

The smartest person in the cockpit: How Artificial Intelligence is guiding the emerging travel boom

A storm cell near Oklahoma City was likely to turn into a thunderstorm around the time Flight 1405 took off, and the airspace north of Amarillo would be closed for military exercises. Better to reroute, the young colleague said, suggesting an alternative that [dispatcher Brad] Ward admitted was safer and more efficient.

The entire conversation lasted just seconds and passed without a word being spoken: a red box lit up on Ward's computer screen when the colleague, an artificial intelligence program he has affectionately nicknamed Algo, had an idea.

"This is the smartest person in the room," says Ward.

...

Algo's formal name is Flyways, and it's the product of a Silicon Valley company called Airspace Intelligence, which is hoping to make air travel more efficient and safer as airlines try to recover from a year in which the pandemic [ravaged the travel industry](#). The idea of AI setting paths for jets streaking through the skies at hundreds of miles per hour might sound terrifying, but Flyways does not dictate—it advises, and humans always have the final say.

Follow the latest news and policy debates on sustainable agriculture, biomedicine, and other 'disruptive' innovations. Subscribe to our newsletter.

[SIGN UP](#)

"A man/machine collaboration will do better than just a man or just a machine," says Pedro Domingos, a professor of computer science at the University of Washington.

[Read the original post](#)