



Path to Profits: How the Best Airlines Promote a la Carte Sales in the Booking Path

Airline website examples from all over the world illustrate best practices on fare displays, baggage pre-pay, seat upgrades, and other top a la carte items

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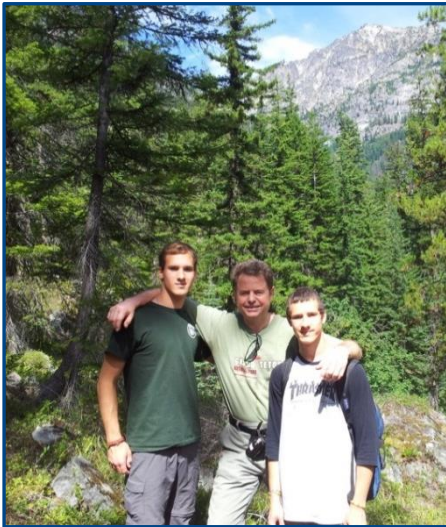
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About Jay Sorensen, Writer of the Report



Jay, with sons Anton and Aleksei, on the North Fork Trail in North Cascades National Park in Washington.

Jay Sorensen's research and reports have made him a leading authority on frequent flier programs and the ancillary revenue movement. He is a regular keynote speaker at the annual MEGA Event, spoke at IATA Passenger Services Symposiums in Abu Dhabi and Singapore, and has testified to the US Congress on ancillary revenue issues. His published works are relied upon by airline executives throughout the world and include first-ever guides on the topics of ancillary revenue and loyalty marketing. He was acknowledged by his peers when he received the Airline Industry Achievement Award at the MEGA Event in 2011.

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Eric, at his favorite summer retreat, Steens Mountain, Oregon.

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Grocers encourage consumers to fill their shopping carts

We've all done it . . . we go to the grocery store for a couple of items and return home with bags of goodies. What began as a simple stroll through store aisles ends with a full shopping cart at checkout. Shopping on an empty stomach can encourage this behavior. But you should know your local grocer is applying a specialized science to boost your spending from the moment you walk into the store.

The layout of a grocery store – and the booking path of a travel site – should motivate consumers to spend. This report will use airline website examples from all over the world to display best practices for the key components of the booking path. Some of these design elements are inspired by the business of selling everyday goods to consumers. There are lessons to be learned from an industry that started using shopping carts long before the internet arrived.



This Whole Foods Market in Milwaukee offers a textbook example of providing a great first impression at the entrance.

The entrance area of a grocery store is known as the “decompression zone.” It’s designed to relax shoppers by immersing them in a welcoming environment of color and aroma. This is accomplished by placing the floral and fresh produce departments up front. The shopper is consciously separated from the stress of the world outside the store. Now relaxed, the consumer is primed to spend more.

The path through the store is strategic because the necessities of life, such as milk and bread, are placed in the back of the store. Along this path lie all the high margin departments — the butcher shop, take-away foods, and the delicatessen. Attractive displays at the ends of aisles are the most visible. Suppliers pay a premium to grocers to display products here. Every retailer knows the additional effort of stimulating the senses of sight, smell, or taste is rewarded with higher take rates and sales.

That's why shoppers encounter product sampling in a grocery store, as it literally stimulates the appetite. Even within the aisles, the most sought-after items are positioned halfway along the aisle. This requires consumers to walk past – and be tempted by – many more products before reaching those most desired. The best store layout balances an efficient shopping experience with the placement of subtle detours that cause consumers to consider buying more.

Retail methods can fill airline shopping carts too

Airline websites can easily apply these practices to booking path design. The home page and the initial booking page should allow consumers to decompress. Images here can allow consumers to virtually “taste, feel, and smell” the travel experience they are about to book.



Stop, look, and buy. This compelling display in the health and beauty section of a Whole Foods Market looks like cheese, but it's actually body soap that sells for \$23 per pound.

The booking path should be clearly defined and easily lead the consumer to the “bread and milk” in the back of the store, otherwise known as a booking confirmation. Attractive displays should encourage consumers to stop and consider adding premium items to their shopping cart.

The ultimate objective for grocers and airlines is to encourage consumers to fill their carts as they shop the store or the website. This requires airline executives to think like retailers and to create websites that go beyond enabling simple transactions to becoming destinations that engage and excite consumers.

