

Up in the Air Travel Fintech Newsletter – Edition May / June 2026



Welcome to edition 12 of the **Up in the Air** 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 **actuary.aero**

Connecting the payments and risk ecosystem

actuary.aero gives every payment stakeholder the visibility needed to make smarter, faster, and more confident decisions. Using intelligent insights built on shared, high quality data, we help acquirers, issuers, merchants, and insurance partners collaborate, unlock growth and reduce risk across a suite of purpose-built platforms.

actuary.aero was born from a simple idea: payment stakeholders shouldn't have to make decisions without seeing the full picture. Built in travel and designed for deferred delivery, we connect the data others don't see on their own, or can't link, across the payment lifecycle.

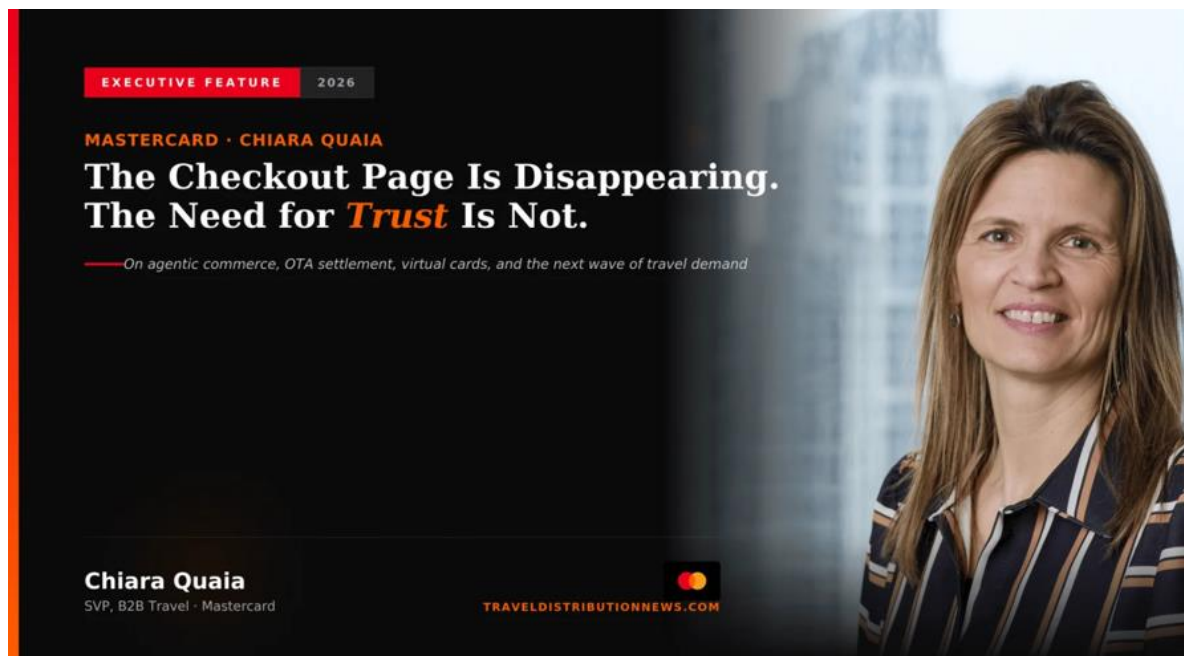
With over a decade of experience in deferred-delivery payments across travel and e-commerce, we understand these challenges inside out. Today, we bring shared visibility to merchants, acquirers, issuers, and insurers, helping the ecosystem reduce risk and grow with confidence.



Mastercard's Chiara Quaia: "The Checkout Page Is Disappearing. The Need for Trust Is Not."

Article by [Travel Distribution News](#)

[Chiara Quaia](#), Senior Vice President of B2B Travel at [Mastercard](#), on agentic commerce, the OTA settlement problem, why virtual cards are reshaping airline distribution, and what financial inclusion in travel actually requires.



Click on image to read the interview

Are Travelers Ready to Pay and Check Out via Agentic AI Tools?

Write up of my recent conversation with [AltexSoft](#) on what to expect (in the short term) from agentic commerce payments in the travel sector. Taking the position of the 'realist in the room' without 'skin in the game'...



Click on image to read the interview

i Vendor News

Outpayce from Amadeus Partners With Hands In to Distribute Split Payments to the Global Travel Industry

Through the collaboration, airlines and travel merchants using Outpayce as a payment orchestrator can offer split payments across two or more cards directly at the payment page, with no additional technical integration required.



