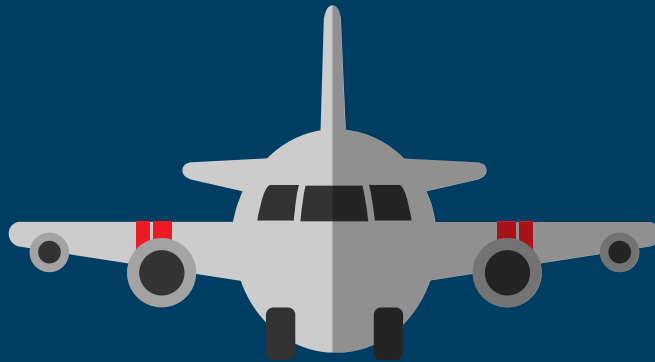


NAVIGATING COVID-19

HOW DELTA AIRLINES SET THE STANDARD FOR
SAFETY, TRANSPARENCY IN AIRLINE TRAVEL
AMID COVID-19 PANDEMIC



A New Chapter for Airline Travel

Amid the COVID-19 pandemic, airlines have been forced to make major changes to their day-to-day operations. Enhanced cleaning procedures, mask requirements have become the new norm when it comes to travel, and Delta has set the standard for safety and customer service. Clear, concise and consistent communication via mass media (news stories, press releases) and social media set them apart from other airlines working to build confidence in customers and increase ticket sales.

COVID-19 Travel Restrictions

When the Coronavirus pandemic started to take hold in the United States, many people were avoiding non-essential travel or it was prohibited under local government. Airlines saw a 96% decrease in passenger traffic in April 2020 because of the COVID-19 Pandemic.

In a March 2020 press release, Ed Bastain, Delta CEO describes the conflict the airline was facing. "These are truly unprecedented times for all of us, including the airline industry. " Bastain said. "Government travel restrictions and stay-at-home orders have been effective in slowing the spread of the virus, but have also severely impacted near term demand for air travel, reducing our expected June quarter revenues by 90 percent, compared to a year ago"

Expanded cleaning procedures and limiting ticket sales can come at a cost the airline, but without these precautions COVID-19 can easily be spread. Delta customers, employees and shareholders are in need of Delta to prioritize safety to keep their business afloat.



"Delta is taking decisive action to prioritize the safety of our employees and customers while protecting our business..."

Ed Bastain, CEO

Taking the High Road

Beginning in March 2020, Delta was one of the first to pledge commitment to the safety and well-being of their employees and customers. Delta was the first airline to announce blocked middle seats and reduced capacity following the lift of the travel restrictions. Delta also made it a priority to interact with and inform the communities they serve - employees and customers alike.

Corporate partnerships with other large, established brands and leaders in the health and wellness community create strong trust in the public while showing the public that Delta is dedicated to their safety and learning more about how they can improve their protocols. Delta airlines partnered with Lysol for a training session for airline sanitation teams, and Delta airlines now carries Lysol products on all of their aircrafts and the products are used to clean. Lysol, a brand known across America has also taken responsibility amid the pandemic by working with those most at risk of contracting the virus while traveling. A partnership with CVS Health provided Delta crews access to regularly administered rapid COVID tests.



Delta has also shown their dedication to educating the public. Expanding their blog/news site, consistent content and blog_posts about COVID-19 Studies were posted and analyzed by Delta PR teams and health professionals. Their twitter page is constantly flooded with safety information and reminders, and the customers are sharing and posting their impressions of Delta's efforts.

The Future of Airline Travel

After bouncing back from the dramatic decline of travelers in the U.S, I think that Delta airlines made the best out of the coronavirus pandemic. The PR professionals really used this as an opportunity to establish a clear and credible voice and a closer and more trusted relationship with their customers. Other airlines made empty promises, filling up airplanes with travelers despite suggesting they would be blocking out middle seats. Delta made the health and safety of their customers a pillar in their business model and have incorporated it into their values as an organization.

