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Outsource your luggage delivery and make travel easier

UK Travel | Flights

Jun 12, 2007

A new service called **Personal Porter** has been launched that allows travellers to bypass the traditional check-in at airports. Customers can arrange to have their luggage delivered directly to their destination, prior to their arrival at the destination.

Outsourcing luggage delivery may at first seem a little odd, but closer inspection reveals a number of benefits for all.

First, some details on how it all works:

The process is kicked off by the customer visiting www.personalporter.com, completing a few simple questions and being presented a quote. Accepting the quote triggers the logistical side of the operation. Allow 10 mins from start to finish.

Customer information from the website is automatically passed to the Personal Porter logistics partner, DHL. There is no re-entry of data or other time-consuming actions required at DHL, the information goes straight into the DHL Manifest system that generates the actual driver manifests.

DHL collects the luggage from your door and it is checked and sealed on the spot and then enters the DHL system. Generally, 24hrs notice for pick-up is required, but this can vary depending on the final destination. In future company intends to offer same-day pickup service, even for far-flung destinations.

You then would only take your hand baggage to the airport, where you would be joined by like-minded people to reduce long queues at check-in (ie ♦"Look! No Bags!") and generally move more quickly through the airport.

There are twenty checkpoints that all luggage has to pass through. These trigger SMS messages along the way. This means a customer knows exactly where their luggage is at all times. Very re-assuring to read ♦"Your luggage has cleared customs and is enroute to your hotel♦" just before you hop on your plane!

When a customer arrives at their final destination, their luggage is there. Pickups and deliveries can be organised wherever DHL has a tentacle, ie lots of places worldwide and lots of places within Australia.

So how does this new service benefit everyone?

The customer

Two key words apply here **NEVER LOST**. Personal Porter, through its logistical partner♦'s systems & processes (including checkpoints) always knows where your luggage is in the world. Yes, you may change plans at the last minute, which in turn may mean your luggage is heading elsewhere, but it is never lost, it just needs redirection.

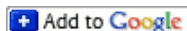
Business people who have to transport goods and equipment are equally interested in ensuring luggage never goes missing and they may have stronger security concerns. However, the big benefit here is that the business person jumps off the plane at their destination and they then sail straight out of the airport. When they arrive at their hotel / office, all their gear is there ready and waiting. Time is money, so there could be some potentially huge savings for businesses using Personal Porter.

For group travel, how many times has a whole group of people been held up when just one bag from one person goes missing?!

Which brings us to cost. Many people are still happy to take their chances with the traditional check-in, risk having their luggage mishandled, and try and talk their way out of excess baggage fees.

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The landscape however is changing; carriers are reducing baggage allowances and discouraging (and penalising!) passengers from exceeding baggage allowance limits. One major airline is shortly to mandate baggage allowances. This means there is no room for negotiation, excess baggage fees will definitely apply. It is expected that other airlines will then adopt similar policies in short order. Taking that extra 10kg to London may cost close to \$500.

Sure, the option of unaccompanied baggage also exists, but the onus is on the customer to drop off, pick up, pay any customs, handling, storage, or other fees and a delivery date cannot be guaranteed. Worst case, a customer may have to incur costs (time & dollars) to return to an airport half way through a holiday to pick up their bags.

The Personal Porter model certainly appears to be a good step forward, and it does address the number 1 source of complaint by both airlines and passengers luggage! However, their biggest challenge lies in educating people that it is OK to outsource their luggage delivery, and then changing the traditional behaviour of lugging everything to the airport and haggling over weight?..

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