

TSA takes steps to shorten its lines: Can this government agency be saved?

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In This Corner

A serious suggestion to alleviate the Transportation Security Administration's embarrassingly long lines: It's patently clear that no terrorist will ever be able to detonate a shoe bomb on board an aircraft. His head would be ripped off first. Let people keep their shoes on. It would save tons of time and hassle, and maybe screeners could do a better job in the process.

In a scramble to avoid huge bottlenecks at U.S. airport security checkpoints this summer, the Transportation Security Administration will increase the staffing of screeners at airports that are expected to have the highest passenger volumes, according to a statement by Department of Homeland Security Secretary Jeh C. Johnson.

It's not clear how beefing up staffing at large airports will affect small and midsized airports.

The overall number of screeners was reduced by at least 10% over the last three years because the TSA overestimated the number of passengers who would enroll in Pre-Check, the program that allows eligible travelers to go through security without removing their shoes, laptops or liquids.

Johnson said the TSA has expanded

outreach and enrollment efforts for Pre-Check, and he encouraged companies to reimburse employees who enroll in the program, as Microsoft has done.

The TSA is also increasing the number of canine teams as an additional measure to help expedite the screening process.

The agency also is working with airports and airlines to support non-security screening operations, such as returning bins to the front of waiting lines and other related tasks.

But some observers, including airlines, wonder if the measures are too little, too late.

Travelers got a sneak preview of what could be in store this summer over spring break, when screener shortages resulted in wait times of three hours.

(Continued on page 4)

GDS companies mark strong first quarter

Sabre gets a big boost from Abacus acquisition

The three western GDS companies started the year well, with most numbers headed in the right direction.

Sabre Corp. reported net income of \$114.65 million for the first quarter, an increase of 53% over first quarter 2015.

Revenue was up 21%, to \$859.54 million.

Sabre Travel Network revenue was up 23.11%, to \$625.48 million, of which \$581.68 million was transaction revenue.

Sabre Corp.'s total bookings increased 27.9%, to 134.9 million, in the first quarter, boosted by its acquisition of Abacus International, the Asian GDS, in July.

Excluding bookings made through Abacus, bookings were up 4.6%, driven

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AMC

Communications International Inc.
Michele McDonald, president

TUI sells Hotelbeds Group for €1.16b

Cinven, a European private equity firm, and the Canada Pension Plan Investment Board agreed to acquire Hotelbeds Group from TUI Group for €1.16 billion.

Founded in 2001, Hotelbeds offers hotel rooms to the travel industry from an inventory of 75,000 hotels in more than 180 countries.

Its main clients are tour operators, travel agencies, corporate clients and consumers.

It also provides transfers, excursions and tours, meetings and events, visa processing outsourcing and cruise handling services.

Headquartered in Palma de Mallorca, Spain, the group employs 6,150 people worldwide.

Cinven said Hotelbeds' accommodations business, which generates the majority of its profits, has

achieved double-digit volume growth in both its hotel portfolio and room nights over the past five years.

Cinven and CPPIB believe Hotelbeds is an attractive investment opportunity due to its "strong underlying market growth supported by an expected increase in global hotel bookings, the continued shift from offline to online bookings and bedbanks' further penetration within their core customer channels."

Together with BC Partners, Cinven took Amadeus private in 2005.

Amadeus went public again five years later.

TUI, which owns Thomson Holidays, First Choice and other operators, plans to divest business units that it considers non-core.



Direct Travel buys Colpitts World Travel

Direct Travel acquired Colpitts World Travel, a \$100 million travel management company based in Norwood, Mass., with international headquarters in Toronto, Canada, and Edinburgh, U.K.

Terms were not disclosed.

Founded in 1890, Colpitts is one of the largest TMCs in the northeast U.S.

Direct Travel, based in Mahwah, N.J., has been buying up agencies at a rapid clip.

In 2014, it acquired Travel Destinations Management Group of Owings Mills, Md.; Caldwell Travel, Nashville, Tenn.; Hurley Travel Experts, Portland, Maine; Child Travel | Albany Travel, Burlington, Vt., and Albany, N.Y.; Peak Travel Group, San Jose, Calif., and Best Travel and Tours, Chicago.

