

# The airline FX opportunity:

How Multi-Currency Pricing (MCP)  
can become a top ancillary product

**RUNWAYFLIGHTS**

< Flight details

1 Adult

Tokyo (NRT) 22:25

Venice (VCE) 14:20<sup>+1</sup>

Japanese Yen (JPY) Total: **¥230,108**

**Euros (EUR) Total: €1,309.21**

Pay with card

Dashboard Transactions Notifications Profile

**01**

**Introduction**

According to a major new economic analysis conducted by the Centre for Economics and Business Research (CEBR) and Amadeus Business Consulting using real industry data, 37.6% of airline ticket sales volumes are cross-currency. This means more than a third of the industry's direct sales volume must be paid for with a cross-border payment, requiring a Foreign Exchange (FX) conversion to take place.

Traditionally, air fares would be priced in the airline's primary currency and the traveler's card-issuing bank would perform a conversion behind the scenes if necessary. Still prevalent across the industry today, this model comes with several drawbacks for travelers and airlines.



# 37.6%

of airline ticket sales volumes  
are cross-currency

02

Challenges with  
the status quo

# Handling Foreign Exchange conversions behind-the-scenes comes with several drawbacks for both travelers and airlines.



## Lack of transparency

The passenger isn't aware of the spread (or fee) they must pay for the FX service. This charge is often only disclosed as an item on the traveler's monthly bank statement.



## Poor customer experience

If an airline's offer is priced in an unfamiliar currency the traveler may not be able to easily understand or compare the cost of the flight.



## Impact on conversion

If a traveler doesn't easily understand the price of the offer, they may navigate away from the airline's website to perform a manual conversion elsewhere, increasing abandonment.



## Lack of control

Despite airlines being the retailer and typically the provider of the travel experience, they have no control over the FX experience passengers encounter when purchasing via their website.



## Missed revenue

FX services present a huge opportunity for airlines to offer a high-margin service to their passengers but at present only a handful of airlines have taken control of FX.

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A satisfactory shopping experience is, in large part, the result of an efficient payment funnel. Payment conversion involves managing a highly complex ecosystem of providers. Currency exchange services, which occur just before the payment transaction is undertaken, must work with the same efficiency as the rest of the payment process. FX has become a key element to analyze in our optimization services of the airline payments funnel.”



Manolo Bogajo,  
Director of Payment Consulting at Amadeus



**03**

**The economic  
case for change**

**FX could generate  
nearly \$2B in additional  
annual revenue.**



CEBR's modelling represents the first major analysis of the airline FX revenue opportunity and draws on comprehensive real payments industry data to deliver a highly accurate picture.

According to the analysis, if every airline took control of FX by pricing services in multiple currencies and performing the required currency conversions, it would generate an additional \$1.74B in annual revenue.

This opportunity is immediate and calculated based on current passenger opt-in rates for airline-provided FX services from a handful of pioneering airlines that already offer Multi-Currency Pricing (MCP). On a global basis, CEBR's analysis found that 19% of passengers choose to pay in their preferred currency when provided with the option by their airline (opting-in for airline-provided FX).

**19%**

of passengers choose to pay in their preferred currency when provided with the option by their airline

While a 19% conversion rate for FX services is reasonably high, there is reason to believe this percentage can increase significantly. Any passenger purchasing a cross-currency ticket will require an FX conversion – even if they don't realize it. The choice is a transparent service provided by the airline merchant, or an opaque conversion performed by a bank.

With a focus on communication and incentivization using miles or discounts, it's possible airlines can increase FX opt-in rates far beyond the 19% average based on current industry data. Indeed, several Outpayce customers have achieved significantly higher conversion rates.

According to CEBR's analysis based on data from Outpayce and Amadeus Business Consulting, if the opt-in rate rose from 19% to 100%, with every passenger opting-in for MCP with their airline, FX services would be worth \$9.6B for the industry on an annual basis.

Airlines can increase FX opt-in rates far beyond the

**19%  
average**

FX services would be worth

**\$9.6B**

for the industry on an annual basis

As stated by CarTrawler Airline Ancillary Yearbook<sup>1</sup> developed by IdeaWorks Company, ancillary revenues at many major airlines represent around 5-8% of overall income, typically driven by revenue from baggage, seat, and loyalty products.

