

News & Notes

TRAVEL • MANUFACTURER • RETAIL • ASSOCIATION

TRAVEL

Airport Innovation Means Trading Stress for Relaxation



For many passengers, airports are a stressful place. That's why many airports are now offering restful amenities to weary travelers. Most notable are travel spas, concierge services and minicinememas. Passengers can catch a few winks by booking a private, enclosed "napcab" at Munich Airport, or a "sleepbox" at Sheremetyevo International Airport.

United Kingdom's Gatwick and Manchester airports offer concierge services to simplify the passenger experience. Excess Baggage Company provides improved baggage services, which include travel goods and accessory retail in the departure areas of Gatwick and Manchester Airports, as well as London's Heathrow.

The No. 1 Traveler Lounge opened at Heathrow, which includes a travel spa, business center, minicinema, and a fully-tended bar.

SOURCE: WWW.AIRPORT-BUSINESS.COM

A Little Respect

As the cost of business travel climbs, executives say airline and hotel workers are going to have to show a little more respect in order to keep their business.

Rude and unwelcoming hotel staff, intrusive airport security procedures, and "steerage-like treatment" on crowded commercial flights are drawing ire

among many business travelers.

Vitesse Worldwide, a Connecticut-based executive travel firm, asked about 3,000 business executives to select the things they hate most about business travel. Results show that chief complaints include airport security screenings topping the list, followed by small, commercial planes, and impersonal



U.S. Travel Association Commends VISIT USA Act

The U.S. Travel Association commends legislation designed to stimulate international business and leisure travel to the U.S.

The Visa Improvements to Stimulate International Tourism to the United States of America (VISIT USA Act), introduced by Sen. Mike Lee (R-Utah) and Sen. Charles Schumer (D-New York), would amend the Immigration and Nationality Act to improve the U.S. visa process.

"Increasing the amount of business and leisure travelers to the U.S. brings significant economic benefits to the U.S. economy, and the VISIT USA Act is comprehensive legislation that makes America competitive once again in the \$1.1 trillion international travel market," says Roger Dow, president and CEO of the U.S. Travel Association.

Since 2000, the U.S. share of overseas arrivals fell from 17 to 12.4%, despite a 40% growth in worldwide travel over the same period. Last May, a U.S. Travel Association report identified difficulties international travelers experience with the U.S. visa system, which it states cause many to choose other countries for business or leisure travel. The VISIT USA Act addresses key recommendations from that report.

SOURCE: WWW.TRAVEMEDIA.COM

treatment from hotel staff.

Hotel rates and airfares are expected to continue to rise, jumping as much as five percent in 2012, according to a survey of more than 300 travel managers by the Global Business Travel Association, a Virginia trade group for travel managers.

SOURCE: WWW.LATIMES.COM

Growth — Though Slow — Expected for 2012 Business Travel

The Global Business Travel Association (GBTA) released its latest *Business Travel Quarterly Outlook — United States*, predicting slow growth in business travel spending due to an uncertain economy. With companies reacting to a sluggish economy by cutting back on travel, GBTA

credits the expected growth in business travel spending to increases in travel goods and services. Although travel prices are projected to grow in 2012, GBTA anticipates that inflation will affect U.S. business travel rates by 2.4% in 2012, compared to 4.3% in 2011. GBTA predicts that corporations will book 3.3%

more business trips abroad in 2012, increasing international travel spending by 7.7% to \$34.3 billion. GBTA members can access the full report at www.gbta.org/foundation/resourcelibrary. Non-members can purchase the report by emailing research@gbta.org.

SOURCE: WWW.TRAVELPULSE.COM

Heys USA Captures Urban Landscape with Fazzino Designs

Recognized for functional art in sleek designs and hard-sided carry-ons, Heys USA continues to raise the bar with the introduction of Fazzino by Heys USA. Famed 3-D Pop artist Charles Fazzino colorfully captures international destinations in the series of travel-inspired bags. Four luggage sets represent the urban landscapes of New York, Venice, Paris, and London. Each set includes three upright rolling spinner bags and a matching beauty case. The Fazzino Collection was launched at New York Fashion Week in September at Macy's in Herald Square.