Last year, it acquired Hobson Travel, Naperville, Ill.; Suzi Davis Travel, Bloomington, Ill., and Creative Group, Chicago.

Operator of members-only hotel site raises \$4.5m in funding

Tokyo-based Loco Partners, which operates Relux, a private sale hotel booking site, raised 500 million yen (about \$4.5 million) in a funding round led by KDDI Open

Innovation Fund.

The private sale model allows hotels to offload distressed inventory at a discount without setting off a rate war or harming the brand.

Travix to integrate Routehappy's airline ancillary content

Travix, a large online travel company based in Oosterhout, Netherlands, signed an agreement to integrate information about flight amenities and services and rich air-



line content from the Routehappy Hub and Routehappy's Scores & Amenities API into its shopping results.

Travix expects to launch Routehappy amenities later in the

second quarter, followed by airline rich content Universal Product Attributes from the Routehappy Hub in the third quarter.

The content will be integrated into the company's five online brands: CheapTickets.nl, BudgetAir.com, Vliegwinkel.nl, Flugladen.de and Vayama.com.

It will be displayed in multiple languages, including Dutch, German and French, from the outset.

Routehappy and Travix are inviting airlines to participate in the integration, which will allow them

to display their rich content on all Travix sites.

Users will be able to see relevant features like aircraft, seat,



food and beverage and entertainment offerings more directly in their flight results, through descriptive text, photos, 360° virtual tours and videos.

Sabre launches Commercial Analytics solution with Aeroflot

Aeroflot is using Sabre Airline Solutions' AirVision Commercial Analytics to obtain a consolidated and accurate view of data generated from across its commercial planning division.

By bringing that data into one place, Commercial Analytics is able to provide airlines with unique and actionable insights to enable more informed decisions.

Commercial Analytics was de-

signed to help airlines optimize revenue per passenger instead of revenue per seat.



It takes an analytical approach to customer segmentation, partnerships and alliances to identify new

revenue streams.

Sabre said Commercial Analytics is the only solution in the market to measure the impact of passenger behavior on an airline's revenue, helping airlines become true retailers.

Aeroflot, the launch customer, said the solution "will give us true visibility into forward-looking interline revenue and code-share opportunities that would otherwise be missed."

Expedia-Amadeus deal adds Orbitz brands, broader content

Expedia Inc. and Amadeus IT Group signed a new long-term agreement that will expand the ways in which the online travel company uses the GDS.

The agreement adds Orbitz Worldwide brands — Orbitz.com, CheapTickets, ebookers, HotelClub, Orbitz Partner Network and Orbitz for Business — in addition to the Expedia, Hotwire, Travelocity, Wotif Group, Expedia

Affiliate Network and Egencia brands.

It will also allow Expedia to use Amadeus content around the world, bringing uniformity to the various agreements that its brands had with Amadeus.

Expedia noted that it has "important" partnerships with the other GDS companies and "as always, we will look for the best content for our travelers."

Air will continue to be the primary product for Expedia's GDS agreements, but the new contract with Amadeus will allow it to expand other lines of business, such as car, rail, cruise, and hotel products.

Amadeus said the new deal builds on the companies' collaboration on Expedia Upgrade Options, which uses Amadeus' Fare Families technology.

Airlines deny changes in combinable fare rules violate law

American, Delta and United airlines denied claims that they conspired to change “combinability” rules to eliminate some low fares from the marketplace.

The complaint was brought by a group of current and former travel agents in an antitrust lawsuit filed against the carriers by 41 current and former travel agents in U.S. District Court in San Francisco.

The carriers do not deny changing the rules to protect their fare structures, but they do deny agreeing with each other to do so.

“The complaint never once alleges evidentiary facts showing an antitrust conspiracy,” United said in its response.

“It fails to identify any conspiratorial meetings or communications among the airline defendants. It fails to identify when the alleged conspiracy was devised, or by

whom, how it operated, when various defendants supposedly joined or how it was policed.”

American said courts recognize and accept that “in many interdependent, markets, companies base their actions in part on the anticipated reactions of their competitors. And because of this mutual awareness, two firms may arrive at identical decisions independently, as they are cognizant of — and reacting to — similar market pressures.”

Such “consciously parallel” conduct is lawful, not evidence of conspiracy, it said.

