



CONFERENCE ATTENDANTS — Mr. and Mrs. Art Suffron, at left, talk over the Montreal sessions with Sherl Folger, G. M. Morris, who is Interline Sales Development Manager for United and Rube Freeman Interline Sales Manager for Varig Airlines. Mr. Suffron, who is with Air Canada, was Conference Co-ordinator.

Interline Sales Managers Conference: Folger Speaks To Montreal Group

EDITOR'S NOTE: During the course of the recent Interline Sales Managers Conference in Montreal, Piedmont's Assistant General Sales Manager Sherl Folger presented the following answer to this question: "As major trunk and international carriers bring high density aircraft into service, how do you see yourself and other local service carriers contributing to the solution of filling these aircraft?"

In my opinion, the solution to the problem of local service carriers filling high density aircraft of trunk and international carriers is one of three parts.

First, we must presuppose that there is schedule compatibility, because if there are no connections between us, then there is no passenger exchange and the problem is moot.

One would think that it should be basic to assume that there would be connections made between the local service carriers and the trunks; however, this is not always a true assumption. For years, the trunks have competitively fought for the "magic hour" departure between the major cities. As each carrier vied for a departure at 5:55, 6:00 and 6:05, there developed a problem of not enough passengers to go around. Now, instead of scheduling just for the "magic hour," if one or two trunks would delay their departures long enough to assure connections from local service carriers, they would most certainly increase their load factors. Therefore, scheduling is the most important factor in the solution of local to trunk passenger flow.

Passenger Awareness

Second, an effective interline program should be developed so that the passenger is aware of just how he can get to his destination and how simple it is. This interline program should include:

1. Joint Advertising
2. Employee Education
3. Connection Ease
4. Joint Sales and Marketing effort

Joint advertising makes possible the association of local service carriers to a major off-line destination. For example, one of our current programs with Delta stresses the fact that if a customer wants to fly to Dallas, Los Angeles, Miami or New Orleans, he can leave his home town on Piedmont. The customer now thinks in terms of starting his trip on Piedmont regardless of his ultimate destination. He no longer thinks of us as being limited geographically.

Employee Education

Employee education takes many forms. One of the tried and proven is the familiarization trips for sales and service personnel. An adjunct to these trips are interline contests designed to make other airlines employees more familiar with your schedules, connecting points and tourist interests. It is an acknowledged fact that anyone can sell a service or a product if he is personally familiar with it. There is no substitute for actual-

ly having been somewhere yourself and being able to answer, in detail, any questions that the customer might have.

Connection ease is a must in these days of larger airports and equipment. It would be futile to have perfect connections between local service carriers and trunks only to find that the customer has to walk one or two miles between airplanes. There must be a reasonably close proximity between the departure gates of interline partners.

Immediate Confirmation

Along with this, good customer service dictates that the airline must have the ability to get immediate confirmation of space to the customer. To insure a consistent flow of passengers between carriers it becomes increasingly more important to have and maintain each other's space availability. You simply cannot have the ability to ticket the passenger all the way to his destination, check his baggage all the way to his destination, confirm him a rental car at his destination and in some instances, secure him a hotel room at his destination and then ask him to wait a day or two for a confirmation of space.

Joint sales and marketing effort makes possible an exchange of ideas between carriers so that each airline's employees know what is happening with their interline partner. If for example, there was a national convention being held in a local service city, we would notify our trunk partners of this and they would contact the delegates in their city to ask them to fly to the convention. The trunks, of course, send us their convention lists. There should be a commonness of promotions and fares as it would be difficult, for example, to sell a family on using family plan if all the carriers did not have some type of family plan fare. Joint sales calls made by local service and trunk sales representatives are common practice today and it helps by giving the customer the benefit of both of their knowledge of their specific areas.

And third, the single biggest step taken by the local service industry to fill the trunk's aircraft is their new equipment program. Our move from the DC-3 up through the Martins and Convairs to our new prop jets and pure jets will mean that, while yesterday we were delivering to the trunks a maximum potential of 30% of their jet aircraft capacity today, we are delivering a minimum potential of 50 to 90% of their jet aircraft capacity. The local service industry is acutely

Interline Tours Have Increased

ALITALIA has announced its "Sunshine Holiday" program for airline employees, varying from \$49 land portion for a week in Greece to an African Safari of 13 days at \$385 land portion. Including economy excursion New York-Nairobi and return, a Piedmont employee can safari for \$583. The Italian flag carrier offers other trips including their "Three Capitals Tour," including London, Paris and Rome. More information of these trips is available from Alitalia Sales Offices.

SABENA offers new positive space package to Europe. Three new "Learn to Ski" tours start at \$150. Each will last a week. The rate includes air transportation, seven-night accommodations breakfasts and dinners, use of ski lifts and daily instruction. For further inquiries write Bert and Barbara Jensen, Alpine Ski Tours, 21603 Pacific Coast Highway, Malibu, Calif.

SWISSAIR has a fall-winter-spring interline tour offering including their "Iberian Holiday," a 14-day tour of Portugal and Spain. Contact a Swissair Sales Office for details.

HILTON Hotels almost without exception grant substantial discounts to airline employees. Write first for quotation.

