

PRESS RELEASE

World Tourism Day: Travelport fuels greater adoption of special service for airline passengers with intellectual or developmental disability

- Requests for assistance for airline passengers with intellectual disabilities on flights booked through Travelport have increased in **India by 165%**
- Globally, use of the code on flights booked through Travelport has increased by 89% since the launch of the [Travel Unified](#) campaign
- Little-known SSR code, DPNA ¹, can be used to alert airlines when a traveler has an intellectual or developmental disability and needs assistance
- Travelport has now extended the campaign until at least the end of 2019 and called for all parties in the travel industry to do more to support people with intellectual disabilities
- Announcement falls on [World Tourism Day 2019](#)

Oct 01, 2019: Requests for assistance for airline passengers with intellectual disabilities have nearly doubled since the launch of the [Travel Unified](#) global campaign by travel technology company, [Travelport](#). The campaign drives awareness about **DPNA** (disabled passenger with intellectual or developmental disability needing assistance) as a Special Service Request (**SSR**) code available in the airline industry for passengers. In India, the use of the code for flights booked through Travelport has increased by 165%.

Travelport launched its [Travel Unified](#) campaign in March 2019 after it found evidence of exceptionally low use of the code on bookings made through its global distribution system (GDS)². A poll of travel agents and conversations with non-profit organizations confirmed this was due a lack of awareness. Since the launch of Travel Unified, use of the DPNA SSR code on flights booked through Travelport³ have increased globally by 89% year-on-year. At a regional level, use of the code on flights is now up 273% in Asia, 259% in Africa, 94% in Europe and 22% in Oceania. Use remains low in both North and South America.

As part of its campaign to raise awareness of the DPNA SSR code, Travelport has shared educational ‘sign-on alerts’ and graphical ‘prompts’ more than 10 million times with hundreds of thousands of travel agents across the world through Travelport Smartpoint, its flagship Point of Sale solution that is used by travel agents, among others, to search and book airline seats, hotel rooms and more. The digital media used to reach travel agents is typically sold by Travelport to travel providers, like airlines and hotels, as advertising space.

In addition, Emirati vlogger, [Khalid Al Ameri](#), documented his family’s positive experience traveling from the United Arab Emirates to Bahrain on a flight with Etihad Airways, with the DPNA SSR code applied to the booking of his son, who is on the autism spectrum. Since the [video](#) went live on Al Ameri’s Facebook page on World Autism Day, it has been viewed more than 6 million times, shared more than 100,000 times and received more than 10,000 messages of support.

Fiona Shanley, Chief Customer and Marketing Officer at Travelport, said: “Our purpose as a company is to build leading technology that makes the experience of buying and managing travel continually better for everyone, so raising awareness of the support available for travelers with different needs is something we all are passionate about. We’re encouraged by the results we’ve seen so far and our decision to extend Travel Unified until at least the end of 2019 should enable us to reach even more travelers and travel agents. We’d like to call on all airlines, airports, hotels and other members of the travel family to do more to ensure everyone has the travel experience they deserve, including the 200 million people worldwide with intellectual disabilities.”

Linda Ristagno, External Affairs Manager at IATA, said: “Air travel is an integral means of transport in today’s world and all those with disabilities – visible or not – should have access to safe, reliable and dignified travel.

With the approval of the IATA AGM Resolution in June, our airline members committed to improve the air travel experience for the estimated one billion people living with disabilities worldwide.

The Travel Unified awareness campaign is an excellent example of a company taking a leadership role in this space, and a reminder of how the travel experience can be improved for passengers through a simple 4-digit code. The correct use of DPNA provides airlines with the relevant information that they need to support passengers with intellectual disabilities. We encourage the travel industry to continue to raise awareness of the code and for passengers with disabilities to know that they are always welcome on board.”

Sandeep Dwivedi, Chief Operating Officer at InterGlobe Technology Quotient, stated: “Air travel is meant to be hassle-free and safe for all passengers and particularly for specially-abled. And, when there is a system in place for them, it is our responsibility to let the patrons with intellectual and developmental disabilities benefit from it. Travelport’s Travel Unified campaign is a great initiative that has been instrumental in raising awareness about DPNA SSR code among travel trade fraternity as well as specially-abled passengers. The code usage while booking flights through Travelport has grown by 165% in India, which clearly shows the effectiveness of this campaign. We encourage all travel professionals in the travel industry to come together and make this campaign reach to everyone.”

SSR codes are used in the airline industry to communicate traveler preferences or needs to airlines. They are delivered through standardized four-letter codes defined by the International Air Transport Association (IATA).

The DPNA SSR code can be used by travel agents, among others, to alert airlines when a passenger has intellectual or developmental disability and needs assistance. Many airlines, as well as airports and hotel groups, have initiatives in place to meet travelers’ individual needs if they are made aware at the time of booking that they require additional support.

-ENDS-

¹ The official description of the DPNA SSR code, as outlined by IATA, is: “Disabled Passenger with Intellectual or Developmental Disability Needing Assistance”. The code needs to be accompanied by additional descriptive free text, so the airline understands the support required. Once an IATA member airline has received the code, a response acknowledging the request is mandatory.

² GDSs are vast hi-tech reservation networks that allow travel agents, travel management companies and large corporations, to search and book airline seats, hotel rooms, rental cars, and other travel related items.

³ Data from Travelport’s systems was used for the analysis. The DPNA SSR code is available through all GDSs.

Please note: The hashtag Travelport is using on social media for this campaign is #TravelUnified

About ITQ (itq.in)

In India, Travelport partners with InterGlobe Technology Quotient (ITQ), a strategic business unit of InterGlobe Enterprises. ITQ is an official distributor for Travelport in 6 markets across Asia Pacific region including India, Sri Lanka. Headquartered in Gurgaon, the company provides cutting edge travel technology solutions with unmatched inventory options to its customers helping them increase their productivity and business efficiency. With an extended network covering nearly 400 cities having 19 dedicated offices and 14 REPs, InterGlobe Technology Quotient reaches out to over 36,000 agency terminals, with two nationalised service centres and 16 training centres having state-of-the-art infrastructure and facilities matching international standards.

About Travelport (www.travelport.com)

Travelport (NYSE: TVPT) is the technology company which makes the experience of buying and managing travel continually better. It operates a travel commerce platform providing distribution, technology, payment and other solutions for the global travel and tourism industry. The company facilitates travel commerce by connecting the world’s leading travel providers with online and offline travel buyers in a proprietary business-to-business (B2B) travel marketplace.

Travelport has a leadership position in airline merchandising, hotel content and distribution, car rental, mobile commerce and B2B payment solutions. The company also provides critical IT services to airlines, such as shopping, ticketing, departure control and other solutions. With net revenue of over \$2.5 billion in 2018, Travelport is headquartered in Langley, UK, has approximately 3,700 staff and is represented in 180 countries and territories.

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