In addition to these staff shortages, other global challenges such as inflated fuel prices, warfare, and weather disruptions further impacted airport operations.

AIR TRAVEL FACES LONG-HAUL FLIGHT TO RECOVERY

Global air passenger traffic (revenue passenger kilometers) as a percentage of 2019 traffic.



*2022 FORECAST AS OF OCTOBER 2021

Revenue passenger kilometers is an industry metric that shows the number of kilometers traveled by paying passengers – Source: IATA

As a result of these disruptions, the passenger journey has taken another hit. The anxiety that came with COVID-related safety measures is now accompanied by another type of anxiety: one caused by overcrowding, logistical issues, unclear information, and dreadfully long queues. Increased crowding at airports means there is less overview, making it harder for travelers to distinguish relevant travel information: and even if they manage to find information, during disruptions, they can’t always be certain that the displayed information is accurate. In some cases, passengers are left with more questions than answers: “What does this disruption mean for my journey?”, “Where should I go next?”, “Am I walking in the right direction?”, “How much time do I have left?”.



A lot of people have really been looking forward to their holidays abroad, especially after two years of COVID. We’re extremely sorry that some people have missed their flight due to the long security control queue. [...] During these special times and circumstances, we must not let these people fall through the cracks.

– Dick Benschop, former CEO of Schiphol

[READ ARTICLE](#)

In this context, it is essential that airports and airlines offer travelers a clear communication and wayfinding experience, to avoid stress where possible, while also making sure that passengers are well taken care of if issues do arise. During service disruptions, the amount of passengers who require personal assistance strongly increases, which airports and airlines need to accommodate for. For example, Schiphol airport enlisted the help of RIFF to put in place a dedicated team of Hospitality Specialists, whose sole purpose is to proactively assist and guide passengers on their journey. During disruptions, the specialists offer passengers reassurance as well as a friendly face, while handing out beverages and snacks to make the wait as comfortable as possible.

KEY LEARNINGS:

- An increase in service disruptions in the past year has affected the passenger journey on a global scale.
- The passenger experience has become more stressful, as a result of overcrowding, logistical issues, long queues, and poor wayfinding. This loss of control results in an increased demand for personal assistance.
- To improve passenger experience during irregular operations, offering clear and accurate information, while proactively supporting passengers in need, is key.



Environmental issues

In line with the global industry's commitment to reaching net zero carbon emissions by 2050, sustainability is a common theme throughout innovation projects across the aviation sector. These projects are not only centered on decreasing the aviation industry's own impact on climate change, but also on limiting the effects of global warming on the industry itself, with **airlines, airplane manufacturers and airports** beginning to plan for increasingly high temperatures. As such, it's important to investigate how these developments will influence the passenger experience.

INCREASED FLIGHT DELAYS AND CANCELLATIONS

Increased weather volatility caused by climate change can influence all aspects of airport and airline operations, from scheduling and flight connectivity to trajectory optimization. As a result, extreme weather conditions such as strong winds, heavy rainfall, and heat waves, can disrupt flight schedules and cause significant delays. In the summer of 2021, the unprecedented Pacific Northwest heat dome led to the delay or cancellation of numerous **Alaska Airlines** flights. Similarly, a damaged runway at **London Luton Airport** during a heat wave in the summer of 2022 disrupted civilian and military flying. With the latest **United Nations report** on climate change predicting even more intense heat waves to come, it is key that airports and airlines are prepared to offer the best possible customer service during disruptions.

DECREASED COMFORT ON FLIGHTS

We can increasingly expect the impact of environmental issues to be felt in the cabin, as airlines seek to reduce their environmental footprint. For example, many airlines are aiming to reduce the weight of their aircraft, which can lead to a decrease in comfort for passengers. This may include narrower seats, less legroom, and fewer amenities, such as free meals and entertainment systems. These developments can affect the experience of passengers. To reduce this negative impact, it's important that airlines communicate openly about the reasoning behind these changes.

SUPPORTING PASSENGERS IN MAKING SUSTAINABLE CHOICES

Sustainability is also increasingly top-of-mind for passengers, especially younger generations, with the 2022 **IATA Global Passenger Survey** reporting that 18% of passengers already offset their carbon emissions. Out of these passengers, 51% are under the age of 40. Airlines can further boost this practice and support their passengers in making sustainable choices, by making the offsetting experience easy and intuitive, while being transparent about the impact and effectiveness of the carbon reduction projects that are supported.

KEY LEARNINGS:

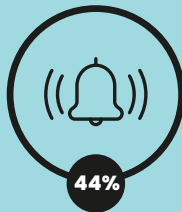
- Sustainability is increasingly top-of-mind for airports, airlines, and passengers alike.
- Climate change is expected to result in increased flight delays and cancellations due to increasingly extreme weather, as well as decreased comfort on flights to reduce environmental impacts. The aviation industry must put in place effective customer service solutions to address these changes and reduce their negative impact on passengers.
- Enabling passengers to easily make sustainable choices will be an increasingly important part of customer experience efforts.

* Evolving consumer behavior and expectations

The modern traveler is provided with a wealth of information in their passenger journey through a combination of digital channels and physical observations; signs at the airport, push notifications on their smartphone, information desks, video call units... Thanks to the application of technology and intuitive self-service solutions, the passenger is more empowered and independent than ever. Research shows that passengers increasingly want and expect this control over their journey and travel experience. In their Rebuild Travel Survey, travel technology company Amadeus found that passengers would feel more confident travelling if they had access to self-serve technologies, such as real-time notifications, self-service check-in, and mobile boarding.

