

## A slow and steady race towards revival

*To ensure swift redressals, InterGlobe Technology Quotient (ITQ) has provided agents with handy ITQ and Traveport Solutions like a linear entry to process refunds. To aid agents in processing requests seamlessly they have also released a region-wise airline refund and cancellation policy tracker.*

Peden Doma Bhutia • ETTravelWorld • Updated: April 10, 2020, 10:49 IST



With the rise of COVID-19 and its global outbreak leading to a nationwide lockdown by the Indian government, the current state of the [travel](#) industry is widely evident. [Sandeep Dwivedi](#), COO, [InterGlobe Technology Quotient \(ITQ\)](#), in an interaction with ETTravelWorld, says that with air travel practically at a standstill, the impact this outbreak has had on the travel and aviation industry is ineffable.

**ETTravelWorld: The severity of the impact of Covid-19 could possibly lead to a structural reset of the tourism and aviation sector in India. In what way has it affected the [GDS](#) business?**

**Sandeep Dwivedi:** With a majority of travel bookings processed via GDS, we have seen the graph take a huge spike in requests for refunds and cancellations in a matter of a month. We have seen airlines releasing new refund and cancellation policies with the same required to be embedded in the GDS, nationally and internationally. As the number of these requests witnessed a rapid growth, GDS operations and its usage has spiked, especially in the month of March. Now, with the speculation of air travel reigniting and opening for bookings post lockdown we have seen some traction in the rate of bookings - yet, it is still too early to comment.

**ETTW: How is InterGlobe working in its role as an intermediary between airlines and travel agents to assuage the fears of the agents?**

**SD:** [Traveport](#) and InterGlobe (ITQ), as official distributor of Traveport technology in India, has been standing right beside the community of travel agents since the beginning of this outbreak. Having redefined our role as intermediary between airlines and travel agents, we have ensured all the latest airline policies and amendments in policies reach travel agents in the least possible time. To aid agents in processing requests seamlessly we have released a region-wise airline refund and cancellation policy tracker for quick reference. To ensure swift redressals, we have provided agents with handy ITQ

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and Travelport Solutions like a linear entry to process refunds. To make the most of the time in hand, we have been providing technical and other trainings and workshops to travel agents across the nation. Further, we have ensured travel agents stay strong through these troubled times with frequent comforting communications including about industry's resilience during past outbreaks and recessions, among others.



*Sandeep Dwivedi, COO, InterGlobe Technology Quotient (ITQ)*

**ETTW: Is it too soon to be thinking of a revival plan? How long will it take to be on the road to recovery?**

**SD:** It is too soon to suggest one, and in fact anyone who is ready with a complete revival plan at such an early stage is overlooking the gravity of the matter. This is not to suggest that a revival is uncertain; it is very much possible and likely to happen anywhere between end of Q2 and Q3. We have to understand reviving an industry of the magnitude of the airline industry is going to take time. It will be a slow process, a remarkable one nonetheless. As has been witnessed over last three decades with crisis like Iran-Iraq war, Oil crisis, Gulf crisis, Asian Financial crisis, World Recession and disease outbreaks like SARS and Swine Flu, aviation industry has constantly remained resilient and has in fact grown in numbers across categories like revenue passenger-kilometre and passenger growth, decade after decade. In that light, if we look at the current scenario with a hopeful vision, then travel, especially air travel, is expected to recommence, albeit slowly, a tad before or after we see a certain decline in COVID-19 cases, both domestically and globally. Further, it is important to understand that the Government of India's plan for revival of the nation amidst and post the COVID-19 outbreak will have a direct impact on the travel industry. It is going to be a slow and steady race towards revival, and we are certain the industry will come out a winner.

**ETTW: What, in your opinion, is the future of the tourism industry?**

**SD:** It is critical to remember that there is always light at the end of the tunnel. This does seem like a slightly dark tunnel or probably a rough road for travel and tourism. It is commendable how businesses are finding ways not only to sustain themselves but also other businesses, for instance there are restaurant-table reservation providers who are offering vouchers with a certain validity to customers in order to aid the restaurateurs and hospitality

industry as a whole. Then we have hotels and online travel agencies offering support to the healthcare community. Needless to say the road ahead for travel and tourism is bright for we are all working together to aid not just our businesses but each other's. It is an apparent decline in competitive business and perhaps a rise of collective endeavours towards a better future. It is in these collective endeavours that the answer to this question rests.

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