Up in the Air Travel Fintech Newsletter – Edition February 2026

Welcome to edition 9 of the **Up in the Air | Consultancy** monthly newsletter! It includes a round up of the content that I recently shared, plus some additional news and background items.

This edition is sponsored by **Grain**

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Grain helps airlines and global platforms stop margin leakage caused by currency timing gaps, turning FX from a cost center into a pricing advantage. By eliminating the drift between pricing and settlement, we protect margin and enable more competitive, predictable global pricing.

i Travel Fintech News

Airline & Travel Payments - Agentic AI 101

Updated version of the **Up in the Air | Consultancy** infographic on agentic commerce payments for airline & travel merchants.
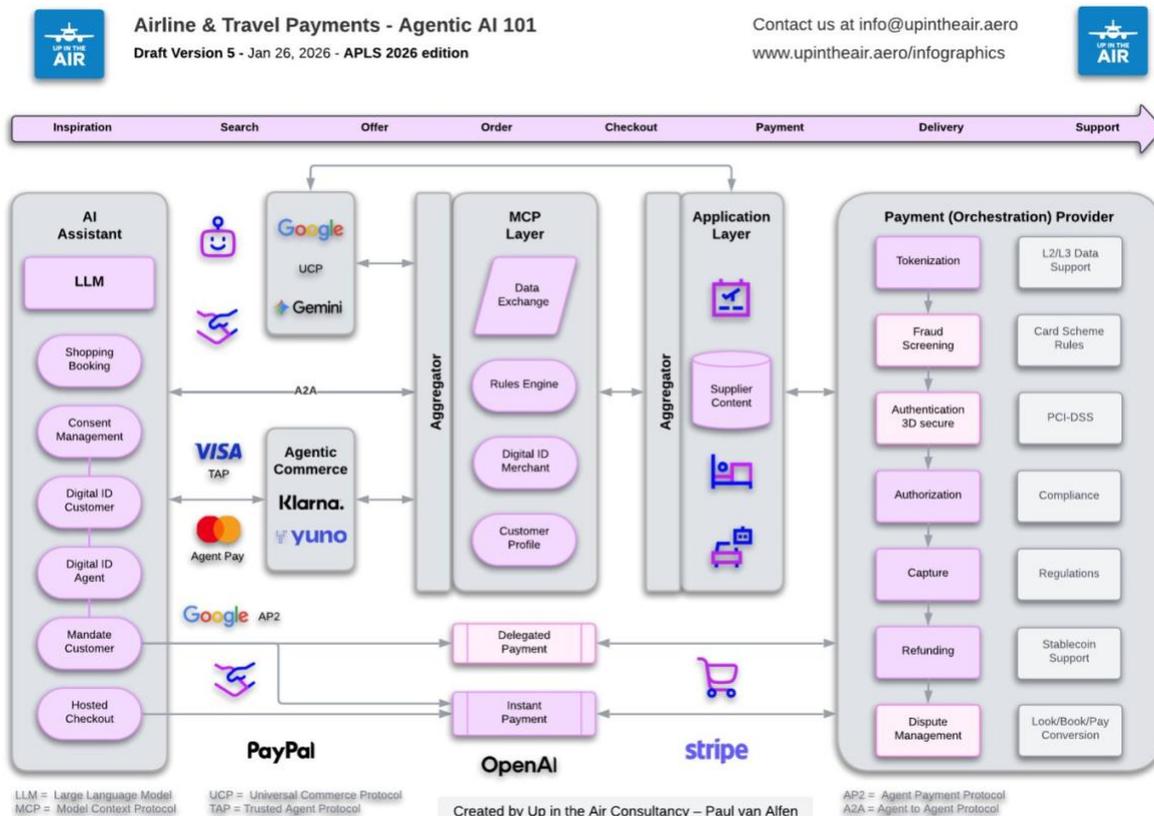
Riyadh Air | طيران الرياض and **Mastercard** take off together to redefine the global travel experience through multiple touchpoints

- The two companies announce a strategic global partnership including multiple elements across enterprise, brand, consumer and guest experience