TWA is offering three 15-day Grand Tours. The first is of Europe, the second, of Portugal and Spain, and the third, England and Scotland. For further information write TWA Interline Adventures for Airline Employees, c/o Globus Tours-Group Voyagers, Inc., 521 Fifth Avenue, New York, N. Y. 10017.

SOUTHERN Airways is promoting a "Christmas on the Coast" week-end at the Buena Vista Hotel on the Mississippi coast. This is the Tenth Annual "Christmas on the Coast" outing for airline employees throughout the United States. It will be held at the Buena Vista in Biloxi, Miss., December 2-4. A \$7.50 registration fee includes: two nights lodging at the Buena Vista (December 2 and 3); Cocktail Reception Saturday, December 3, at 8:30 p.m.; Christmas Buffet and Dance Saturday night. Checks for reservations should be made payable to Buena Vista Hotel, and mailed to Robert Ward, Royal Arms, Apartment 16, Mississippi City, Miss., 39562. Ward is Southern Airways' Station Manager at Gulfport-Biloxi. Ward asks that reservations requests include arrival time, whether flying in or not, and number in party. Free transportation will be provided from the airport to the Buena Vista.

For information on obtaining Non-Rev and Reduced Rate Passes, see page six.

Night Owl Flights Showing Up Well

Effective with the September 1 schedule change, Piedmont has been offering a series of new flights to test the market potential for middle-of-the-night airline service. The three flights initially offered have been labeled "Night Owl Pacemaker" flights.

Vice President-Traffic C. G.

aware of our responsibility to the traveling public and to our interline trunk partners to keep our aircraft fleet as modern as the trunks so that our customers can expect a safe and comfortable trip from their home town to wherever they may be going.

This, then, is how we propose to meet the challenge of filling our trunk and international interline partners high density aircraft.

Anyone Here Named Martin?

by Don Conner
ROA Reporter

A recent Piedmont passenger, who held a reservation on flight 788 (a Martin 404), arrived at the Roanoke airport a little late. Instead of checking in at the ticket counter, he went running out to the flight luggage an unusually large suitcase. When stopped by an Operations agent and informed that he would have to return to the counter and check his luggage, the passenger became quite upset and demanded to see a supervisor, who promptly appeared on the scene.

After further demanding the supervisor's name, our passenger began laying down the law to Lead Agent (Don) Martin. The ensuing commotion eventually attracted the attention of the Captain of flight 788 who subsequently came over and asked what was going on. Again demanding names, our irate "friend" had a few choice words with Capt. (Bill) Martin.

It was finally made clear to the passenger that, no matter what, he would have to return to the counter and check his suitcase as the carry-on rack could not accommodate it.

Storming up to the counter, our now hysterical traveler decided to try one last time by demanding an audience with the Reservations supervisor on duty, who just happened to be Chief Agent (R. L.) Martin. Our flabbergasted friend just refused to believe it all and cancelled his flight on the Martin (404), choosing to leave the following morning on flight 42, an F-27, with the hopes that everyone he met that day would not be named Fairchild.

We just didn't have the heart to tell him to address his baggage complaints to Mr. (T. L.) Martin.



ROBERT BEARD
DCA



DAVE SMITH
CRW

TRANSFERS . . .

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cer of the Lillington Masonic Lodge and a Boy Scout Committee Chairman.

Bob Bennington

Bob Bennington, Chief Agent at Florence, has been transferred to Augusta and promoted to Station Manager for the Southernmost point on Piedmont's system.

A native of Fayetteville, North Carolina, Bennington graduated from the public schools there before joining the U. S. Navy where he served as an Electronics Technician at the Naval Air Technical Training Center in Memphis.

Bennington joined Piedmont as a Utility Agent in Fayetteville in 1954. He was promoted to lead agent at the same station in 1963. The following year he was promoted and transferred to Florence as Chief Agent.

Mrs. Bennington is the former Catherine Cook of Fayetteville.



ROBERT BENNINGTON
AGS

With their son, Robert, the Benningtons are members of the Westminster Presbyterian Church in Florence.

Brown, Jr., in announcing the new service, said, "With these new flights Piedmont is exploring what we feel is a market of passengers, especially military personnel, who would prefer to travel late at night. This later night service is a relatively new thing for local service airlines. Piedmont is fortunate in having a number of military bases on its system and we constantly try to improve service for these frequent travelers."

Southbound Flight 823

Piedmont's new southbound later night Flight 823 originates in Washington, D. C., providing non-stop service to New Bern-Jacksonville, N. C. From New Bern the flight continues to Fayetteville-Fort Bragg, N. C. Six days a week the flight continues non-stop to Atlanta, Georgia, where it terminates. On Saturdays the flight terminates in Fayetteville.

Also a part of this new program is Flight 816 offering non-stop northbound service between Atlanta and Fayetteville-Fort Bragg.

Most Successful Flight

Thus far, of the three flights involved, southbound flight 823 operating DCA-EWN-FAY-ATL has been the most successful. For the month of September this flight had a 51.81 per cent load factor and averaged 30 passengers daily between Washington and New Bern.

Flight 816, Atlanta-Fayetteville, had a 38.64 per cent load factor and flight 820, Fayetteville-Washington, had a 27.01 per cent load factor.

Director of Schedules Bob McAlphin said, "We are generally pleased with the Night Owl flights for the first month of operation and are optimistic for continued improvement."