Airline Disruption Management - Perspectives, Experiences and Outlook

Over the past decade, airlines have become more concerned with developing an optimal flight schedule, with very little slack left to accommodate for any form of variation from the optimal solution. During operation the planned schedules often have to be revised due to disruptions caused by for example severe weather, technical problems and crew sickness. Thus, the field of Airline Disruption Management has emerged within the past few years. The increased focus on cutting cost at the major airlines has intensified the interest in the development of new and cost efficient methods to handle airline disruptions. The purpose of this paper is twofold. In the first part it offers an introduction to airline disruption management provides the readers with a description of the planning processes and delivers a detailed overview of the numerous aspects of airline disruption management. In the second part we report on experiences from a large research and development project on airline disruption management. Within the project the first prototype of a multiple resource decision support system at the operations control center in a major airline, has been implemented.