

AVIATION • PHILIPPINES

The recovery-rate standard: the executive economics of aviation customer and operations support outsourcing to the Philippines.

An analysis of why contacts handled is a volume vanity metric, how disruption-recovery rate and on-time reaccommodation — never contact throughput — decide the true cost of an airline support operation once stranded passengers, missed connections, passenger-rights exposure, and rebooking leakage are counted, and the vendor-selection discipline that gets the passenger recovered when the operation breaks.

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ABOUT THIS SERIES – VOLUME 80

Every aviation-support proposal is priced per contact handled, because volume is easy to count. This volume is about the only support outcome an airline's operation and brand actually depend on: the disrupted passenger recovered — rebooked, reaccommodated, and made whole — inside the window that keeps the operation moving and the regulator satisfied. The gap between handling a contact and recovering a passenger is where stranded travelers and passenger-rights exposure live. The full series lives at piton-global.com.

THE PITON-GLOBAL LEADERSHIP TEAM

About the authors



John Maczynski
Chief Executive Officer

John has bought airline-support capacity for three decades, and learned that the fast operation that answers every call in a meltdown and strands the passenger anyway is the most expensive one a carrier can hire — because an unrecovered



Ralf Ellspermann
Chief Strategy Officer

Ralf has spent twenty-five years running Philippine airline-support floors, and he judges an aviation team by its disruption-recovery rate and passenger-rights compliance, not its contacts-per-hour: whether the stranded traveler got

traveler is a rebooking on another carrier, a duty-of-care bill, and a passenger-rights claim, all at once. His standing question ignores the contacts-handled report: of the passengers you touched in the disruption, how many got recovered — rebooked and reaccommodated — before they gave up on you? Applied at PITON-Global, that question is what clients get on every aviation sourcing decision — personally, with no account layer in between.

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rebooked in the window, or held on line while the connection closed. The operations contract in Section 3 codifies what he learned rebuilding teams that answered fast and recovered slowly. He now reads aviation providers the way he once ran them — from the recovery-rate dashboard and the EU261/DOT exposure log backward.

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ABOUT PITON-GLOBAL

PITON-Global is a buyer-side advisory practice, Manila-based since 2001, that has never operated a delivery floor or taken a placement commission. Its stock-in-trade is knowing the Philippine provider market at the operating level — 1,000+ mapped operations, re-verified continuously, including each aviation team's real disruption-recovery rate and passenger-rights compliance rather than its contacts-per-hour headline — and converting that knowledge into a shortlist of six to ten genuinely qualified partners per engagement. Buyers from Tripadvisor, Garmin, TSYS, HealthPartners, Yetipay, Workrise, and Norman Disney & Young have run their searches through the practice.

SECTION 01

Executive summary

-58% Fully-loaded cost per recovered passenger vs. US onshore	94%+ Disruption-recovery rate on vetted teams, up from 74-84%	-62% Reduction in passenger-rights exposure on vetted teams	6.4× First-year ROI, reconstructed case (Section 6)
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An aviation-support engagement is bought on the price per contact and paid for on the passengers it fails to recover when the operation breaks. The vendor reports millions of contacts handled at a fraction of the onshore cost; the airline finds the travelers stranded overnight because the rebooking came too late, the connections missed while the passenger held on line, the EU261 and DOT claims that piled up because reaccommodation and duty-of-care were mishandled, and the revenue that walked to another carrier's counter. The operation answered its calls and the airline inherited stranded passengers, a compliance backlog, and a brand hit that outlived the weather. The gap between handling a contact and recovering a passenger is where the real cost of cheap aviation support hides, because a contact answered but not recovered is not throughput delivered — it is a traveler abandoned mid-journey and a claim waiting to be filed.

The Philippines — with a deep aviation and travel-support talent pool, 24/7 operations culture, and English fluency across global passenger bases — is where airline support is delivered with the most recovery-rate discipline, because that pool can run the fast reaccommodation, GDS-fluent rebooking, and passenger-rights compliance that recovery demands. Five findings:

- 1** **Contacts handled is the industry's most flattering number.** Any floor can answer calls in a meltdown. Vetted teams are measured on outcome: disruption-recovery rate, reaccommodation speed, and passenger-rights compliance. Weak providers quote a low per-contact price the airline repays in stranded passengers, claims, and lost loyalty. Section 2 shows the gap.