"This creation reflects the company's commitment to offering fashion-fresh products to our customers," says Heys USA Group President/CEO, Harry Sheikh. "To have Charles Fazzino working with Heys portrays our goal to shine through current offerings and bring our customers trendy alternatives for all their travel needs."

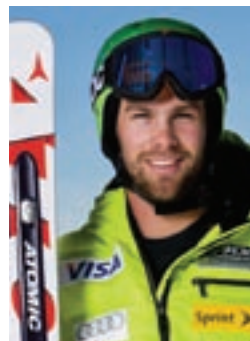


Macy's buying team was on hand for the launch of Heys' Fazzino Collection at Macy's Fashion's Night Out in Herald Square. From left: Peter Doval, Heys USA National Sales Manager; Roxanne Irani, Martine Millien, Sam Archibald from Macy's; Chrissy Teigen, SI Supermodel/Heys Fazzino Brand Ambassador; Charles Fazzino, artist; Fitz Read, Macy's; Seymour Daiches, Macy's Luggage Buyer; Amber Collins, Miss NY USA/Heys Fazzino Brand Ambassador; Evan Alonzo, and Harriet Baron from Macy's.

High Sierra Sport Company Sponsoring U.S. World Cup Downhill Skier

As U.S. World Cup Downhill Skier Travis Ganong preps for the upcoming 2012 World Cup Tour, High Sierra Sport Company will provide him with luggage, backpacks, hydration packs, and ski bags.

"Travis Ganong is headed to the top of his game and so are we. Together, we'll make worthy partners as we draw more attention to downhill skiing," says Hank Bernbaum, president of High Sierra Sport Company.



In his first season on the Audi FIS World Cup downhill tour last season, Ganong earned a spot on the 2011 World Championship team.

"High Sierra is a perfect match for me and I'm excited about the opportunity," says Ganong. "I'm constantly traveling and hiking in the mountains throughout the summer. In the winter, I'm always traveling with the team. Bottom line, I live out of bags, so I said, 'let's do it.'"

Travis Ganong

As Light as Your Little Dog

Lightweight carry-on luggage is a trend in high demand right now. A recent review in *Atlanta Journal Constitution's* "Buyers Edge" included the Delsey Helium Shadow among its "grab bag" selections and pointed out that, while the 6.8 pound, 21-inch trolley weighs little more than a Chihuahua, it still offers ample room to accommodate essentials for a weekend getaway.



SOURCE: THE ATLANTA JOURNAL CONSTITUTION

Topcor Launches Private Label Program for Clipa Handbag Accessory

Designed for today's larger, heavier bags, Clipa handbag accessories can now accommodate company logos in two locations on its American-made circular bag clip that keeps bags off the ground, preventing contact with dirt, germs, and water. Clipa has become a favorite of designer handbag aficionados, and is used in restaurants, theaters, salons, offices, airplanes, and other locations to extend handbag life. Companies and organizations can now incorporate their logo on the Clipa accessory for as few as 250 pieces or as many as 2,000.



Briggs & Riley Travelware Adopts Leading Tech Platform

Looking to advance retailer sales and marketing capabilities, Briggs & Riley has selected shotfarm, a free, centralized platform for the exchange of product images and distribution between retailers and manufacturers, as its new method of product management and distribution.

"We are always looking to support our retailers with leading-edge tools to help build their businesses; placing our digital assets on shotfarm was a logical move for us," says Yvonne Williamson, associate brand manager at Briggs & Riley.

Shotfarm centralizes all product images and information, allowing companies to manage their product images in the same location where retailers come to download them.



RIMOWA Honors Excellence in Sales

Celebrating its second annual Excellence in Sales Awards in September, RIMOWA honored six store managers from across the U.S. for their dedication to the RIMOWA brand.

