Premium Meals
for the **Economy Cabin!**

There are many universal truths in life: money isn't everything, laughter is the best medicine, and so on. I think another one is that **people really love a good meal**. And for decades another universal truth was that airplane food was bad. But that's all changing! Today, airline meal options are plentiful and tasty. Airlines are going gourmet and some even have culinary delights from celebrity chefs!

The power of meals to differentiate an airline's brand – and drive revenue – has made this a popular Use Case topic, and so we've decided to feature an example. So, how does an airline approach premium meals for Economy Cabin?

Like any product offering, there are a few basic questions for the airline to answer. In this case, things like: What meals will the airline offer? In what conditions does a particular meal make it onto the menu (based on markets, flights, regions, etc.)? And what—if anything—will the airline charge for the meals, taking into account personalization and loyalty status? Each of these "answers" are easily configured in FLX Merchandise, which will then drive the business rules engine to pass the correct offer or choices to the airline's point-of-sale using standardized XML web services. Let's take a quick look.

First, what meals does the airline offer? No doubt the airline's appointed chefs have created a full catalog of meal options spanning a range of foods, meals, markets, and tastes – each with corresponding marketing descriptions, images, and rich content. This superset of information can be easily defined in FLX Merchandise (or accessed via separate database).
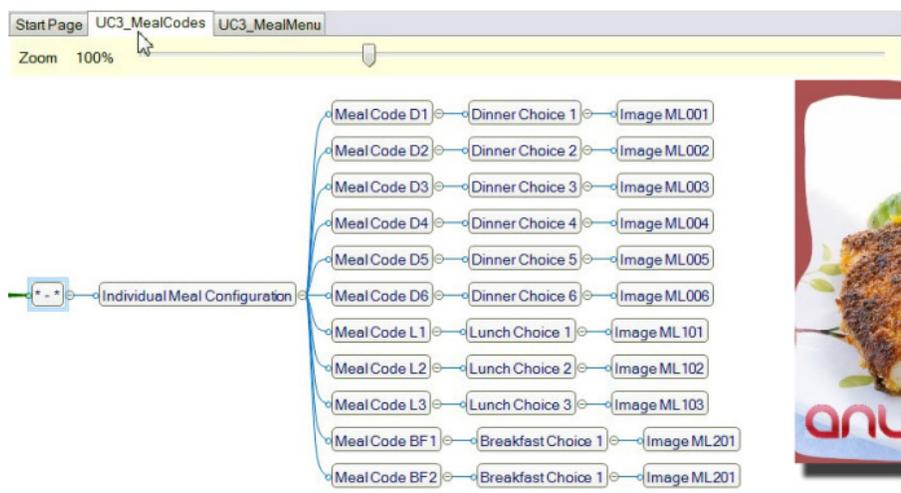
Next, what meals will be offered under which conditions (e.g., which choices are on the menu on tomorrow's flight from JFK to LHR)? This is also easily defined and managed in FLX Merchandise, where bundles are used to group meals together as menu choices. These bundles—each with unique codes—will be associated to hierarchical nested rules that precisely reflect the airline's business rules.

Finally, how will the airline personalize and yield-manage the offer? In this regard, business users at the airline must be given unlimited flexibility in structuring rules and options, such as with FLX Merchandise. In the example below, a meal's base price is 15.00 GBP, but a variety of discounts are available, depending on which fare brand the traveler has selected OR based on frequent traveler status. A traveler with Tier 2 status gets a 50% discount on the meal, as do all travelers who opt for the "FLEX" fare brand.

We have only scratched the surface of what is possible managing meals in a strategic merchandising environment. But I hope we have gotten you thinking!
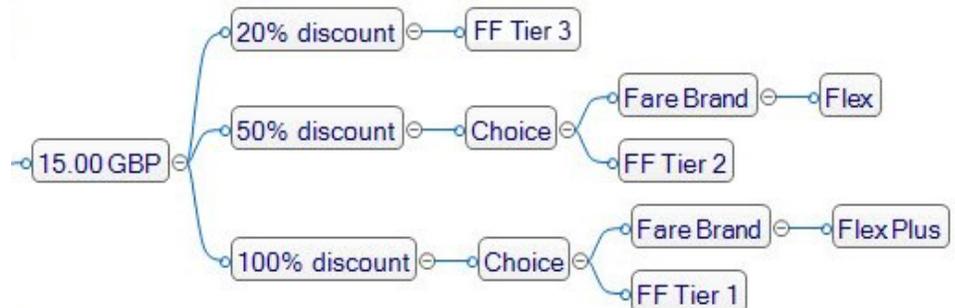
Merchandising Tip: Creating an offer for a premium meal is one thing, but controlling how many extra meals can be accommodated based on storage capabilities on board, as well as assuring that these additional premium meals can be properly handled by the crew, requires rule sophistication. Here FLX Merchandise uses a fully integrated inventory module where those restrictions are part of the meal service configuration.

Some of the typical parameters used for this

- Equipment type
- Routing
- Flight duration
- Frequent traveler status (e.g., offer only to top tier level)

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