SELF-SERVICE TECHNOLOGIES

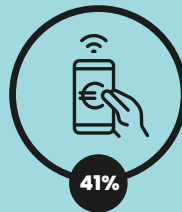
MOBILE APPLICATIONS THAT PROVIDE ON-TRIP NOTIFICATIONS AND ALERTS



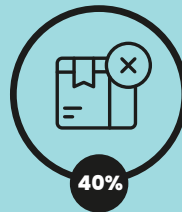
SELF-SERVICE CHECK-IN



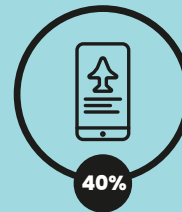
CONTACTLESS MOBILE PAYMENTS, E.G., APPLE PAY



AUTOMATED AND FLEXIBLE CANCELLATION POLICIES



MOBILE BOARDING



Passengers clearly see technology as key to improving the convenience of airport processes. They want to arrive at the airport ready-to-fly, get through the airport at both ends of their journey more quickly using biometrics and know where their baggage is at all times.

- Nick Careen, IATA's Senior Vice President for Operations, Safety and Security



Consumer expectations regarding the application of technology to further improve the travel experience are expected to keep increasing in the coming years. The 2022 IATA Global Passenger Survey revealed that post-pandemic, convenience is a top priority for passengers. They found that 83% of respondents would be willing to share personal data in advance to further reduce queuing times and minimize hassle at the airport, while 75% would like to use biometrics instead of passports or boarding passes.

To keep up with these evolving expectations and provide passengers with the best experience, airports and airlines must find creative ways to apply self-service technologies in the most inconvenient and time-consuming touchpoints of their passenger journey.

KEY LEARNINGS:

- Post-pandemic, convenience is a top priority for passengers.
- The application of technology and intuitive self-service solutions have made passengers more empowered and independent than ever. Passengers expect this level of service and control from every company that is involved in the travel-chain.



Today's travelers expect the same online experience as they get from major retailers like Amazon.

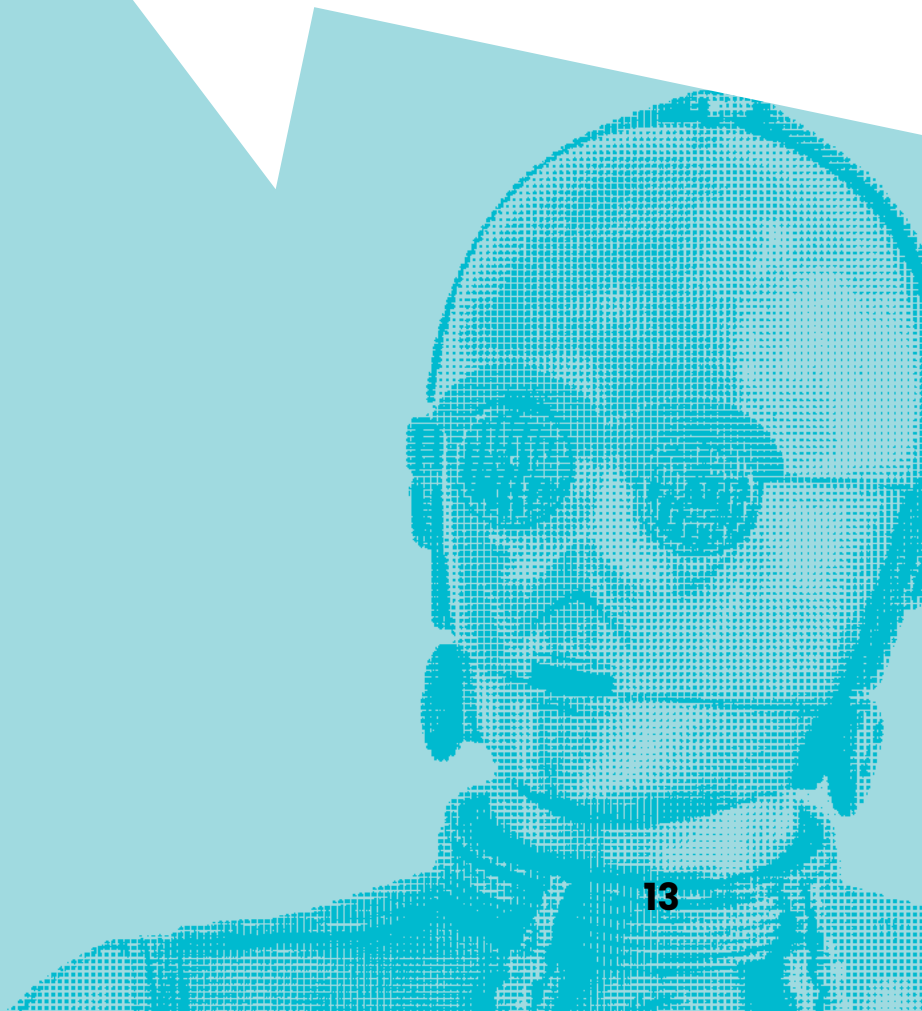
– Muhammad Albakri, IATA Senior Vice President
Financial Settlement and Distribution Services.

! Balancing technology and human interaction

FROM THE METAVERSE TO AI

The clever and innovative application of emerging technologies has played, and will continue to play, a key role in shaping passenger experience in the aviation industry. **For instance**, Qatar Airways has recently launched Qverse, a VR experience on their website that allows passengers to virtually tour and navigate the airline's Premium check-in area, as well as the cabin interior of their aircraft, all while being accompanied by a MetaHuman cabin crew. Similarly, Incheon International Airport Corporation has developed a virtual airport, designed to help passengers plan their travel more efficiently.

In addition to the use of virtual reality and the metaverse to provide a virtual passenger experience, Future Travel Experience also reported the increased use of automation as a key trend in the air transport industry in 2023. Multiple airports have already started implementing autonomous robots for various functions, such as the delivery of food and beverages, to streamline operations and offset rising labor costs. Another popular application of artificial intelligence has been in the realm of customer service. Using AI chatbots, passengers can quickly receive answers to their questions without ever having to speak to a human.