ATPCO also was named as a defendant. Joseph M. Alioto, the attorney representing the plaintiffs, told *TTU* that it was included because it “facilitated” the airlines’ alleged collusion.

ATPCO is owned by the airlines, Alioto said, and is “a puppet.”

In its response, Delta said the “allegedly unlawful features” of ATPCO — the public dissemination of pricing information — “were long ago examined by the Department of Justice and found to comply with the antitrust laws.”

It also said the plaintiffs’ allegations of irreparable harm “are limited to the inconvenience of creating multiple, rather than single, tickets for customers (for which they are paid) wishing to purchase itineraries affected by the rule change, damage to or loss of Plaintiffs’ travel agency business and injury to reputation, even though the same rule changes apply to all travel agencies.”

American explained why it changed the rules.

Ultra-low-cost carriers can offer extremely low fares between particular high-demand cities because they do not have the costs of operating an extensive network of connecting flights, it said.

American often offers fares that are competitive with ULCC fares on the specific routes where they compete. But when those low-fare segments are combined with other segments to create an itinerary that is served nonstop by American — a transcontinental route, for example — the combined fare may undercut what American is offering to non-stop passengers.

Alioto and the group of plaintiffs have tangled with the airlines before, from suing the major carriers for cutting commissions in 2003 to attempts to block the four major airline mergers of recent years.

Their complaint against the American-US Airways merger is still pending.

TSA takes steps to shorten its lines

(Continued from page 1)

According to American Airlines, nearly 6,800 of its passengers missed flights because of checkpoint delays during the week of March 14.

Airlines try to accommodate connecting passengers stuck in security lines when they can, but there is little they can do without disrupting their schedules.

Some airports are threatening to give TSA the boot altogether and hire private security firms.

In the midst of the turmoil, TSA closed the Terminal South checkpoint at Atlanta Hartsfield for three weeks to test a new system that (ironically, some might say) is designed to speed screening.

The Atlanta Journal-Constitution reported that on May 9, the lines at the Terminal North checkpoint snaked all the way to baggage claim.

The TSA is promising that screeners who normally would work at the closed checkpoint are being deployed to speed things up at Terminal North.

Meanwhile, Delta Air Lines is teaming up with CLEAR, which aims to use biometric services to reduce wait times at security.

Delta will provide access to the CLEAR service to U.S. Diamond Medallion customers free of charge.

All U.S. SkyMiles members will have access to preferential pricing, Delta said.

Amadeus unveils tool to help airlines get control of data

Amadeus introduced Performance Insight, a new tool that is designed to help airlines corral their data and determine how to use it to uncover untapped revenue, achieve higher yields per passenger and see a more accurate picture of traveler needs and trends.

Amadeus said the fragmented systems and variety of formats in which data are delivered requires the use of advanced travel intelligence tools.

Performance Insight's cloud-based open architecture enables it to integrate multiple data feeds.

It is scalable and flexible, with no limit on the amount of data it can handle.

Airlines can also gain insights to understand peaks and valleys in travel shopping.

They can analyze and purchase patterns to help them better manage demand and build personalized offers.

Amadeus said Performance Insight can provide a clearer picture of an airline's performance against projections, including revenue and profitability, market share and customer loyalty.

For airlines that are in the early stages of their business intelligence strategy, the Amadeus Performance Insight Standard Pack features five key dashboards, giving insight to C-level executives and the sales, marketing, operations, and revenue management departments.

For more mature organizations, Amadeus designed a series of advanced modules that complements new data sources from within an airline's existing systems to help uncover opportunities for growth.

The suite also includes custom solutions to cater to the needs of airlines around data integration, hosting, processing and visualization.



Guestline launches revenue management auditing services

Guestline, a provider of property management and distribution software to the hospitality industry, launched a range of revenue consultancy services for customers who want to learn more about the core components of revenue management and how to apply them operationally on-site.

Targeted at properties and hotel groups of all sizes, with or without dedicated revenue managers in place, the program's main objective is to demonstrate how hoteliers can maximize revenue and drive profit by optimizing their inventory and price availability.

By managing room rates and gaining competitor insight, Shrewsbury, U.K.-based Guestline can show hoteliers how to increase direct bookings, reduce

online travel agency commissions, improve prices and drive visibility.

