

**ECONOMIC, POLITICAL AND SOCIAL UPDATE****Global IT outage causes major disruptions across key sectors**

A global IT outage linked to Windows computers has disrupted banks, airlines, rail services, supermarkets, and other institutions worldwide. In the UK, doctor surgeries couldn't access patient records, and Sky News went off air for hours. Airlines like American, Delta, and United were forced to ground flights, with airports in Germany, Spain, and Amsterdam reporting issues. Edinburgh Airport's boarding scanners failed, causing manual checks. Alaska's emergency 911 lines were down. The UK's Southern, Thameslink, Gatwick Express, and Great Northern rail services experienced widespread IT problems. The London Stock Exchange's news service was disrupted, and the NHS booking system in England went offline. The outage, affecting Windows PCs globally, is linked to the cyber security firm, CrowdStrike, though it's not seen as a cyberattack.

Donald Trump Shooter was flagged to authorities twice before attempted assassination

A clearer timeline has emerged regarding the assassination attempt on Donald Trump at a Pennsylvania rally, revealing that local police and Secret Service missed several opportunities to stop the gunman, Thomas Matthew Crooks, before he fired. Local police first identified Crooks, who was acting suspiciously, about an hour before the shooting but lost track of him. A counter-sniper later flagged him using a rangefinder, but despite this, Crooks was not intercepted and managed to shoot at Trump, injuring him and killing one rally goer. The incident has raised serious concerns about security failures, prompting calls for the resignation of Secret Service Director Kimberly Cheatle. An investigation by the Department of Homeland Security's inspector general and an independent review directed by President Biden are underway to determine the extent of these security lapses.

UN Top Court to deliver landmark opinion on the Israel and Palestine conflict

The UN's top court, the International Court of Justice (ICJ), is poised to deliver a landmark advisory opinion on the legal consequences of Israel's 57-year occupation of the Palestinian territories, including the West Bank, East Jerusalem, and Gaza. This follows a request by the UN General Assembly. Despite Israel's refusal to participate in oral hearings and its rejection of the court's legitimacy, 52 countries submitted opinions, mostly condemning the occupation as illegal. If the ICJ deems the occupation illegal, it could significantly impact international trade and the legitimacy of Israel's presence in the West Bank and East Jerusalem and set new legal parameters for future negotiations. The advisory opinion, though not legally binding, will carry substantial political weight and may influence the UN General Assembly's subsequent actions, potentially catalysing renewed negotiations.

TRADE UPDATE

Friday set to be 'busiest day' for flight departures since October 2019

Friday (July 19) is set to be the busiest day for UK flight departures so far this year, as schools in England break up for the summer holidays. There will be more than 3,200 departures on Friday, the highest number of daily departures since October 2019, according to research from aviation analytics firm Cirium. Over the course of tomorrow and the weekend (July 19-21), 9,075 flights are scheduled to depart UK airports, equating to more than 1.6 million seats. Compared to the same weekend in 2023, scheduled departures are up 4% year-on-year. Scheduled departures across the weekend are also set to reach 93% of 2019 levels. While UK departure numbers sit below 2019 levels, there are over 2,500 more available seats from UK airports over the three days, compared to the same weekend in 2019. Heathrow is set to record the highest number of departures, followed by Gatwick, Manchester, Stansted and Edinburgh.

The getaway, though, has been hit by a global IT outage affecting airlines and airports, with the extent of the disruption not yet fully clear. By mid-morning, Cirium had counted nearly 1,500 cancellations globally, and said more would likely follow.

Agents hopeful of 'biggest ever' lates market after election and Euros

Agents are hopeful of a record-breaking summer lates market following the general election and the conclusion of the European Championships at the weekend. Several agents told TTG they noticed an immediate uptick in enquiries following England's defeat to Spain on Sunday, which marked the end of a busy period for the nation. The outlook is supported by figures from homeworking and franchise agency Not Just Travel, which reported a 25%

increase in last-minute bookings following the election and the Euros. Co-founder Steve Witt said booking levels this week were comparable with January. "With the conclusion of the Euros, the general election result bolstering economic stability and consumer confidence, consistently disappointing weather and our travel consultants actively engaging their client networks, everything is perfectly aligned," he said.