With CEBR's analysis finding the average FX spread charged by airlines stands at 3% of the overall flight purchase, it's easy to see how MCP could make a significant revenue contribution for many airlines. On an average \$200 passenger spend, that 3% represents around \$6 in additional margin — almost doubling IATA's 2025<sup>2</sup> reported \$7 average net profit per passenger. With FX Box MCP, airlines can capture this value directly, turning every international sale into a smart, high-margin opportunity.

Airlines stand to roughly

**double the  
profitability**

of any fare above \$200



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The key for airlines is to offer a transparent FX experience tailored to the specific needs of passengers on each route. Industry research shows that merchants using conversion rate optimization tools or services enjoy an average ROI of 223%<sup>3</sup>. Furthermore, personalizing the payments experience can increase conversion rates by 202%<sup>4</sup>. FX is an important enabler to achieve these conversion improvements.”



Manolo Bogajo,  
Director of Payment Consulting at Amadeus

04

The regional  
opportunity

While CEBR's analysis highlights FX opportunities in every region of the world, some regions stand out due to more bookings being made cross-currency. In particular, the APAC and LATAM regions, where more than half of all purchases are made on a cross-currency basis, meaning an FX conversion is required. This naturally larger requirement for FX services is the result of diverse national currencies in these regions, compared to North America which is largely dollar based.

Zooming in on APAC provides a glimpse into the FX potential in regions with diverse currencies. Today, airlines could generate nearly \$600m in additional revenue by offering FX services in APAC. However, with more than half of all purchases requiring currency conversion, this number could grow to \$3.8B if airlines can convince all relevant passengers to opt-in.



# \$3.8B

**This number could grow to \$3.8B if airlines can convince all relevant passengers in APAC to opt-in**

# \$600m

Airlines could generate nearly \$600m in additional revenue by offering FX services in APAC

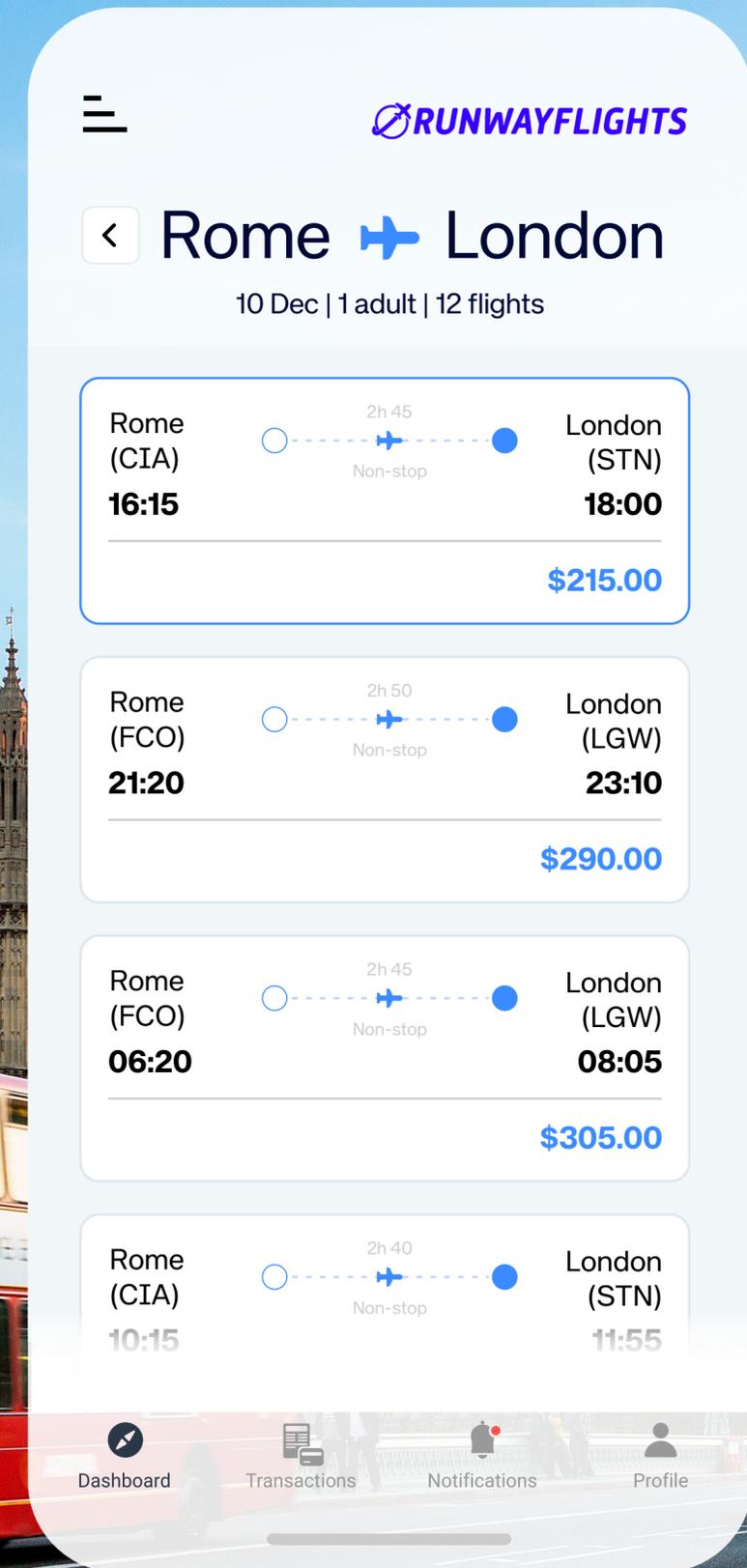
Even in Europe, where 20 countries now use the Euro, there is still a significant need for FX services at the point-of-purchase. For example, when international visitors from the Americas or APAC travel to Europe they frequently need to buy additional flights to travel across the continent, driving demand for cross-currency purchases. With around 37% of total airline sales in EMEA being cross-currency, airlines can tap into an immediate annual FX revenue opportunity of nearly \$700m. Airlines in EMEA have the potential to grow this to \$3.6B with maximum passenger opt-in.

