



Travel Innovation Group Bulletin Number 17

From Michael Edwards, Managing Director

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1 INTRODUCTION

Just over a year on from Lockdown 1.0 and little did we know the challenges and devastation this year would bring, across the world, country, and our much-loved industry. The travel industry, by nature, always seems to be the industry most affected by social, economic, political, and natural occurrences and the Covid-19 pandemic is no different – as we were the first industry impacted and likely we will be the last to return to some kind of normality.

However, it does serve as a stark reminder of how resilient our industry is – most of our partners, both airlines and tour operators, have found ways to adapt and sustain during the most challenging period in our industries history and the Travel Innovation Group is no different.

Across the group we have kept our customers at the heart of everything we do – We Are With You. All the enhancements we have made to our products, services and systems have been with you in mind, thinking about how we can make our customer experience easier and more efficient, given the challenges we are all facing. I have written more about these enhancements in section 3 of this bulletin and they include our Travel Innovation Group API, our Cache product and ticketing guidance reminders for our customers.

At the Travel Innovation Group, we have also always managed our finances prudently and this gave us a strong financial platform as we entered the Covid crisis last year. Throughout, we have continued to manage our finances carefully. We have also, this month, renewed our Lime and Aviate ATOLs and are in a strong and safe position to weather the remainder of the disruption until flying resumes.

In this vein, we are aware that the financial implications around the ATOL licencing and IATA are very stringent. Therefore, many of our customers who have solus ticketing agreements with us have been able to drop their IATA requirements completely - safe in the knowledge and confidence that Lime and Aviate will deliver a long term, cost effective flight provider and ticketing service for them.

If you would like to discuss how you can free yourself of the IATA requirements and agree terms, then please do not hesitate to contact Naomi Moizer or one of our partnership team on partnerships@travelinnovationgroup.com

Rest assured, 'We Are With You', we will continue to enhance our products and services and innovate new ways to assist you– we believe the hard miles are behind us and we look forward to a considered pathway to enable our mutual customers to commence flying once more and the world returning to a new normality...

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REFUNDS UPDATE

a. Lime and Aviate Flights Refunds – GDS (not BSPLink)

We have been working hard to do what we can to speed up the refund process and get your monies back to you as quickly as possible. There appears to be little let up in the volumes of refunds. However, hopefully you have noticed, over the last few months, we have been consistently ahead of our published refund cycle timelines. We are therefore more confident we can now provide you with an earlier Target Date as to when we now estimate we will have your refund with you. Whilst, just in case of unexpected issues, we have maintained the 'Latest by Date' you can have confidence the Target Dates will be achieved. We hope this assists you further when having to refund your clients. Please note that the refund timetables for Lime and Aviate are now different.

These refund cycles are now shorter than those previously published. The target date for Aviate refunds is now 1 week shorter and for Lime 2 weeks shorter.

Lime Refund Timetable

Processed for Refund (email confirmation sent to you by us)	Refund Target Date	Refund Latest by Date
1 March to 15 March 2021	02 April 2021	16 April 2021
16 March to 31 March 2021	18 April 2021	02 May 2021
1 April to 16 April 2021	02 May 2021	16 May 2021
17 April to 30 April 2021	18 May 2021	02 June 2021

Aviate Refund Timetable

Processed for Refund (email confirmation sent to you by us)	Refund Target Date	Refund Latest By Date
1 March to 15 March 2021	09 April 2021	16 April 2021
16 March to 31 March 2021	25 April 2021	02 May 2021
1 April to 16 April 2021	09 May 2021	16 May 2021
17 April to 30 April 2021	25 May 2021	02 June 2021

2 REFUNDS UPDATE

b. Aviate Flights Refunds via BSPLink

As we have moved through the past 12 months, we have gradually seen more airlines re-open GDS refunds, which has enabled us to process your refunds in the normal manner and thereby, where due, activate refunds with the airlines automatically (reflected in the table shown in 2a of this bulletin). However, some airlines have continued to insist we request refunds via BSPLink where we are now also seeing those refunds processed steadily (see table).

The table below represents some of our higher volume airlines who are still insisting on manually managing refunds via BSPLink. Please be reminded that these payment timescales are our best estimates and are changeable based on the airline's circumstances.

