

Tech innovation set to transform travel retail, TFWA workshop hears



“It is time to transform and digitize the travel retail industry” - Alexander Trieb, Founder and CEO, Duffle

Technology solutions - including the power of online aggregation - were the focus of the TFWA Innovation Workshop during the TFWA World Exhibition in Cannes earlier this month.

In the words of TFWA Conference Manager Michele Miranda, the workshop gathered together retail and tech experts to show how “tech is the key to boosting the consumer experience” for duty free operators.

Among the workshop highlights was Duffle, founded by Berlin-based tech entrepreneur Alexander Trieb, who dubs his one-stop-shop app for purchasing luxury goods and food & beverage at airports “the Uber of the travel retail industry”.

The CEO urged airlines, airport landlords and duty free operators to work together in order to improve the retail purchasing experience at airports.

This month, Duffle starts operating its pioneering “convenience commerce” service at Copenhagen Kastrup Airport, its first customer.

Duffle’s app brings together Copenhagen Airport operators’ retail offerings for the convenience of passengers.

Duffle supplies the app, marketing expertise, and operational, on-the-ground last-meter delivery at every airport.

Duffle is backed by seed investor Gebr Heinemann’s Gharage innovation division and aims to work with 30 airports.

“We are at the beginning of our journey,” Trieb enthused. “It is time to transform and digitize the

travel retail industry.”



Wassim Saadé, founder and CEO, Inflyter

Meanwhile, aggregation is the “proven” key to e-commerce success for Wassim Saadé, founder and CEO of French start-up Inflyter, a proprietary e-commerce platform that operates in North America, Europe and the Middle East and is backed by travel loyalty specialist Collinson Group.

Inflyter’s aggregation platform currently brings together the offerings of four duty free operators on one platform. And customer data is key, with Saadé emphasizing that “we want to keep the data”.

In a separate development for Inflyter, Saadé pointed to the success of a partnership between Diageo and world-leading duty free operator DFS to open a Johnnie Walker-branded e-boutique on the DFS app in the US.

In its online presentation, the e-boutique mimics an in-store shop and is open for six months for passengers traveling through New York JFK, Los Angeles and San Francisco airports.

“We can crack the passenger conversion issue better than a product listing,” he told the audience.

Saadé then explained the benefits of vending machines at airports. Covering only 1.5 square meters, an automated kiosk has begun trading at Geneva Airport, operating 24 hours a day, even when the airport stores are closed.

He also highlighted that Inflyter can tap into the millions of travelers who use Collinson Group’s Priority Pass airport lounge pass service.

In partnership with 3Sixty, Inflyter has created a home delivery service for US domestic passengers