THE HUMAN TOUCH

But what if a human touch is necessary? While consumer demands regarding the use of technology and automation to improve convenience are on the rise, it is important to recognize that this does not replace the need for human interaction. When Asia's leading low cost airline, AirAsia, introduced their first chatbot AVA to be the face of their customer service in 2019, it was met with a great deal of frustration from customers. Infamous for its unreliability and redundancies, AVA quickly became "the most hated AI chatbot in Asia", as confessed by the CEO of AirAsia's parent company.

If the recent disruptions affecting airport operations have taught us anything about consumer experience, it's that human contact remains crucial in our digital world. As any consumer using a chatbot has experienced at some point, not all queries can (or should) be resolved by artificial intelligence. The same applies to other technologies intended to facilitate customer service, such as self-service solutions. Depending on the complexity of the issue, the passenger's sentiment, and the intensity of emotion, a human approach may be required.

Furthermore, it's important to recognize that replacing human interaction with technology will not work for all passengers, or at every stage of the passenger journey. In fact, advancing technology and automation often fail to account for those customers who don't fit into the typical customer journey and, as a result, they get left behind. Outstanding customer care should also account for the elderly traveler who does not own a smartphone, the illiterate refugee, or the passenger with a debilitating fear of flying. Only then is your customer care operation truly customer-centric.

KEY LEARNINGS:

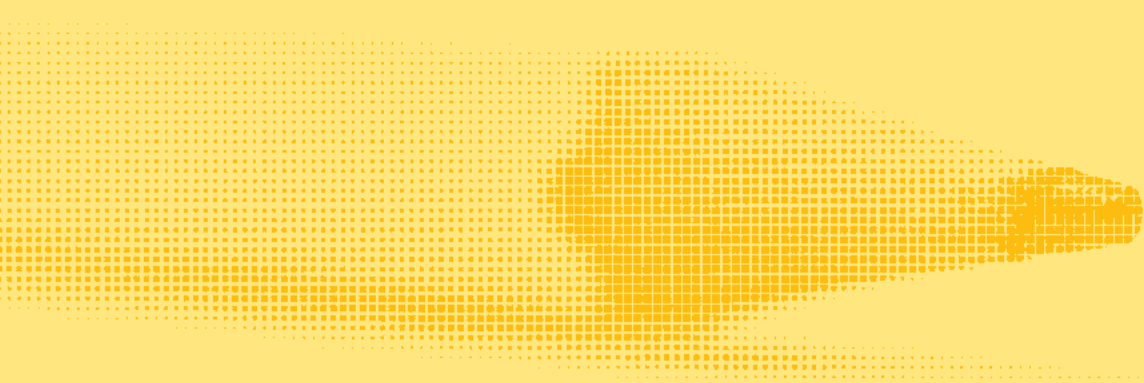
- The effectiveness of emerging technologies in customer service is highly dependent on the passenger, their query, sentiment, and the stage of their customer journey.
- The demand for personal service will keep existing alongside the demand for self-service. Airports and airlines should leverage technology such automation and self-service solutions for simple cases with straightforward answers, while prioritizing human intervention for complex cases that require a human touch.



REDESIGNING CONSUMER CARE

Our exploration of the 5 key trends influencing consumer care in the aviation industry reveals that: both the COVID-19 pandemic, and the operational challenges that resulted from the overwhelming revival of air travel, have made significant dents in the passenger experience on a global scale.

More than anything, passengers are now looking for the convenience, reassurance, and control over their travel experience that has been lacking in the past few years. To meet these evolving needs, while addressing challenges that continue to disrupt the passenger journey, consumer care in the aviation industry is in need of a redesign.