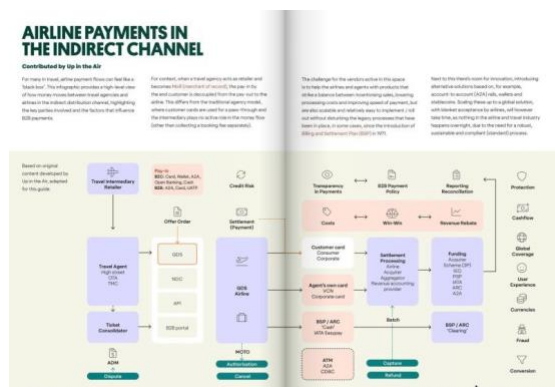
Click on image to read press release

[Lufthansa Group Digital Hangar](#) announced that [Lufthansa Group](#) airlines will be going live with 'Click to Pay' across key European markets, in collaboration with [Mastercard](#).



Navigating Travel Payments - A practical guide to payment models, flows and tools across the travel ecosystem

A guide by [Advantage Travel Partnership](#)



Click on image to read the guide

50+ *Up in the Air* Infographics

On the updated [Up in the Air](https://www.upintheair.aero) website you'll find:

- 50+ infographics
- Vendor directory
- Travel Fintech Newsletters
- Industry event schedule



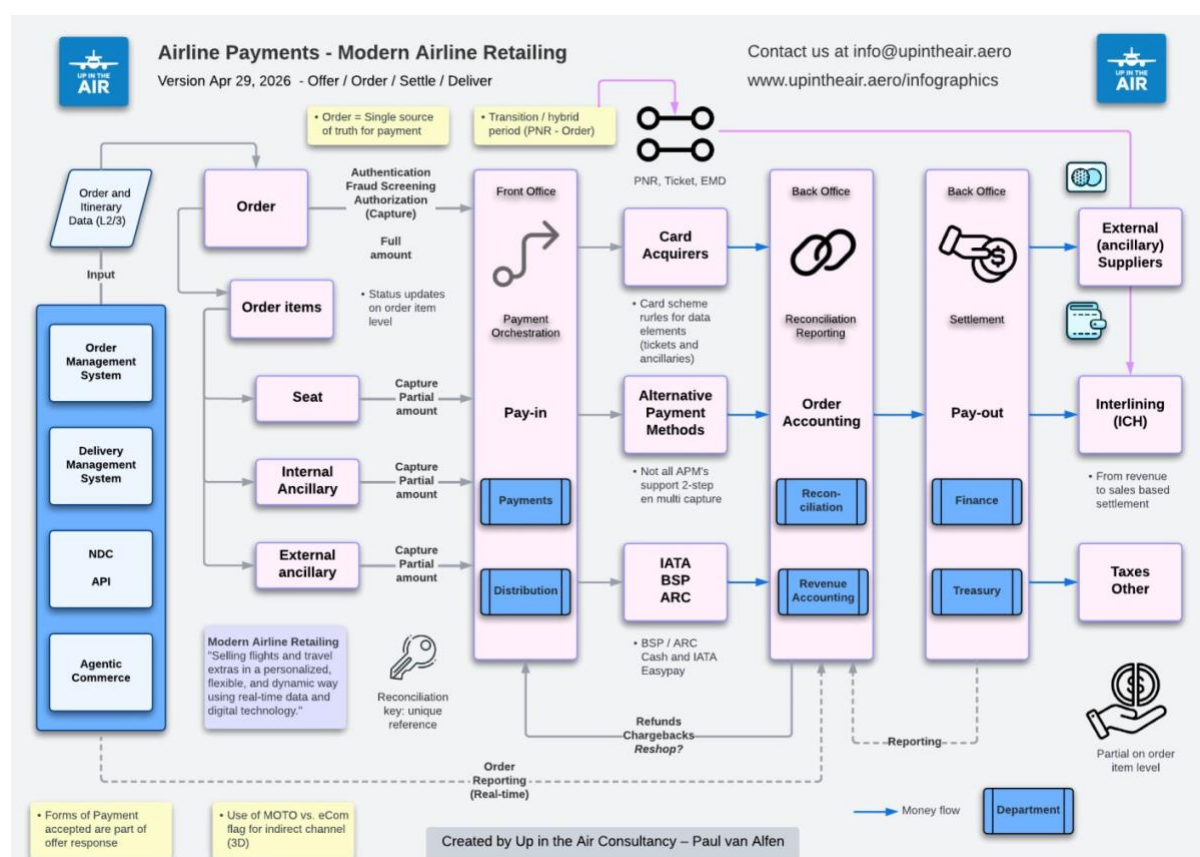
Click on image for infographics

i Blogs, white papers and other content

Airline Payments - Modern Airline Retailing

Some take aways from this new [Up in the Air](#) infographic:

- MAR covers both the direct and indirect channel (so not only NDC!)
- Is your payment architecture future proof, based on a solid foundation?
- Airlines should start to focus on streamlining their settlement with ancillary suppliers, start to think like a marketplace
- Order accounting and reconciliation will be key, take a holistic view and make it work end to end, from day 1



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Aviation Business News Insights Special Report - Airline Payments & Retail in the Era of AI

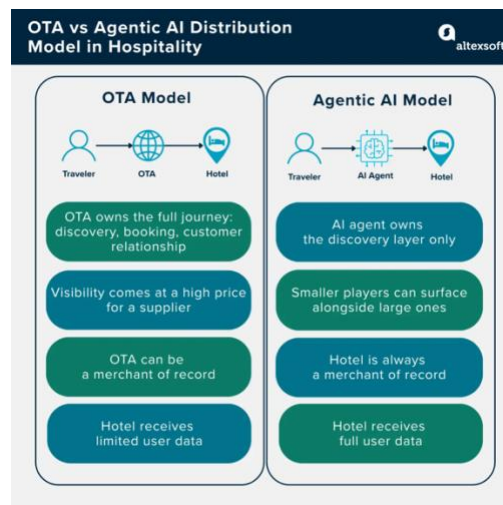
A special [Aviation Business News](#) and [Low Cost & Regional Airline Business](#) report on the future of payments, retail and distribution.



[Click on image to read the report](#)

Who Will Control Lodging Distribution in the Era of Agentic AI? 7 Questions Posed to Hospitality Experts

An AltexSoft travel blog.



[Click on image to read blog](#)

Reframing travel plumbing: NDC, MCP as tech stack allies

Article by [PhocusWire](#)

In the 2010s, [International Air Transport Association \(IATA\)](#)'s **New Distribution Capability** (NDC) was hailed as a solution to modernize airline merchandising and distribution. Now, model context protocol (MCP) promises to simplify how artificial intelligence (AI) agents connect with external systems.

- MCP vs. NDC
- How NDC, MCP could work together



Click on image to read article

i Upcoming and recent events

Aviation Festival Americas

Panel: Payment Orchestration Innovation: How can we Strengthen Payment Resilience while Scaling Operations? With [Francisco Melendez](#), [Karina Medeiros](#), [Paul van Alfen](#) and [Luis Rodrigo Maldonado](#).



Industry Event Schedule 2H-2026



Industry Event Schedule 2H-2026

Version Apr 30, 2026

Contact us at info@upintheair.aero
www.upintheair.aero/events



Event name	Organizer	Event website for registration (click on link)	Location	Start Date	End Date
GBTA Convention 2026	GBTA	https://convention.gbta.org/	Chicago, IL	03/08/2026	05/08/2026
Arabian Travel Market	RX Events	https://www.stm.com/atm/en-gb.html	Dubai	17/08/2026	20/08/2026
Airline & Travel Payments Summit APAC	Airline Information	https://www.alconnects.us/events	Bali	25/08/2026	26/08/2026
Future Travel Experience Global	FTE	https://www.futuretravelexperience.com/the-global-conferences	Dallas, TX	08/09/2026	10/09/2026
HEDNA Global Distribution Conference	HEDNA	https://www.hedna.org/en/events/	Lisbon	15/09/2026	17/09/2026
T2RL Engage	T2RL	https://www.t2rl.com/events/t2rlengage/	London	21/09/2026	23/09/2026
Skift Global Forum	Skift	https://live.skift.com/upcoming-events	New York, NY	22/09/2026	24/09/2026
Digital Travel US 2026	WB Research	https://digitaltravel.wbresearch.com/	Orlando, FL	28/09/2026	29/09/2026
Web In Travel	Northstar Travel Group	https://www.wbevents.com/vitsingapore/	Singapore	30/09/2026	02/10/2026
World Aviation Festival	Terrapinn	https://www.terrapinn.com/conference/aviation-festival/index.stm	Lisbon	13/10/2026	15/10/2026
Bavel Travel Summit	Voxel	https://www.voxelgroup.net/events/bavel-travel-summit/	Sitges (Barcelona)	21/10/2026	23/10/2026
World Financial Symposium	IATA	https://www.iata.org/en/events/wfs/	Macao	28/10/2026	29/10/2026
World Passenger Symposium	IATA	https://www.iata.org/en/events/wps/	Macao	28/10/2026	29/10/2026
World Travel Market	RELX	https://www.stm.com/london/en-gb.html	London	03/11/2026	05/11/2026
APG World Connect	APG	https://worldconnect.apg-ga.com/	Monaco	04/11/2026	06/11/2026
Digital Travel Europe	WB Research	https://digitaltravel.eu.wbresearch.com/	London	17/11/2026	18/11/2026
PhocusWright Conference	PhocusWright	www.phocuswrightconference.com	FT. Lauderdale, FL	17/11/2026	19/11/2026



