Customer Contact Information
Travel Agent FAQs

1. Is it mandatory for travel agents to provide the passenger's mobile phone and email address?

As per Resolution 830d (http://www.iata.org/Sites/FMC/Files/reso_830d.pdf) and in accordance with the ticketing and reservation procedures of the airline, agents should provide the passenger's mobile phone number and/or email address in the PNR. Travel agents should use the industry standard for the contact element entry SSRs CTCE and CTCM.

2. For what purposes will the airline use the passenger's contact?

The airline needs to have sufficient contact details available to proactively contact the passenger in the event of irregular operations or provide the customer with updated information about their journey. Airlines shall use these contact details exclusively for the purpose of operational notifications and shall not use the contact details for sales or marketing purposes.

Operational notifications include but are not limited to changed time of departure, flight delay alert, flight cancellation, pro-active flight-rebooking information, seat change, gate change, baggage updates, check-in open/automated check-in, etc.

3. If the customer refuses to provide a contact detail, what is the responsibility of the agent?

The agent should explain to the customer the advantages of providing their contact details and what the impact is to the customer if there is no contact information.

In the event the passenger exercises his or her right not to provide contact details it is incumbent on the agent to indicate that the passenger has declined to provide such details. The agent should enter the refusal in the PNR using the SSR CTCR (contact refused) and in such cases the passenger shall not be provided with information pertaining to their flight.

4. What is the benefit for the travel agent by providing the customer's contact?

By providing a valid passenger contact (email address and mobile phone number, using the industry standard) the travel agent will:

1. Ensure their customers will be provided with relevant and timely information by the airline
2. Reduce the need to check PNR queues for messages related to disruptions and re-booking
3. Reduce the need to search for alternative flight arrangements for their customers
4. Save time and money, while meeting customer's expectations
5. Improve the overall experience with the travel agency

5. Not all customers have mobile phones or email addresses (or have access to data roaming). How can airlines ensure that customers are kept informed?

In the 2015 IATA Global passenger survey 93% of travelers responded that they would like to be provided with real-time and pro-active information about their flight. 79% of global passengers responded that their preferred option to be notified is by e-mail or sms. Complimentary WiFi services at airports are increasingly available throughout the world allowing customers to connect and receive pro-active notifications.

Some customers do not have a mobile phone or email and therefore the existing processes of providing updated flight information (e.g. airport information screens, customer service announcements, etc.) remains in place.

6. When will the airlines deploy the standard industry SSR CTC element?

The major GDS providers (Amadeus, Travelport and Sabre) have provided the infrastructure for the SSR CTC element. Airlines started deployment in 2014 and gradually implemented it within their systems. Travel agents were notified by each airline when the SSR CTC element is deployed and should be used.

7. Where can I find out the procedures for the new contact element entry?

The new procedures are communicated by the airline to the travel agents via their information bulletins or dedicated travel agent on-line portals. Agents can also obtain the contact element entry procedures from their GDS Product Advisory notifications.

8. How are corporate travel management companies (TMC) expected to manage the notifications to their customers?

The customer contact should be provided using the CTC contact element, but where individual agreements exist between the airline and the TMC for customer notifications, these will prevail.

9. How do airlines ensure that the passenger receives the notifications?

Airline notification systems manage the delivery of the message via sms, voice or email.

10. Some customers have more than one mobile phone number and use local numbers to reduce roaming fees. How are airlines managing this?

The travel agent is advised to inform the customer that they should provide the preferred contact number or email address that is valid for that particular journey (can also be segment related). The travel agents can also contact the airline for further advice.

11. How do airlines manage the notifications for families or group travel?

For families or group travel the agent may provide an email or mobile phone number in the PNR for one person or several people. Travel agents can also check the individual airline policy about families and groups.

12. Are airlines storing the passengers' contacts?

The airline will use the contact information provided to communicate to the customer any operational notifications within the operational window. (This operational window is individually determined by each airline.) The contact information is stored in the PNR only and is purged after travel is complete. For this reason agents are asked to provide the customer contact each time the passenger books with the agent.

13. Will the customer be notified if there are different airlines in the same itinerary?

The SSR CTC element is visible to all operating carriers in the same itinerary. It is the airline's responsibility to notify the customer of any operational issue.

14. How do airlines ensure protection of the customer's contact information as it is considered personal data?

Airlines already handle personal data of their customers and must comply with the national data protection regulations in their country of registration.