



"We Are Witnessing A Prospective Revival Story In The Making"



We are at a juncture of hope and perseverance as the entire world faces an unexpected pandemic. There are no qualms about the fact that a virus of this intensity would prompt people to keep behind closed doors, will cause millions to fear and governments to shut down travel for controlling the spread. But it is also true that we shall sail through this and revive in due time.

What we are facing is a global plight and nothing could be a bigger reason for a collective fight than this pandemic. With the world turned upside-down, we at travel industry are taking all in a stride, staying strong for the country and doing the best we can to pacify the unrest among masses.

As our industry preservers, we have come to witness a remarkable unity and spirit of service with airlines offering mindful services to Government of India - to carry not just impacted people but, following requests, to carry cargo in passenger flights. It is an excellent example of community service at these troubled times.

Being part of this benign industry, InterGlobe Technology Quotient (ITQ) is taking all necessary actions to persevere and help our community of agents follow the same and continue operating. Our teams across the country have already been requested to work from home and keep offering uninterrupted services to agents across the nation.

As the sole distributor of one of the leading and most widespread Global Distribution System (GDS) – Travelport Smartpoint – ITQ is relentless in bringing the latest airline updates to the travel agents and keeping agents updated with developments including on refunds and cancellation policies. To further advance in this direction, ITQ has shared a complete region-wise airline policy tracker for refunds and cancellations with our community of travel agents across India. ITQ has also been actively educating agents about Travelport Smartpoint hacks like processing refunds using linear entry for swifter transactions.

Our teams at customer service and technical helpdesk are available to resolve customers' queries not just via helpline but also via email. In a time like this, such extended services are the least we can offer to support the agents. Needless to say, these are met with excellent fervor and positive response from agents who continue to process travelers' queries including cancellations and refunds seamlessly via GDS.

It is easy to lose hope and human touch in a time like this. Our human resource and client service teams are well aware of this fact. To help keep the spirits up and engage employees and agents, our teams keep providing creative programs, trainings, industry insights including of resilience, health tips, masterclasses with leadership and more.

With the latest update from Government of India (GoI) concerning future plans for lockdown - mentioning no apparent plan for extension post April 14, 2020 - we are hopeful for the industry and people at large. Looking at the current number of cases, it is expected that GoI shall be able to curb the spread of novel coronavirus and we will but slowly resume pace of daily routine.

It is important to understand that panic will only drive us so far; that we are part of an industry that moves people beyond state and national boundaries. We bring a physical connectivity to an otherwise separated world. While the need of transnational and transcontinental travel may pause for a while, it will never cease.

Ours is an industry that is renowned to have survived numerous breakdowns and revived out of renaissance. It is time we recall our industry's revival after financial crisis of 2007, Gulf crisis of early 90's and Asian crisis of late 90's, oil crisis of late 70's and many others. In terms of disease outbreak, previously we have witnessed such outbreaks as SARS in 2003 and Swine Flu in 2009 that have impacted economy and travel industry, post which both the economy and travel industry revived thereby depicting resilience in action. While no two times are similar, they certainly hold the power to teach us most valuable lessons. Let us remember to learn from our past and present, and keep going forward.

As an industry that hardly stops serving, unless absolutely necessary, despite turbulent weathers figuratively and literally, we should keep matching our steps to the latest developments and keep innovating in face of adversity to serve all those who depend on mobility, one way or the other. It is time for us to set yet another example of strength in unity and power in perseverance; for if there is any industry that knows how to maintain absolute altitude, descent, thrust, lift and arise at the right time, it is travel industry.

By **Sandeep Dwivedi**, Chief Operating Officer, ITQ