# \$700m

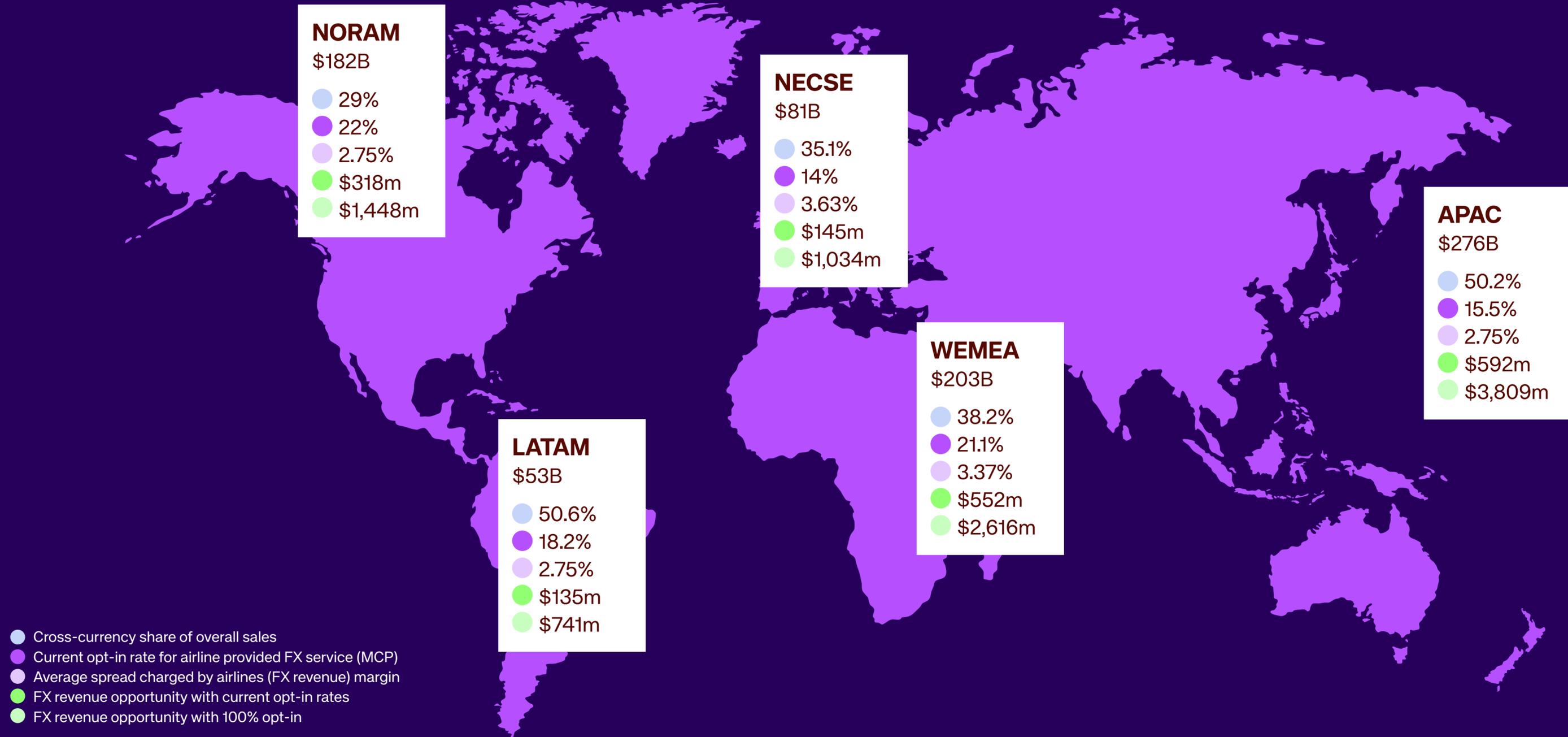
Airlines could generate nearly \$700m in additional revenue by offering FX services in EMEA