Hoteliers will learn how automate processes and target specific customers with particular promotions and e-mails using Guestline's automated templates.

The first of the services, available now, is a performance and optimization review that evaluates the client's Rezlynx Property Management System, distribution channels, online booking channels and websites to highlight revenue challenges and opportunities.

The review will include recommendations for business and process improvements to increase revenue.

Clients will receive a follow-up visit and a full report to review the findings of the audit.



Sabre gets a boost from Abacus acquisition

(Continued from page 1)

by growth in all regions except Latin America.

Bookings increased 11.7 % in the EMEA region, despite being “tempered” by the terrorist attacks in Brussels in March, and 3.8% in North America.

They decreased 2.5% in Latin America, largely in Venezuela and Brazil.

However, Sabre said it did gain some share in the region.

Growth in North America was held back by the corporate market, particular the energy and financial sectors.

Leisure travel, on the other hand, remained “solid,” Rick Simonson, executive vice president and chief financial officer, said.

Sabre’s market share increased 1.7 points year over year, to 37.4%

Before the acquisition of Abacus, which Sabre powered, it included its figures in its market share but not in its booking numbers.

Sabre’s Airline & Hospitality Solutions revenue increased 16.3% during the quarter, with “solid contributions from all key product lines” in the airline sector.

The acquisition of the Trust Group in January, a major European provider of central reservations, revenue management and hotel marketing with a significant presence in the Asia-Pacific region, has expanded Sabre’s geographic reach and customer base, the company said.

The fourth-quarter migration of American Airlines/US Airways to SabreSonic, its single passenger services system, resulted in a 45% increase in passengers boarded via

Sabre booking summary, Q1 2016 (in millions)

| | Q12016 | Q12015 | Change |
|----------------|---------------|---------------|--------------|
| Air | 119.86 | 91.42 | 31.1% |
| Non-air | 15.02 | 14.01 | 7.2% |
| Total | 134.88 | 105.43 | 27.9% |
| Share | 37.4% | 35.7% | |

Sabre’s airline IT systems in the first quarter.

In addition, Air Seychelles migrated to the SabreSonic system on March 19.

Not counting American and Air Seychelles, Sabre reported passengers boarded growth of 10%.

Travelport Q1 segments (in millions)

| | Q12016 | Q12015 | Change |
|-----------------------------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|
| Asia-Pacific | 16.98 | 16.71 | 2% |
| Europe | 23.13 | 22.99 | 1% |
| Latin America & Canada | 4.55 | 4.27 | 7% |
| Middle East & Africa | 9.72 | 9.92 | (2%) |
| Int'l | 54.39 | 53.9 | 1% |
| U.S. | 35.6 | 40.61 | (12%) |
| Reported segments | 89.97 | 94.52 | (5%) |

Travelport buoyed by Beyond Air initiatives

Travelport reported net income of \$17.18 million for the first quarter, compared to a loss of \$7.1 million in first quarter 2015, on total revenue of \$609.26 million, up 6% year over year from \$572.12 million.

The Travel Commerce Platform, which includes the GDS and Beyond Air businesses, accounted for \$578.88 million, a 7% increase.

“All our metrics are going nicely,” chief executive officer Gordon Wilson said.

The exception was in reported segments, which took a 12% hit in the U.S. due to the loss of much of its Orbitz business.

That was enough to drag the total down by 5%, to 89,973.

But Travelport was buffered by its “Beyond Air” strategy.

Revenue from eNett International, its payments business, grew 76%, to \$33 million, as new customer implementations were completed, and the hotel and car rental attachment rate grew to 43%.

In the Smartpoint desktop, “we’ve done a lot of work to make it easier to book a hotel,” Wilson said.

Despite the recent terrorist attacks in Brussels and the earlier attacks in Paris, reported segments grew 1% in Europe.

“The bounceback from terrorism is getting shorter all the time,” Wilson said.

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Amadeus' share continued growth in Q1

Amadeus reported net income of €217.2 million for the first quarter, an increase of 7.2%, on revenues of €1.12 billion, up 13.2%

Distribution revenue was up 4.2%, to €751.7 million.

Lufthansa Group's GDS surcharge "is having an impact on volumes," Luis Maroto, chief executive officer of Amadeus, said.

