

Continental Airlines Celebrate at Airline of the Year



Continental Airlines was named OAG Airline of the Year 2004 at a glittering ceremony at The Park Lane Hotel, London on the 20th May.

The OAG Airline of the Year Awards are now in their 22nd year and they continue to demonstrate our commitment to the industry by recognising excellence in air travel. They are considered significant and valued accolades because they are voted for by some of the most frequent flyers in the world – subscribers to OAG electronic and print products.

Continental Airlines is the first US based carrier to win the title since the awards were established and their team celebrated in style at the ceremony which was attended by many familiar names and faces from the industry. Recognition of Continental's excellent service was further reflected by the airline winning the award for Best Business Class and Best Airline based in North America, as well as being short listed in three other categories.

Airport of the Year went to Dubai International Airport. This was an extremely closely contested category and Dubai deserves congratulations for narrowly beating Singapore Changi, who have held the airport title for eight consecutive years.

The Asia Pacific region fared very well, with Singapore Airlines taking home four awards including Best International First Class and Best Economy/Coach Class.



OAG Chairman Eddie Bell, Tim Kennedy, Managing Director Europe & Middle East for Continental Airlines and OAG CEO Les Higgins

Cathay Pacific Airways won Best Trans-Pacific Airline, and Australian based Virgin Blue won best Low Cost/No Frills Airline, beating the incumbent title holder Southwest Airlines as well as easyJet and Ryanair.

Within Europe, British Airways took home two prestigious awards: Best Airline Based in Western Europe and Best Trans-Atlantic Airline. CSA Czech Airlines won Best Airline based in Central/Eastern Europe for the first time.

The Outstanding Service Award, presented to airline or airport staff who have acted above and beyond the call of duty, always adds a more thoughtful moment to the evening. This year the award was presented to bmi stewardesses Karen Cornelius, Sally Cast and Ellen Davies, whose quick thinking and cool heads saved a passenger who suffered a massive heart attack on board a flight from Chicago to London.

It is always a privilege to have the opportunity to celebrate success within the industry. The OAG Airline of the Year Awards provides one of those special moments when we can recognise the achievements of our colleagues. You can read more about the Awards in this issue of OAG data News and if you want to see more pictures of the evening please visit our website at www.oag.com

Celebration is something that we don't hear much about – the aviation industry has seen many ups and downs in recent years and with fuel prices continuing to raise this seems to be the next hurdle for everyone to jump. But celebrate we should. In addition to the awards, OAG analysis does show that the number of worldwide flights is on the increase and that is a credit to everyone's efforts as they continue to face new challenges on a daily basis.

One of those challenges is the evolution of new technologies and how best to embrace them and turn them into opportunities. By using OAG's skills as a global content manager and then partnering with organisations that bring unique technical expertise, we have already brought a number of new innovations to the market in record time.

You can read about our latest PDA development, OAG FlightFinder, in this issue. If you are attending the IATA Schedules conference in Toronto or the ACI European Assembly in Nice we would be happy to demonstrate all our latest developments and discuss any questions you may have.



Duncan Alexander, Managing Director, Business Development

If you are not able to attend these events and there is anything in this issue that you would like to discuss further then please do not hesitate to contact me at duncanalexander@oag.com

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Collecting the Award for Outstanding Service.
Ellen Davies, bmi Chief Executive Austin Reid and Sally Cast

Using bmi's special diagnostic equipment, the stewardesses linked up via satellite with doctors on the casualty unit of an Arizona hospital and literally helped save passenger Stephen Clarke's life.

The three colleagues accepted the award from bmi Chief Executive Austin Reid who commented: "We are delighted that Karen, Sally and Ellen have been recognised for their life-saving actions. They represent the spirit of bmi and deserve to be applauded for their professionalism in such challenging conditions."

A brand new category was introduced for 2004, Best Marketing Campaign, which was won by United Airlines for their "We Are United UK" campaign.

A special award, for Lifetime Achievement, was presented to Lord Marshall, Chairman of British Airways. Eddie Bell, Chairman of OAG, praised Lord Marshall's great contribution to the airline industry over the last 20 years saying: "He has done a spectacular job, in difficult circumstances, for the airline industry. His long standing service and valuable contribution has been magnificent, guiding BA through some turbulent times."



