



FlightGlobal

Incorporating FLIGHTSTATS

Data: Corporate Traveler Experience

8 - 9 November 2018 Atlanta, USA

The 60 Second spotlight: Murdo Morrison interviews Patrick Linnihan

In the build-up to the Data: Corporate Traveler Experience forum, Murdo Morrison, Head of Strategic Content at FlightGlobal, sits down with Patrick Linnihan, President, Gant Travel Management to discuss the how Gant using data to improve corporate travel.

Most of us these days are used to ordering a burger or a ride at the touch of an app; changing a flight can be slightly more complicated, especially when disruption is involved. However, when it comes to business travel, those same savvy consumers are not always happy to wait for technology to catch up, and they demand a more seamless service from their airline and travel management company.

That is the view of Patrick Linnihan, president of Gant, a USA-based TMC that has doubled in size in the past five years, with new satellite offices in Guatemala City and Manila. He will explain how his company is addressing that problem by using data to improve its service to clients in a session called “Proactive disruption service in action” at FlightGlobal’s Data: Corporate Traveler Experience conference in Atlanta on 8 and 9 November.

Gant has been working with FlightStats’ Travel Waiver Services product since 2015. By collecting information on airline waivers for regular fliers when a flight is disrupted, FlightStats can give TMCs such as Gant near-instant updates that they in turn can communicate to their clients’ high-end corporate travelers, allowing them to switch their travel plans much quicker.

“It has made us better and faster,” says Linnihan. “FlightStats really gave us an edge in terms of innovation.” When it comes to dealing with clients, TMCs are “only as good as their last transaction”, he says. If a traveler ends up missing a meeting because they did not learn their alternative options early enough when their flight was disrupted, the airline and the TMC will usually end up sharing the blame.

Before incorporating the waiver product, Gant would have to wait to receive information from the airline about any disrupted flights and waivers offered to regular travelers – such as the option to switch to another flight at no charge. The details would often arrive into busy inboxes or even by fax, giving the TMC little time to react and get that information to their clients.

Linnihan will be making the case for the engaged and proactive TMC at the conference. TMCs are useful at the best of times. At times of disruption, they are invaluable, he will argue. “The ecosystem is still too fragmented, especially if there is a rental car, ground transportation, hotel and airline all involved, and all on different booking platforms,” he says.

“It often requires a sophisticated problem-solver, a virtual assistant. If an airline modifies its schedule for weather, and you need to change or redeem the value of your ticket, we can do it faster and more efficiently than you can,” he says. “It all comes down too to your employer being seen to be exercising a duty of care. A company’s travel policy and how it looks after its staff is a reflection of its culture.”



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