

Pandemic accelerating digitization, survey finds

Consider individual passenger needs



Passengers need to be reassured that their food is transparently safe to consume during a pandemic.

43%

of the airlines expect that the needs of passengers will have changed in the long term after the COVID-19 pandemic.



Catering will remain a differentiating service factor for airlines because passengers do not hesitate to share their feedback. Airlines will continue paying attention to their catering products, even during times of operational financial adversity.



Passengers may require more customization in every class, especially when it comes to catering.

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A survey conducted by the [LSG Group](#) among airline customers has shown that the COVID-19 pandemic is accelerating digital solutions for pre-flight, inflight and onboard services, the company reports this week.

Qualitative interviews with 17 airlines conducted in September and October show that airlines around the world expect this to improve the quality and predictability of the flight experience.

More than two thirds of the participants are interested in testing at least a small number of new digital services, including pre-order and pre-select solutions for catering, over the next 18 months. The remaining respondents consider the models to be at least compatible with their brand and technically feasible.

"Even the general trend toward customized products and experiences does not stop at airline catering," said Stefan Patemann, CEO of Retail inMotion and Head of Onboard Retail of the LSG Group in yesterday's announcement. The shift toward greater individualization associated with digitalization, regardless of the booking class.

Healthier or not?



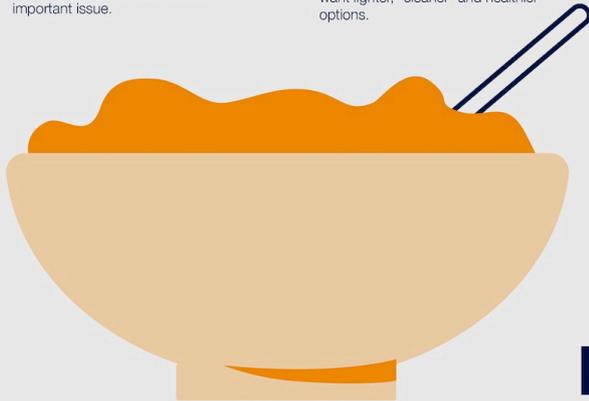
When it comes to health, passengers don't just think about COVID. Eating healthy is also an important issue.



43 percent of the experts predict that passengers in the future will want lighter, "cleaner" and healthier options.

57%

think, that there will be contradictions between what passengers reveal during research – a preference for healthy food – and what they actually consume on board.



On some occasions, only one bold and substantial item, of very good quality, may be what passengers request.

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"We can support this shift with concepts that can be implemented quickly and adapted to the different needs of customers," Patermann added.

According to Patermann, the findings of the customer survey show that catering will remain an important indicator of an airline's service level in the future, especially in view of the fact that passengers share their feedback on social media. The health aspect of food onboard is also playing an increasingly important role. Among participants, 43 percent of them expect the demand for healthier and more digestible meals to increase. At the same time, 57 percent suspect that many passengers pay less attention to their diet onboard than they generally claim.

Another finding is the importance of sustainability for the airline industry. Of those surveyed, 80 percent believe that it will play a central role in product development in the future, even if the pandemic has recently pushed certain aspects, such as the use of as little packaging material as possible, to the background because of the desire for maximum hygiene.