Lord Marshall receiving his Lifetime Achievement Award from Eddie Bell and Clive Anderson

Eddie who co-presented the awards with TV personality Clive Anderson summarised the evening's events: "Congratulations to Continental Airlines on winning the OAG Airline of the Year Awards. Continental has consistently improved the quality of its service and this fact has been duly recognised by its customers. OAG is proud to be able to publicly recognise the highest standards within the industry and all the nominees should feel exceptionally proud of their achievement."

Airline of the Year 2004

Winner: Continental Airlines

Finalists: British Airways, CSA Czech Airlines, Emirates, LanChile, Qantas Airways, Singapore Airlines, South African Airways

Best Airline Based in Western Europe

Winner: British Airways

Nominees: bmi, KLM Royal Dutch Airlines, Lufthansa, SWISS

Best Airline Based in Central/Eastern Europe

Winner: CSA Czech Airlines

Nominees: Aeroflot Russian Airlines, LOT Polish Airlines, MALEV Hungarian Airlines

Best Airline Based in Asia

Winner: Singapore Airlines

Nominees: Cathay Pacific Airways, Japan Airlines, Malaysia Airlines, Thai Airways

Best Airline Based in Central/South America & Caribbean

Winner: LanChile

Nominees: Aeromexico, Mexicana, VARIG

Best Airline Based in North America

Winner: Continental Airlines

Nominees: Air Canada, American Airlines, Northwest Airlines, United Airlines

Best Airline Based in Australasia/Pacific

Winner: Qantas Airways

Nominees: Air New Zealand, Australian Airlines, Virgin Blue

Best Airline Based in the Middle East/Indian Sub-Continent

Winner: Emirates

Nominees: EL AL Israel Airlines, Jet Airways, Qatar Airways, Gulf Air

Best Airline Based in Africa

Winner: South African Airways

Nominees: Comair, Egyptair, Kenya Airways

Best Europe to Far East/Australasia Airline

Winner: Singapore Airlines

Nominees: British Airways, Cathay Pacific Airways, Lufthansa, Qantas Airways

Best Trans-Pacific Airline

Winner: Cathay Pacific Airways

Nominees: Japan Airlines, Qantas Airways, Singapore Airlines, United Airlines

Best Trans-Atlantic Airline

Winner: British Airways

Nominees: American Airlines, Continental Airlines, Lufthansa, Virgin Atlantic

Best International First Class

Winner: Singapore Airlines

Nominees: American Airlines, British Airways, Cathay Pacific Airways, United Airlines

Best Executive/Business Class

Winner: Continental Airlines

Nominees: American Airlines, British Airways, Cathay Pacific Airways, Singapore Airlines

Best Economy/Coach Class

Winner: Singapore Airlines

Nominees: American Airlines, British Airways, Continental Airlines, United Airlines

Best Low Cost/No Frills Airline

Winner: Virgin Blue

Regional finalists: easyJet, Ryanair, Southwest

Best Airport

Winner: Dubai International

Regional finalists: Atlanta Hartsfield, Singapore Changi

Outstanding Service Award

Winners: Karen Cornelius, Sally Cast, Ellen Davies,

stewardesses with bmi

Best Marketing Campaign

Best Marketing Campaign

Winner: United Airlines for "We Are United UK"



More airlines subscribe to OAG codeshare services – Virgin Atlantic latest customer

The ability to maintain the most up to date and accurate schedules within the industry's supply chain can be a difficult and expensive business for airlines. In addition, increasing workloads mean it is often difficult for an airline to allocate enough time to support the coordination of schedule information for flights that it doesn't actually operate.

Over a year ago OAG carried out a detailed analysis in which it was revealed that over 50% of flight numbers contained codeshare indicators. The importance of maintaining this information cannot be underestimated as synchronisation of this data is required to optimise the commercial value of codeshare agreements. The analysis also showed that 30% of codeshare flights contained mismatches. So it was at this point that OAG began looking at the solutions for reducing the rising costs and effort involved in managing this growing part of an airline's operations.

OAG developed sophisticated solutions, that capture data mismatch, communicate this to the airlines concerned and then, if



required, resolve the mismatch by offering an 'auto-correction' service. From the moment these services were introduced, interest was high. Aeroflot subscribed to OAG codeshare reports and Finnair have been using two codeshare solutions, the reports and also the codeshare alert service and were extremely impressed with the flexibility of the solution.