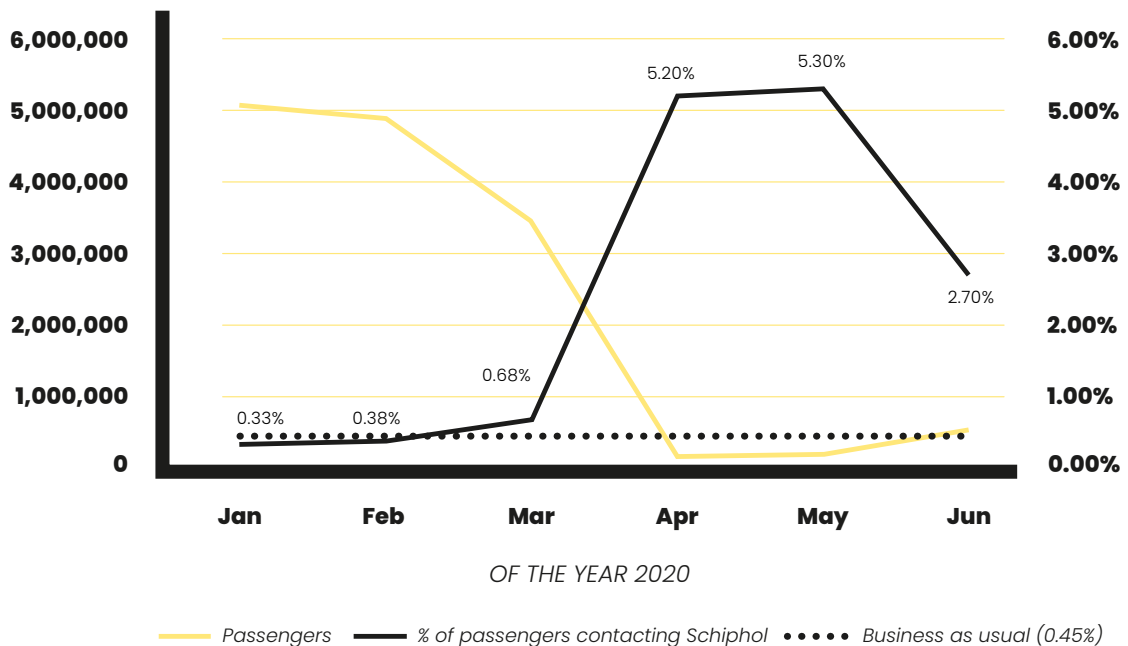


Service in times of crisis

The first step in reinventing customer care in this tumultuous and ever-evolving industry, is to embrace the opportunity that service disruptions offer. Since 2018, RIFF has been responsible for Schiphol Airport's omnichannel customer service. During the first half of the pandemic, our customer contact team noticed that while the number of passengers traveling at the airport strongly decreased due to international restrictions, the number of passengers reaching out with questions and concerns skyrocketed:



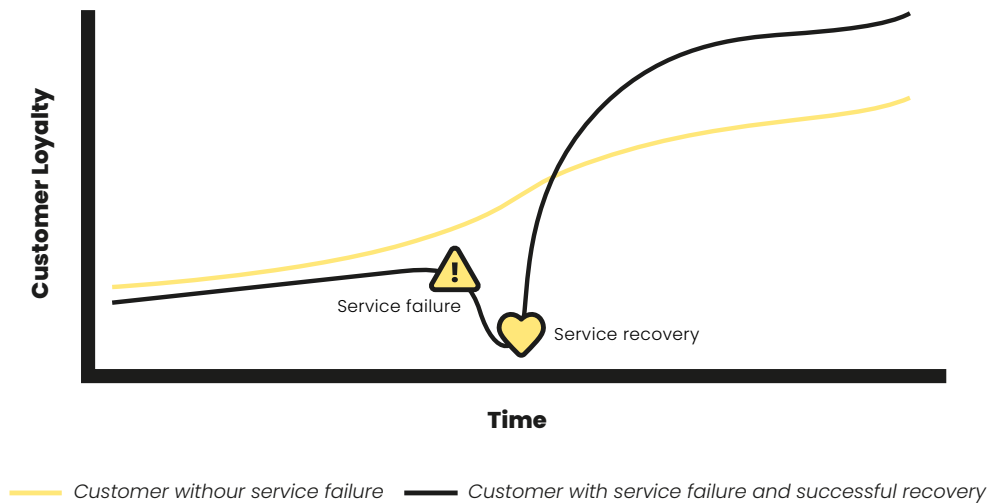
CONTACT RATIO DURING THE FIRST HALF YEAR OF THE PANDEMIC



This illustrates that while times of crisis can certainly have a devastating effect on customer experience, they also offer a unique opportunity to surprise customers with your quality of service. If done well, these efforts can end up not only recovering, but even improving customer satisfaction, resulting in long-term customer loyalty. This concept has been coined as the Service Recovery Paradox and has received a lot of research attention since the 1990s. It describes a situation in which a customer thinks more highly of a company after it has corrected a problem with their service, compared to how they would have viewed the company if no problem had occurred at all.

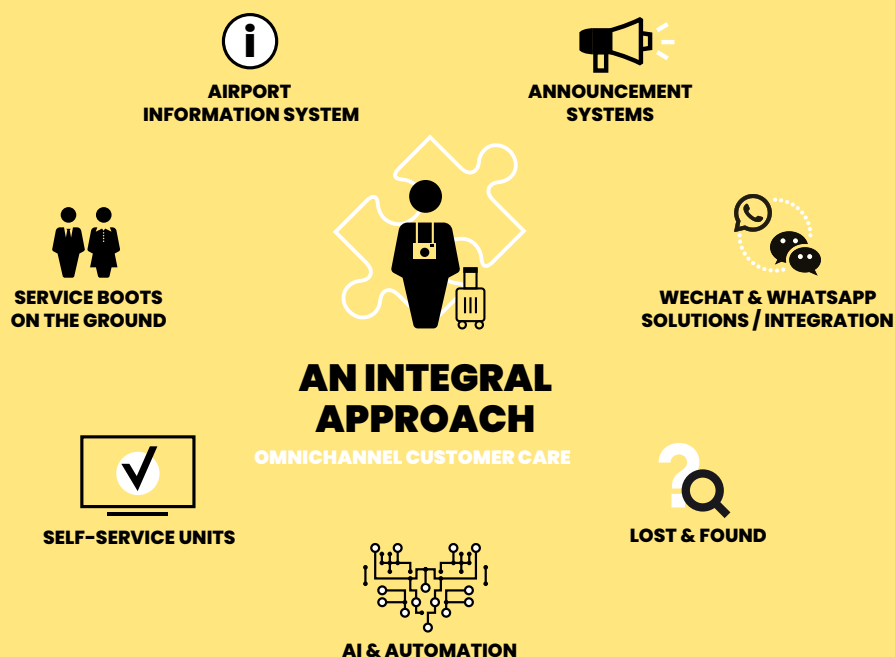
For instance, **studies** in call centers have shown that the number of customers who repurchased after a good service recovery was significantly higher than those who did not. The Service Recovery Paradox highlights that outstanding customer care can make a real difference when things don't go according to plan.

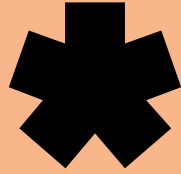
THE SERVICE RECOVERY PARADOX



? Towards an integral approach

The ability to deliver outstanding customer care during both disruptions and the status quo requires a thoughtfully designed strategy, one that combines the unique capabilities of digital and human service channels to create an integral system. It meets passengers where they're at and provides them with the best type of support for them. This should be informed by who they are, how experienced they are with flying, where they are in their passenger journey, what issue they're experiencing, as well as how they feel about it.



