

## Airline Reservations System

### Abstract

The Airline Reservations System (ARS) was one of the earliest changes to improve efficiency. ARS eventually evolved into the Computer Reservations System (CRS), and then into Global Distribution System (GDS). The airline industry created the first GDS in the 1960s as a way to keep track of flight schedules, availability, and prices. Although accused of being “dinosaurs” due to their use of legacy system technology, GDSs were actually among the first e-commerce companies in the world facilitating B-2-B electronic commerce as early as the mid 1970s, when SABRE (owned by American Airline) and Apollo (United) began installing their propriety internal reservations systems in travel agencies. Prior to this, travel agents spent an inordinate amount of time manually entering reservations. The airlines realized that by automating the reservation process for travel agents, they could make the travel agents more productive and essentially turn into an extension of the airline’s sales force. It is these original, legacy GDSs that today provide the backbone to the Internet travel distribution system.

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