

# Marketing 2.0 Case Study: How SpiceJet launched the Bombardier Q400 in India

By educating customers on social media, SpiceJet increased Indians' comfort with flying turboprops and achieved a remarkable 88% load factor in the first two weeks of its Q400 launch



## The Challenge

Where the story begins

Headquartered just outside the capital, New Delhi, SpiceJet is a leading low-cost airline in India. To expand its market reach, SpiceJet decided to extend its connectivity to Tier II and Tier III cities in India with newly-acquired Bombardier Q400 turboprop aircraft.

However, the Indian public had typically not been the most keen to fly turboprops, and battling this mindset was the biggest challenge to SpiceJet.

The aircraft were also flown between lesser-known secondary city pairs like Hyderabad-Goa. As such, in addition to changing customers' mindsets, there was a need for SpiceJet to create destination awareness in the specific target markets.



**High level of competition in India**



**General misconception about turboprops**



**Lack of awareness about new routes and destinations**



## SimpliFlying's Expertise at Work

Customer-to-Customer Education Model

SimpliFlying developed a two-pronged strategy to help SpiceJet drive 1) Experiential Awareness and 2) Engagement. This approach leveraged on travelers educating one another about the new aircraft and learning about destinations – all through a series of contests on Facebook and Twitter, instead of the usual one-way advertising through traditional mediums.



### Phase 1: Awareness through fun

After announcing that the airline would be welcoming the Bombardier Q400, SpiceJet went on to leverage fun factors via:

1. Name The Plane contest – Fans could suggest five names after Indian spices. A panel of jury would determine which best suggestion to be selected.
2. SpiceJet Q400 Trivias contest – By sharing technical aspects of the airplane, this initiative helped dispel pre-conceived notions about turboprops and drive awareness about the brand new SpiceJet Q400s.
3. Facebook App: Guess the Destination – By generating pin codes of the destinations that SpiceJet Q400 would be flying to, this initiative gamified the user experience to elevate the fun level, resulting in tremendous response.

### Phase 2: Experiential & Engagement

SpiceJet brought the experience closer to its fans through:

1. Social Media PR – Prominent Indian bloggers and media personalities were flown in for a social media-FAM trip to Bombardier's facilities in Toronto, where they were given first sneak peeks and know-hows of SpiceJet Q400. This experience was widely shared online in real-time on multiple channels.
2. Making of Q400 contest – Fans were treated to a behind-the-scenes video on the making of the Q400, followed by an invitation to join a sequencing contest to rearrange various images in the correct order of the plane-making process. The video went on to be featured in The Huffington Post!
1. Coverage of The First Flight – Photos around the landing of the first Q400 were shared live with users. Fans subsequently went on to actively post photos of their Q400 flights.



## Results & Impact

12 new routes, 88% load factor – only at 5% of the total investment



Reached up to  
**182,881 users on  
Twitter**



Cost less than  
**5% of total  
investment**



**88% load factor  
in 2 weeks of  
fleet operation**

Each of the initiatives garnered very high levels of interest. Among which, Name The Plane contest attained 98,241 impressions within seven days; SpiceJet Q400 Trivias contest attained 122,647 impressions in five days, with each trivia averaging 20,000 impressions; the blogger outreach helped SpiceJet attain a reach of 182,881 people on Twitter.

What was most notable was that all these results was achieved for less than 5% of the total marketing budget invested for the aircraft publicity and destination launches.

At the end of the three-month campaign to launch Q400 in five new destinations on 12 new routes, SpiceJet attained a remarkable 88% load factor within two weeks of the new fleet operation.

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### What SpiceJet has to say:

“SpiceJet generated an early buzz for Q400 aircraft even before the actual delivery of the aircraft.

We made a range of announcements on our introductory fares, posted pictures and most importantly educated the target customers about the features of the Q400.

This information was shared, ‘liked’, posted, tweeted and re-tweeted to create and sustain awareness, in key target markets.”

**- Sam Sridharan, Former CCO, SpiceJet**