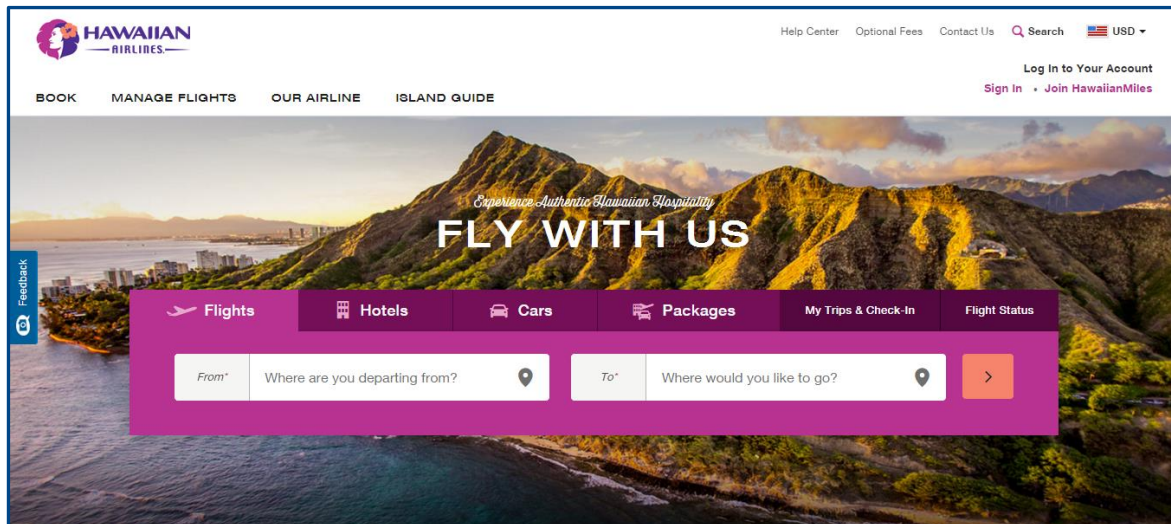
IdeaWorksCompany reviewed the websites of airlines all over the world; unfortunately we didn't find the perfect site. However, in the next pages we offer commentary on good practices regarding booking paths and also on what airlines should avoid.

Home pages welcome and immerse the traveler

The home page isn't just a store front, it's the lobby of the store. It must instantly convey the brand, spirit, and style of the airline. Unfortunately, as an industry we remain stuck in a one-size-fits-all approach for the design of home pages. Some carriers take an all-business approach and feature men in suits and lie-flat seats. Others choose a sterile display of shaded boxes, destination pricing, and calls-to-action for the latest ancillary revenue offer. Most have all the charm of the entrance area of a Walmart or Tesco. For the latter, these airlines should hardly be surprised when only lowest-price shoppers are attracted.

Airline websites that make noble attempts to be bold and different include Delta.com, AirNewZealand.co.nz, and Lufthansa.com. These airlines use attractive imagery to create a feeling of wonder for travel and avoid trashy call-outs that beg visitors to “buy now.”

It should be little surprise that airlines based in paradise-like locations have natural advantages here. The HawaiianAirlines.com home page (see below image) achieves the dual objectives of promoting its home market and defining how the airline is distinctly different. The slogan on the page says it all, “Experience Authentic Hawaiian Hospitality.” This is supported by emotionally engaging text such as “Fly With Us” and “Our Airline” which promotes an intimate relationship between its employees and you the traveler.



One amazing aspect of the internet is the self-selection that occurs while consumers are shopping. By doing a search or entering the address of your website, they have already selected your store. There’s no need to entice the customer off the street. However, once off the street the customer should be put at ease by an environment that relaxes their hold on the purse strings and makes them happy to be shopping in your store.

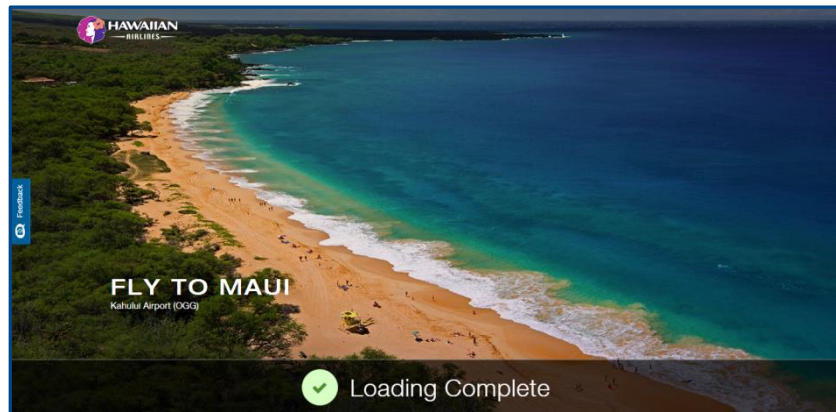
Flight and fare selection are the key revenue generators

Unfortunately, the process of booking travel requires a very early commitment by the customer. After entering travel dates and city pairs the consumer is asked to spend a big sum of money and select a departure time that may be months distant. It’s an uncomfortable leap to make after just entering the store and allows little time to enjoy the shopping experience.

For some consumers, this poses no problem. Business travelers and those visiting friends and relatives may merely wish to conduct a quick transaction. The key to serving these travelers is to remove barriers that keep them from quickly booking a flight. Websites could screen for these consumers and provide a no-fuss path to booking. Perhaps many business travelers have already opted out of websites and now book through mobile applications. The best of these provide an efficient booking experience with a focus on the basic elements of travel.

There are methods to manage the abrupt transition to the shopping experience. For example, the Air Transat website (AirTransat.com) has tabs for flights, packages, and hotels. The site also goes beyond the usual airline offer with additional choices for cars, rail, and cruises. It’s a very leisure oriented collection. Another transition style allows travelers to shop by exact travel dates or to browse by lowest fare.

