mobile concierge

A Mobile Application That Empowers Airline Agents To Help Customers Anywhere, Anytime

Airlines are inundated with numerous challenges — market acceleration, as well as pressure to increase profitability, decrease costs, operate more efficiently and exceed customer expectations. Juggling all these issues is not easy. Compounding the problem, passenger demand is expected to double by 2035, and more than 300 airports will be running at maximum capacity, resulting in overcrowded airports and even longer lines.

By Summer Stokes

Travelers' experience today can be somewhat daunting. They travel from one queue to another (from check-in to security to boarding to deplaning and, finally, to collect their luggage). Often times, customers feel like a number and receive little, if any, one-on-one interaction with airport or airline agents.

To help remedy the stress and anxiety that often accompanies traveling, airlines are looking for ways to increase airport efficiently and throughput, while also enhancing the end-to-end customer experience.

To do this, airlines need to leverage technology and customer information to identify their customers and deliver a personalized service that is contextually relevant throughout their airport experience. Data shows that deliberate efforts to create a best-in-class customer experience at every stage of the customer journey enhances loyalty, increases profitability and improves customer satisfaction.

Innovations in mobile technologies, such as Mobile Concierge, provide an entirely new airport experience for travelers. Mobile Concierge enables airlines to:
- Scale operations,
- Personalize customer service,
- Operate efficiently,
- Improve in-flight support.

The objective of Mobile Concierge is to enhance customer experience at the airport from check-in to the lounge to the gates and even in-flight by providing airline employees all the information they need to address passenger issues … right in the palm of their hands. The solution addresses several fundamental challenges for airlines.

Personalized Service Anywhere, Anytime

Many airports lack personalization and are mainly queue-based environments that often make for a frustrating travel experience. With more self-service channels, there is little interaction with customers. Mobile Concierge allows agents to get away from airport counters so they can focus on customers who require a special level of service.

With Mobile Concierge, airlines can now effectively offer one-on-one customer service anywhere, ultimately providing a consistent and positive customer experience. Examples include:
- At check-in counters, off-site locations and self-service kiosks, agents can assist customers with seat changes, ancillary sales, adding passport details to records, printing boarding passes and bag tags, and much more.
- Lounge agents can assist passengers with standard flight queries and seat changes.
- Transfer-desk agents can scan a passengers boarding pass and quickly review their updated flight information and then take necessary action.

Scale Operations

With airport infrastructure limitations and increasing demand, today's agents can no longer be constrained to a standard ticket desk. Confining agents to airport workstations limits the number of agents that can assist passengers during peak times.

Mobile Concierge empowers agents to check-in passengers anywhere such as curbside, at the kiosk, off-site, at cruise terminals or even at specific venues for special events or charters. In addition, Mobile Concierge only requires Wi-Fi or mobile (3G or 4G) connectivity to provide the necessary check-in capabilities for an airline's front-line staff.

Operate Efficiently

Clearly, delays are costly and lead to negative customer experiences that can be amplified by the emergence of social media such as Twitter and Facebook. With boarding and quick jet-bridge bag-tag printing capabilities, Mobile Concierge helps agents get flights out on time. For example,

MOBILE CONCIERGE PROVIDES AN ENTIRELY NEW AIRPORT EXPERIENCE FOR AIRLINE PASSENGERS. IT ENABLES AIRLINES TO SCALE OPERATIONS, PERSONALIZE CUSTOMER SERVICE, OPERATE EFFICIENTLY AND IMPROVE IN-FLIGHT SUPPORT. THIS GIVES AIRLINES THE ABILITY TO ENHANCE CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE ACROSS THEIR ENTIRE JOURNEY BY ARMING AIRLINE EMPLOYEES WITH ALL THE PASSENGER DATA THEY NEED TO ADDRESS PASSENGER ISSUES AND PROVIDE THE BEST POSSIBLE SERVICE.

WHEN AN AIRPLANE'S OVERHEAD BINS ARE FULL YET PASSENGERS WITH CARRY-ON LUGGAGE ARE STILL BOARDING, THE LUGGAGE MUST BE CHECKED. THIS CREATES A POTENTIAL DEPARTURE DELAY BECAUSE AGENTS TRADITIONALLY MUST WRITE TAGS MANUALLY ON THE JET BRIDGE OR RETURN TO THE COUNTER TO REPRINT BAG TAGS. MOBILE CONCIERGE ENABLES GATE AGENTS TO SCAN THE BOARDING PASS, PRINT BAG TAGS AND UPDATE THE PASSENGER RECORD WITH THE NEW LUGGAGE INFORMATION. THIS SPEEDS THE BOARDING PROCESS, AS WELL AS REDUCES THE CHANCES OF A LOST BAG.

if boarding lines get too long, mobile agents can seamlessly create an additional boarding lane and scan boarding passes using the iPhone camera to help board a flight more efficiently.

Another issue that can hinder an airline's ability to depart on-time are full overhead bins. Once the bins are full, agents are tasked with either writing tags manually on the jet bridge or running back up to the counter to reprint bag tags. It is a tedious task that takes entirely too long and jeopardizes the on-time departure. Mobile Concierge enables gate agents to scan the boarding pass and a bag tag is printed and notated in the passenger record, which also helps reduce the chance of a lost bag.

In-flight Support

Today, flight attendants receive a passenger list prior to departure, which provides limited passenger information. Flight attendants need additional passenger data so they can answer questions with accurate information and provide improved support, especially during extended delays, diversions and cancellations.

Mobile Concierge gives flight attendants the ability to review updated manifests, verify current flight information (flight status and rebooking status) and sell a premium seat to a passenger who now wishes to get out of the middle seat in the back row.

Airline Tested

Mobile Concierge is a new solution that is available to airlines using SabreSonic. Thanks to the tremendous feedback Sabre received from its three alpha partners, WestJet, Virgin Australia and Etihad, the technology company made tremendous progress in 2016 and has recently launched Mobile Concierge, creating many efficiencies and valuable benefits for airlines on a global scale.

BOARDING LINES AT THE AIRPORT CAN BECOME LONG, SLOWING THE BOARDING PROCESS AND CAUSING FLIGHT DELAYS. MOBILE CONCIERGE CAN SOLVE THIS PROBLEM. FOR INSTANCE, IF BOARDING LINES GET TOO LONG, MOBILE AGENTS CAN EASILY FORM AN ADDITIONAL BOARDING LANE AND SCAN BOARDING PASSES USING THE IPHONE CAMERA TO MORE EFFICIENTLY BOARD A FLIGHT AND GET IT OUT ON TIME.

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