

IN

FOCUS

SERVICING IN NDC

Why this paper

Servicing in NDC is priority and key to ensure airlines and their partners take full advantage of the retailing capabilities that NDC brings.

This paper presents the status of servicing in NDC. It will also provide a vehicle/tool to help harvest implementation feedback from the industry.

Servicing - what do we mean?

Servicing refers to changes to a customer's Order, triggered by the customer or by the airline.

Changes triggered by the customer are also referred to as **voluntary servicing**, such as a change of flight date, adding an ancillary or cancelling a trip. There may be additional fees or charges to be paid by the customer or the airline may refund the customer, depending on the order rules.

Changes triggered by an airline are also referred to as **involuntary servicing**, such as a flight delay or cancellation due to weather conditions, not delivering an ancillary due to changing aircraft or a time change causing a misconnection. Involuntary servicing involves advising the travel agent of the change so they can manage the impact to their customer.

Where the involuntary change requires re-accommodating the customer to another flight or a reroute, the customer may not accept the change. Servicing involves the ongoing interaction between the travel agent and the airline until an acceptable solution is found.

'Unbundling' Servicing

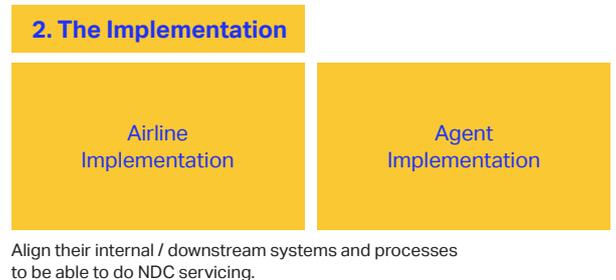
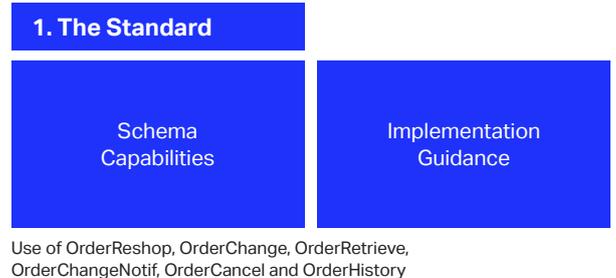
Servicing may be looked at through 2 broad lenses described below - the standard, and the implementation.

1. Servicing – The Standard

This refers to the schema and the associated implementation guidance to support voluntary and involuntary servicing. OrderRetrieve, OrderReshop, OrderChange, OrderView, OrderChangeNotif and OrderHistory are examples of schemas that support different servicing business scenarios.

The Implementation Guide will continuously evolve to explain how to use the schema to support different servicing use cases.

Servicing through 2 lenses



2. Servicing – The Implementation

Servicing must be implemented by the airline and their agent partners, and supported by other parties that may be a part of the servicing flow. These parties include aggregators, mid/back office service providers and delivery service providers among others.

At the Implementation Forums held by IATA, Leaderboard airlines discuss their high level servicing roadmaps with the implementation community, including TMCs, OTA's, GDSs, other aggregators, IT companies etc.

Servicing capabilities that have been described by these airlines include post booking merchandising, schedule change, name correction, cancellation of one or more customers in an order, to name a few.

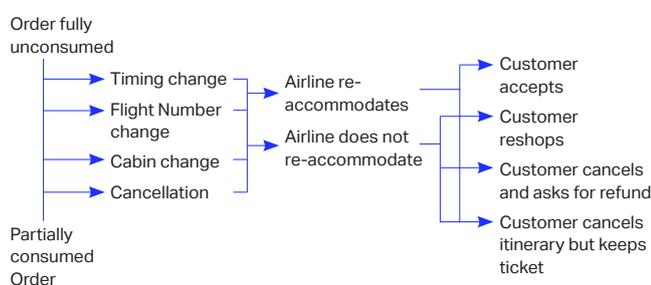
The status of servicing in the standard

The standard supports airlines implementing servicing scenarios with their partners from version 17.2 onwards.

The industry working group delivering the standard continues to review business scenarios and use cases to ensure servicing gaps are addressed.

Gaps in the standard may be at the schema level or in the documentation of implementation guidance.

Review of a schedule change scenario:



The 19.2 standard (September 2019 delivery) supports airlines to better automate their servicing capabilities and includes enhancements for a better customer experience.

These enhancements include the following:

- Better support for the airline to notify the seller of changes made by the airline (involuntary changes) or if a customer initiates changes directly with the airline;
- To better inform the seller of reasons for a schedule change when it impacts the customer's order. It further provides the seller with instructions for any follow up action e.g. if the customer must explicitly accept, re-shop or cancel and the consequences of inaction (e.g. auto-acceptance, auto cancellation);
- Support to handle fare waivers;
- The customer can cancel an order and ask for a refund or ask to 'leave' the refund amount with the airline for future use;
- When a customer is reshopping his/her order, the airline can better inform about the price differential e.g. if there is an additional collection (AdCol) and refund, AdCol and residual value etc.;
- Support for reshopping an itinerary that includes partially flown segments;
- Streamline servicing flows, e.g. reinforcing the use of OrderReshop→OrderChange flow (vs. OrderCancel) to process the cancellation of an order.

A word about "split"

The constraint of today's PNR is that it does not support non-homogenous scenarios. For example, if a passenger has a different itinerary to other passengers in the PNR, the agent creates a new PNR to reflect the itinerary for that passenger.

Split - What does the NDC standard support?

The Order concept defined in the standard supports multi-passenger, non-homogenous itinerary use cases. Yet, the constraint described above makes implementing non-homogenous scenarios complex. This is because it often requires mapping elements of a non-homogeneous order to individual PNRs.

Discussions with implementers highlight that generally, apart from a passenger wanting to be removed for data privacy reasons (e.g. a family dispute), scenarios that typically undergo a PNR split today may be implemented in NDC without the need to split an Order ([see scenarios on slides 14 – 15 in this document](#)).

IATA encourages implementers to leverage the capabilities brought by the Order concept as far as possible. This prepares your implementation to be closer aligned with a servicing flow that takes into account the next step, ONE Order.

Meanwhile, the working groups will seek to further understand business scenarios where agents may require a 'split', to take these into account for any future standard evolution.

Conclusion

If you or your partners are implementing a version of the standard from 17.2 onwards, you are poised to take advantage of servicing capabilities and implementing 19.2 will allow you to take advantage of the features described in this document.

Here are two ways to stay close to the progress of this work:

- To highlight specific standard gaps or get involved in the ongoing standard development: [Email the IATA Standards team](#).
- To share your specific implementation findings or find out how others are addressing specific implementation aspects → join the discussions on the [AIRTechZone online forum](#) or [email your servicing findings](#).