

United Continental Holdings

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United Airlines chief says passenger dragged off overbooked flight was "disruptive"

It really has been a story that took off today.

United Airlines sparked further outrage after its chief executive described a passenger who was forcibly removed from an overbooked plane as "disruptive and belligerent".

The video of the man screaming has gone viral and the company as attracted much criticism.

Shares in parent company, United Continental Holdings Inc (NYSE:UAL) fell more than 4% at one point today, and at one point nearly \$1bn (£800m) was wiped off its value, as traders dropped the stock in droves.

Airline police officials violently dragged a passenger, a 69-year-old Asian man, believed to be a doctor - from the plane at O'Hare international airport in Chicago on Sunday.

He has now been reportedly identified as David Dao, a medical doctor from Elizabethtown, Kentucky.

The incident was captured on video by several shocked passengers and made the rounds online, provoking a heated response on social media.

Chief executive Oscar Munoz dug the hole deeper in an email to staff explaining what happened.

Munoz said when crew members first approached the man he had raised his voice and refused to comply with instructions.

"He was approached a few more times after that in order to gain his compliance to come off the aircraft and each time he refused and became more and more disruptive and belligerent," he said.

Munoz said crew members then had to call Chicago aviation security officers to assist in removing the passenger from the flight.

The airline explained that after no one agreed to voluntarily give up their seats they chose four passengers at random based on ticket class.

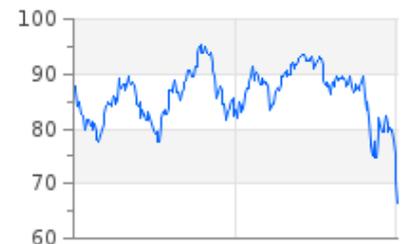
In a separate statement to media, Munoz said: "This is an upsetting event to all of us here at United. I apologise for having to reaccommodate these customers. Our team is moving with a sense of urgency to work with the authorities and conduct our own detailed review of what happened."

The news serves as another blow to the company weeks after it was ridiculed for refusing to allow two teenage girls to board a flight because they were wearing leggings.

Price: 67.07

Market Cap: \$16.63 billion

1 Year Share Price Graph



February 2019 August 2019 February 2020

Share Information

Code: UAL

Listing: NYSE

52 week High Low
95.99 61.33

Sector: Transport

Website:
www.unitedcontinentalholdings.com

Company Synopsis:

United Continental Holdings, Inc. (UAL), formerly UAL Corporation, is a holding company and it's, wholly owned subsidiaries are United Air Lines, Inc. (United) and Continental Airlines, Inc. (Continental).

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The airline said the girls were travelling on special pass for employees and guests, which has a strict dress code that does not allow "form-fitting lycra/spandex tops, pants and dresses".

United Airlines is not the only US airline to cause a stir.

Delta Airlines Inc (NYSE:DAL) has cancelled thousands of flights due to severe storms that struck Atlanta last Wednesday. While the storms have abated, the airline continued to cancel flights over the weekend, saying it has had ongoing troubles with staffing flights in accordance with federal rules governing how long and how often flight crews can work.

Last August, the airline issued an apology after thousands of flights were delayed and cancelled due to a computer bug and power failure.

In February, it was also forced to apologise after barring Sikh-American actor Waris Ahluwalia from boarding an Aeromexico flight because he refused to remove his turban during a security check.

Southwest Airlines Co. (NYSE:LUV) suffered a hit to its reputation in 2010 when US director Kevin Smith was removed from a flight after being told he was too big for the seats.

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