

Global Airlines: Competition in a Transnational Industry *by Pat Hanlon*

There are numerous indicators and there is ample evidence that underline the dynamic nature of the air transport industry and specifically the airline industry. The need to constantly update books about this industry is just another example. The third edition of "Global Airlines" is probably the latest addition to the books providing an overall discussion of the industry aiming at breadth rather than depth. In style and content, this book is very similar to the, perhaps more popular, books by Rigas Doganis, also in terms of quality.

A book review by Moshe Givoni

Outline

In more detail, the eight chapters of the book (370 pages in total) cover all that is expected from such a book. The first and second chapters provide an overview of the airline industry and of its main elements together with an up-to-date picture of the current situation (unlike many other books, this edition is updated until one year before its publication, which is a significant achievement). The following chapters cover the following: competition issues (chapter 3), route networks (chapter 4), scheduling through hubs (chapter 5), pricing power (chapter 6) and mergers and alliances (chapter 7). The last chapter (8) is not the usual summary or concluding chapter, but it covers, as the title suggests, "transnational airlines". This chapter is very much an extension of the fourth chapter, which discusses airline networks in the context of (mainly) "freedoms of the air". The book also includes a section on "recommendations for further reading" with respect to each of the book's chapters and comes after the last chapter and before the list of references.

Discussion

The author is very successful in discussing the main elements of the airline industry, especially the traditional issues of competition, regulations and formation of Hub & Spoke networks, from an up-to-date perspective, orientation and data. This makes the book relevant, interesting, and timely, also for those who only have some knowledge of these issues. Another important achievement in this book to note is the

successful bridging of the academic research of air transport with the practice of air transport management, especially with regard to the economics of this industry. The 'soft' approach to airline economics makes the book accessible to anyone interested, even without prior knowledge of economics, and, at the same time, it provides all the necessary references to the important research work carried out on these issues by the leading academics. The main elements of airline economics are demonstrated in a very clear and accessible way, supplemented with data and examples. The author puts emphasis on providing the bottom line in air transport research, avoiding the technicalities and the methodology, by summarizing the main conclusions and their policy, regulatory and managerial implications. This helps getting current research known to a wider audience, also outside the academic world. The section of "recommendations for further reading" further strengthens this aspect of the book. This section is a 'must-keep'-list for anyone interested in further academic reading on the airline industry.

The book makes interesting and smooth reading. It is fun to read and the many practical/real-life examples, usually illustrated through tables and figures (with ample up-to-date data that is usually not so easy to find), significantly contributes to that. A minor shortcoming of the book is its length with respect to what it covers, and a more concise version would have been better. Also, a chapter dedicated to low-cost airlines is surprisingly absent, although

references and attention to this phenomenon are made in every chapter.

Conclusion

Overall, the book is highly recommended to anyone new to the airline business or anyone who wants to know more about the research approach to this industry and understand the basic economic/management nature of it. This book will mainly appeal to undergraduate students interested in air transport, irrespective of the discipline they come from. Professionals who are new to the airline industry and researchers who are new to air transport will also benefit from reading this book.

About the author

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