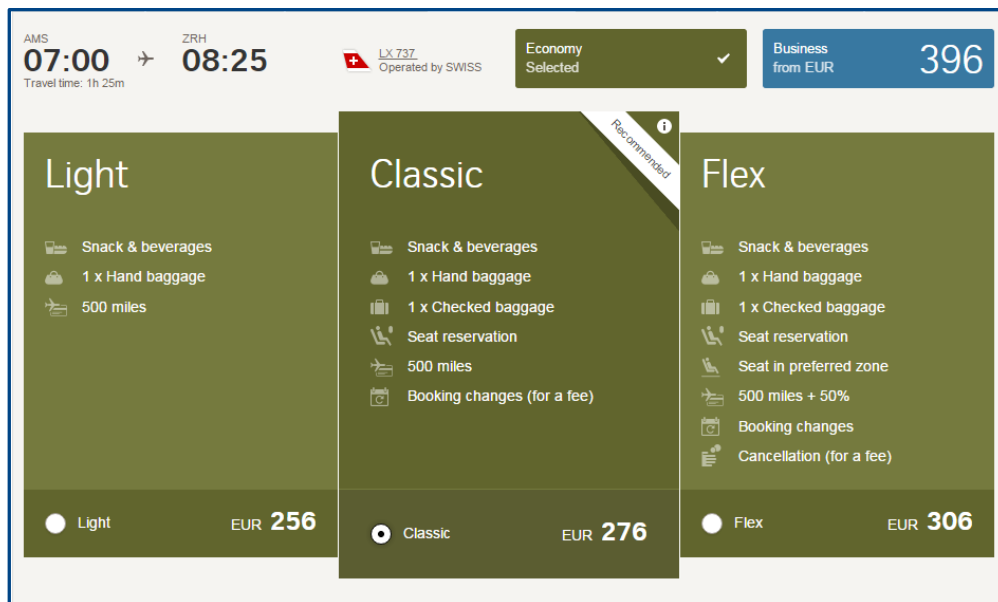
Hawaiian Airlines actually reads the destination selected by the consumer and flashes an attractive image while the flight choices are assembled by the booking engine. It's a very subtle touch, but one which provides a smoother transition from browsing to buying.



Searching for Hawaiian flights from LAX to Maui delivers this engaging image of a beach on Maui to stimulate the senses of a consumer planning a trip there.

Eventually the consumer arrives at the big moment of choosing a flight and fare. Airlines have plenty of choices here; the lowest fare for each cabin class can be presented or consumers might be offered the choice from a fare family or branded fare. The latter method is exceptional because with one single decision the consumer selects a flight and the service bundle which best meets their needs.

Branded fares are easily understood by consumers. The pricing differentiation between products is predictable and rational. Revenue management treatment keeps all branded fares available regardless of demand associated with a particular flight. SWISS provides the best example for the presentation of branded fares.



After entering city pairs and dates, consumers are presented flight choices. The fare display shown in the image above is revealed after a flight is selected. Three branded fares are presented; research has shown consumers are more tempted by a “middle choice” when three are presented. But SWISS adds to the attraction by flagging its Classic fare as “recommended” and using a visually larger display box. The features for each fare are listed in a simple and transparent style.

It's a very attractive display that encourages consumers to choose the fare priced above the one they would normally choose. The offer of three branded fares naturally steers consumers to the middle choice. This is similar to the grocery store practice of placing brand names with good margins on shelves at the eye level of shoppers.

Branded fares are delivering outstanding results for airlines. WestJet indicates its branded fares provided incremental revenue of CA\$80 million (\$58 million) for 2013.¹ JetBlue implemented a branded fare strategy in 2015 and expects annual revenue gains of \$200 million.² Austrian Airlines, which has a program similar to SWISS, disclosed 44 percent of consumers choose its higher priced Classic and Flex fares; 54 percent buy bag only; and 2 percent buy business.³

Choosing a flight and fare is a complex process for consumers, with significant implications. The following describes how airline websites can support consumers during flight and fare booking:

- **Summary of features:** Don't allow the description of features included with a fare to overwhelm consumers. For example, bullet points can be used to list the features associated with each branded fare product. The top product should have no more than six key features listed. Lower priced fares should have a corresponding quantity of fewer features.

- **Fare feature details:** The display of fare families and branded fares should include a pop-up display to provide a more complete list of features. However, this should be attractively presented. The "more is better" philosophy rarely works well here. Consumers won't take the time to study an endless list of product features.

