More than 2,000 Delta pilots sign up for early retirement

- More than 2,000 pilots at Delta Air Lines have applied to take early retirement offers.
- “This is meaningful progress as we look to mitigate furloughs and our teams are hard at work to determine next steps and evaluate how the pilot early retirement may affect Delta’s overall pilot staffing outlook,” the airline said in a written statement.
- Delta has about 90,000 employees, including roughly 14,000 pilots.

United Airlines loses $1.6 billion in second quarter but expects to further lower cash burn

- United Airlines on Tuesday said it lost $1.63 billion during the second quarter, driven by a plunge in air travel demand because of the coronavirus pandemic. During the same quarter last year it posted a $1.05 billion profit.
- Revenue plunged to $1.48 billion in the three months ended June 30, an 87% drop from $11.4 billion during the same time last year. The sharp decline in sales wasn’t as bad as feared, beating analysts’ estimates of $1.32 billion.
- United said it expects to reduce its cash burn to $25 million a day in the third quarter from an average daily burn of $40 million in the second quarter. The carrier has slashed thousands of flights and idled scores of planes to cut its costs.
- The airline said its capacity in the third quarter will likely be down 65% compared with the same quarter a year ago.
- United said it will “proactively evaluate and cancel flights on a rolling 60-day basis until it sees signs of a recovery in demand,” which executives expect to be limited until there is a treatment or vaccine for the virus.
- United’s payroll costs were $2.17 billion in the second quarter, down 29% from a year ago as staff worked fewer hours due to the reduced flight schedules and others took voluntary time off.

Alaska Airlines avoids pilot layoffs for now, but outlook for other employees remains unclear

- Thanks to a large number of pilots opting to either retire or take voluntary leave at reduced pay, Alaska Airlines will avoid layoffs among its 3,000 pilots in the immediate future. Other employee groups at the airline still await news of possible layoffs, and might not be so lucky.
- More than 1,000 Alaska Airlines pilots took the incentives: 137 chose to retire early and an additional 929 opted to take extended leave ranging from 6 to 24 months.
Ryanair will close its Frankfurt base after pilots refuse to take pay cuts

- Ryanair will close its Frankfurt base in Germany in the autumn after pilots refused to agree to a pay cut, the airline says.
- Other closures in Germany are expected to follow.
- The airline is carrying out a restructuring plan involving 3,000 job cuts to cushion the shock of the pandemic.
- Unlike their German counterparts, Ryanair’s British pilots have agreed to wage cuts of 20%, which should enable them to save 260 of the 330 jobs threatened.

Virgin Atlantic Resumes Passenger Flights After 3 Month Break

- Flights will resume from London’s Heathrow on Monday to Hong Kong, and on Tuesday to New York’s JFK and Los Angeles. The airline says it will observe some social distancing, and every passenger will receive a Health Pack containing three medical-grade masks.
- The airline recently secured a much-needed privately secured bailout of about £1.2 billion ($1.5 billion) from a conglomerate of benefactors.

Amtrak Leverages New Solutions for a Contactless Travel Experience

- As part of the company’s New Standard of Travel, the Amtrak app enables customers to purchase tickets, access up-to-date gate and boarding information and present e-tickets using their own mobile device.
- To simplify and safeguard the experience, Amtrak now provides real-time boarding information when customers enable push notifications through the Amtrak mobile app so that they can wait comfortably at a distance until their train is ready.
- "We encourage all customers to download the app to receive our new app updates, which will prevent crowding inside the station waiting for the boarding information to post; and provide an extra level of confidence to make travel safe and secure, in addition to the many safety measures onboard our trains and at our stations," said Amtrak President and CEO Bill Flynn.

Marriott sees Greater China occupancy rates returning to pre-virus levels by early 2021

- Hotel operator Marriott International said it expected room occupancy rates in Greater China to rise to 60% next month and forecast it could recover to pre-coronavirus levels by the start of 2021, as domestic travel in the country ticks up.
- Craig S. Smith, the company’s Asia-Pacific group president, said the pace of recovery was also “encouraging” with an average occupancy rate of 37% in the region in July.
- The average occupancy rate in Greater China stood at 55% in July, Marriott added. In February, when China introduced draconian measures to keep people at home and stop the spread of the virus, the rate fell to less than 10%.
More Than 8,000 U.S. Hotels Could Close in September

- American Hotel and Lodging Association president and CEO Chip Rogers said more than 8,000 hotels could close in September if business travel does not pick up and funding from the Paycheck Protection Program runs out.
- According to AHLA, only 20 percent of hotels have received any debt relief from Commercial Mortgage-Backed Security lenders on Wall Street.
- Without aid from Congress, the industry association expects massive foreclosures on the horizon.
- A recent report from The Wall Street Journal suggests 20 percent of New York's total hotel supply (about 250,000 rooms) could close permanently.
- Occupancy rates for U.S. hotels also took a slight dip in July, as the number of coronavirus cases in the U.S. continues to surge. After 11 consecutive weeks on the rise, average occupancy declined from 46.2 percent for the week ending on June 27 to 45.6 percent for the week of July 4, according to hospitality data provider STR. The number improved only marginally the following week, to 45.9 percent.
- STR predicts occupancy rates for U.S. hotels will likely not reach pre-COVID-19 levels until 2023.
- Since mid-February, U.S. properties have lost more than $40 billion in room revenue, according to the AHLA. Hotels across the country are on track to lose more than $400 million in room revenue per day due to COVID-19, which equates to losses of $2.8 billion weekly.