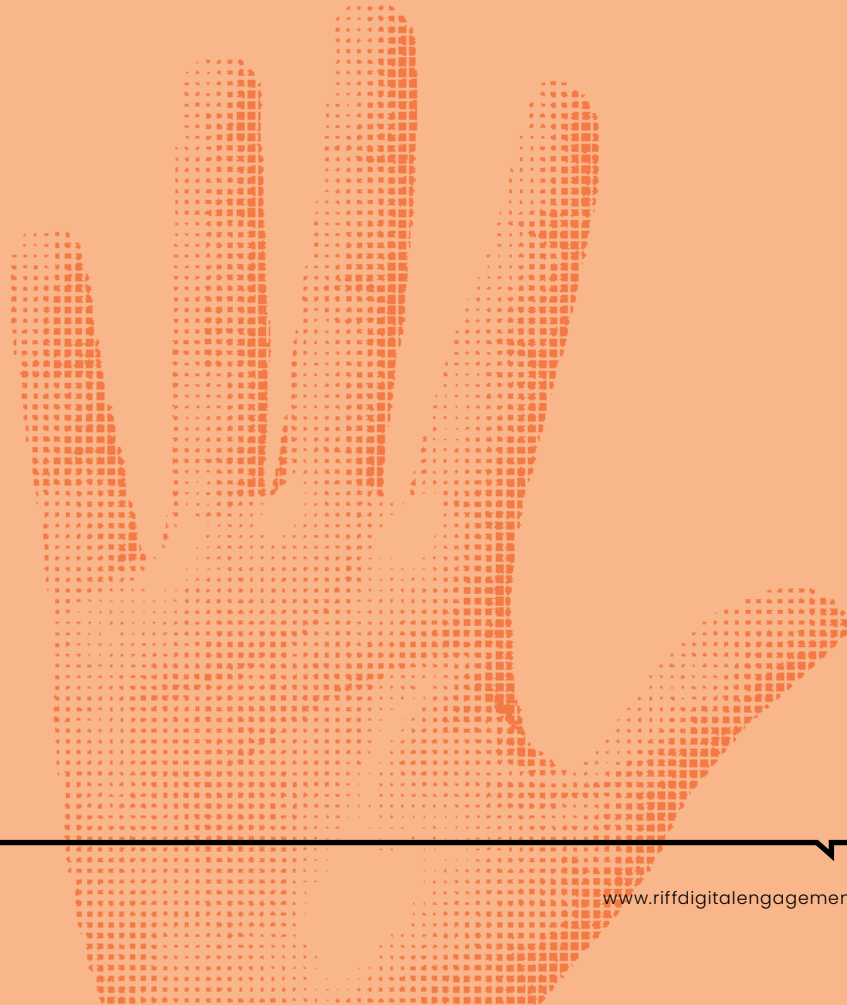


5 TIPS

TO FUTURE-PROOF CONSUMER EXPERIENCE

The final chapter will dive into 5 tips to put this integral approach into practice, to create a future-proof consumer experience strategy and ecosystem.

In times of chaotic operations and disappointed passengers, there are actions that airports and airlines can take to not only repair but reinvent and future-proof their consumer experience.



● 1. Plot your new CX

ASSESS THE PASSENGER JOURNEY

To design a good experience you must start by understanding the journey your passenger takes. The best way to do that is to take the journey yourself or to follow a passenger. Write all the steps down and try to get data on every step. How often do people call about a step in the journey like parking? How often do they search on your site for things like luggage allowance? This helps you to understand the experience.

Think big! You might not be responsible for parking, but do passengers feel that way? You might not be responsible for queues at immigration, but how do passengers experience having to wait there? And how does it impact the overall experience? When you have a clear overview of the journey you might see gaps or points of frustration.

MAP YOUR TRAVEL PERSONAS

You might want to create different journeys for business and leisure passengers, since their needs and experiences are different. Think about the difference between first-time and frequent passengers, and keep in mind that people who speak other languages may have a different experience than you might think of.

REVIEW THE DATA

Review the data you have and see if you can map it to the different stages in the journey. Do you know when your passengers are happy? Do you know what frustrates them? Do you know when they need to wait?

By plotting the data you have on the passenger journey, you will also get an overview of the things you do not know. An overall customer satisfaction score doesn't tell you that much if you do not know the experience from the underlying steps.



PASSENGER JOURNEY HEALTHSCAN

An example of a supportive tool and internal discussion starter to map your performance and identify potential improvement points, is our Passenger Journey Healthscan. The scan looks at five key pillars of your passenger journey that can help you add value.

AVAILABILITY

Availability is key these days. Not only the platforms and the accessibility of those platforms is important, but passengers also want to be able to retrieve the right information wherever and whenever they want it. Let them have it their way.

SELF SERVICE

Self-service has become the standard, especially in the aviation industry and touches everything from border patrol to self-service units and chatbots to AI. Your Passenger facing technology needs to be up to the current standard and expectations.

INNOVATION

Innovation is a process and a mindset used to identify issues, and spot opportunities to improve the experience. You should create an environment where there is room for innovation by setting some basic steps.