- The partners will develop a portfolio of innovative consumer products including Riyadh Air-branded credit and prepaid cards built for the next generation of travelers

- As a global first, Riyadh Air will introduce airline-branded virtual card program to support travel agents and other B2B transactions

- The extensive partnership will include the co-development of a dedicated center of excellence to design, test and scale new solutions

Click on image to read the press release

***How payment innovations broaden opportunities in global travel***

Article by **FinTech Magazine**, an interview with **Hahnair** s Head of Payments **Benjamin Sibbald** covering the complexities that come with serving 100.000 travel agents selling tickets on behalf of 350 airlines, across 190 markets.

Click on image to read article

Travel payments in 2026: challenges, trends, and regulatory updates

The Paypers invited six payment experts to weigh in on the trends, challenges, and regulatory shifts impacting travel payments in 2026.
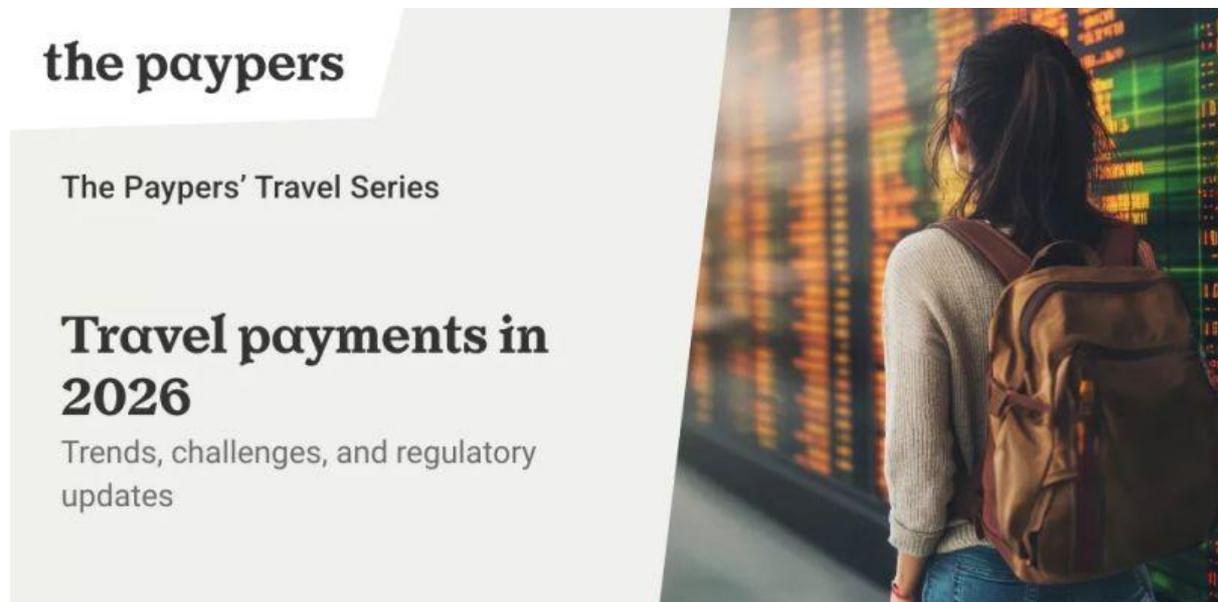
Click on image to read article

ℹ Vendor News

Cebu Pacific Air *teams up with* **mnc.aero** *to optimize payment processes*

Cebu Pacific has signed an agreement with **mnc.aero** to implement an automated payment reconciliation platform for its financial operations.
The platform will replace manual reconciliation processes with system-driven transaction matching, providing visibility across revenue flows and supporting financial closing cycles.

mnc.aero specializes in payment solutions for airlines, addressing reconciliation requirements across multiple payment channels, acquiring relationships, and settlement processes. The company's platform consolidates transaction data from payment service providers, global distribution systems, and direct booking channels.

the paypers News

MXC aero

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Click on image to read article

