

Brunch over Lunch: A Review of British Airways' Cost-cutting Measures



Source: Unsplash (2022)

Background

With a history of more than a century, British Airways (BA) is the flag carrier of the United Kingdom, operating to more than 200 destinations worldwide (Routes, n.d.). In past decades, the airline has faced criticism for inconsistent reliability and service quality, but its recent cost-cutting measures have created even more controversy.

In its latest cost-cutting strategy, BA replaced lunch service on some long-haul flights with brunch for business and first-class passengers (The CFO, 2024). Instead of the original lunch menu, passengers on long-haul flights departing between 9:30 am and 11:29 am are shown a smaller brunch brochure. First-class customers who would previously have been offered a range of main course options, including grilled lamb rack, chicken Wellington, grilled halibut, or vegetarian kofta, are now served prawn salad, poached egg, and pancakes (The Telegraph, 2024).

BA's brunch policy sparked vibrant debate soon after its implementation, as passengers and industry partners worry the change symbolizes an unhealthy shift in priorities from customer experience to favouring the airline's bottom line (The CFO, 2024). This concern was further substantiated by reports that flight attendants are told in training to stop apologizing to customers over complaints of poor meal and amenity options (Leff, 2024). In another training exercise, flight attendants are given a price list of food items and asked to assemble an economy class meal without exceeding a £5 budget (Klint, 2024).

Despite these criticisms, BA's financial performance has improved, with the airline reporting growing profits at the end of 2024 and announcing a £7bn turnaround investment in aircraft, cabins, and systems upgrades (The Guardian, 2024). It is believed that BA adopted cost-cutting measures like the brunch policy out of necessity, and may now be willing to realign service levels as its finances improve.

Challenges

Some attribute the brunch policy to BA's adoption of offer-order technology, which modifies service offerings based on data but has resulted in gaps in understanding customer preferences (The CFO, 2024). While the shift to brunch may reflect a broader trend towards cost efficiency, it overlooks the nuanced needs of high-paying customers. Additionally, logistical problems have arisen, such as brunch being served as late as 1 pm for flights departing later in the morning, which is not ideal for passengers expecting lunch (The Telegraph, 2024).

Following these events, concern is growing among loyalty members that the airline may further erode the premium experience with more cost-cutting measures in the future (PYOK, 2025). While BA seeks to enhance profitability through cost-cutting, it risks losing loyal customers to competitors.

Discussion Questions

1. In what ways might the brunch policy impact customer satisfaction and loyalty?
2. How do flight attendant training changes reflect BA's shifting priorities?
3. Should airlines prioritize financial performance over customer experience? Why or why not?
4. What changes would BA make to the brunch policy to reduce friction of implementation and customer complaints?
5. What alternative cost-cutting measures could British Airways consider for in-flight meal services that might be less controversial than the brunch policy?

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Keywords

- Airline
- In-flight service
- Cost-cutting
- Cabin Crew Training
- Guest experience
- Meal Policy

早午餐替代午餐：英国航空公司成本削减措施回顾



Source: Unsplash (2022)

背景

英国航空公司拥有超过一个世纪的历史，是英国的国家航空公司，业务遍及全球 200 多个目的地 (Routes, n.d.)。在过去的几十年里，该航空公司因可靠性和服务质量不稳定而受到批评，但其近期的成本削减措施引发了更多争议。

在其最新的成本削减策略中，英航在一些长途航班上，为商务舱和头等舱乘客用早午餐服务取代了午餐服务 (The CFO, 2024)。在上午 9:30 至 11:29 之间起飞的长途航班乘客，看到的不是原来的午餐菜单，而是一份更小的早午餐菜单。原先能享用包括烤羊排、惠灵顿鸡、烤大比目鱼或素食丸子等多种主菜选择的头等舱乘客，现在被提供的是虾仁沙拉、水煮蛋和煎饼 (The Telegraph, 2024)。

英航的早午餐政策实施后很快引发了热烈讨论，乘客和行业伙伴担心这一变化象征着航空公司重心出现了不健康的转变，即从客户体验转向了优先考虑公司的盈亏底线 (The CFO, 2024)。有报道称，乘务员在培训中被要求停止就乘客对餐食和便利设施选择不佳的投诉道歉，这进一步证实了这种担忧 (Leff, 2024)。在另一项培训练习中，乘务员拿到一份食品价格清单，并被要求在不超出 5 英镑预算的情况下组装一份经济舱餐食 (Klint, 2024)。

尽管存在这些批评，英航的财务表现有所改善，该航空公司报告 2024 年底利润增长，并宣布了一项 70 亿英镑的转型投资，用于飞机、客舱和系统升级 (The Guardian, 2024)。据信，英航是出于必要性才采取早午餐政策等成本削减措施，并且随着财务状况改善，现在可能愿意重新调整服务水平。