Virgin Atlantic is the latest airline to benefit from the OAG codeshare services. Concerned with making their business more efficient, the airline was looking to improve how they could monitor and update their codeshare flights.

After receiving a single test report from OAG, Virgin were so impressed that they decided to subscribe to the full service, including weekly codeshare reports and daily alert messages.

Darren Slaughter, Systems and Products Manager, Virgin Atlantic Airways Limited stated *"From just receiving one trial report we discovered some serious discrepancies in our data that we were not aware of. This gave us an early indication that the OAG codeshare services would be of great value to us"*

As more and more airlines realise that unsynchronised codeshare data devalues the potential financial and customer service benefits, that such partnerships can create, interest is continuing to grow in these solutions. The expertise and knowledge that OAG can offer in resolving codeshare issues is second to none.

For further information regarding codeshare services, please contact our customer support team at dataservices@oag.com



OAG welcomes new Product Director

Steven Greenway is the newest edition to the OAG executive team joining as Product Director. Steven will be based in our UK headquarters in Dunstable.

Steven, joined OAG in March 2004. In his role as Product Director, he is responsible for OAG's entire Product Portfolio which spans our "next generation" offerings such as mobile and SMS solutions as well as our traditional printed products such as the OAG Flight Guide.

Beginning his career with Qantas Airways in Sydney Steven held a number of roles from E-Commerce to Commercial Strategy before relocating to London to work as a Principle Consultant for the Global Aviation Group of PwC Consulting. Here, Steven worked on key strategic assignments for some of world's leading airlines, low cost start-ups and industry service companies.

Most recently, and prior to joining OAG, Steven was Head of Sales and Distribution Strategy for Virgin Atlantic. In this role his objectives were to reduce the airline's distribution costs, whilst broadening the airlines channels to market and improving customer service by introducing new developments and innovations.

OAG is pleased to welcome Steven on board. He brings highly relevant knowledge and experience and will be a valuable addition to the team.

OAG User Groups go from strength to strength

OAG has been holding regular User Groups to coincide with the IATA scheduling conference since the mid 1990s. Early last year, in response to positive feedback we began to hold additional user groups in venues around the world making them accessible to a wider audience. We have recently held our second User Group in Dubai and also an event in Kuala Lumpur.

The feedback has continued to be positive and the events are becoming far more interactive. One of the initial objectives of the user groups was to provide updates in OAG's existing activities and new initiatives. This is still the case, but as our developments are utilising new technologies, such as mobile devices, xml and SMS text messaging, the events have become more interactive providing hands on demonstrations where possible.

At one of our recent user groups we provided those who attended with free trials of our CD Rom analysis tool, MAX and a codeshare report which identified any mismatches of information between their airline and their partner airlines. Being able to actually use a service we know will provide potential customers with a much better idea of how they or their organisation will benefit from those services. But it is also valuable to us, as we can specifically go back and research attendee feedback about how we can improve those specific services in the future.

The user groups are free of charge to attend. The day is designed to benefit all those involved in the commercial planning, marketing and distribution teams of an airline or airport; however, if you are a supplier or partner to the aviation industry, then the topics and discussions of the day may also be of interest.

Our next user group will be held prior to the IATA Scheduling Conference in Toronto, Canada. We are also hoping to hold our first user group in Latin America and in Africa later this year. Information on the next OAG User Group can be found at www.oagdata.com But, if you would like further information to be sent to you automatically, have a topic you would like to discuss at the next user group or would like a copy of the last user group presentation please contact our Customer Support Teams at dataservices@oag.com

Where can you find one of the largest gatherings of airlines and airports all discussing new route opportunities?

At the World Route development Forum, Routes, taking place in Madrid from 26th-28th September where over 10,000 meetings are expected to take place over 3 days!

This year Routes expects more than 250 airlines to attend, including major, regional, low cost, start-up, cargo and IT/charter as well as a record number of airports, with around 450 expected from five continents. Routes is definitely not a traditional conference event. The event revolves around a series of formal, productive and pre-arranged one-to-one meetings between airports and airlines, as well as superb social occasions designed to create further informal networking opportunities.



OAG is playing a larger role this year by sponsoring the 'New Airline Hall' which is dedicated to start-up carriers. We have recently sent out personal invites to airlines that have started operations in the past 18 months or have plans to start operations in the future. OAG has a team of experts who deal with the complexities of schedules every day and we understand that the needs of a start-up carrier are considerably different to those of an established operation. The 'New Airline Hall' has been established to address those specific needs. There is no charge for an airline to attend the event and each carrier will have its own allocated table where they can discuss potential opportunities with airports and other industry suppliers.