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16.PENALTIES
CHANGES
  ANY TIME
    CHANGES PERMITTED FOR NO-SHOW/REISSUE/REVALIDATION.
    NOTE -
      REPRICING CONDITIONS-
      -----
      A-BEFORE DEPARTURE-
      ITINERARY MUST BE RE-PRICED USING CURRENT FARES
      IN EFFECT ON THE DATE THE TICKET IS REISSUED
      THE ITINERARY MUST MEET ALL RULE PROVISIONS OF
      THE NEWLY TICKETED FARE INCLUDING ADVANCE
      PURCHASE
      --AP MEANS--
      TKT MUST BE PURCHASED A MINIMUM NUMBER OF DAYS
      BEFORE THE FLIGHT DEPARTS
      A CHANGE IS A DATE/FLIGHT/ROUTING/BOOKING CODE
      CHANGE.
  
```

- **Fare rules:** After a fare is selected, user-friendly rules should be available to the consumer. Avoid a generic display of all fare rules that requires the consumer to scroll to the fare purchased.

Ugly and confusing. Perhaps an airport agent might understand these coded sentences, but when selling direct to consumers, airlines simply must place fare rules in understandable language. The above reflects a small portion of the rules provided by one global airline.

For many consumers, the choice of a flight and fare represents a moment of panic. Most realize the lowest fares are restricted, but airlines do very little to create consumer confidence when fare rules are not readily disclosed at the moment of fare selection.

¹ Datalex Commerce Platform brochure reviewed January 2016 at Datalex.com.

² JetBlue Investor Day presentation dated 19 November 2014.

³ "Austrian Airlines Invests Further in Its Product and Fleet" press release dated 19 October 2015 at AustrianAirlines.at.

Bag fees deliver the most a la carte revenue

After choosing a flight, the booking path typically continues with a buffet of a la carte items such as checked bags, assigned seats, and prepaid meals. Among these, bags are the major revenue generator, so special care should be taken with promotion. Baggage policies can cause consumer anger at the time of check-in and while boarding the flight. Savvy low cost carriers know customer service problems can be avoided by providing a 25 to 50 percent discount to encourage online prepayment. But it's more important to provide a clear description of bag policies and fees prior to arrival at the airport.

Aer Lingus offers a good example for airlines to follow with a clean and concise presentation of its baggage policy. The display is very easy to understand due to the use of simple graphics and transparent pricing:

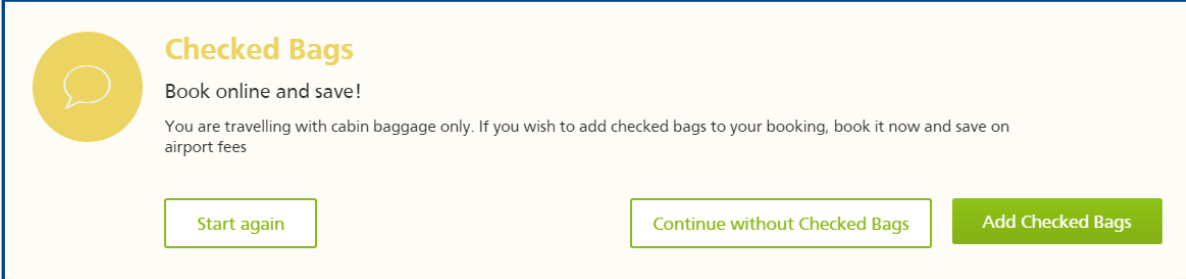
The screenshot shows the Aer Lingus baggage selection interface. At the top, a green banner reads "You've saved up to 50% on airport rates!" with a sub-note: "Cabin weight limit is 10kg on Aer Lingus. Partner flights may be different." Below this, the flight details are shown: "ECONOMY Dublin to Amsterdam". The baggage selection area features icons for "No Bags", "15kg", "20kg", "25kg", and "40kg". The "20kg" option is selected, indicated by a green checkmark and a small orange notification bubble. Below the icons, a row of price options is shown: "€0", "€15", "€20" (selected), "€30", and "€55". To the right, a "Number of Bags" section shows "1" selected, "2", and "3" as options. A summary box on the left shows "George Washington 20kg in 1 bag(s)" for "€20.00" with a "Clear All" button. The subtotal is "€20.00". At the bottom, there is a link for "Checked & Cabin Baggage Policy" and a note: "Pricing is per passenger, each way. The maximum allowance per bag is 70lbs / 32kgs".

Aer Lingus brings sanity to bag pre-payment with this easy to use booking tool. In the image above, a single 20kg bag is selected with the price clearly displayed as €20.

The following methods help Aer Lingus achieve a balance between clarity for customers and more ancillary revenue for the airline:

- **Online discount.** The baggage presentation begins with a very compelling call to action with a 50 percent discount for booking online.
- **Transparent pricing.** The fees associated with bag weights and pieces are clearly labeled.
- **Baggage information.** The rules associated with checked bags are easily found by clicking on the “Checked & Cabin Baggage Policy” button which provides details in a nicely organized table.
- **Easy cancellation.** Consumers may click the “x” or “Clear All” buttons to start over and remove all bag selections.
- **Baggage reminder.** Bag selection is opt-in with a reminder provided at the bottom of the page to not forget baggage.