[Adyen](#) *and* [Uber](#) *Expand Global Partnership to Power New Markets, Launch Uber Kiosks*

- Adyen and Uber expand their relationship to support Uber's payment processing across more key geographies
- Uber will leverage Adyen's Checkout API to offer additional payment methods
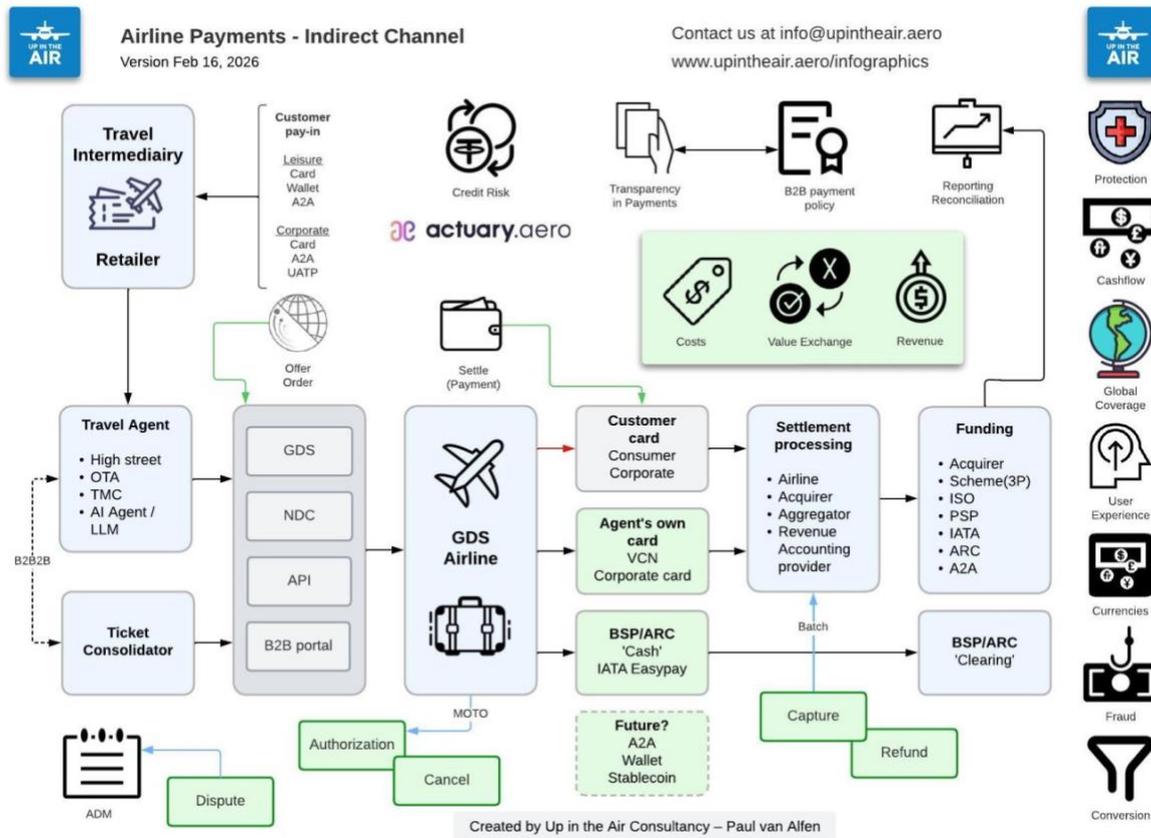- Uber launched kiosks at venues powered by Adyen terminals
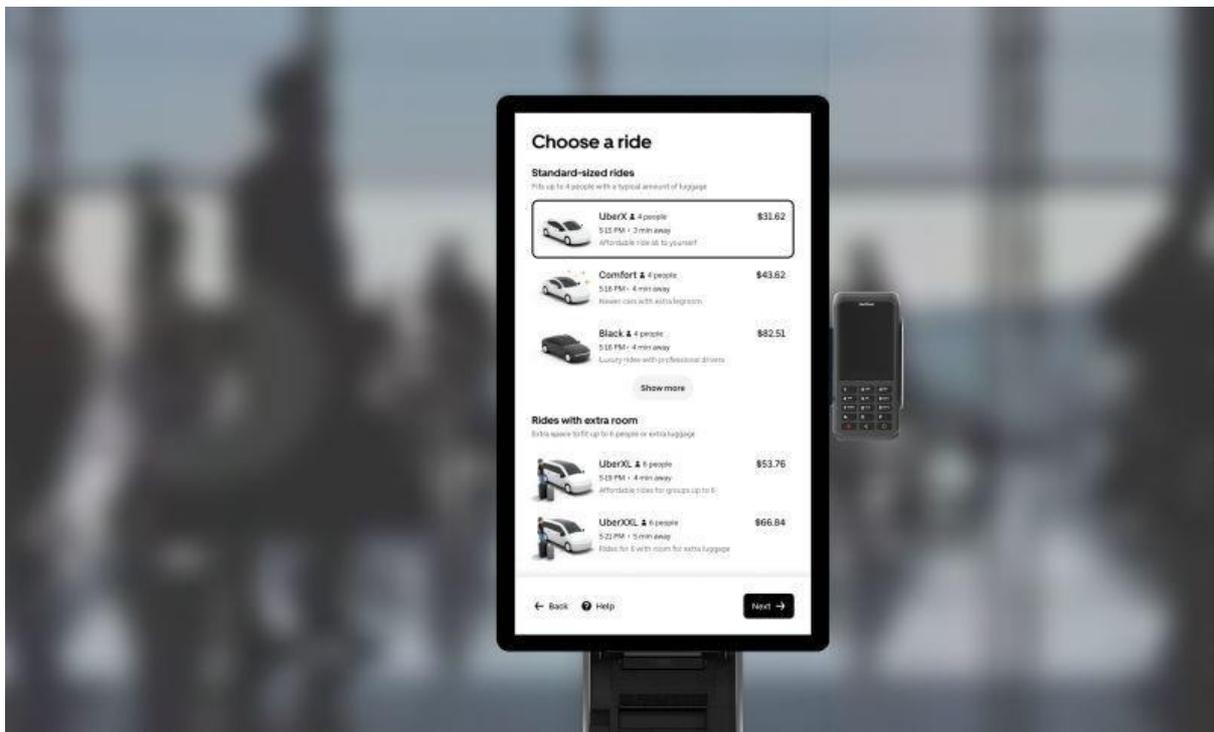
Click in image to read press release