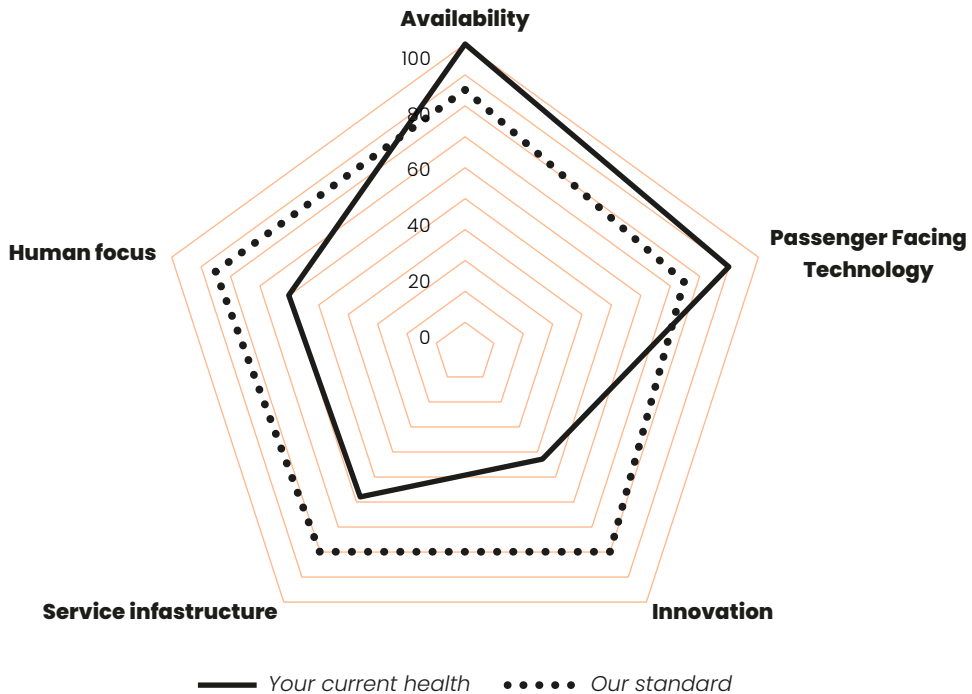
SERVICE INFRASTRUCTURE

To support an excellent Customer Experience you need to have the right Service Infrastructure. This connects all the dots and ties them together. It is the fundament to deliver a consistent experience.

HUMAN FOCUS

All of this should be done while maintaining a human focus. Your passengers are, and should be, the most important aspect of your operation. Keep in mind that all of this needs to make sense for you and needs to fit your organization. It is a tool to help you move forward, not a standard set in stone.

PASSENGER JOURNEY HEALTHSCAN



➤ 2. Create a CX ecosystem

Whenever and wherever a passenger contacts you, there are two things you need to be sure of:

- The information you share is correct and consistent
- You know what the passengers is asking

To be sure that the information provided by your staff, website, app, call center, and every 3rd party working for you is consistent, you need a solid foundation to manage knowledge. One platform that supports all channels is the ideal basis to achieve this. If this is a bridge too far, you should have processes in place to ensure that all sources of knowledge are in sync. Ideally the responsibility for knowledge is centralized in a clear role.

Your CX ecosystem consists of all your passenger touchpoints, service channels, and the way these interact with each other. A functional CX ecosystem effectively shares and consolidates information and knowledge between each component, to provide passengers with the optimal experience.

This ecosystem should give you the possibility to report and analyze from all possible viewpoints. What issues do passengers experience? Which types of passengers have questions? Which airlines generate the most questions? Only when you have a full overview are you able to initiate improvements and measure the impact.



3. Innovation is key

If you're aware of weaknesses or improvement points in your operation, you can improve your products and services. The basics of these improvements are simple, ask yourself the question "what if...?".

Once you've mapped your current journey and have identified a problem, work with your team to answer as many "what if's" as possible. You will likely generate some great ideas. Encourage your team to think big, yet remain pragmatic. Work from there and see if you can tackle obstacles that rise when you want to implement a solution.

Innovation should never be a goal in itself, nor is it always technology driven. It should be a tool to deliver improvement, and so it can also mean implementing a different process or improving communication.

USE INNOVATION TO ADAPT TO CHANGING CIRCUMSTANCES

During the pandemic, passengers needed a lot of additional healthcare-related information to be able to travel, ranging from PFL (Passenger Locator Forms) to COVID-19 tests results. In some cases these had to be printed and ready to hand over to staff during boarding, depending on the airline they were travelling with or the government of their (final) destination. Not all passengers had a printer accessible or remembered to prepare this in advance.

We did a "what if" workshop and came up with different solutions, from handing out plastic gloves at the printer station to sending text messages to emphasize the need to print at home. But eventually we equipped our Mobile Passenger Assistance team with mobile printers. That way, they could assist these passengers on the spot, resulting in over 5,000 prints in 2021/2022.


4.5
CUSTOMER SATISFACTION
IMPROVED FROM 3.9 TO 4.5/5


+5000
PASSENGERS HELPED TO CATCH THEIR
FLIGHTS BY OFFERING MOBILE PRINT


2000
PASSENGER
INTERACTIONS PER DAY

! 4. But keep it human!

