

# EL AL INCREASES CUSTOMER SATISFACTION

## National Airline of Israel implements the Attentive™ feedback solution to monitor and improve customer experience

### Introduction

Since 2005 the national airline of Israel, EL AL, has achieved high results in customer satisfaction levels and was recently ranked by IATA as one of the world's three most efficient air carriers. The emphasis that EL AL places on its customers' satisfaction is supported by research which has shown that customers no longer choose their airline just because of the high security level it provides, but the quality of customer service. In a time where the airline sector is stripping out costs, EL AL is bucking the trend and continuing to provide a full service element and investing heavily in improving its service for both economy and business class passengers. EL AL's flight network currently reaches 31 European airports, seven Asian airports, five North American airports and two African airports, a total of 45 destinations.

One of the main reasons for the significant improvement in EL AL's quality of service is the technological capabilities it introduced for customer feedback.

### The Challenge

After recently becoming privatised, EL AL decided that the key to growth within the industry was through providing excellent quality, enhanced customer experience, improvement and reinforcement of customer relations. In order to achieve this goal EL AL needed, not only the ability to measure customer service quality continuously, but also to make constant changes based on its customers' feedback.

The majority of today's airlines compete to provide a cost-effective service for their passengers by stripping out costs such as offering complimentary beverages and meals on flights instead of focusing on providing an excellent service. EL AL decided to proactively contact its passengers to enquire about their customer experience, evaluate their feedback, and generate responses. Attentive™ was selected because it provided the airline with the perfect solution for these requirements. This was seen as a key tool to ensure a quality experience for EL AL customers by generating a continuous ongoing interaction with the customer about their experience using event-driven feedback.

### The Solution

The EL AL service centre receives 10,000 calls per day, with 70% of the calls coming from Travel Agents whilst only 30% are from business or private customers. In total there are 500 agents spread across five virtual call centres. There is also a separate Customer Relation and Retention department who deal with 250 pieces of written correspondence per day (letter, email & fax) with an SLA that 95% of correspondence is dealt with in 14 days.

The Attentive™ solution ensures that EL AL is able to manage and locate any complaint or dissatisfaction over any communication channel or point of contact between the customer and the Attentive™ system. The Attentive™ installation is primarily used in the call centre but is also occasionally used in other areas of the business. For example Haim Romano, EL AL's CEO, requested feedback on two new planes and this was implemented and the feedback obtained in just three days.

Tamar Kahil, Head of service quality department explains:

"EL AL conducts ongoing satisfaction surveys with three layers of data collection. The first layer is the quality service of the call centre; the second layer focuses on the quality of the service experience before boarding the plane; and the third layer focuses on the flight itself, where about 10 selected passengers are randomly sampled during the flight."

As a result of the new proactive feedback module, interviews with customers are carried out daily, soliciting feedback 24 hours after the customer's initial contact with the service centre.

Each team within EL AL has a remit to sample each call centre agent 3 times per month for feedback. All agents are trained to investigate a low satisfaction response and find out the root cause of the customer's issue. Low scores are then sent to the Retention Unit who will call the customer back within 24 hours and attempt to influence any future decisions to fly with EL AL.

Attentive™ system allows EL AL to accurately assess the degree of satisfaction of their customers from the whole flying experience such as, pre-flight service, and during the flight itself. From the continuous information received from its passengers, EL AL can significantly improve the flight experience for its customers.

Haim Romano, EL AL's President and CEO said:

"Today, EL AL can really be on top of things when it comes to customer experience and service levels. The only way to know what the passengers are really thinking is to ask them!"

## **Benefits**

One of the main benefits for EL AL has been the ability to immediately obtain feedback from its customers and employees within one week following the launch of a new service. This allows EL AL to make the necessary adjustments based on the results within a very short timeframe.

Additionally, feedback data is submitted to the highest levels of the company and is used in all decision-making processes involving customer experience. Furthermore, EL AL can obtain an accurate picture of the quality of service it receives from various suppliers; for example, the quality of the food served during the flights. EL AL recently launched a new healthy meal and the various comments received from passengers enabled them to immediately evaluate their degree of satisfaction.

## **Notable results have included:**

- ✓ Call centre sales are up from by 500%
- ✓ Agents productivity has been increased by over 100% (agents used to take 4 calls per hour, they are now up to 9-10 calls per hour)
- ✓ There has been a direct correlation between rising SLA's and rising customer satisfaction
- ✓ They have improved the ability to manage the Call Centre with monthly reviews and work plan updates
- ✓ They are able to carry out targeted surveys at any time
- ✓ Internal surveys provide 360 degree feedback that has led to happy employees which in turn has led to more satisfied customers

In addition, the feedback EL AL has obtained has enabled the company to make decisions such as changing the catering facilities at certain locations, altering the number of seats in business class, enhancing the audio systems on the planes and changing the departure times.

Revital Segal, EL AL's Director of Customer Service said:

"There is no doubt that this information helped us reach a 12% growth in our customers' satisfaction level."

## **Future**

EL AL plans to enhance their use of Attentive™ by improving the effectiveness of their feedback forms, reducing operational costs and taking advantage of email and the company's website. In the future, EL AL's web technologies will be further developed. This will enable EL AL to target potential customers and current passengers who live abroad. The company also intends to improve the interface with EL AL's CRM system, tightly integrating customer relationship management with customer experience.