



## Case study

# International Air Transport Association

## Commercial card solution enhances transparency and control over travel expenses

The International Air Transport Association (IATA) is the trade association for the world's airlines. Representing over 260 airlines in 117 countries, IATA is dedicated to developing global standards that allow for higher safety and efficiency in aviation, and to improving the understanding of the industry among decision-makers.

### Seeking enhanced expense transparency and control

The international nature of IATA's activities, along with the company's decentralized organizational structure, posed numerous challenges to IATA in managing employees' travel-related expenses.

IATA operated with a fragmented payments structure. For example, it was composed of 37 different card schemes, featuring 17 card types. Various systems were also in place for reporting and monitoring card transactions, many of which lacked automation. Meanwhile, information management was rendered costly and unwieldy, with time-consuming reconciliation processes and no central oversight.

A solution was therefore needed to enhance transparency and control over staff expenses, simplifying billing and settlement, while allowing IATA to adopt a single, automated expense management system (EMS).

### Choosing the right commercial card provider

IATA chose Citi's T&E (travel and entertainment) solution, a payments solution with global reach especially designed for multinational companies.

The solution allows payments and transaction fees to be centrally billed, streamlining purchase and reconciliation procedures, and improving visibility into and control over IATA's global transactions.

Citi's T&E solution has enabled IATA to adopt a single, automated EMS that provides the trade association with comprehensive information at a global level, improving its spending oversight and enabling it to produce detailed reports in a time-efficient manner.

By allowing enhanced transparency over expenses, Citi's T&E solution enables IATA to gain a better understanding of employee spending habits, strengthen controls and ensure targets are met.

The solution can be seamlessly integrated into the EMS, consolidating monitoring and reconciliation processes and allowing reports to be automatically produced in a standardized manner through Citi's Custom Reporting System (CCRS).

### Putting Citi's T&E solution to work on a global scale

The solution was implemented in 2014 with great success. A total of 960 cards have been issued globally, surpassing initial estimates by 30%. As of August 2015, over 62,000 transactions in 29 countries had been processed through commercial cards, corresponding to nearly EUR17 million in payments.

The solution has enabled IATA to adopt a single, automated EMS. Following the program's implementation, IATA's multiple, often manual, systems for reporting, reconciling and monitoring transactions were replaced by a centralized platform, connected to the CCRS. This provides IATA with comprehensive information at a global level, improving oversight and enabling the production of detailed reports in a time-efficient manner.

Moreover, by implementing a globally consistent payments solution, IATA is now able to analyze transaction volumes and leverage the aggregated expenditures by negotiating favorable deals with vendors.

IATA's global footprint has therefore been supported by Citi's T&E solution. By transforming the company's locally fragmented program into a centralized, global platform, Citi has enabled IATA to optimize information management, while increasing transparency and control over travel related expenses.

### Challenge

IATA's international activities and decentralized organizational structure made it challenging to manage employee travel-related expenses. IATA's payment structure had 37 different schemes and 17 card types, making it fragmented and lacking in automation and oversight. IATA needed a single automated EMS, better transparency and control over staff expenses, and simplified billing and settlement.

### Solution

Designed for multinational companies, Citi's T&E payment solution streamlines purchasing procedures by centrally billing payments and transaction fees while improving visibility and control of global transactions. IATA chose this not least because it could also be seamlessly integrated into the EMS via CCRS, allowing IATA to further standardize reports to consolidate monitoring and reconciliation processes.

### Result

Implementing a globally consistent payments solution now gives IATA comprehensive information that enables the company to analyze transaction volumes and negotiate favorable deals with vendors. Enhanced transparency and control over expenses also enables IATA to better understand employee spending habits, strengthen controls and ensure targets are met.