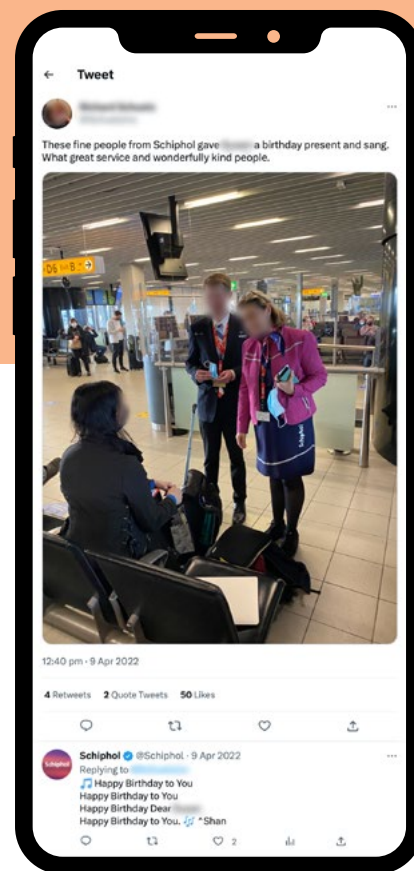
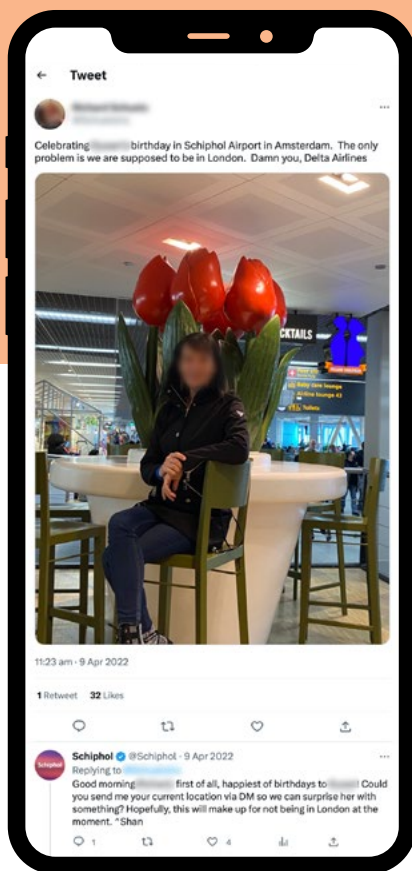
Sometimes people just need to talk to a human. Sometimes they want more than factual information. That is when your staff needs to be there. You need people that understand the emotions that passengers have. You need staff with an eye for the context of the questions asked.

Being human sounds simple. But it may also mean that your staff sometimes need to break protocols in order to solve problems. That is when they need support from the leadership. They need to know that being human is more important than sticking to processes. They need to feel that passengers are humans and not just "pax".

5. And make it personal

We all know that a business passenger behaves differently than a leisure passenger. But how do you react when that same frequent business flyer shows up in her holiday attire with her entire family? What category of passenger do you use when you need to categorize this passenger and how do you make sure that both journeys result in an equally personalized passenger experience?

A personal approach means that you always have an eye for the person behind the passenger. Your systems should be flexible, and so should your processes, allowing you to log and recognize personal touchpoints that can make a difference. Everyone is familiar with the copious birthday wishes you receive from companies on your big day, but what if you can use that information to actually make an impact, instead of ending up in a spam folder?



A BIRTHDAY SURPRISE AT SCHIPHOL

An agent in Schiphol's Customer Contact Center noticed a tweet from a passenger who had to spend her birthday at Schiphol Airport, due to their flight to London being delayed. The agent reached out to her Mobile Passenger Assistant colleagues at Schiphol, to see if they could arrange a little surprise. Soon, two assistants had located the passenger, to surprise her with a present and a birthday song while she waited for her flight.

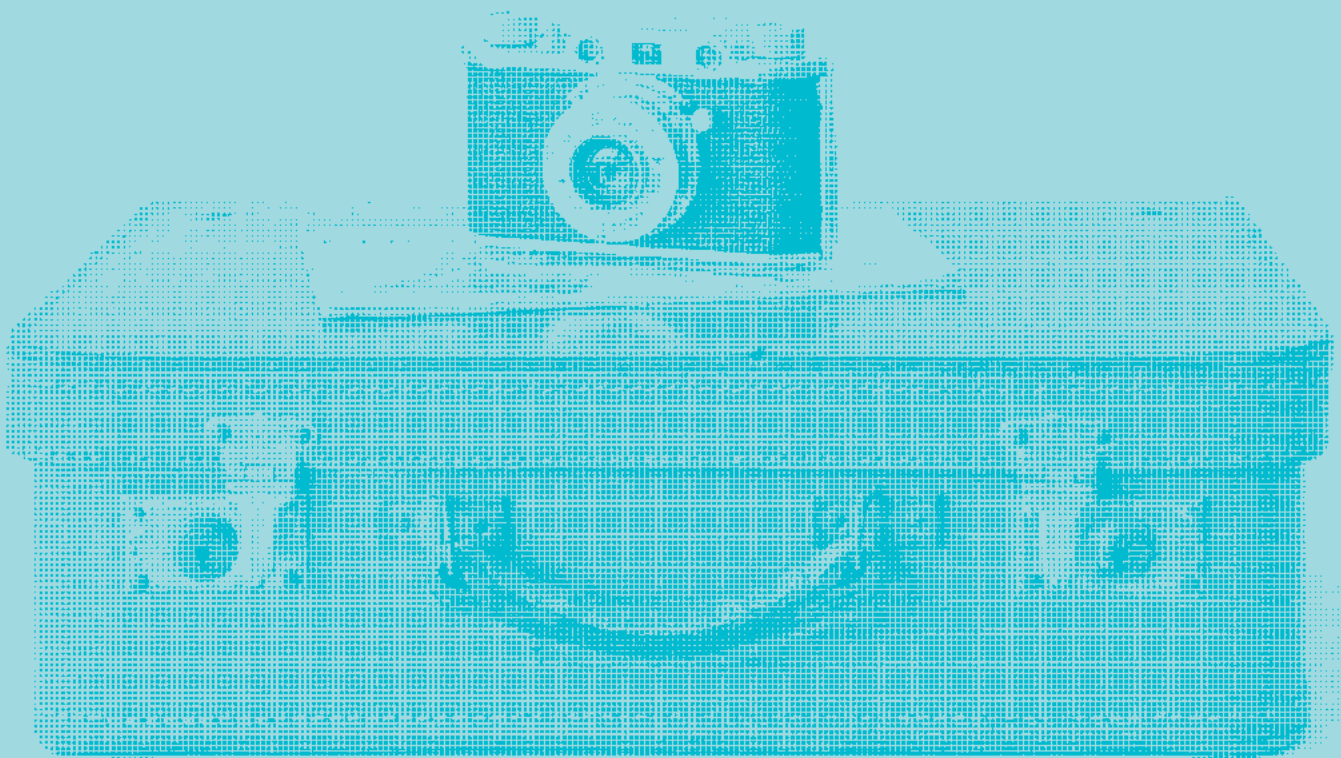
Thanks to effective cross-channel collaboration, some extra effort, and a personal touch, the customer care team was able to turn a negative event into a memorable experience.



