HitchHiker 2011

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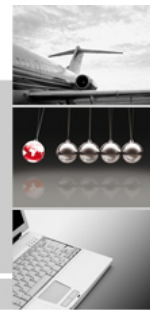
Dear Readers,

You surely know our slogan: "HitchHiker offers solutions for the entire flight tariff management, booking and ticketing process". Now we would like to visualise in a Customer Case Study how our solutions can be applied throughout this process and thus lead to productivity gains and lower distribution cost.

As an example we will present how we streamline and automate the workflow of STA IDIV – the international wholesale division of STA Travel.

Kind regards,

Melanie Blumentritt
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HitchHiker GmbH

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Customer Case Study:

STA Travel International Division manage their entire flight process using HitchHiker solutions

With automated and streamlined workflows, enabled by HitchHiker, STA International Division (STA IDIV) has achieved their key objectives of reducing cost, errors and risks. STA IDIV is the global wholesale division of STA Travel and works with around 150 partner agencies and franchises in around 50 countries. STA IDIV partners operate their own businesses as student and youth travel specialists in their local market, while STA IDIV supplies air and land products for the partners to sell under their banner.

"Air travel is our most complex product. For the loading, distribution and ticketing of our different net fares we need a high performance solution. We have been working with HitchHiker for 3 years now and have successfully implemented many projects. With their flight expertise, HitchHiker has proved a great partner for scalable and automated solutions allowing us to operate across many time zones, currencies and GDS platforms" states **Clare de Bono**, General Manager Operations & Systems Development of STA Travel International.

The tariff management workflow at STA IDIV commences with the loading of net fares into HitchHiker's visualFares Entry. This local database enables fast and easy loading, maintenance and distribution of net fares. The loading is managed centrally in London as well as the distribution to HitchHiker's TeMyra.Agent. This hosted B2B fare display is accessed via web browser at STA IDIV agents in currently 7 countries. It will be available to a further 30 countries by the end of this year. Approximately 200 international agents and franchises will use TeMyra.Agent for the fare display of all STA net tariffs. With TeMyra.Agent all relevant information about the fare are displayed in a user friendly graphical user interface.

The feedback from agents in Norway and Denmark, who were the first to use TeMyra.Agent for fare display, is very positive: "TeMyra.Agent has become a very useful tool for looking up prices as well as airlines. It has been extremely important for new staff who need the basic knowledge with regards to routes, stops and rule restrictions. The tool has given us a better understanding of STA travel air products in terms of booking and procedures."
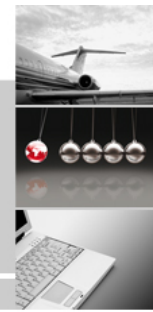
STA IDIV fare management workflow:
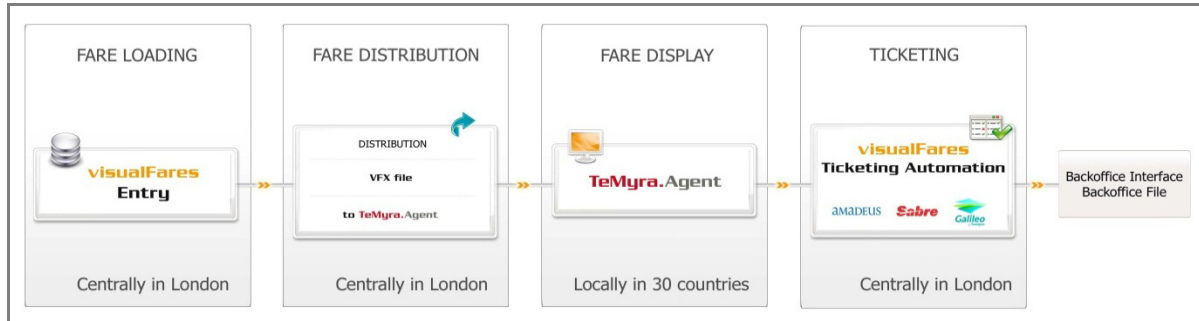
Currently, local agents make the actual bookings native in their preferred GDS. In the future also the booking process could be handled with TeMyra.Agent. All bookings are then queued to the centralised visualFares Ticketing Automation for a fare quote and then later ticketing. This HitchHiker application has multi-GDS functionality, validates the booking before ticketing and processes net and published fares. In London the bookings of all STA agents are automatically validated and issued on the chosen GDS. After ticketing, all information of the booking is passed automatically via a detailed back-office file to a mid-office system for reconciliation and invoicing.

Clare de Bono explains: "Through this process we minimise the risk of ADMs and save time and cost, as fare maintenance and ticketing is done by experts centrally in the head office in London. At the same time agents in the different countries can work with the fares according to the needs of the local market. Additionally, TeMyra.Agent has been easily adapted to the multiple local requirements. The lower costs associated with administrative errors increase efficiency while the automated processes enable better quality control."

Andreas Bieber, International Key Account Manager at HitchHiker, defines: "If HitchHiker technology is applied for the entire fare management and ticketing process expensive ADMs are reduced to an absolute minimum. 24/7 operation of our Ticketing Automation and the minimal mark-up of the STA IDIV wholesale model requires automated solutions. Errors can be eliminated in the first steps of the sales process thereby avoiding problems at the ticketing stage or unsatisfied customers."

Additionally to the STA Travel International division, STA Travel Germany, Austria and Switzerland also manage their booking process with TeMyra.Agent and issue their tickets using the visualFares Ticketing Automation. In a back-office file the booking data is transferred to the Dolphin's Travel Manager System for further administration.