

dba has launched check-in via mobile phone. This is currently available on its routes from Munich to Hanover and Münster/Osnabrück, and will be expanded across the airline's domestic network.

DBA 'ONE STEP AHEAD' WITH MOBILE CHECK-IN

NEXT-GENERATION CHECK-IN ARRIVED IN GERMANY IN MARCH, WHEN LOW-COST CARRIER DBA (RECENTLY BOUGHT BY AIR BERLIN) LAUNCHED CHECK-IN VIA MOBILE PHONE IN CONJUNCTION WITH T-MOBILE. THE SERVICE IS CURRENTLY OFFERED TO PASSENGERS FLYING FROM MUNICH TO HANOVER AND MÜNSTER/OSNABRÜCK, AND WILL BE ROLLED-OUT ACROSS ITS DOMESTIC NETWORK SOON. **ROSS FALCONER** REPORTS.

The only requirement for passengers is that they have an MMS-enabled mobile phone (simply meaning they are able to accept picture messages). When passengers book their tickets online they have the option of receiving a 2D barcode via MMS, which acts as their boarding card. This is received three hours prior to take-off and scanned at the gate, negating the need to queue at a check-in desk. The obvious benefit to passengers is the time saving.

Matthias Andreesen, dba's head of communications, said: "The main thing for us is that, so far, we have had to have a boarding pass with a magnetic strip. The 2D barcode can be used for all different kinds of check-in, such as web check-in. We are the first airline in Germany, possibly even the first in Europe to have implemented this."

He believes the 2D barcodes will soon become standard and other airlines are looking at implementing the technology. Obviously, airports must have barcode scanners at their gates and dba is in talks with each of the German airports it serves about installing these. At the moment, mobile check-in is for passengers with hand luggage only, which is around 90% of dba's passengers. 95% of dba's services are domestic and 70%

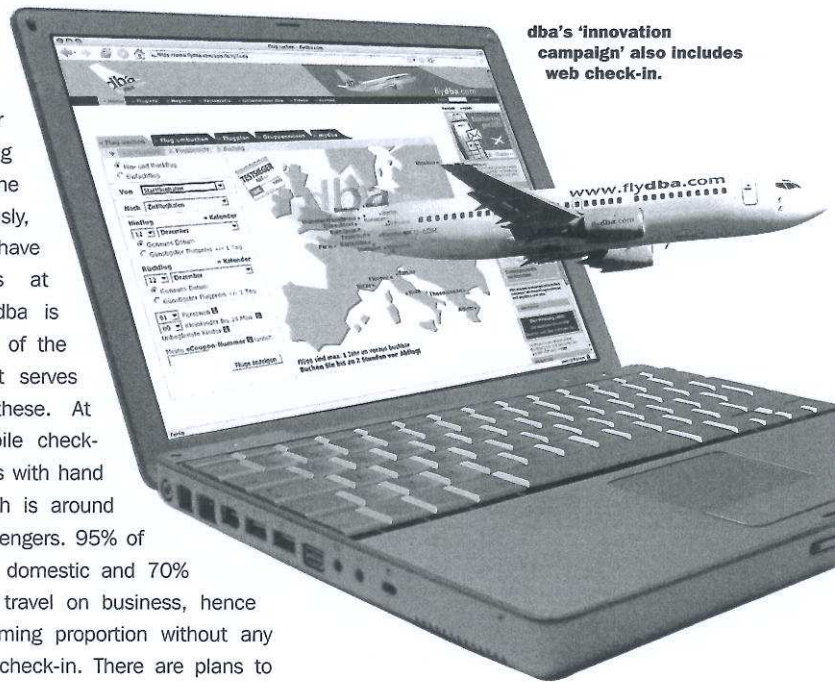
of passengers travel on business, hence the overwhelming proportion without any baggage to check-in. There are plans to have fast bag drop points, which would also be used for passengers checking in via the web.

"We're an innovation leader and see a tendency in the industry to use 2D barcodes. We're happy that we're already on that road and one step ahead of the others. Passengers, especially business travellers, like to save time," said Andreesen.

'INNOVATION CAMPAIGN'

While currently only used on dba's domestic network, the technology could be used on international services, providing the infrastructure was in place. According to Andreesen, no special security measures are necessary – normal procedures are followed, with the passenger's identity

dba's 'innovation campaign' also includes web check-in.



Passengers with a T-Mobile MDA or PDA can reserve seats and check-in in a mobile, flexible, paperless fashion.

checked at the security checkpoint and at the gate.

Andreesen said: "This is part of an innovation campaign, including web check-in and self-service check-in. These are cost efficient systems, but it's up to the passenger how they want to check-in – we'll still have check-in desks."

Although the mobile check-in service was introduced with T-Mobile, it can be used with all networks. This technology was preceded in December 2005 by the ability for passengers to reserve seats via SMS, for those who do not possess an MMS-enabled phone. The passenger is able to choose this option when booking online by simply entering a mobile phone number. Around three hours before take-off the seat reservation is sent via SMS, and if the passenger accepts the seat reservation a confirmation message is sent.