i Airline & Travel Payments 101

Airline Payments - Indirect Channel

Updated version of the **Up in the Air | Consultancy** infographic on settlement / payment between travel intermediaries and airlines.

Airline & Travel Payments - Product World Map

Updated version of the **Up in the Air | Consultancy** world map for alternative / local forms of payment.

Airline & Travel Payments - Product world map 2026
Version Feb 4, 2026

Contact us at info@uptheair.aero
www.uptheair.aero/infographics

Created by Up in the Air Consultancy – Paul van Alfen

i Blogs, white papers and other content

Spirit's Bankruptcy Explained: a Note for Frontier, Ryanair, and Allegiant
A video by **AltexSoft**, unpacking where the ULCC model fails, where it still works, and what this means for the future of low-cost aviation

Click on image to watch video

[Worldpay](#) *Agentic Commerce Report 2025*

The Agentic Commerce report: An expert view on consumer trust and behavior and what merchants can do to prepare for the industry's biggest shift in e-commerce.

Click on image for download page

Flight Booking Process: Structure, Steps, and Key Systems

" When a person books a flight, less than 15 minutes pass between their starting to fill in the search form and a booking confirmation appearing in their mailbox. From the airline side, it involves many events and systems to issue a ticket and make sure that the right person will board the plane. In this article, **[AltexSoft](#)** describes the flight booking pipeline and explain the main processes supporting it. "
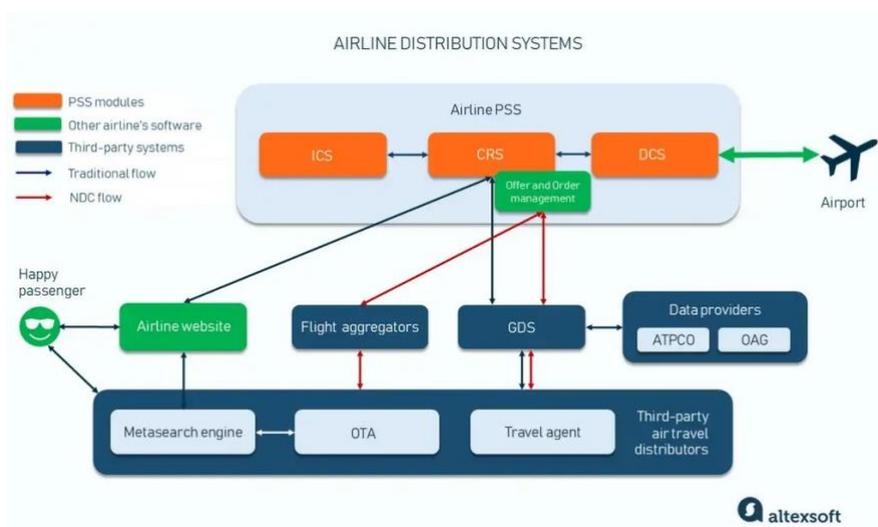
Click on image to read article

i Upcoming and recent events

Airline Distribution® 2026 - An Elevated Platform for Greatness

Airline Distribution® is **UATP**'s annual interactive conference that focuses on important distribution issues affecting the airline industry.

Click on image for more information and registration

Converge by actuary.aero 2026

Amsterdam will be the location for the 4th edition of the 'Converge by **actuary.aero**' event, the highly rated community gathering of travel / fintech thought leaders, experts and other stakeholders.

Click on image for more information and registration

Airline Payments Leadership Summit

The fifth edition of this unique event took place in Valencia on January 27-29, under the stewardship of **Thomas Helldorff** at **Worldpay**. It brought together 35 seasoned industry experts, young talents and innovators to discuss 3 main topics:

- End-to-End Payments Cost and Value

- Payments and Modern Airline Retailing - Exploring "Settle" (Payment) in OOSD

- Agentic Commerce in Travel: Reality vs. Hype

ℹ Movers & Shakers

Laurie Gablehouse: Pay Fly Stay

After many years of delivering solutions for airlines and hospitality organizations, **Laurie Gablehouse** is excited to share the next chapter in her journey: "I am leveraging my 40+ years of experience to create effective strategies for companies. Welcome to my new consultancy practice, **Pay Fly Stay**, where I can be reached for collaboration and insights."

ℹ Jobs

VP, Business Development, Travel - EEMEA at **Mastercard**

Omoke Adebanjo is hiring!

"The EEMEA Merchant and Commerce team is looking for a VP, Business Development – Travel Segment to drive transformative growth by leading Mastercard's commercial strategy across the EEMEA region travel ecosystem. This includes leading and scaling all sales and partnership activities across relevant airlines, hotels, OTAs, TMCs, and other travel-related technology companies, to drive profitable revenue growth, market share expansion and deep strategic relationships."

*Principal Product Manager, Payments at **Booking.com***

Henrique Di Lorenzo is hiring in Amsterdam!

"Agentic commerce is still taking shape. We don't have all the answers - but we intend to lead. We're unlocking growth by expanding payments across high-opportunity markets like LATAM. You'll drive both vision and execution various other high-impact areas."

ℹ Follow us for more news and information

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LinkedIn:

- **Paul van Alfen**
- **Up in the Air | Consultancy**
- **Airline Retailing Payments** Up in the Air's Airline Retailing (Offer/Order/Settle/Deliver, NDC) page for the Airline & Travel Payments community
- **Think Travel Payments** Webinar Series

YouTube channel: **UpintheAirPay**

Would you like to suggest content for this newsletter? Contact me at paul@upintheair.aero