挑战

一些人将早午餐政策归因于英航采用了报价与订单管理技术，该技术基于数据调整服务产品，但导致了对客户偏好的理解存在差距 (The CFO, 2024)。虽然转向早午餐可能反映了追求成本效率的更广泛趋势，但它忽略了高价值客户的细微需求。此外，还出现了一些操作上的问题，例如对于上午较晚起飞的航班，早午餐最晚可能在下午1点才供应，这对于期待午餐的乘客来说并不理想 (The Telegraph, 2024)。

这些事件之后，常旅客会员越来越担心，航空公司未来可能会通过更多成本削减措施进一步侵蚀高端体验 (PYOK, 2025)。尽管英航试图通过削减成本来提高盈利能力，但它面临着将忠实客户输给竞争对手的风险。

讨论问题

1. 早午餐政策可能通过哪些方式影响客户满意度和忠诚度？
2. 乘务员培训的变化如何反映英航优先事项的转变？
3. 航空公司是否应该将财务业绩置于客户体验之上？为什么？
4. 英航应对早午餐政策做出哪些改变，以减少实施过程中的摩擦和客户投诉？
5. 对于机上餐食服务，英国航空公司可以考虑哪些比早午餐政策争议更小的替代性成本削减措施？

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关键词

- 航空公司
- 机上服务
- 成本削减
- 机组人员培训
- 宾客体验
- 餐食政策

早午餐替代午餐：英國航空公司成本削減措施回顧



Source: Unsplash (2022)

背景

英國航空公司擁有超過一個世紀的歷史，是英國的國家航空公司，業務遍及全球 200 多個目的地 (Routes, n.d.)。在過去的幾十年裡，該航空公司因可靠性和服務品質不穩定而受到批評，但其近期的成本削減措施引發了更多爭議。

在其最新的成本削減策略中，英航在一些長途航班上，為商務艙和頭等艙乘客用早午餐服務取代了午餐服務 (The CFO, 2024)。在上午 9:30 至 11:29 之間起飛的長途航班乘客，看到的不是原來的午餐菜單，而是一份更小的早午餐菜單。原先能享用包括烤羊排、威靈頓雞、烤大比目魚或素食丸子等多種主菜選擇的頭等艙乘客，現在被提供的是蝦仁沙拉、水煮蛋和煎餅 (The Telegraph, 2024)。

英航的早午餐政策實施後很快引發了熱烈討論，乘客和行業夥伴擔心這一變化象徵著航空公司重心出現了不健康的轉變，即從客戶體驗轉向了優先考慮公司的盈虧底線 (The CFO, 2024)。有報道稱，空服員在培訓中被要求停止就乘客對餐食和便利設施選擇不佳的投訴道歉，這進一步證實了這種擔憂 (Leff, 2024)。在另一項培訓練習中，空服員拿到一份食品價格清單，並被要求在不超出 5 英鎊預算的情況下組裝一份經濟艙餐食 (Klint, 2024)。

儘管存在這些批評，英航的財務表現有所改善，該航空公司報告 2024 年底利潤增長，並宣佈了一項 70 億英鎊的轉型投資，用於飛機、客艙和系統升級 (The Guardian, 2024)。據信，英航是出於必要性才採取早午餐政策等成本削減措施，並且隨著財務狀況改善，現在可能願意重新調整服務水準。

挑戰

一些人將早午餐政策歸因於英航採用了報價與訂單管理技術，該技術基於數據調整服務產品，但導致了對客戶偏好的理解存在差距 (The CFO, 2024)。雖然轉向早午餐可能反映了追求成本效率的更廣泛趨勢，但它忽略了高價值客戶的細微需求。此外，還出現了一些操作上的問題，例如對於上午較晚起飛的航班，早午餐最晚可能在下午1點才供應，這對於期待午餐的乘客來說並不理想 (The Telegraph, 2024)。

這些事件之後，常旅客會員越來越擔心，航空公司未來可能會通過更多成本削減措施進一步侵蝕高端體驗 (PYOK, 2025)。儘管英航試圖通過削減成本來提高盈利能力，但它面臨著將忠實客戶輸給競爭對手的風險。

討論問題

1. 早午餐政策可能通過哪些方式影響客戶滿意度和忠誠度？
2. 空服員培訓的變化如何反映英航優先事項的轉變？
3. 航空公司是否應該將財務業績置於客戶體驗之上？為什麼？
4. 英航應對早午餐政策做出哪些改變，以減少實施過程中的摩擦和客戶投訴？
5. 對於機上餐食服務，英國航空公司可以考慮哪些比早午餐政策爭議更小的替代性成本削減措施？

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關鍵詞

- 航空公司
- 機上服務
- 成本削減
- 機組人員培訓
- 賓客體驗
- 餐食政策