Coupled with the conflict in Ukraine, LHG's €16 "Distribution Cost Charge," implemented on Sept. 1, contributed to a 4.6% decline in travel agency air bookings in Central, Eastern and Southern Europe.

The drop was keenly felt in Germany, where Amadeus is the dominant GDS.

Western Europe, Amadeus' largest source of bookings, fared better, declining only 1% despite terrorist attacks in Paris late last year and in Brussels and Turkey in March.

Overall, travel agency air bookings increased 2.4%, to 141.2 million.

Non-air bookings declined 4%, to 15.8 million, due primarily to a

decrease in rail travel.

Amadeus' share of the worldwide GDS market continued to grow, from 41.9% in the first quarter of 2015 to 42.6% this year.

During the quarter, Amadeus renewed or signed content agreements with 12 airlines, including Etihad Airways, Virgin Australia and LATAM

IT Solutions revenue grew 37.6% in the first quarter, reflecting the acquisition of Navitaire, a developer of passenger services systems for low-cost and hybrid carriers.

The first-time inclusion of Navitaire's passengers boarded resulted in an increase of 63%.

Growth in Altéa passengers boarded was 9.9%, due to a combination of organic growth and the migrations undertaken in the last twelve months.

Notable additions in the first quarter include Swiss International and Brussels airlines, both part of the Lufthansa Group, and Taiwan's China Airlines.

Travelport buoyed by Beyond Air initiatives

(Continued from page 6)

In Latin America, a region where the two other major GDS companies saw declines, "we grew share, mainly in Colombia, Argentinian and Peru," he said.

"We're also getting a lot of bookings through Despegar," one of the largest online agencies in the region.

Wilson said Travelport will be managing the transition of Virgin Atlantic Airways to Delta Air Lines' passenger services system in

the fourth quarter.

Delta Air Lines reacquired the data and intellectual property rights of the system from Travelport in 2014, but Travelport continues to run the system infrastructure for the Delta platform in its Atlanta data center.

The system is still called Delta-matic in house, but it has been renamed Air4 for Virgin and any other equity partners, such as Aeromexico, that may choose to migrate to it.

Amadeus travel agency air bookings Q1 2016 (in millions)

| | Q12016 | Q12015 | Change |
|---|--------------|--------------|---------------|
| Western Europe | 56.3 | 56.9 | (1%) |
| Asia-Pacific | 25.1 | 22.8 | 9.7% |
| North America | 24.1 | 22.6 | 6.9% |
| Middle East & Africa | 16.7 | 15.8 | 5.6% |
| Central, Eastern & Southern Europe | 11.1 | 11.7 | (4.6%) |
| Latin America | 7.8 | 8.1 | (3.7%) |
| Total | 141.2 | 137.9 | 2.4% |

Fastpay hotels completes integration with eRev Max

Fastpayhotels, a new B2B hotel distribution platform, completed a two-way XML integration with eRevMax, a provider of hotel connectivity solutions.

The deal allows their mutual hotel customers to update rates and availability in real time.

Fastpayhotels is an alternative B2B operator that pays all reservations at the time of bookings, up to 390 days in advance, with no refunds for cancellations.

It focuses on the "early bird" rate in order to provide travel agency customers with rock-bottom prices.

On the Calendar

May 10-12: PhoCusWright Europe 2016: "Unsettled Yet Undeterred;" Convention Centre Dublin, Ireland; phocuswrighteurope.com.

May 11-12: Technology and Innovation in Airline Distribution; Royal Plaza Hotel, Hong Kong; flightglobalevents.com/tiad16.

May 16-19: OpenTravel Alliance Advisory Forum; Disney's Coronado Springs Resort, Orlando, Fla.; mydisney-meetings.com/opentravel.

May 17-18: Online Marketing Strategies; Ritz-Carlton Coconut Grove, Miami; eyefotravel.com.

May 24-26: SITA 2016 Air Transport IT Summit; Hotel Hesperia Tower, Barcelona, Spain; sita.aero.

May 24-25: Aviation Festival Americas; Hilton Miami Downtown; terrapinn.com/aviation-Americas.

June 1-3: IATA Annual General Meeting; Royal Dublin (Ireland) Society; iata.org.

June 20-23: HITEC 2016; New Orleans Ernest N. Morial Convention Center; hftp.org/hitec.