Travel agencies' green claims to go under the microscope, advertising watchdog warns

Travel agencies' claims about their sustainability credentials are coming under more stringent scrutiny, a director of the UK's advertising watchdog has warned the sector. Speaking at TTG's Fairer Travel Sustainability Forum on Thursday (11 July), Miles Lockwood, director of complaints and investigations at the Advertising Standards Authority (ASA), said: "We're carrying out some monitoring around travel agency claims, more broadly around sustainable, eco-friendly claims or absolute claims, which is potentially problematic." He stressed the ASA was not targeting individual companies within the industry, but "keywords" in their advertising that could potentially be problematic.

AIRLINE UPDATE

Delta - Delta Air Lines saw second quarter profits drop by 11% year-on-year amid higher costs and discounted economy fares across the US airline sector. The decline to \$1.5 billion came despite improved international revenue helped by strong transatlantic travel demand.

Etihad Airways - Etihad Airways' June passenger carryings rose by more than a third over the same month last year. The UAE carrier flew 1.5 million passengers with an average load factor of 86%. Eight new routes were introduced from Abu Dhabi to Bali, Jaipur and Al Qassim in Saudi Arabia in addition to the seasonal links to Nice, Antalya, Mykonos, Santorini and Malaga.

Jet2.com - Jet2.com and Jet2holidays have brought forward their launch date from Bournemouth airport by two months in response to high demand. The brands have now decided to launch on February 4, 2025, with winter sun trips to the Canary Islands. Since Bournemouth was confirmed as Jet2.com and Jet2holidays' new base in March, the companies have recorded strong demand.

United Airlines - United Airlines flew the most customers for a second quarter in its history, carrying 44.4 million passengers in April, May and June. The US

carrier also set a record for the most ever customers carried in a day by the airline at 565,000. Its capacity was up 8.3% compared to the second quarter of 2023, according to the airline's Q2 results.

TOUR OPERATORS, TRAVEL AGENCIES, OTA UPDATE

Ocean Holidays - Ocean Holidays is to expand its focus on accessible product beyond its Florida stronghold, as it hailed the impact of its specialist programme on conversion and retention rates. It is now in talks with stakeholders in California to extend the programme and is looking to embed it further in its offering across the US, Canada and Mexico.

Royal Caribbean - Royal Caribbean vice-president EMEA Gerard Nolan believes their new ship, Utopia of the Seas, can help fulfil the potential of the UK's multigenerational market. "Multigenerational family travel is probably more developed in the US at the moment, but it's definitely growing in the UK," Nolan said. "That's something we see as a real opportunity to grow."

TUI - TUI has released its winter 2025 programme early with holidays available until Easter 2026. Destinations with exclusive, direct charter flights from various regional UK airports include Senegal, Cape Verde, Goa and Thailand. The operator claims to be offering its biggest ever winter for free child places after expanding its free kids' portfolio for summer 2025.

SOCIAL UPDATE

TikTok announces Eventbrite integration

TikTok has launched a new partnership with Eventbrite which will allow creators to promote links in videos. This will provide a way for creators to seamlessly promote and sell tickets to their community. Multiple links can be added to a video, with users being shown the relevant events based on their locations. Over the past year TikTok has added similar partnerships with Ticketmaster and CTS EVENTIM in Europe.

Meta testing AI comment summaries

Meta is testing AI comment summaries that will provide an overview of comments on a Facebook post. This follows YouTube's testing where they separate comments into separate subjects. X has another system that summarises news stories for X Premium subscribers. As part of the testing creators can provide feedback on these services and whether they're useful.

MICE UPDATE

The Business of Events publishes International Planner Sentiment Report 2024

The report shows the current priorities of event buyers from across the sector, including corporate, association, agency and incentive and reward, from the UK, Europe and North America when selecting an event destination or venue. All those surveyed were asked to rank 10 topics of sentiment on a scale of 1 - 10, with 1 being regarded as not very important and 10 as very important. For UK planners, cost and value for money was the top priority, with a score of 10, while topics scoring 9 included equity and diversity, safety and security and destination welcome. Cultural identity and sustainability and social impact were the lowest scoring topics, each rating 7. The report shows differences in priorities across the regions. For North American planners safety and security was the top issue when choosing a venue or destination, scoring 10, while in Europe there were five issues tied for first place on 9 points each: cost and value for money; destination and city brand; equity and diversity; safety and security; and destination welcome.

LIGHTER NOTE

Youtuber 'MrBeast' has successfully removed 34 million pounds of rubbish and plastic from oceans and rivers all across the globe, with each dollar donated verified by an independent third party as going directly to removing one pound of trash. Read more [here](#).