INSPIRATION FOR YOUR CONSUMER CARE

At an airport or airline, no day is the same. To illustrate our best practices for consumer care, we've compiled a handful of passenger journeys, based on real cases that our customer care agents handled for Schiphol Airport.

Passenger names have been changed for privacy purposes





PASSENGER: HENRY (28) & SAMUEL (26) **JOURNEY: NAIROBI, KE - SAN FRANCISCO, US**

It's a typical morning at the Customer Contact Center when an agent receives a call from an elderly woman in Kenya, who seems distraught. She's trying to reach her sons, who are passing through Schiphol on their journey from Nairobi to San Francisco. She explains that their father has just passed away, and that she is unable to reach them. The agent reassures the woman and contacts the Mobile Passenger Assistant team, who start looking for the brothers right away. They find them waiting at their gate, where they call their mother to receive the sad news. The brothers get access to a private lounge area to process the news, while the Mobile Passenger Assistants make arrangements for them to fly back to Kenya as soon as possible. They are placed on the first flight to Nairobi the next day and express their gratitude to the team for their compassion and care in a difficult situation.



PASSENGER: JULIE (18) **JOURNEY: TORONTO, CA - BANGKOK, TH**

It's Julie's very first time flying internationally by herself. When her flight from Toronto gets delayed, she misses her connecting flight in Amsterdam. Panicked, she stumbles upon a Self Service Unit and starts a video call. An agent reassures Julie and sends someone over to assist her right away. A Mobile Personal Assistant heads to Julie's location and reaches out to the airline to make sure she is placed on the next flight to Thailand. They arrange a hotel and food for Julie and show her how to find her gate the next morning. The next day, the Mobile Personal Assistant who had taken care of Julie heads over to the gate to check if everything went well. Julie was all set to board, and excited for her adventure in Thailand! A few weeks later, the team received a heartwarming letter from the girl's mother as a thank you.



PASSENGER: ELAINE (77) & WILLIAM (82)

JOURNEY: AMSTERDAM, NL - ATLANTA, US

While stationed at the terminal, a Mobile Passenger Assistant notices an elderly woman looking anxious and offers his assistance. The American woman had lost sight of her husband, who suffers from dementia and has a tendency of wandering off on his own. The Mobile Personal Assistant arranges a broadcast for the missing passenger, and soon the Dutch Military Police calls to inform him that the man has been found. Grateful, the husband and wife have an emotional reunion. Unfortunately, the ordeal had caused the husband to suffer some incontinence. The MPA brings the pair to the Designer Outlet, so they can get him some clean clothes. He then accompanies them to their gate, where they safely board their flight home to Atlanta.

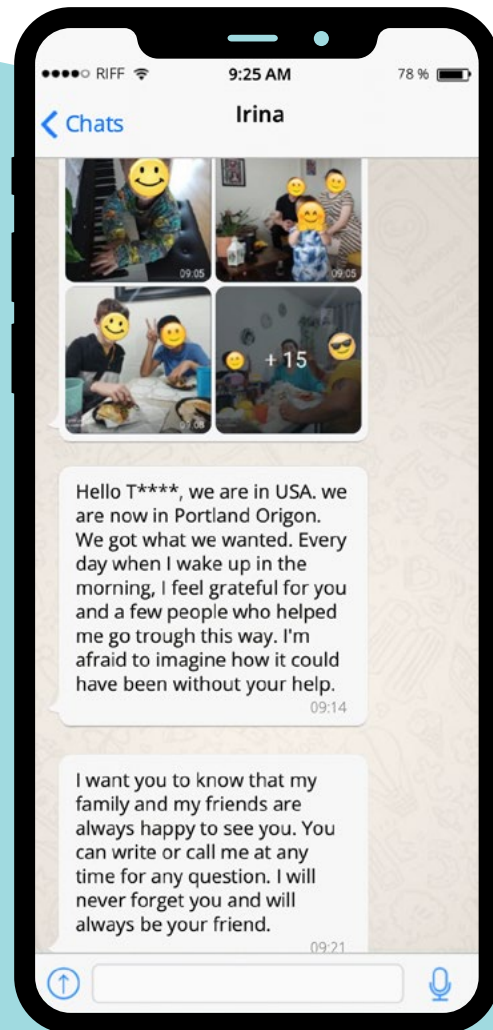


PASSENGER: IRINA (35), DAVYD (10) & MAXIM (3)

JOURNEY: KYIV, UA - MEXICO CITY, MX

In one of the Schiphol Arrivals halls, a Mobile Passenger Assistant is approached by a woman and her two children. The mother is crying, and explains that she has fled Ukraine with her 10- and 3-year-old sons. After a 3-day journey consisting of countless trains, they have arrived at Schiphol to fly to family in Mexico City. Noticing that the family looks exhausted, the Mobile Passenger Assistant first makes sure to get them some food and water. He then accompanies them to the KLM ticket office.

The woman had only a printed email from her brother, who had booked the tickets via Skyscanner. Unfortunately, the KLM employee was unable to find the corresponding tickets, as it turns out that something had gone wrong with the payment. The employee reaches out to Skyscanner and soon the family's tickets are arranged. The tickets are swapped to a flight that leaves the same evening, and the family gets some rest at the baby care lounge. Later that evening, the MPA picks up the family and helps them board their flight. A month later, the team received a grateful WhatsApp message from the family:



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