June 22: HSMIA Revenue Optimization Conference; New Orleans Ernest N. Morial Convention Center; hsmia.org.

July 16-20: GBTA Convention 2016; Colorado Convention Center, Denver; gbta.org/convention.

Sept. 20-22: New Generation of Airline Passenger Systems; Grand Connaught Rooms, London; flightglobalevents.com/pss16.

Oct. 18-20: The Beat Live (subscribers only); InterContinental Chicago Magnificent Mile.

Oct. 18-20: IATA World Passenger Symposium; JW Marriott Marquis Dubai; iata.org/events/passenger-symposium.

Nov. 15-17: PhoCusWright Conference; JW Marriott L.A. Live, Los Angeles; phocuswrightconference.com.

Names in the news

The Priceline Group brought back **Jeffery H. Boyd** as interim chief executive officer and president while the board conducts a search to name a successor to **Darren Huston**, who resigned following the discovery of his personal relationship with an employee. Boyd, who also is chairman of the company, served as CEO and president from 2002 to 2013. **Gillian Tans** was named chief executive officer of Booking.com, a position also held by Huston. She was president and chief operating officer.



Gillian Tans

RightRez, a provider of air booking solutions for the tour, cruise and energy/marine industries, appointed **Gary McNickle** director of software development. He was senior software architect at Vision Solutions, which migrates and recovers companies' digital assets and systems to and from the cloud.



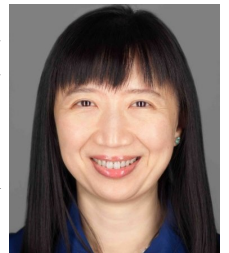
Gary McNickle

Travel Leaders Corporate named **Travis Harper** vice president of sales. He was an enterprise account executive with Salesforce. **Parker Schlank** was appointed vice president of consulting and analytics. He was vice president of growth.



Jeffery H. Boyd

Wai Mun Wong was appointed vice president, global supplier management for the Asia-Pacific region at Carlson Wagonlit Travel in Singapore. She has served as interim head of **Wai Mung Wong** global supplier management, Asia-Pacific, for the last year.



Wai Mung Wong

Dubai Parks and Resorts named **Julien Munoz** vice president of sales and revenue management. He was director of marketing and sales for France at Disneyland Paris.



Jennifer Ridgely

John Q. Hammons Hotels & Resorts promoted **Jennifer Ridgely** to senior director of revenue optimization. She was regional director of sales and revenue optimization.

News in brief

GDSs

Air France-KLM expanded its long-standing relationship with **Travelport** to include the Rich Content & Branding merchandising solution.

Ukraine International Airlines signed up for **Amadeus** Airline Ancillary Services, which enables airlines to sell meals, prepaid bags and other ancillary services through the travel agency channel.

Germania Swiss, which serves 12 European destinations with A319 and A321 aircraft from its base in Zurich, went live with **Travelport's** Rich Content & Branding merchandising technology. The deal enables the carrier to provide tailored offers to individual corporations and travel agencies as well as inclusive and corporate negotiated fares.

Fly Blue Crane, a new regional carrier in South Africa, signed a participation agreement with **Travelport**. The airline also signed up for the Travelport Rich Content & Branding merchandising solution.

Fareportal, which operates the **CheapOair** and **OneTravel** consumer sites, expanded its long-time relationship with **Sabre**, adopting its advanced air shopping data and intelligence APIs. Fareportal integrated Sabre's Travel Insight Engine into its booking path to offer information such the best time to book.

Flybe, a large European regional carrier, implemented **Amadeus** Airlines Ancillary Services, ena-

bling it to sell prepaid bags through the travel agency channel.

Shanghai-based **Spring Airlines** adopted **Amadeus** Ticketless Access, which uses "light ticketing" technology to enable booking in the same flow as that used for traditional carriers. Spring Airlines' content is available to Amadeus travel agents in China, Hong Kong, Japan, Macau and Taiwan and will be rolled out to subscribers worldwide by the end of the year.

Airlines

Lufthansa began using **Airlogica's** Zeus system to analyze its Billing Information Data Tapes in order to control invoices.

