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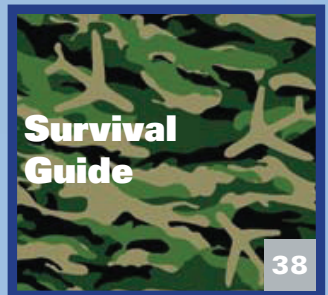
Taking your airline to new heights

A Clear Vision

A Conversation With ...
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Brainpower

Business intelligence solutions from *Sabre Airline Solutions*[®] enable airlines to broaden their analysis capabilities to include key performance data into their business strategies.

■ By Michael Askew | *Ascend* Contributor

Many airlines currently rely on SabreSonic® Customer Sales & Service to manage transactional passenger reservations data that enables them to book and manage travel for their customers. However, significant benefits can be realized by moving beyond solving transactional problems to creating a customer sales and service solution.

To gain the most from a CSS solution, insights into how an airline's business is performing are essential. Leveraging Sabre Airline Solutions' rich travel industry knowledge and layering powerful business intelligence systems on top of CSS data, SabreSonic CSS offers flexible analysis capabilities so airlines can incorporate valuable performance insights into their business strategy.

The Business Intelligence option of SabreSonic® Res provides such insights. And one of the first of several planned new Business Intelligence capabilities is now available — Essential Analytics, a reports module offering flexible analytics. One of the most important actions airlines can take to maximize revenue opportunities is to first understand which booking sources, distribution channels and markets are driving bookings. With this information, carriers can enhance distribution channels and relationships, identify less-effective sources, and adjust their marketing and distribution strategies. Essential Analytics provides these insights and more, enabling airlines to analyze booking trends and identify effective sales and marketing initiatives.

SabreSonic CSS leverages Sabre Airline Solutions' industry knowledge and strengths in reservations data management to deploy new business intelligence capabilities to its SabreSonic CSS customers. Essential Analytics, an interactive Web-based analytical and intelligence reporting solution, leverages leading business intelligence (see related article on page 36) and analytical data management technologies, enabling SabreSonic CSS customers to measure the performance of their various distribution channels, including airline reservations agents, airline Web sites and global distribution systems.

The CSS concept represents the best opportunity for airlines to develop customer-focused solu-

tions and revenue generation in every distribution channel, helping them realize their revenue goals. Essential Analytics and its planned enhancements are integral components to helping airlines achieve the value of the CSS approach. The Business Intelligence environment and Essential Analytics give airlines of all sizes around the globe the ability to:

- Analytically view top sources and markets — Airlines can evaluate the top sources of their bookings (GDS, airline direct and interline bookings) and the top travel markets based on user-selected dates. With backward- and forward-looking booking, market and last-minute cancellation reports, they have insight into areas that may require change.
- Measure and target incremental market opportunities — The flexibility of the analytic tool provides a variety of ways to drill into business bookings performance — more easily than was possible before — enabling airlines to measure and target incremental market opportunities within their network and distribution channels.
- Graphically present analysis results — Airlines can quickly select the desired report parameters to create a variety of reports. The various report views include tabular, drilldown and graphic formats as well as year-over-year comparative views to highlight how bookings are performing this year compared to last year.
- Access a cost-effective reports solution online — Because Essential Analytics is a hosted solution, airlines can realize significant cost savings in the areas of hardware and third-party software, system implementation, support personnel, data storage, and ongoing monitoring and maintenance. With Sabre Airline Solutions managing the application environment, airlines can focus on their core business rather than internal information technology operations.

Essential Analytics helps focus on historical and forward-looking reservations booking details (travel booked up to 331 days into the future and as far back as two years) through a wide range of airline-

specific filters such as booking class, travel cities and booking source (including direct booking channels such as reservations centers and Web sites).

Airlines generate hundreds of thousands, in some cases millions, of data points used in the reporting and analysis process. Flexible report parameters help isolate and focus on only the level of report output detail that is relevant to a specific business question. For example, for a particular timeframe, it is easy to narrow the bookings performance report output to highlight details such as the number of bookings that are being driven through an airline's Web site(s), reservations center or a particular GDS.

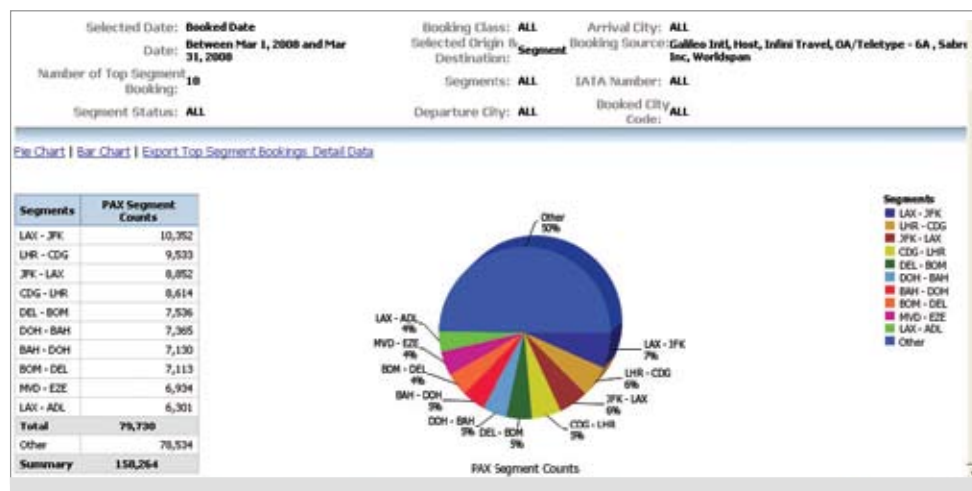
Summary booking reports provide access to simplified booking reports for creating a quick snapshot of bookings performance with some additional built-in drilldown capabilities and graphic summary representations such as pie charts and bar charts. These reports also include top markets and top booking source reports for identifying an airline's top 20 markets or booking sources for the selected time period.

Additional detailed booking reports provide the ability to analyze even more detailed report outputs and support the export of report output to comma-separated value, or CSV, format for import into Excel or a local database for further manipulation by power users. The option supports analysis by booking date or travel date and identifies the key sources of last-minute cancellations that impact an airline's available inventory. In addition, it provides year-over-year, quarter-over-quarter and month-over-month outputs to support comparative analysis.

Essential Analytics is available to airlines using SabreSonic Res, and it leverages Microsoft Internet Explorer Web browser version 6.x or higher. It also provides preliminary, unaudited booking and market data for directional and trending analytics based on a snapshot of the current state of a carrier's bookings in SabreSonic Res. The reports provide the airline with a preliminary unaudited view into its booking and channel performance as well as trends during that critical timeframe when the airline is typically waiting days or weeks before fully adjusted audited revenue accounting-based statistics become available.

Essential Analytics complements other technology from Sabre Airline Solutions, such as the Quasar™ System for revenue accounting, or the airline's own in-house or third-party passenger revenue accounting system.

Additional business intelligence product enhancements such as revenue analytics and an executive dashboard are also planned this year as part of an overall strategy to help airlines drive profitability insights and provide an at-a-glance view of critical business metrics. ■



Carriers can examine the main sources of their bookings and the top travel markets based on user-selected dates. With a variety of historical and forward-looking booking, market and last-minute cancellation reports, they have insight into areas that may need to be adjusted.

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