Consumers in Europe and the United States don't suffer the online shopping surprises caused by opt-out practices. "Forced choice" provides an effective solution by requiring consumers to choose "yes or no" before continuing the booking. As displayed below, Aer Lingus includes a gentle and helpful reminder to those not choosing to check a bag.



Checked Bags
Book online and save!
You are travelling with cabin baggage only. If you wish to add checked bags to your booking, book it now and save on airport fees

Start again Continue without Checked Bags Add Checked Bags

Not just yet . . . Aer Lingus uses "forced choice" to prompt consumers before booking continues.

Caution is advised, as every a la carte item should not be presented using forced choice. It's best limited to items with higher take rates, good margins, and the potential for customer service issues at departure time. This is usually checked bags, assigned seats, and products related to trip cancellation.

Assigned seating puts a price on valuable real estate in the cabin

Seat assignment fees were likely first introduced by Air Canada with the launch of its low fare Tango unit in 2001.⁴ Fast forward 15 years and fees for seat assignments are widespread. Global carriers joined the trend with charges applied for extra leg room seats or any seat when a lower-priced fare is booked. This has become an important category; IdeaWorksCompany has determined average revenue among low cost carriers can range from 50 cents to more than \$5 per passenger for assigned seating.

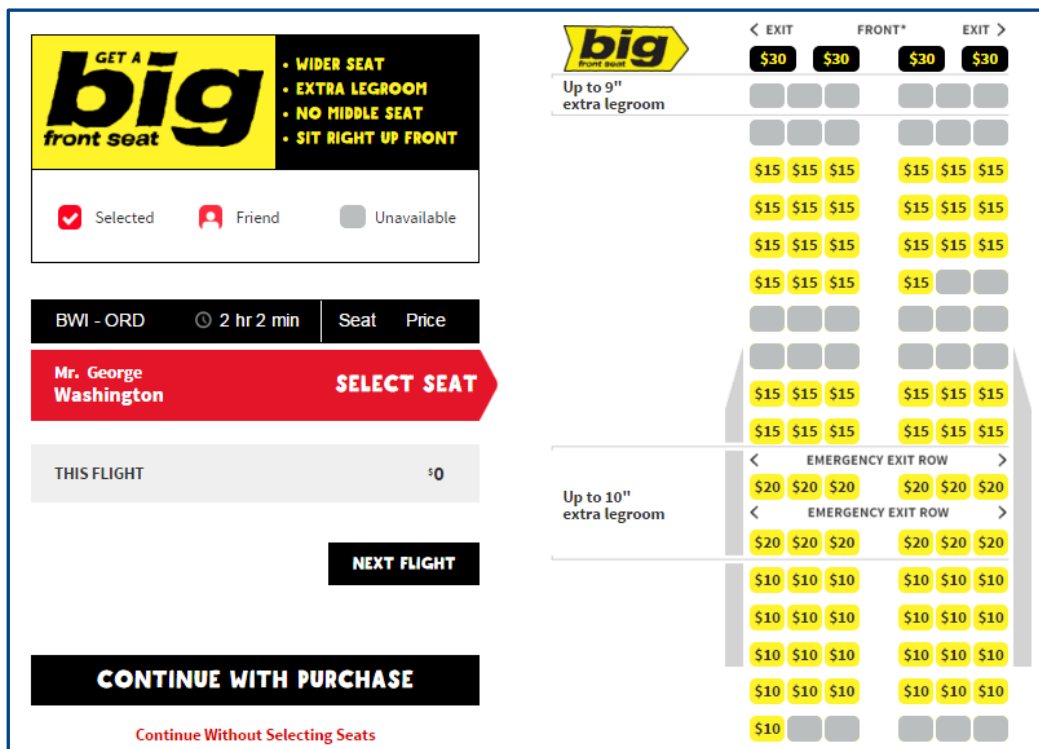
Assigned seating is attractive for travelers who don't want to wait until online or airport check-in to be assigned seats. Many travelers have a strong preference for front rows in the cabin because they are the first to deplane upon arrival. Frequent travelers have known for a long time about the extra leg room provided by exit row seating. Airlines have also known for years which seats are the most popular. These fees merely allow the market to determine the value of each seat in much the same way real estate is priced.

The arrival of online booking introduced travelers to the convenience of selecting their own seat. Early websites blocked exit row seats from general consumers and saved this privilege for travelers with elite status. In this regard, charging fees is far more democratic. The usual online method presents an aircraft seat map with colors and a legend indicating the price assigned to particular seats. All too often the information presented is very limited and without the capability for consumers to click for more details. Making a greater effort here – which is limited to the constraints of the carrier's booking system – will be rewarded with more ancillary revenue and happier customers.

⁴ "Inside Track: Air Canada Announces Low-Fare Unit Launch" article dated 22 October 2001 in *Business Travel News*.

Spirit Airlines is an ancillary revenue champ and aggressively promotes a la carte services. The carrier disclosed revenue of \$76,270,000 for 2014 from advance seat selection; that's an average of \$5.34 per passenger. The approach Spirit takes for assigned seating is obviously effective and the financial result is among the best in the world. Here's what airlines can learn from Spirit's methods:

- **Transparent pricing.** Just like an item on a store shelf, every available seat is marked with a price. Consumers can easily pick based upon price.
- **Extra leg room.** These seats are highlighted with a specific description of the additional inches provided.
- **Flight time.** The display shows the flight time as a reminder to the traveler to seek more comfort on longer flights.
- **Forced choice.** Consumers are required to select a seat or decline the option before continuing the booking.
- **Big Front Seats.** Spirit installs a few premium class seats in the front of every cabin to gain more revenue within the legal limits of the flight attendant to passenger ratio.



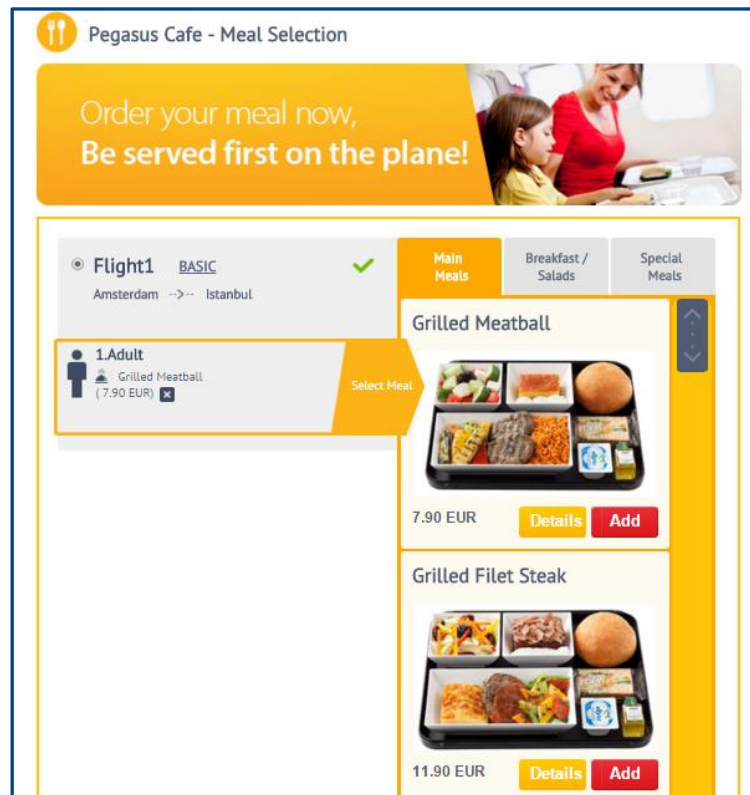
Sumptuous and savory displays sell more food

Not every airline allows travelers to order and pre-pay inflight meals . . . but many airlines (and their passengers) wish they did. This is especially true for long haul flights without complimentary meal service. Catering managers really dislike the guess work required to board sufficient meals to match passenger demand while avoiding food waste.