"This year's awards were very special to us," says Rob Cochrane, vice president of sales for RIMOWA North America. "We have been so fortunate to have the great support that we do from our customers, and to be able to show some of these people how grateful we are is very exciting. These are people who really care about the brand, and we thank them for that."

Award recipients include: Colorado Bag'n Baggage managers Kim Erickson of Lonetree, CO, Eric Bell of King of Prussia, PA, and Jack Richey of Scottsdale, AZ; Edwards Luggage manager Marnie Craig of San Francisco, CA; Luggage 'N More manager Ludmila Suarez of Miami, FL; and Innovation Luggage manager Nadine Toussaint of New York, NY.

Breathe Healthy Signs Exclusive Agreement in Middle East, North Africa

Breathe Healthy, a manufacturer of masks frequently used for respiratory protection during air travel and in locations with air problems, has signed an exclusive distribution agreement with Tamayz Medical a subsidiary of Alajaji Group, in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia. Tamayz will have rights to sell the Breathe Healthy respiratory protection masks in retail outlets in the Middle East and North Africa. The masks will help protect citizens against frequent sand and dust storms.

"Our products are a higher-end alternative to paper disposable masks," says Michael Vahey, owner of Breathe Healthy.

Breathe Healthy masks are a hybrid mask which form fits to the face, eliminating gaps that allow unfiltered air to enter the lungs.

Holiday Shopping Made Easy with Travelpro®, Atlantic® Luggage, and Austin House™ 2011 Holiday Gift Guide for Travelers

Just in time for holiday shopping, the *2011 Holiday Gift Guide for Travelers* boasts an array of innovative luggage and travel accessories.

"Whether your friend or family member is a frequent business traveler, or they are planning for an upcoming vacation, the *2011 Holiday Gift Guide for Travelers* offers a wide variety of luggage, briefcases, and travel accessories that make great gifts for the holidays," says Scott Applebee, vice president of marketing for the Travelpro®, Atlantic® Luggage, and Austin House™ brands.

SOURCE: WWW.TRAVELPRO.COM

Consumer Zen

A recent study, "Relaxation Increases Monetary Valuations," shows that relaxed shoppers are inclined to spend more money. This suggests that retailers might want to consider incorporating soothing tunes, massages, and pedicures to put consumers in the mood to spend.

The study, co-authored by Columbia University business professor Michel Tuan Pham and professors Iris W. Hung from Singapore and Gerald J. Gorn from Hong Kong, suggests that relaxed customers will spend more for a range of merchandise, including utilitarian items and products that require physical activity. Researchers say calming cues promote abstract thinking, which causes customers to focus on the general benefits of products rather than on specific features or details.

SOURCE: WWW.INC.COM

Trending this Holiday Season

The National Retail Federation (NRF) predicts 2011 will “be a holiday season like none other,” and counsels retailers to watch for these top ten trends:

1. Slow and steady. NRF gives a moderate forecast for the 2011 holiday. The third quarter forecast saw GDP stronger than anticipated and unemployment claims trending downward.
2. Keep online presence accurate, informative, and efficient. Online retailers expect their sales to grow by 15 percent this holiday season.
3. Great expectations. Anticipating already low prices, shoppers want to know “what else” they’ll get on top of the existing deal.
4. Popular and profitable. Retailers have streamlined supply chains to maximize regional and local markets. Selling popular products at a profit means easier access for shoppers and access to “it” items.
5. Shop around. Shoppers will beat the bushes for the best deal. If the price is right, they will purchase toys at a grocery store and stocking stuffers at the wholesale club.
6. A gift for you, a gift for me. Six in ten holiday shoppers will make additional “non-gift” purchases for themselves.
7. “Everyday appropriate.” Practical is popular this year as consumers are expected to spring for a \$200 coffeemaker or the \$400 watch, challenging retailers to play up the practicality of gift options.
8. The earliest bird gets the deal. Black Friday begins at midnight for some retailers, who expect shoppers to hit the doors early for the best bargains
9. Free shipping isn’t free, but it works. Shoppers expect free shipping and retailers are paying attention. 92.5 percent of online retailers will offer free shipping this year.
10. Guided by the app. Sixteen percent of consumers will use their smartphone to make purchases. Meanwhile, iPad and tablet owners are twice as likely to use tablets as smartphones to shop from the comfort of their home.