Air Canada and **Avianca Brasil**, both members of the **Star Alliance**, implemented the first stage of a code-share agreement. Air Canada will place its code on flights operated by Avianca Brasil to and from Brasília, Curitiba, Florianópolis, Fortaleza, Porto Alegre, Recife, Rio de Janeiro (Antonio Carlos Jobim-Galeao), Salvador and São Paulo (Guarulhos).

Hotels

Hotelskanner.com, a new accommodations website launched by the Dubai-based media company ExMarketplace, selected **DHISCO** to connect its customers with the best rates and real-time availability information.

Twenty hotel clients in the Orlando area signed with **nSight**, a provider of online consumer shopping intelligence. Among them are **CoCo Key Hotel & Water Resort**;

the **Florida Hotel & Conference Center**; the **Omni Orlando Resort at Champions Gate**; the **Radisson Resort Orlando Celebration**; the **Ramada Gateway Hotel**, and **Westgate Resorts**.

SHR, a provider of distribution technology and services for the hospitality industry, said **Vagabond Inn**, a California hotel chain, migrated to SHR's WindsurferCRS distribution platform.

TSA Solutions installed its Front Desk Upselling program to support the 438-room **Mövenpick Hotel Riyadh**, its 12th hotel customer in Saudi Arabia.

DER Touristik, a German tour operator and travel agency, partnered with **TrustYou** to analyze, benchmark and influence the online reputation of its own hotel brands, **Club Calimera** and **LTI Hotels**.

The **Alana Nha Trang Beach Hotel** in Vietnam's Khánh Hòa province signed with **HotelREZ Hotels & Resorts**, a hotel representation company.

Booking.com unveiled a new Booking Messages interface, a chat-inspired communications platform that enables customers and accommodation providers to connect with each other as soon as a booking is made. Customers can manage the most common stay-related requests in a few taps. The interface features automatically pre-translated templates for some predefined requests, including arranging check-in and checkout times, bed preferences and parking.

Back Talk

"See something, say something." That has become the mantra for America's defense against terrorism. If something doesn't look right, speak up. You never know.

In some cases, that response is appropriate. It was passengers who "saw something" and took down the Shoe Bomber and the Underwear Bomber.

But in all too many cases, we see something that makes us uncomfortable just because it's "different." It might be darker skin, or a beard. We may hear a foreign accent, or prayers chanted in a foreign language.

Or, as in the case of Guido Menzìo, a passenger on an American flight, he could have a light olive complexion and a beard and a foreign accent and be doing math.

Menzìo's seatmate noticed that he was scribbling differ-

ential equations on a pad of paper and concluded that he was writing in a secret language, or maybe Arabic. She alerted a flight attendant. Law enforcement authorities were called. Menzìo was taken off the plane to speak with them. The flight was delayed for an hour and a half while this tragicomedy was sorted out.

Menzìo, a native of Italy, is a tenured associate professor of economics at the University of Pennsylvania and yet another victim of the "abundance of caution" that has turned the U.S. into a nation of xenophobic ninnies. Maybe we should change our antiterrorism mantra to "See something, say something, preferably to someone with an ounce of common sense."

Comments? E-mail mmcdonald@amc-comm.com.

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World news briefing

Travelport signed an extended agreement with **Al Tayyar Travel Group**, the largest travel company in Saudi Arabia. Al Tayyar operates in the Middle East, North Africa, Malaysia, North America, Australia and Europe. The company will use Travelport's Universal API to expand its online business. Its agents will use the Smartpoint desktop.

Through its distribution partner in Qatar, **Travelport** signed an extended agreement with **Overseas Travel Bureau**. The 24-year-old travel management company will use the Smartpoint desktop.

Travel Tripper, a provider of hotel reservations and e-commerce solutions, opened a new global delivery center in Hyderabad, India, and will hire up to 65 employees.

SITA will install and manage six AirportConnect S4 Kiosks at **Bahrain International Airport**, with four in the economy check-in area and two in the premium class area. SITA also will provide its AirportHub shared connectivity platform, enabling airlines to migrate their back offices from legacy or direct connections systems to a cloud-based communication link.

ASA, which owns Cape Verde's seven airports and **Cabo Verde Handling**, will implement **Amadeus** Airport Common Use Service and Altéa Departure Control in four international airports. The airports will make use of application virtualization, allowing passenger processing systems to be accessed and deployed anywhere on demand.