# \$3.6B

This number could grow to \$3.6B if airlines can convince all relevant passengers in EMEA to opt-in



# Explore the FX opportunity by region



- Cross-currency share of overall sales
- Current opt-in rate for airline provided FX service (MCP)
- Average spread charged by airlines (FX revenue) margin
- FX revenue opportunity with current opt-in rates
- FX revenue opportunity with 100% opt-in

APAC: Asia-Pacific, WEMEA: Western Europe, Middle East, and Africa, NECSE: Northern, Eastern, Central, and Southern Europe, NORAM: North America and LATAM: Latin America

Values reported in U.S. Dollar (USD).

**05**

**The traveler  
perspective**

So far, this white paper has focused on the economic opportunity FX services provide.

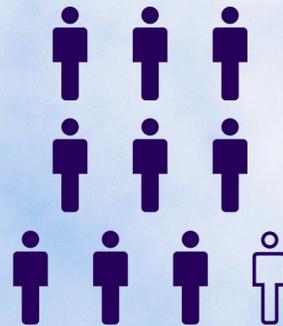
## But what do passengers think?

Our research with 5,500 travelers shows widespread frustration with today's status quo and clear interest in the provision of FX services by airlines.

Respondents to our research cited the need for transparency of FX fees, with clear provision of information at the time of purchase. They were also keen on services that priced fares in their preferred currency.



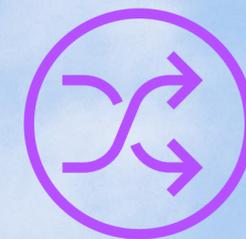
**Almost half** of travelers said card issuer FX rates are too high



**9 in every 10** passengers need to check their bank statement to understand FX fees applied by their bank



**One third** said bank FX charges were opaque



**Nearly half** of travelers weren't even aware their bank would issue an FX fee for a cross-currency payment

**06**

**How Outpayce's  
MCP solution works**

# FX Box MCP

Multi-Currency Pricing (MCP) allows the passenger to see the cost of their ticket or ancillary service in several pre-determined currencies, available at any time during the booking process. If the passenger chooses to pay in their preferred currency, then an FX transaction is performed by one of Outpayce's differing operational pricing models, including banking partners (Citi and HSBC). Outpayce's solution also includes other models using FX rate data from XE.com.

Airlines can source mid-market FX rates from leading banks without any intermediary steps and the MCP transaction is integrated into the airline's back-office model using revenue accounting.

Airlines can design an FX experience tailored to their different customers and routes with variable spreads.

The screenshot displays the RUNWAYFLIGHTS booking interface. At the top, the logo 'RUNWAYFLIGHTS' is visible. Below it, a payment section titled 'We accept' lists logos for VISA, Mastercard, PayPal, Apple Pay, Google Pay, and Klarna. The form includes fields for 'Name on card' (J Williams), 'Date of birth' (21/02/1981), 'Card type' (Visa), 'Card number' (4546 38 - - - - - 1234), 'Exp date' (07/28), and 'CVV' (513). A dropdown menu for currency selection is open, showing 'Select from 99 currencies' and a list of options including Euro (EUR), British Pound (GBP), Australian Dollar (AUD), Canadian Dollar (CAD), Danish Krone (DKK), Hong Kong Dollar (HKD), Japanese Yen (JPY), and US Dollar (USD). To the right, an 'Itinerary' section shows flight details: Madrid (MAD) to New York (JFK) on Monday 03 Nov, 12:40 - 14:55 (8h). Below the itinerary, there are options for 'x1 Passenger(s)' and 'x1 Baggage'. At the bottom right, the total price is displayed as €990.

