Alitalia first European carrier to sell airline extras to agencies through Sabre

Landmark implementation sees Italian carrier use industry standards to sell pre-paid baggage and lounge access

ROMA, Italy, August 28, 2012 - Sabre Travel Network, a global technology company serving travel agencies and suppliers, has signed a multi-year agreement with Alitalia to sell its ancillary products to Sabre travel agents in Italy, USA, Spain, UK, Belgium and other countries to follow.

In addition to shopping and booking Alitalia airfares, an agent can now shop and book ancillary services such as pre-paid baggage and access to airport lounges, all seamlessly integrated into the reservation process – a first for agents in Europe.

The products will be immediately available to agents in Italy, with the USA, Spain, UK, Belgium and other markets to follow.

Alitalia, which already has a full content agreement with Sabre, has chosen to sell its ancillaries through Sabre using industry standards developed by ATPCo and IATA.

The electronic miscellaneous document (EMD) allows an agent to efficiently purchase an airline’s ancillary products on behalf of customers in the same way they would a base airfare. Sabre provides both the airline and the agency an easy and efficient way to manage the sale and purchase of new airline ancillary products, while also providing travelers with complete transparency as they can see the total cost of the fare and extras.

Aldo Ponticelli, VP Distribution of Alitalia, said: “Increasing revenue through the sale of ancillary products and services is a major part of our business plan, which is based on a distribution of Alitalia’s services through direct and indirect channel. Sabre and Alitalia have been able to implement with timeliness this effective way to sell ancillaries in the indirect channel that will allow to reach, to satisfy and to retain the broadest range of our market”.

Alitalia says it will expand the ancillary services it sells through Sabre and additional points of sale over the coming months.

Harald Eisenaecher, Sabre’s senior vice president in Europe, the Middle East and Africa, said: “This is a major step forward in the evolution of airline product sales and distribution. Carriers around the world are looking to differentiate their product and drive new sources of revenue. Sabre allows travellers and agents to see the total cost of the trip, shop and purchase ancillary products leveraging industry standards. Alitalia recognizes the needs of consumers and travel agents, and by embracing industry standards to facilitate the purchase and fulfillment of these air extras, they address a big need in the industry. Sabre’s travel agency customers can now automatically include the sale of ancillaries into their booking workflow, leading to improved levels of customer service and revenues.”

Sabre has also enhanced its technology to allow agents to add ancillary services after a ticket has been issued. This means travellers have more flexibility to shop, book and purchase ancillary services from the time they make their reservation all the way up to departure. The feature maximises agency efficiency and generates more airline revenues.
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