

TRAVELTRENDS™

Monthly travel insights from Compete

By Gregory Saks

JetBlue flies steady through turbulent period

Most consumers and professionals are aware of the Valentine's Day storm that wreaked havoc on JetBlue Airways. The collapse of the carrier's flight operation was well-documented in both industry and national press as it struggled to re-align its planes, crews, and customers.

Shortly after JetBlue's operational difficulties were resolved, Compete fielded a survey* to over 400 JetBlue Customers** and Prospects*** to gauge their awareness of these events, their opinions of the airline's response, and their likelihood to fly JetBlue in the future.

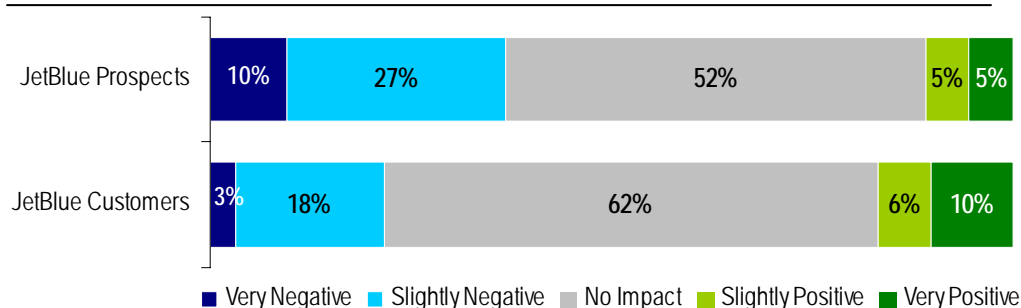
In summary, JetBlue's approach to a potentially disastrous situation serves as a model for other marketers who find themselves in similar public relations predicaments.

Key Findings:

- Despite the extended operational difficulties, the responsiveness of the JetBlue management team and the resiliency of airline's brand enabled JetBlue to emerge from the situation in a positive light. 78% of survey respondents were aware of JetBlue's changes in policy including the new "Customer Bill of Rights." Additionally, 82% of respondents aware of new policies felt the changes will help improve the airline's operation.
- Most consumers saw the situation as a public relations issue, rather than something that will directly impact their future flying decisions. While 42% of respondents saw a negative impact on JetBlue's public reputation, only 30% indicated a negative impact on their likelihood to fly JetBlue. 14% actually said the events had a positive impact on their likelihood to fly JetBlue.
- Travelers were upset with JetBlue's handling of the situation as it unfolded, but gave the company credit for swift operational changes and new policies. 35% of respondents felt that JetBlue insufficiently informed customers about delays. However, 48% say the company did an exceptional job in implementing new policies and rights for passengers (only 7% of respondents felt changes to policy were insufficient).
- The impact of JetBlue's troubles on Customers and Prospects was notably different. 21% of Customers said that the operational difficulties had a negative impact on their likelihood to fly JetBlue; among Prospects the rate climbs to 37%. Though previous Customers believe in the JetBlue brand, the company has more work cut out for itself in restoring interest and demand among Prospects who have not yet flown the airline.

How have JetBlue's recent operational difficulties impacted your likelihood to fly with JetBlue?

(Asked of Survey respondents, February 2007)



* Compete behaviorally-targeted a survey to Internet users who had visited JetBlue.com in January 2007, fielding the survey between Friday 2/23 and Sunday 2/25.

** JetBlue Customers: visitors to JetBlue.com that have flown the airline in the past 12 months

*** JetBlue Prospects: visitors to JetBlue.com that have not flown the airline in the past 12 months

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