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i Jobs

[Adyen](#) is hiring a Head of Travel & Mobility.

The banner is split into two sections. The left section is a photograph of an Adyen office reception area with a woman at a desk and a man standing. The right section has a grey background with a blue button at the top that says 'TRAVEL FINTECH JOB ALERT' and 'UP IN THE AIR' with an airplane icon. Below the button, the text 'Head of Travel & Mobility' is written in white, followed by the green 'adyen' logo.

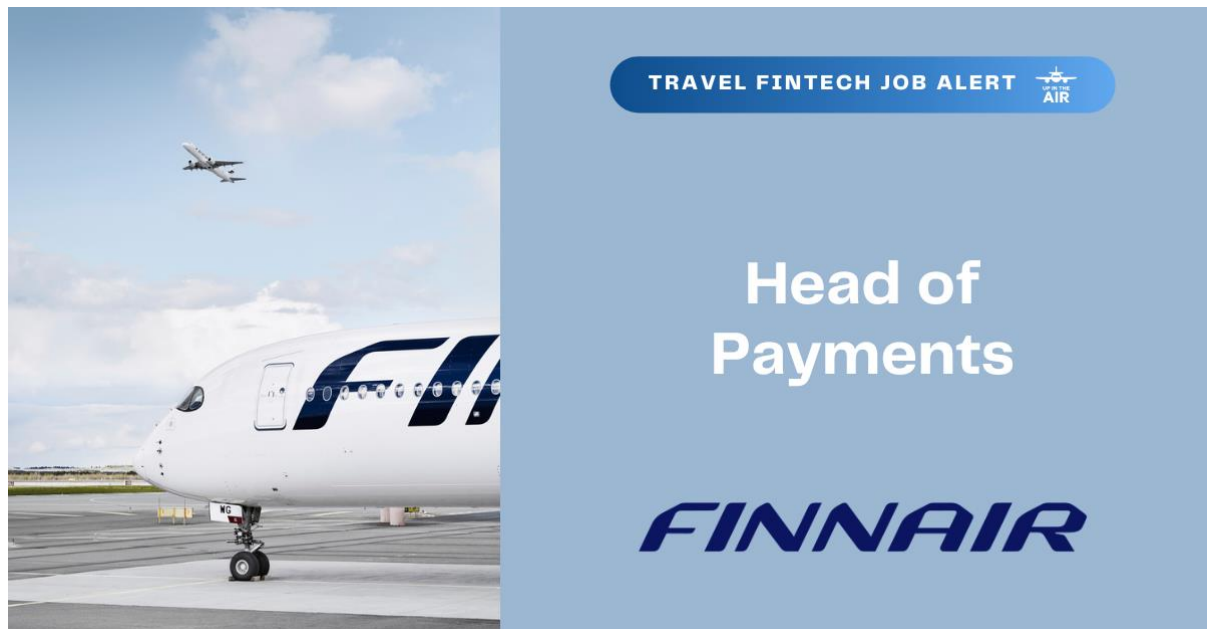
TRAVEL FINTECH JOB ALERT 

Head of
Travel & Mobility

adyen

Click on image to view job

[Finnair](#) is hiring a Head of Payments.

The banner is split into two sections. The left section is a photograph of a Finnair airplane on a tarmac. The right section has a blue background with a blue button at the top that says 'TRAVEL FINTECH JOB ALERT' and 'UP IN THE AIR' with an airplane icon. Below the button, the text 'Head of Payments' is written in white, followed by the blue 'FINNAIR' logo.

TRAVEL FINTECH JOB ALERT 

Head of
Payments

FINNAIR

Click on image to view job

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- [Think Travel Payments](#) Webinar Series
- YouTube channel: [UpintheAirPay](#)



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