APPS IN THE AIRCRAFT CABIN

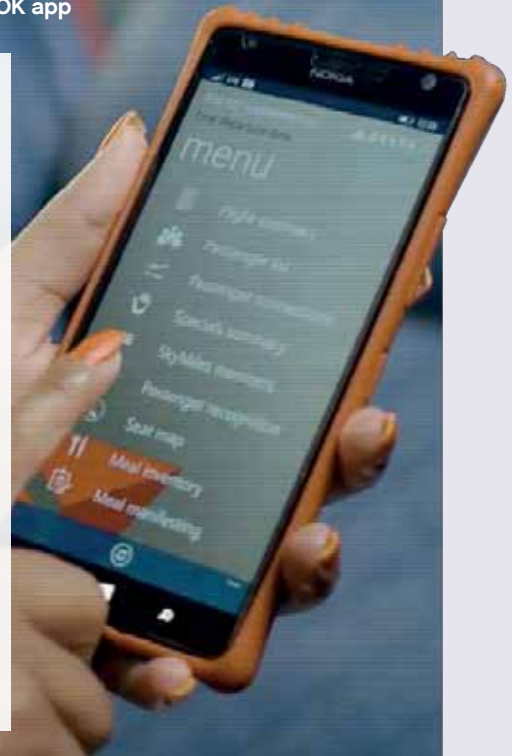By Jennifer Coutts Clay, Author of JETLINER CABINS Evolution & Innovation E-BOOK app

For decades, flight attendants have had to struggle with hard-copy Passenger Manifests. These lists of passenger names, printed on long thin scrolls of teletype paper or accordion-style folded sheets, were usually positioned in secluded sections of the galley or in an alcove near the cabin entry doors.

It was a major challenge to read through the coded strings of letters and figures that were jammed together on this official company document. Individual flight attendants had to take turns to personally locate the information that related to the specific areas of the cabin where they were working, with particular reference – for safety and emergency egress requirements – to SSRs (Special Service Requests), UMs (Unaccompanied Minors) and PRMs (Passengers with Restricted Mobility).

In recent years, however, the advent of apps has fundamentally changed the traditional cabin-management process. Using a PED (Personal Electronic Device) to click on, e.g. Seat #30A, a flight attendant might find a plain-language screen display for "Mr X," showing that he always asks to sit alongside a window and has reached the mid-level status of the airline's loyalty mileage scheme; he likes to drink red wine with his dinner; he paid for a round-trip fare online; he was involuntarily re-routed during a recent, multi-sector overseas itinerary and he will be making his homebound journey in the next three days.

A systematic flow of this type of market intelligence, based on authentic data collection associated with individual customers, can provide airlines with unprecedented opportunities for the personalisation and humanisation of the overall flight experience to the eventual benefit of both passengers and the operating carriers.

CREATING AN APP

The Keyword Search and Index facilities produce screenfuls of related information suitable for further navigation by interested readers, who can zoom in to view the content. There is year-round scope for updating the material, e.g. I added the Cabin Health Alerts and Flying Healthy Case Studies to cover the outbreak of the COVID pandemic. And via direct links between the app and a protected section of the website – jetlinercabins.com – there are currently well over 6,000 accompanying pictures, catalogued in more than 20 Galleries. This image section will continue to expand.

It was not easy at the beginning of the project: all page layouts had to be programmed, set and designed for export as pdfs to be uploaded into the app. However, recent progress has shown that the amazing developments in the field of app technology have provided a secure future flight path for JETLINER CABINS: Evolution & Innovation.

When planning the third edition of JETLINER CABINS, it became obvious that the Apple app platform would offer significant advances over the earlier printed versions of my book, e.g. I have been able to specify designated hyperlinks, including the websites of the organisations mentioned in the 16 Chapters.

Jennifer Coutts Clay is the author of JETLINER CABINS Evolution & Innovation E-BOOK app, available on the Apple App Store, Amazon apps, and Google Play. More information on www.jetlinercabins.com