Preparations for World Route Development Forum Continue – Start-up carriers Invited to attend OAG sponsored 'New Airline Hall'

The Routes Scheduling Team will secure pre-arranged meetings with airlines for those airports or other industry players attending Routes, and you will receive notification of these prior to the event. The Scheduling Team will also assist in getting extra meetings during Routes itself. They will also be organising one-to-one meetings for the New Airline Hall as they do for the rest of the event.

One of the eagerly anticipated occasions at Routes is the Gala Dinner which is when the Airport Marketing Awards are announced and presented. OAG is proud to be sponsoring these awards for the first time in Madrid. The awards were created to honour

the very best in airport marketing. Voted for by the airline network planning community the awards recognise airports whose overall marketing activities have left a positive impression in the market place. Each year a huge number of carriers take the trouble to vote for those airports that make a real difference to their own network planning activity.

If you would like more information on the OAG New Airline Hall or the OAG Airport Marketing Awards please contact Lesley Morris at lmorris@oag.com. For more information on the Routes event visit their website at www.routesonline.com

OAG Provides online Solution for Copenhagen Airport – combining the latest in technology and expertise

One of Europe's key airport hubs, Copenhagen is Scandinavia's main airport for the transfer of air traffic between other parts of the world as well as the many national and regional airports in Scandinavia and the area south of the Baltic Sea.

OAG was delighted to be able to work with Copenhagen when it wanted to enhance its flight information service to existing and potential passengers by offering a daily updated, online timetable service. The service would have to be cost effective as well as meeting specific content requirements to maintain brand consistency in accordance with their corporate identity.

OAG's highly experienced timetable team utilised the latest in technology to be able to deliver a solution which met both the cost and content criteria of Copenhagen Airport, providing them with the exact schedules display that they required.

The result was a timetable solution which Copenhagen have called 'Travel Planner' and can be found on the airport's website.



This combines a flight schedule look-up facility which is directly linked to OAG's data flight engine. The benefits of OAG hosting the Copenhagen Airport Travel Planner facility are great; as it enables data for the facility to be refreshed on a daily basis and also allows the user to have access to a years' worth of accurate, timetable flight information, covering all flights from the airport, both direct and single connections.

Besides the Copenhagen Airport Travel Planner being easy to use it also has a number of unique features:

- City or airport names can be found by either typing the IATA Code or full name

- The globe search look-up feature lists destinations alphabetically and when a selection is made the destination is automatically inserted.
- For direct flights, the timetable facility can show flights to a destination up to 3 days before the selected date and also 3 days after.
- The timetable can provide additional information such as flight numbers, terminal times, arrival details, aircraft information, airport maps and direct links to an airlines website.

Copenhagen Airport have found the new Travel Planner facility a valuable asset to their already comprehensive website, Thomas Meier Lorenzen, Web Editor, Copenhagen Airport stated *"Our travel engine is visited by many users of our website every day, so I consider it a helpful and necessary service. I think the service has made a difference when it comes to easy information about planning a journey to or from Copenhagen Airport"*

To see the service yourself, visit www.cph.dk/CPH/UK (English version) or www.cph.dk (Danish version). For further information about this service, please contact Liz Holden at eholden@oag.com or our Customer Support Team at dataservices@oag.com



OAG and Qatar Airways are pleased to announce that they have entered into a strategic business partnership which will deliver a range of multi lingual customised solutions to promote and support Qatar Airways products and services globally.

Qatar Airways signs new content deal with OAG

The agreement will deliver a suite of products which together will combine to be the first of their kind in the region and comprises of a range of electronic services designed to enhance the passenger's experience when making flight arrangements as well as when actually travelling. The partnership includes development of a full range of multi lingual timetable solutions which can be supported via a variety of technical platforms, including downloadable timetables to PDF, PC and PDA (Palm and Pocket PC) in addition to a web browser based flight look-up facility.

Each solution contains regional content tailored to meet the specific needs of the Middle East market. This will enable Qatar Airways to develop their e-business customer service and improve communication channels with both their passengers and the travel trade, so supporting their aim to provide the highest level of customer service via all business channels.