Food has never been a big profit center for airlines. Buy-on-board programs are attractive because these replace the alternative of providing a snack or meal for every passenger. Low cost carriers know sales are enhanced on flights longer than 2 hours and 30 minutes and when fees are charged for everything . . . including soft drinks and coffee. When travelers can keep their wallets closed and sip a free Coke, they simply spend less. And as flight length increases, the desire to silence a growling stomach grows exponentially.

Long distance low cost has become more prevalent through the activities of AirAsia X, Eurowings, Jetstar, Norwegian, Scoot, and of course long-established Icelandair. They all allow customers to order and pre-pay meals. Imagine being on Norwegian's 11-hour flight from Copenhagen to Bangkok. That's a long time to suffer if the buy-on-board sandwiches sell out.

Pegasus is a short and medium haul airline with an extensive network within Turkey and international flights to Europe, Middle East, Africa, Russia and the CIS. However, its robust approach to onboard catering allows its meals to compare with the best of the long distance airlines listed above.



Rather than an artificial and misleading display of meals on restaurant plates, Pegasus opts to show the food as it will be presented on board.

The Pegasus approach to prepaid meals is very sensible because it operates with minimum space on the page and uses compelling visuals to attract customer interest. For these and other reasons, it represents a good model for airlines to consider:

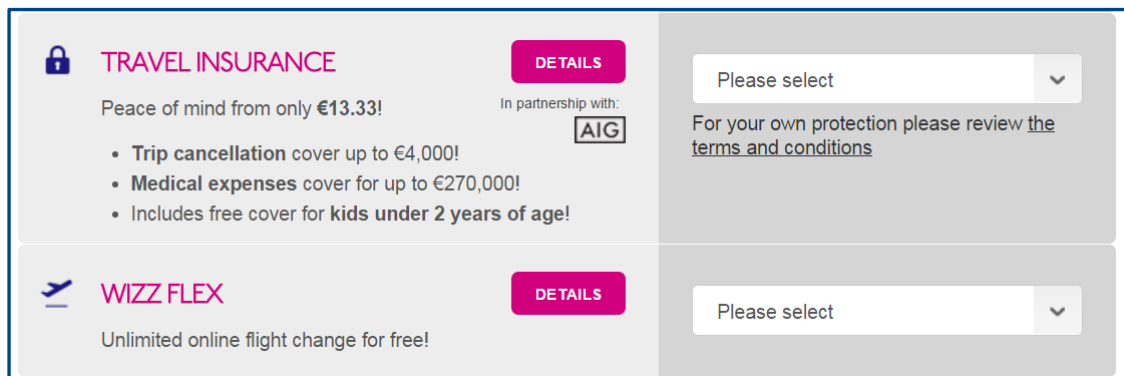
- **Modest space requirement.** Some airlines needlessly dedicate an entire page to the display of meals. Pegasus teases consumers by displaying two meals and hints more are available with the scrolling feature.
- **Prompt delivery promise.** Pegasus serves pre-order meals first from the galley which provides another incentive to buy during booking.
- **Varied meal styles.** Tabs indicate the choice of main entrees, breakfasts, salads, and special meals.
- **Professional photography.** Images accurately and attractively present the meals in the style served to passengers.
- **Meal details.** Consumers can easily click a listing for complete meal details.
- **Easy cancellation.** Consumers may click the “x” to start over and remove all selections.

This a la carte buffet continues with more delights

Checked bags, assigned seats, and prepaid meals are typically the most visible items offered in the booking path. This is for good reason, as these items have higher take rates, generate good revenue, and represent core customer service features. There is far more an airline can offer customers in the booking path. This includes insurance coverage, lounge access, car rental, hotel accommodations, special baggage, car parking, and airport transfers. And there are more items beyond those listed here. This section will review products which represent better ancillary revenue potential: insurance coverage and car hire.

It's tempting for ancillary revenue managers to place too many a la carte items in the booking path. This overwhelms consumers and they will simply decline all offers in a mad rush to reach the confirmation page. Worse yet, they might even abandon their shopping cart. Advertisers who design highway billboards know that "less is more" and the same can be said of booking paths. Include those items most likely to sell for good margins. Leave out everything else and promote these in the post-confirmation phase of the travel process.

Travel insurance is frequently included in the booking path due to good take rates and the healthy commissions paid to airlines. Wizz Air offers travel insurance through AIG and also promotes its own trip flexibility plan. This combination is relatively rare and offers consumers two compelling products (see below image).



Travel insurance is sold through a process which allows consumers to click for more and more information. Wizz Air provides three levels of detail and combines this with other features which remove the mystery associated with buying insurance:

- **First level of detail.** Major benefits are described with three bullet points.
- **Second level of detail.** Consumers may click for "Details" which summarizes the policy with more text and bullet points.
