



Soft Landing: Airline Industry Strategy, Service, and Safety

Andrew R. Thomas

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Soft Landing: Airline Industry Strategy, Service, and Safety covers the immediate past, present, and future of the airline industry and its effects on consumers and the economy.

Aviation receives a disproportionate amount of news coverage in the popular press--not to mention chatter at cocktail parties and workplaces around the world. And why not? Aviation represents a sector of the U.S. economy, for example, exceeded in size only by the real estate, healthcare, and automotive industries. Furthermore, hundreds of millions of people fly each year, including 80 million Americans.

So we all have airline stories--experiencing a delay and losing a business deal, spending a night or three in the airport, dealing with ornery airline personnel, losing money on airline stocks, or being involved in a near miss. (Or, as George Carlin more accurately put it, a "near hit.")

But things might be on the upswing. Knocked to its knees by 9/11 and a decade of falling revenue and rising losses, the industry's "flying cheap" strategy and organizational efficiencies based partly on outsourcing have appear to have helped passengers and profitability return. As this book explains, we can look forward to better technology and infrastructure, speedier--and easier--travel, more effective and less invasive security measures, and more jobs in the air and on the ground.

Turbulence is always a possibility. Rising fuel costs, economic uncertainty, and future terror attacks could cause tumult once again. Plus, airline companies intend to charge us extra for everything from the weight of our own bodies to use of the bathroom. But as the industry has discovered, we'll put up with that--and more--if we can make it to our destinations with bags intact and a smaller dent in our wallets.

What you'll learn

- How the airline industry has become the world's greatest "loss leader"
- What globalization does and does not mean for the industry
- How terrorists will become more innovative in continued attempts to destroy airplanes and airports
- How aviation security will (d)evolve
- What the consolidation of major carriers means for consumers
- Why airline employee unions in the U.S. will not survive in their present form
- What air travel will be like in the future
- Why air travel is exponentially cheaper than at any other time in history and what the "flying cheap" strategy means

Who this book is for

The millions of people currently employed by some facet of the airline industry (2 million in the U.S. alone), not to mention the hundreds of millions of people worldwide who fly each year. This book will also interest investors still trying to make money on airline stocks after all these years, government officials pondering economic development or bond issues for airports, security officials and entrepreneurs whose livelihoods are tied to aviation, travel agents, manufacturers, and many others.

Table of Contents

1. Soft Landing? You Cannot Be Serious
2. The World's Greatest Loss Leader
3. A Billion New Passengers: The Globalization Paradox
4. Flying Cheap, Part One: Passengers Pile In
5. Flying Cheap, Part Two: The Outsourcing Compulsion
6. The Collapse of Federal Oversight and the Birth of the TSA
7. Touching Your "Junk" and Viewing Your Cavity
8. Turbulence Ahead for Airline Unions and High-Paying Jobs
9. The Future Is Now: The Planes of Tomorrow
10. Infrastructure Spiffed? Future Airports, Air Traffic Control, and Cargo Handling
11. Flying in Our Future
12. Appendix A: GAO Report on Aviation Security

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