

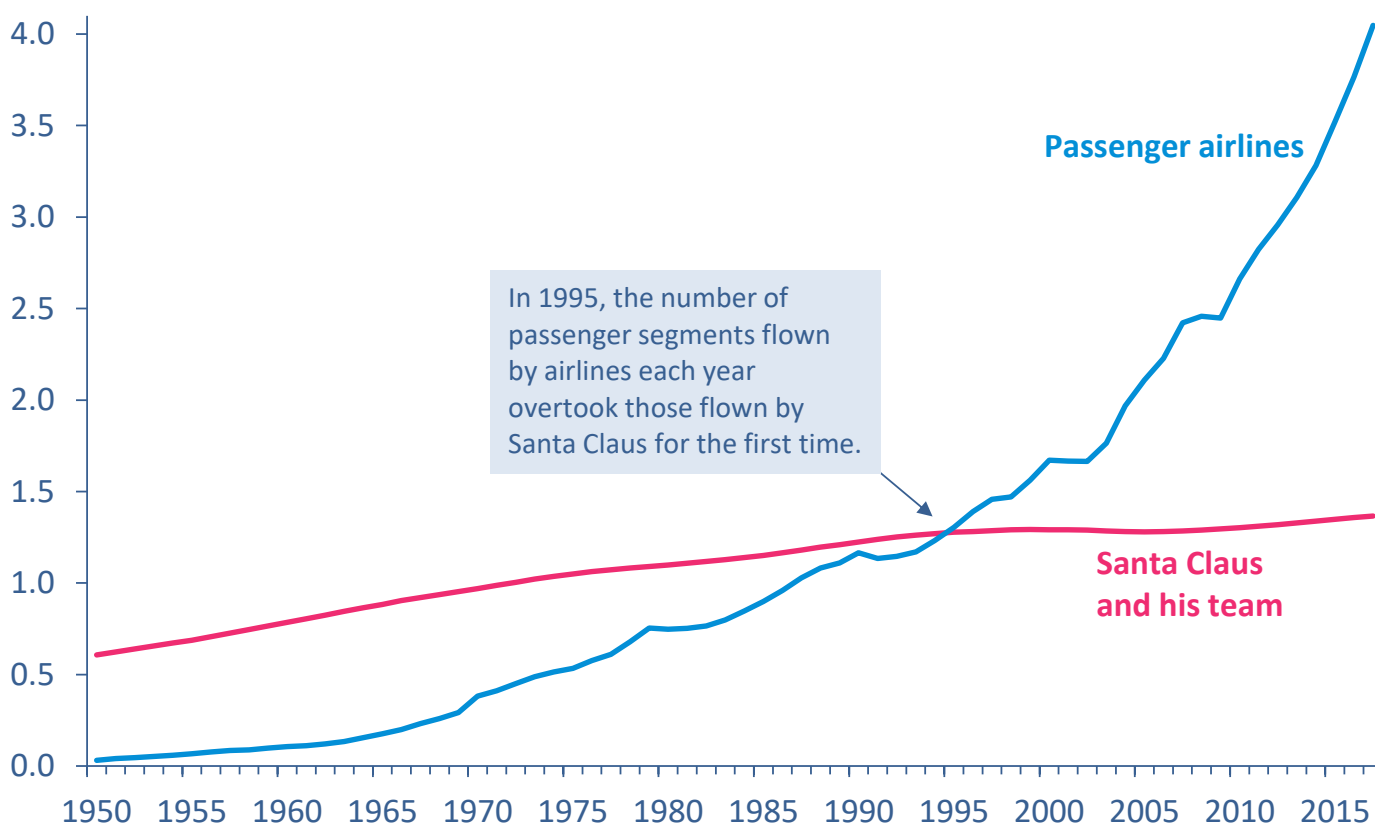


IATA ECONOMICS' CHART OF THE WEEK

15 DECEMBER 2017

SANTA CLAUS IS FALLING FURTHER BEHIND THE GLOBAL PAX BUSINESS

Number of segments flown each year (billion)



Sources: IATA, ICAO, UN POP

- We estimate that Santa Claus and his team will fly 1.4 billion flight segments this holiday period, in order to deliver presents to each of the world's 1.9 billion children. (Of course, the fact that some children live in the same households makes Santa's arduous task that little bit easier.) This is no simple feat, and the exact details of how the team manages it are shrouded in mystery.
- However, long gone are the days when Santa could boast of flying more segments than the entire passenger industry combined. A combination of factors, including rising living standards as well as the long-standing decline in the inflation-adjusted cost of air travel, mean that the industry overtook Santa in terms of segments flown in 1995. This trend has continued since, with passenger airlines set to fly three times as many segments as Santa this year. As we noted last [year](#), Santa may need to rethink his business model if he wants to remain relevant in today's ever-changing world.
- But, of course, size is not everything. The fact that more and more of us are living in cities means that the average distance that the sleigh needs to fly between each present delivery will have decreased significantly over the years. (Based on data from the UN, the proportion of the global population that lives in urban areas has risen from around 20% in 1950 to 58% in 2017.) The upshot is that Santa and his team are likely to be able to get their job finished more quickly than in the past, allowing them to get back to North Pole sooner to enjoy more of their own holiday season.
- Chart of the week will return in 2018. Season's greetings to all!

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