- **Third level of detail.** Clicking "Terms and Conditions" produces the complete policy document for each country of purchase.
- **Company logo.** AIG, which is a major global company, is identified as the insurance company to provide policy credibility.
- **Simple pricing.** Multiple policy types are not offered. Instead, a single policy is offered with a choice of days of duration.

This is a forced choice item in the booking path and consumers must add or decline coverage. The same is true for the Wizz Flex product offered by the airline. Airlines that sell true branded fares rarely build itinerary flexibility into the branded fare choices. Instead, this can be purchased as a layered benefit to any branded fare. Wizz Air describes its product in simple terms: “Purchasing Wizz Flex will allow you to change the date, time and routing of your flight, online and any number of times, up to 3 hours prior to the scheduled departure time. The change fee will not be charged however any fare difference must be paid. The service is not valid for name change.”





The flexibility offered by Wizz Air does not create a refundable fare. Instead, it allows travelers to pre-pay for the option to change a reservation and travel at a later date. All revenue from Wizz Flex benefits Wizz Air. Unlike travel insurance, Wizz Flex is not provided by a vendor. Similar to travel insurance, Wizz Air allows consumers to click for more details and limits the booking path to a very simple benefit statement: “Unlimited online flight change for free!”

Car hire is another frequent feature in airline booking paths. It’s a sensible addition because vendors have made car rental inclusion an easy task; the airline can earn commissions from sales, and it allows airline websites to compete with online travel agents.

Earn WestJet dollars. Pay when you pick up your car. Book now.

Reserve now and pay when you pick up your vehicle.
 All displayed quotes include taxes and fees. Click on the arrows to see other options.

Pick-up from: Vancouver (YVR) Mon May 2 2016, 9:27 AM
 Drop-off to: Vancouver (YVR) Tue May 3 2016, 8:57 AM

<p>Economy 4 Door, Automatic, AC</p>  <p>Budget</p> <p>Total price \$40.80 CAD (includes taxes and fees) \$40.80 CAD/day</p> <p>SELECT</p> <p>Rate details</p>	<p>Compact 4 Door, Automatic, AC</p>  <p>AVIS</p> <p>Total price \$56.66 CAD (includes taxes and fees) \$56.66 CAD/day</p> <p>SELECT</p> <p>Rate details</p>	<p>5 Door, Automatic, AC</p>  <p>Alamo</p> <p>Total price \$96.78 CAD (includes taxes and fees) \$96.78 CAD/day</p> <p>SELECT</p> <p>Rate details</p>	<p>Intermediate 4 Door, Automatic, AC</p>  <p>Enterprise</p> <p>Total price \$78.78 CAD (includes taxes and fees) \$78.78 CAD/day</p> <p>SELECT</p> <p>Rate details</p>
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WS WestJet Rewards members earn 1% back in WestJet dollars on car rentals booked at westjet.com.*
 * WestJet dollars will be awarded on the cost of your rental before taxes, fees and charges.

WestJet is known as a consumer-friendly airline; its pricing display supports this brand identity by only using all-inclusive pricing.

CarTrawler is a leading vendor in this market and its inclusion in WestJet's website provides a concise, compact, and full featured example of car rental retail:

- **Transparent pricing.** The lead price display includes all taxes and fees.
- **Modest space requirement.** Some airlines needlessly dedicate an entire page to the display of cars. WestJet limits its display to four cars.
- **Multiple brands.** This suggests consumers can find a price point to meet their needs because selection is not limited to a single brand.
- **More choices available.** Left and right arrows indicate the ability to scroll the display for more rental options.
- **Frequent flier bonus.** The headline describes the benefit of WestJet dollars accrual for rentals.
- **Easy cancellation.** After a car is booked, it appears in the shopping cart. Consumers may click the trash icon to easily remove the item and start over.

Once booked, the rental car is included in the traveler's WestJet shopping cart. The booking process clearly indicates that payment is only due at the airport and is not prepaid with the ticket. The removal feature reduces consumer anxiety regarding a la carte items. Transparency in pricing is good, and this includes transparency in removing items from the cart.

