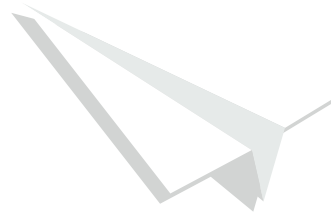




flying high on Customer Experience

**kulula.com**

## flying High



Low-fare airline kulula.com has been voted the best low cost airline in Middle East / Africa for three years in a row, and has won a number of other accolades, including top airline for business travellers in the 2015 Sunday Times Top Brands survey and Best low cost airline: Business traveller awards 2016. kulula.com is owned by Comair Limited who also operate British Airways (within Southern Africa).

These kudos are mainly due to the airline's focus on customer experience (CX). Comair's Executive Manager for Commercial Distribution, Iain Meaker, explains that the airline has actively worked on fulfilling its vision of delighting its customers at every turn, and that its fantastic commercial results over the past few years are proof of the effectiveness of this approach.

"In order to improve the experiences of passengers – from booking, to check-in, to disembarkation and bag retrieval, and at every other touchpoint – we have taken a multi-pronged approach that places the customer at the centre of everything. We have created an encompassing system that allows us to understand what our customers are saying and understand their behaviours a lot better, enabling us to move towards truly personalised experiences," he says.

"Priding itself on consistent value, reliability and professionalism, kulula needed a solution that was just as adventurous, cutting edge and passionate about customer experience as it was."

"To this end, we developed a master plan that takes us past merely understanding customer data, and allows us to identify what technologies to deploy in order to fulfil our vision, what actions we need to take, and how to close the loop between technology, customer data and feedback, and how all of these are used in the business. We don't just hear what our customers are saying, we are actively engaging in their stories."

kulula has employed the insights garnered from its CX initiatives to further this evolution, using the expertise of long-term partner and CX orchestration specialist inQuba and the inQuba CX software platform. Meaker adds that the airline has been successful in this respect because it is able to proactively engage in real communication with customers, shifting away from service recovery to actively identifying the areas where improvements will make the biggest impact on the customer journey. "Different areas have different impacts on the customer journey. By identifying the relative importance of these to our passengers, we are able to ensure that those are prioritised. For example, disembarkation should be as fast and painless as possible, and any glitches in this area impact the customer's experience far more than, say, the in-flight catering."



# making Connections

By making CX part of the company's culture – so much so, that every member of the team has an understanding of the customer journey, including pain points and issues, and how these can be resolved – kulula has achieved remarkable results. However, Meaker says that as the airline's CX experience has matured, so has its CX programme.



“Our CX journey is a work in progress. We are constantly fine-tuning in order to ensure we stay current and relevant. We learned a tremendous amount from our feedback system, and as we built on that we embarked on a complete redesign in order to refine our ability to reach individual customers and enhance their experiences.”

Using what Meaker terms the “credible detail” provided by the Voice of the Customer (VoC) system, kulula identified what it needed to do – and how – in order to build a holistic view of customers as individuals. While still evolving, the ultimate outcome of this project will be to build a “master customer profile” that will not only recognise passengers as individuals, but allow the airline to overlay value systems, history scores and social media influence to offer a personalised service. For example, a mother travelling alone with a child may get an extra baggage allowance in order to spare her from having to lug two bags through the airport.

“By refining our journey mapping and reports and identifying priority improvement areas, we are creating an environment where we are actively creating ways to make customers feel more valued and engaged.”

According to Meaker, inQuba's ability to enable intelligent communication with customers through its built-in rules based system has been very important. “This means we won't bombard customers with the same surveys, for example, and allows us to target specific customers or groups of customers in a more timely fashion and with the proper context. In the event a customer uses the survey to voice his or her frustration and make a complaint, the inQuba system alerts our internal customer relations team and arms them with the information that they need to effectively engage in service recovery and close the loop with our customer.”

## staying Fresh

inQuba assisted the airline in the redesign of its CX programme, including elements such as shortening survey questions, refining text analytics and reports, and identifying moments of truth in the customer journey. The redesign included the revision of both transactional and periodic surveys.

The periodic surveys provide a holistic view of customer loyalty and how customers perceive the brand, offering a big picture overview. As the name implies, the transactional surveys focus on specific transactions and touchpoints, and are conducted in a targeted manner. The surveys were specially crafted to fully integrate with the brand persona of kulula, and they cover all of the CX areas the airline has identified as important.

In addition to the surveys, customer feedback is collected through social media and kulula's customer care email box. This allows a constant stream of feedback from any channel, with surveys, social media and e-mail feedback being collected in real time. All of this data is analysed via a centralised text analytics profile that allows kulula to identify the sentiment relating to each feedback item, as well as the themes and stories that are trending.

"The data helps us understand the feedback from all the different channels and tie it all together."

"The analytics use a mix of the structured and unstructured feedback areas, and allows us to drill down into specifics. We can look at specific elements, and even do regression analysis on them," Meaker says. "The data helps us understand the feedback from all the different channels and tie it all together."

Operating in a highly competitive industry, kulula's continued success is proof of the fact that CX is an invaluable tool in growing market share. "By combining the focus of our people and our systems on the customer, we are constantly improving their experience of the airline. As we continue to refine and evolve our CX programme, we will use our learnings to more actively engage in our customers' stories."

## about inQuba

inQuba is a customer experience management and customer engagement SaaS provider established across four continents. inQuba offers Enterprise Customer Experience (CX), Social, Engagement, Campaigning and Service Desk on a single, integrated SaaS platform.

For more information on inQuba, please visit [www.inquba.com](http://www.inquba.com)

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