"Qatar Airways is focussed on continually improving the organisations products and services" said Bradley Warren, IT Manager,

Qatar Airways Group and continued, *"Qatar Airways is developing an integrated Information Technology framework to support one of the fastest growing airlines in the world and the OAG relationship is the first of many new global partnerships being made."*

Baldev Viridi, OAG Senior Data Sales Manager for Middle East is based in the U.A.E. and can provide local support in addition to understanding the specific requirements of airlines and airports based in the region. Baldev commented, *"After in-depth discussions with Qatar Airways, it is wonderful that OAG has been chosen as their strategic partner. OAG possesses the creativity and innovation required by Qatar Airways in representing their brand and services across the globe."*

To download or view the timetable services visit www.qatarairways.com/flights.html or for further information regarding products and services, please contact our Customer Support Team at dataservices@oag.com

OAG Scores High

OAG recently conducted a customer satisfaction survey amongst all customers of the MAX product. OAG MAX is a CD-rom software tool which provides access to 12 months of current schedules and related information, allowing customised analysis of worldwide flights in just a matter of seconds.

The objective of the survey was to identify areas for improvement to ensure we meet customers' expectations and future requirements. OAG would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone for their participation and their valuable feedback.

The key findings of this research were very positive:

- High levels of satisfaction with the content & overall experience with the MAX CD (90%).
- 70% of MAX customers rate their overall experience with the subscription process as either 'Excellent' or 'Very Good'
- 85% of respondents would be interested in having access to the data online.
- 68% of the respondents heavily rely on the OAG data

OAG has made a commitment to take all comments on board and enhance the product making it more user friendly. This upgrade programme will be completed within the next few releases of the product and we will keep you up to date with developments as they are launched.

If you would like more information about OAG Max or the results of the survey please contact George Efkolides at gefkolides@oag.com

OAG FlightFinder – The must have application for your PDA

OAG has recently launched a new travel planning tool, OAG FlightFinder. The service offers complete flight schedule listings instantly available on your handheld – all for less than the annual cost of a newspaper!

The new development compliments the internet based Airport FlightFinder service which was launched earlier this year and was covered in the last issue of OAG data News. The development of this new PDA service used some technical knowledge from the airport service and combined it with other IT expertise and market understanding to produce a solution aimed at the business traveller.



With extensive knowledge of the traveller market, particularly that of the high revenue frequent flyer market, OAG is aware that when travelling on important business, passengers are more comfortable with a full range of flight schedules available at their fingertips. This has been provided over many years in both printed guides as well as applications that can be loaded onto a laptop.

But the new FlightFinder software for PDA enables a traveller to download ALL flights within a chosen geographical region or alternatively to download all flights within that region as well as to/from the rest of the world.

Available versions of FlightFinder currently include:

- Europe – direct flights within Europe only
- Europe Plus – direct flights within Europe & to/from Europe to the rest of the world
- North America – direct flights within North America only
- North America Plus – direct flights within North America & to/from North America to the rest of the world

Wherever a traveller goes they now can take all airlines' flight schedules with them – allowing them to check flight details, look up alternative flights should plans change and have instant access to airline reservation numbers.



The application is really easy to use and includes features such as:

- ability to view all return flights with one touch
- includes all flights departing in the next 3 months
- can add a chosen schedule to your traveller's diary
- provides contact details for all airlines in chosen area
- additional travel support service via PC or laptop – access OAG's online service, OAG club – packed with useful information on passports, visas, health advice, airport and destination information and much, much more.

The service is one of the new initiatives that OAG is taking to extend the distribution of airline information using some of the latest technologies available.

If you would like more information on the OAG FlightFinder service please contact our Customer Support Teams at dataservices@oag.com

Forthcoming Events

If you would like to meet the OAG team and find out about our solutions and services you will find us at the following events. If you want to arrange a time to meet the team you can contact us via the Events page of www.oagdata.com.

OAG User Group
Toronto, Canada
11th June

**IATA 144th
Schedules
Conference**
Toronto, Canada
12th-15th June

**ACI European
Assembly**
Nice, France
9th-11th June

**Association of
American Airport
Executives (AAAE)**
Las Vegas, USA
21st-24th June

**TIACA International
Air Cargo Forum**
Bilbao, Spain
14th-17th September

**ACI North American
Annual Conference**
Houston, USA
19th -22nd September

Routes
Madrid, Spain
26th-28th September