Great store layouts stimulate the appetite

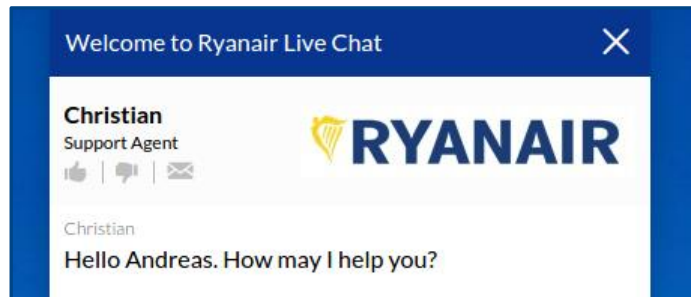
Travel is one of life's most exciting activities, and yet many airlines have made the online experience a series of soulless pages that match the drudgery of taking a seemingly endless online survey. We've all had that experience . . . when the good intention of providing feedback is soon overcome by pages and pages of buttons to click. There are brick and mortar stores that operate in the same manner. These make us eager to escape as soon as possible with the minimum amount in our shopping cart.

Do the above observations describe your website and booking path? The following is a review of lessons provided in this report, along with new ideas that can help make websites become destinations that engage and excite consumers:

- **Create a welcoming entrance.** The world of travel is full of wonder and the home page should be a window to your network. Website imagery should convey the carrier's brand, destinations, and people.
- **Ease into the booking process.** By necessity (or maybe not) the first choice represents the major buying decisions of date, flight, and fare. Allow consumers to decompress by using images tied to the choice of destination.
- **Help your travelers dream.** More airlines are creating "inspire me" features that allow consumers to see the possibilities defined by their point of departure and travel budget.
- **In all things, be transparent.** Everyone wants an honest shopkeeper and the same is true online. Don't be tempted by poor ethical choices such as using opt-out or adding generic "administrative fees" to air fares.

- **Provide layers of detail.** Use a few bullet points – and perhaps an image – to briefly describe the product. Then offer the opportunity to click for more details. And if lengthy terms and conditions are required, be certain to use easily understood language.
- **Honor the consumer’s decision.** Some may wish to cancel the purchase of an item before checkout. Make it easy to remove items from the shopping cart.

There’s one final detail not yet presented in this report, and that’s the human element. Savvy grocers appreciate the intimacy of food; it is after all, the stuff of life. They staff their stores with helpful clerks, butchers, bakers, and cashiers to sell products and provide service.



How amazing is this? A low cost carrier offers online chat (free of charge) while a long list of global network airlines have yet to do so.

Airlines can add the human element to their website through live chat. Ryanair now provides live chat to support online booking. Consumers simply click to chat and a Ryanair representative is available to answer questions. Other airlines offering this feature include Aerosvit, AirAsia, Indigo, Norwegian, and Thomas Cook.

Can you imagine a grocery store without shop assistants? It’s a question that should cause ancillary revenue managers to pause and ponder how seriously they seek to become retailers. Great store layouts stimulate sales in worlds of bricks and mortar and internet commerce. But neither will succeed without the good old fashioned human touch.



Exceeding Expectations

“IdeaWorksCompany exceeded our training expectations.”

Managers and board members attended Jay Sorensen’s workshops to learn from his expertise. His insight brought new dimension to our knowledge of industry trends and client-oriented service innovation. The key takeaways of the workshop provided our team of vice presidents with a clearer roadmap on how to develop our new AAA – Avianca Ancillary A la Carte – program.”

Estuardo Ortiz
Chief Revenue Officer



Airlines all over the world choose IdeaWorksCompany for a revenue boost.

IdeaWorksCompany is a leading consulting resource for ancillary revenue and loyalty marketing. Our client list spans the globe – Europe, Middle East, Americas, South Pacific, and Asia – and every type of carrier. Avianca benefited from our expertise in the areas of frequent flier programs, ancillary revenue, and a la carte services.

Reach Jay Sorensen direct at Jay@IdeaWorksCompany.com



Avianca is the commercial brand that represents the Latin American airlines integrated into Avianca Holdings S.A. The airline, which is a Star Alliance member, serves 98 destinations in 26 countries throughout the American and European continents with its modern fleet of 173 aircraft, including the Boeing 787 Dreamliner.