



**Association of South African Travel Agents**

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## **GDS COSTS**

A fee is charged to the airline used each time that a booking is made in the Global Distribution System (GDS) – that is the reservation system used by travel agents. Charges are not only incurred for the bookings that are ticketed and enjoyed by travellers, but for each and every reservation that is made at the request of a client whether that booking ultimately translates into a ticketed transaction or not.

Airlines are cutting costs on every level and GDS costs, being a billion Dollar loss in the airline industry globally, is receiving much attention and scrutiny.

It is imperative for the clients of our ASATA Member Retail Travel Agents be aware of the costs involved so as to reduce this wastage and the implications thereof. Methods of curbing the phenomenon include:

- You have a preferred ASATA Travel Agent or Travel Management Company for a reason and likely have a sound performance-based SLA in place with them outlining the objectives of this contract. Trust them to obtain the best available price for you at the time of travel.
- Refrain from requesting quotations from and holding seats with a host of Travel Agents until you are ready to confirm your booking. The practice of holding seats on a multitude of flights, by a variety of agents, has an alarming impact on the GDS wastage costs experienced by the airlines.
- Every time a booking is made, changed or cancelled, GDS costs are incurred by the airline. Whilst we acknowledge that changes or cancellations may sometimes be unavoidable, please try to do so only when absolutely necessary. Plan the trip before you make the reservation.
- Advise your ASATA Travel Agent should you no longer need to travel. If bookings are not cancelled timeously, cost implications are incurred.

If remedial steps are not taken to reduce the costs incurred to the airlines, the resultant action could be the passing on of charges on to the end-user, and that means you, the traveller.

ASATA has undertaken to assist the airlines in a drive to reduce GDS costs in the South African market through education and awareness. We ask for your assistance in this awareness campaign and your cognizance with future travel bookings.

**Robyn Christie**  
**Chief Executive Officer**