Airlines	Estimated Payment from Airlines to Aviate from processed date (email confirmation sent to you by us)	Refund paid over to Tour Operators
WestJet/Malaysia Airlines /Kenya Airways/Tap Portugal/Air Transat/Singapore Airlines	6-8 weeks from refund request*	+2 weeks
Avianca/Vietnam Airlines/Air Europa	12 weeks from refund request*	+ 2 weeks
Egyptair/SriLankan Airlines	24-26 weeks from refund request*	+ 2 weeks
Royal Air Maroc/Oman Air/Air India	52 weeks from ticketing date*	+ 2 weeks

*We will need these clear funds from IATA/the airlines before processing your refunds over to you.

The vast majority of refund claims made in 2020 (up to 31 December 2020) are now concluded and you should have now received your refund. The exceptions are the following airlines:

- Norwegian
- Air Mauritius
- South African Airways
- Virgin Australia
- Thai Airways

See 2d. 'Long-delayed Refunds and Aviate actions' for further information on these airlines.

2 REFUNDS UPDATE

c. Lime and Aviate Groups Refunds

I am pleased to advise that we have been able to speed up our Groups refund process. These are now being refunded within 4 weeks of you receiving a refund confirmation email from us.

d. Long-delayed Refunds and Aviate actions

As stated above, there are some airlines who have not authorized any refunds, even though some refund claims were initiated as long ago as in March/April 2020. We have been taking steps including, where allowable, utilizing IATA's 'Post Billing Dispute' process in an attempt to collect the refunds. We are having some successes and as we do, we enact the refund, as soon as possible, to our customers. We are also encountering hurdles and resistance to the process and must chase some refunds by other means. The main airlines we are experiencing these challenges with are:

- Norwegian
- Air Mauritius
- South African Airways
- Virgin Australia
- Thai Airways

Some of these are in various states of administration. Over the next couple of weeks we will be updating our customers about their individual bookings relating to these airlines. As we are seeking clarity on situations to collect these refunds.

3

WE ARE WITH YOU

a. Setting the foundations for recovery

Throughout the pandemic, we have developed our technology and evolved the way we support our customers in a bid to help relieve some of the stress you have endured.

As we face the prospect of a more imminent recovery (we live in hope), we are laying the foundations to assist our tour operators and agents in their recovery too. Everything we do will be built upon these foundations:

- Providing legendary service
- Maximising efficiency and effectiveness
- Enhancing and utilising our dynamic systems to benefit our customers

Some of the products, services, and enhancements we are creating on top of these elements are listed below.

b. Technology

i. Travel Innovation Group API

Our TIG API is going from strength to strength and has been benefitting more of our customers than ever before. Our API is already connected with suppliers such as Dolphin, PaxPort, Anteeo, Inspiretec, Goranga Tech and Penguin and we can develop the connection into other systems as and when our customers require.

Our powerful integration offers fully automated airfares and (selected) ancillaries as a booking solution for many of our customers who rely on other systems to manage their wider travel offering.

TIG API is a single source connection which opens our entire live inventory from hundreds of airline partners with a range of nett fare types sourced across GDS and NDC channels. Our API can be integrated seamlessly with your bookable website and back-office systems – giving our customers direct control of their bookings from availability to ticketing - as well as booking data and in-depth fare rule and product information.

If you are looking for a way to increase your efficiencies and revenue, then our API could be the solution you require. To discuss further, you can contact our Partnership and New Business Manager Naomi Moizer on partnerships@travelinnovationgroup.com

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WE ARE WITH YOU

ii. Travel Innovation Group Cache

Over the past year, some of our customers have approached us for distribution solutions that complement their high-volume business model. Last year, after significant development, we launched our TIG Cache, which is now live with an increasing number of our customers. This is helping those using it to execute high-volume searches without losing speed to market.

The Travel Innovation Group Cache combines leisure IT economy fares for all airlines. The cache is unique, offering a custom selection of routes and airlines and all their best leisure fares (including combining GDS and NDC fares within the data).

If this sounds like something that could help you and your business, please contact Naomi Moizer on partnerships@travelinnovationgroup.com who will be provide full information and guidance.

iii. Ticketing Guidance Reminders

In the spirit of making our systems more dynamic and more tailored to the growing needs of our customers, we have introduced a 'Ticketing Reminder' function across all our online booking systems on Lime, Aviate and Virgin Atlantic Flightstore.

This new reminder will automatically be sent to notify you when your bookings fall within the advised ticketing period.

iv. Low Cost Carriers

Toward the end of 2020, we launched our Low Cost Carrier product via Aviate. Low Cost Carriers are available to book via the [Aviate booking system](#) and provides you with the perfect solution to help streamline your flights business and increase efficiencies.