SOURCE: BLOG.NRF.COM

Modest October Sales Prompt Caution

Analysts remain divided on what October’s modest sales increase means for holiday spending. Major chain stores reported a 3.4 percent increase in October sales compared with the same month last year. The results fall short of Thomson Reuters’ expected 4.5 percent increase, prompting concerns that consumer spending will stagnate during November and December.

Some analysts maintain that the modest increase is a sign of trouble ahead during a critical season for retailers. Others insist that October is not a good predictor for consumer spending because it is a traditionally slow month for merchants who are gearing up for the holidays.

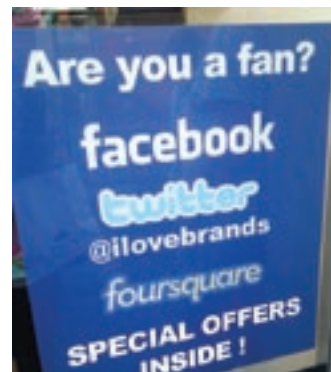
SOURCE: WWW.LATIMES.COM

Smart Retailers Utilizing Smart Technology to Attract Consumers

During the 2010 holiday season, retailers began paying attention to how smartphone options could impact sales. Now, they’ll put those new ideas to use. Last season, stores utilized location-based marketing programs like Foursquare and Facebook to reward customers for “checking in.” This year, messages detailing proximity, directions, deals, and product availability will be part of the lure.

“Thanks to the ‘Groupon effect,’ shoppers now expect more ‘deal of the day’ offers,” says Mark Niehaus, director at Acquity Group. “It’s a great retail strategy to get people in stores more frequently and earlier in the season.”

SOURCE: WWW.ADWEEK.COM



ALDA Seeks Former Members

The American Luggage Dealers Association (ALDA), a cooperative, is searching for former members who hold Certificates of Interest. Following completion of the financial obligations of its merger with the National Luggage Dealers Association (NLDA), ALDA will redeem all Certificates of Interest starting January 2012.

Anyone with info about the following former members should contact Frank Fine, ALDA (505) 345-5155, or at finefrank@gmail.com.

- Stephen Jennings, Complete Traveler, Grand Junction, Colorado
- Rick Hurd and Sean Riley, Humidor One, Southfield, Michigan
- Max Burns, Humidor One/Panache, Southfield, Michigan
- H.S. Bhasin, Kensington Luggage, Fountain Valley, California
- Al Zarzana, Stefano di Carmel, Carmel, California
- Robert or James Madosky, Maison Jacques/Luggage & Leather Repair, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, or Oaklyn, New Jersey
- Abe Feller, A to Z Luggage, Brooklyn, New York
- Ann Speier, Monterey Luggage, Monterey or Salinas, California

Boomers Gaining Tech Edge for Holiday Shopping

Gen Y still dominates the online, “social shopping” market, but a recent holiday spending survey shows that shoppers utilizing digital and online shopping experiences are spreading across age and income groups.

“When it comes to online and social media, we are seeing a bit of flattening of the bell curve,” says Scott Erikson, a Minneapolis-based partner in Deloitte’s retail practice.

Erikson says Gen Y is more likely to embrace Black Friday traditions (42%), as well as shopping on Cyber Monday (37%). Lower-income shoppers (earning less than \$100,000) indicate that they search the Internet for bargains. Yet overall, 59% of lower-income shoppers expect to spend the same or more than they did last year.

SOURCE: WWW.MEDIAPOST.COM