**07**

**How SriLankan  
Airlines turned  
MCP into a top  
ancillary product**

## CASE STUDY




**Bimali Malalasekara,**  
Digital Commerce Manager  
SriLankan Airlines

Our network covers markets with a very diverse range of currencies, which means pricing our fares only in Sri Lankan Rupees (LKR) could be confusing for passengers who are more familiar with a different currency e.g. the Australian Dollar.

In 2021 we identified this situation as an opportunity to improve our digital experience by transparently offering fares in the passenger's preferred currency and also assuming control of the Foreign Exchange (FX) process to capture additional revenues for providing this service.

We worked with Outpayce from Amadeus to implement its FX Box Multi-Currency Pricing (MCP) product alongside Amadeus' digital commerce tools, which took less than two months.

We are now successfully offering MCP across all key markets of our SriLankan operated routes covering 33 destinations across 21 countries and we're very happy with the results.

13% of our customers perform an FX conversion through MCP, which has generated significant additional revenue. In fact, MCP has become one of our top ancillary revenue streams and currently stands in fifth position behind business class upgrades, bags and seat-related ancillary revenues.

Through continual optimization of the currency pairs we offer and the mark-up we charge at the individual route level we've been able to increase MCP revenues by a further 20% during 2025.

Now my team is focused on expanding MCP to additional markets by introducing the most in-demand currency options. As the marketing carrier that handles the booking we're in a great position to offer relevant currency pairs to travelers and capture more revenue in the process.

**20%**

We've been able to increase MCP revenues by a further 20% during 2025



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Final thoughts

**2x****MCP can double  
the profitability  
of many fare types**

CEBR's analysis draws on data from Outpayce to highlight the immediate and recurring opportunity for airline provided FX services. With more than half of all direct sales requiring cross-currency purchase in some regions, the airline industry is perhaps better placed than any other category of merchant to take control of FX services.

Establishing MCP across an airline's direct channels is a relatively straightforward process that doesn't require significant IT effort or integration. 'Delivering' this service to the passenger is also straightforward and doesn't involve any 'real-world' process changes, for example at the airport.

Yet we've seen that MCP can double the profitability of many fare types while improving conversion and offering passengers a smoother and more straightforward e-Commerce experience.

As airlines contend with high costs, intense competition and the transformation to become retailers, FX services can be established as a top five ancillary service in relatively little time, as demonstrated so effectively by Bimali and her team at SriLankan Airlines.





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One of the most common comments I hear from airline customers is the extra financial flexibility MCP provides, which helps the airline’s payment team to grow. Showing that payments can be a profit-center means that payments teams can typically access larger departmental budgets to grow and improve their capabilities. Ultimately, payment services should not only be viewed as a cost, they can also add to the airline’s bottom line.”



Damian Alonso,  
Global Head of Product & Partnerships, Outpayce



Travel. Simply paid.

## For more information on FX Box Multi-Currency Pricing

Contact us

### About Centre for Economics and Business Research (CEBR)

For more than 30 years the Centre for Economics and Business Research (CEBR) has supplied independent economic forecasting and analysis to hundreds of private firms and public organizations.

### About Amadeus Business Consulting

Amadeus Business Consulting works with travel companies to improve business performance with technology. The team supports airlines with sales, payments, customer experience, data consulting and business transformation.

### About Outpayce

Outpayce delivers smoother end-to-end travel experiences by making travel payments simple. Our open platform connects FinTech and banking service providers to the entire travel ecosystem, allowing customers and travelers to easily benefit from new advances in payments.

#### Source

1. <https://ideaworkscapacity.com/2024-cartrawler-yearbook-of-ancillary-revenue-report/>
2. <https://www.iata.org/en/pressroom/2025-releases/2025-06-02-01/>
3. <https://www.demandsage.com/cro-statistics>
4. <https://instapage.com/blog/personalization-statistics>