With Low Cost Carriers including easyJet, Jet2 and TUI now bookable, Aviate can now service all your flight bookings. All of Aviate's customers automatically have access to these fares and everything you need to know can be found in our recent communication [here](#).

4

BUSINESS AND PARTNER UPDATES

a. Aer Lingus launches direct routes from Manchester

Last week, Aer Lingus announced the launch of some direct transatlantic routes from Manchester, including year-round services to Orlando and New York – commencing 29 July 2021 and a seasonal service to Barbados commencing October 2021. These routes are now on sale via Aviate.

We have also teamed up with Aer Lingus to introduce a booking incentive to our customers for any bookings made with Aer Lingus via Aviate on these new routes by 30 April 2021, full details are available [here](#).

b. Emirates NDC coming 1 July 2021

From 1 July 2021, Emirates will be implementing a GDS Surcharge on all bookings made via a GDS – therefore, Emirates' overall fare costs, available via the GDS will be more expensive. NDC will also allow Emirates to have the ability to offer more value and differentiated fares, if they so choose.

Here at Aviate, we have developed our systems to enable Emirates NDC fares, which means our customers can book Emirates fares via Aviate's website or API – safe in the knowledge that you have access to the best Emirates' leisure fares in the market. Emirates' ancillaries will also, in due course, be available to purchase including seats and bags.

c. Virgin Atlantic Expanded Out of Date Range fares coming soon

Very shortly we will be introducing expanded Out of Date Range product with Virgin Atlantic – bookable via Virgin Atlantic Flightstore. In addition to the Out of Date Range Economy Classic Orlando fares we usually have available for our customers, we will have Out of Date Range fares available to an increased number of destinations; Barbados, Las Vegas, New York and Orlando.

Our Out of Date Range fares are 100% guaranteed and we can offer bookings all the way until January 2023, including all peak travel dates and school holidays.

What is even more exciting is that in addition to the Economy Classic fares we have on all these routes, we will also have Premium and Upper Class Out of Date Range fares available to Las Vegas and New York.

More information to follow when this is launched.

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BUSINESS AND PARTNER UPDATES

d. British Airways Updates

i. Refundable IT fares

In case you missed it, in December British Airways introduced new refund flexibility into longhaul Semi-Deferred Inclusive Tour and shorthaul Inclusive Tour fare rules so you can rest easy if your clients plans change. The new refund rules enable the fare and taxes to be fully refunded if cancelled up to 50 days before departure. Cancellations within 50 days of departure are refundable for a nominal charge. This new refund rule applies to all bookings created from 08 December 2020 onwards. Full details can be found [here](#).

ii. Ticketing Deadline Policies on new IT bookings

British Airways have also announced a new flexible IT ticketing policy to support Tour Operators during these changeable times. For new bookings that meet the select criteria, the original Ticket Deadline will be replaced with a more flexible Ticket Deadline. Full details can be found [here](#).

iii. Longhaul summer schedule

British Airways have published their longhaul summer schedule, full details can be found on the Lime website [here](#).

Enhancements to the long haul schedule include [flights to the Maldives from London Heathrow being extended into the summer season](#).

e. LATAM – now available to book online again

On 12 March 2021, LATAM reversed their decision to leave Amadeus. Therefore LATAM is now, once again, fully bookable via Amadeus and through Aviate. LATAM will still be available to book via other GDS' and we will still accept bookings in Galileo, Worldspan and Sabre.

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BUSINESS AND PARTNER UPDATES

f. Virgin Voyages third ship goes on sale.

Earlier this week, our partner Virgin Voyages released details of their third ship, the aptly named Resilient Lady. Voyage Store is managed by Aviate and is the preferred Virgin Voyage package distributor to the UK trade – we are pleased to report that Resilient Lady’s itineraries have created a huge buzz in the cruising world and packages are selling quickly – departing from Piraeus, Athens and sailing around the emerald-topped Greek Isles and Croatia’s sun-drenched coastline.

To become a Voyage Store partner simply click [here](#).

g. Aegean announce new direct flights to the Greek Isles

Aegean have recently unveiled some great new additions to their network. Including three new direct flights from London Heathrow to Thessaloniki (from 22 April 2021), Heraklion (from 26 May 2021) and Santorini (from 25 May 2021) and a new direct service from London Gatwick to Corfu (from 28 May 2021).

Full details of these exciting new routes can be found [here](#).

Michael Edwards

Managing Director

