

## Out of Finnair: Juha Järvinen on Future PaxEx for the Chinese Traveler

19 April, 2016 in [Services](#) Written by [Caroline Ku](#)



Juha Järvinen. Image via Finnair

**APEX Insight: With China as a target market for the Finnish flag carrier, a deep appreciation of Finnish and Chinese culture has come to the fore as Finnair refines its services and the passenger experience for its customers.**

This April, Finnair won the title of “Best European Airline” at the annual TTG China Travel Awards – a meaningful accolade for the Finnish flag carrier, which aims to be the airline of choice for Chinese travelers flying to Europe. The airline has taken a strong focus on tackling China – which, according to IATA, boasts the world’s fastest increasing passenger market. As a testament to this commitment, Finnair launched the first of its Airbus 350 XWBs on its route to Shanghai in China where the airline currently flies to six cities, and advertises the shortest flights between Europe and Asia.

As the airline’s service infrastructure between Greater China and Europe continues to form, priorities will shift its focus to offering a unique passenger experience for Chinese customers. “When the airline gets the basics right – meaning regularity, punctuality and a well-working hub airport – the customer hierarchy of needs changes,” says Juha Järvinen, chief commercial officer, Finnair. “Customers increasingly want experiences on top of actual transportation. Why can’t we do that? In which other business do you get customers into your own space for eight to 10 hours on a long-haul flight?”



Finnair hosted a dragon dance at Helsinki Airport to celebrate the opening of the route to Chongqing. Image via Finnair

For Finnair, drawing upon Finland's destination appeal offers advantages both for marketing and service differentiation. "In a market, where the airline is not a household brand ... we need to carefully design the approach. Finland and the rest of the Nordic region is gaining popularity as a new, unknown region, with lots of opportunities for new experiences," he says. "By marketing the destination, we can easily get more attention than only promoting the airline. Iceland and Singapore are two great examples of smaller countries that have succeeded in that."

One of the novel ways Finnair has managed to capture destination marketing is through the interior of its A350 XWBs, which it outfits with stark white interiors, creating a plain canvas, so its Nordic cabin light display can shine. "Our neutral cabin palette ... [has] a calming, peaceful feel to it. It also reminds us and our passengers of clean white snow, which covers our home country for a large part of the year."

In addition to campaigns and ambience, Finnair supports its goals with tailored and regionally driven services. To welcome Chinese passengers, Finnair has a Chinese-language website, Chinese-speaking crew and continues to ramp up on routes to the country. It's even installed a team in Shanghai to keep an ear to the ground of local culture and "to gain more leverage on Chinese social media sites, with destination marketing in the core," he says.

According to Järvinen, customer-centricity will always be key to an airline's success. While most airline executives shy away from Twitter, Järvinen [has his own account](#). "Twitter has become an increasingly important communication channel for company news, irregularity communication, and even direct customer service," he says. "Besides the more fact-based communication, it is also a great way to position the brand and communicate a bit more freely, in a relaxed manner."

*Don't miss Juha Järvinen's keynote at [APEX MultiMedia Market](#), at the RAI in Amsterdam, at 10:00 a.m, Wednesday, April 20. Check out Finnair's [city guide to Beijing](#) below.*

The Airline Passenger Experience Association is a network of the world's leading airlines, suppliers and related companies committed to elevating the level of the airline passenger experience.

©Airline Passenger Experience Association (APEX) 2016. All rights reserved.

[Home](#) | [Contact Us](#) | [Site Map](#) | [Login](#)