- 2

The recovered passenger, not the answered contact, is the product. A traveler who keeps flying your airline comes from a fast, correct rebooking, reaccommodation handled to policy, and duty-of-care delivered — not from a call that got picked up. Teams that recover well protect the operation and the brand; teams that only answer strand passengers at a cost far above the per-contact price.
- 3

Disruption cuts both ways — the passenger and the operation. A slow recovery strands the traveler and jams the operation, cascading misconnects downline; a wrong reaccommodation triggers a rights claim and a duty-of-care overrun. Vetted teams hold recovery above 94% precisely because both tails cost — the passenger lost and the operation that never re-sets.
- 4

The claim and the lost passenger, not the call, are what cost. A disruption handled badly costs the duty-of-care bill, the EU261/DOT claim, and the traveler who defects — many times the per-contact saving. Teams that recover fast cut claims and hold loyalty, and that protected revenue and compliance — not the offshore rate alone — is where the case study's return is built.
- 5

Contract on the recovered passenger, not the handled contact. The contracting failure of aviation support is paying per contact and hoping the passenger got recovered. Vetted deals price against recovery-rate floors, reaccommodation-speed targets, and passenger-rights-compliance minimums, making recovery the team's problem, which is where it belongs.

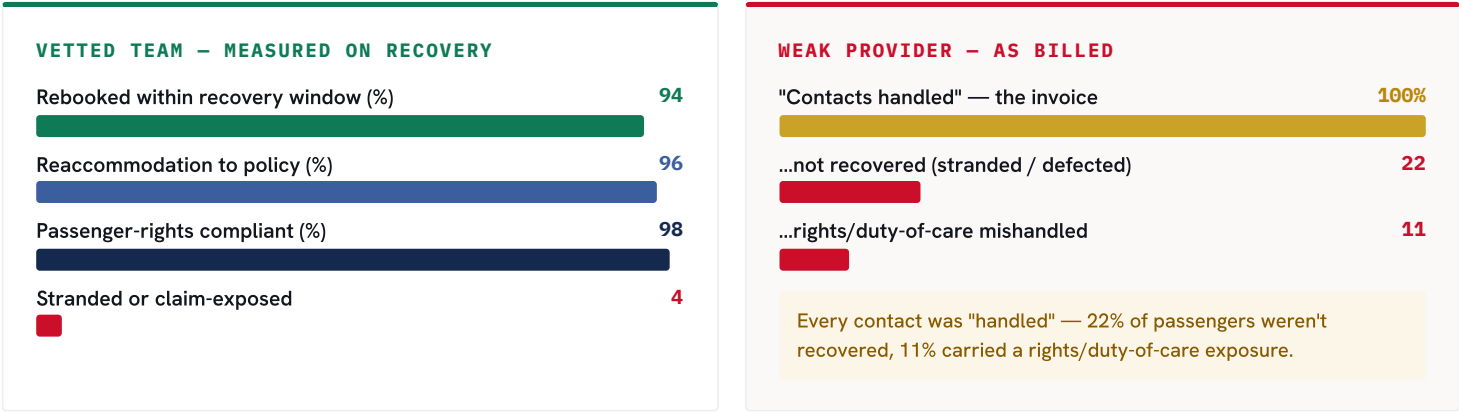
The intended reader is a VP of customer operations, head of airport & guest services, or COO buying aviation support per contact and paying for it in stranded passengers, claims, and lost loyalty. Sections 2-4 separate the teams that recover passengers from the teams that answer contacts; Sections 5-7, the method and the proof.

SECTION 02

The volume mirage: contacts handled versus passengers recovered

Figure 1 shows one irregular-operations event two ways: as the contacts-handled report a weak vendor bills, and as the recovery reality the passengers and the operations-control center experience. The contacts-handled number is identical in spirit to a chatbot's containment rate — a figure engineered to look like output while stranded travelers, missed connections, and passenger-rights claims accumulate underneath.

FIG. 1 – ONE IRROPS EVENT: RECOVERY QUALITY VS. REPORTED CONTACT VOLUME



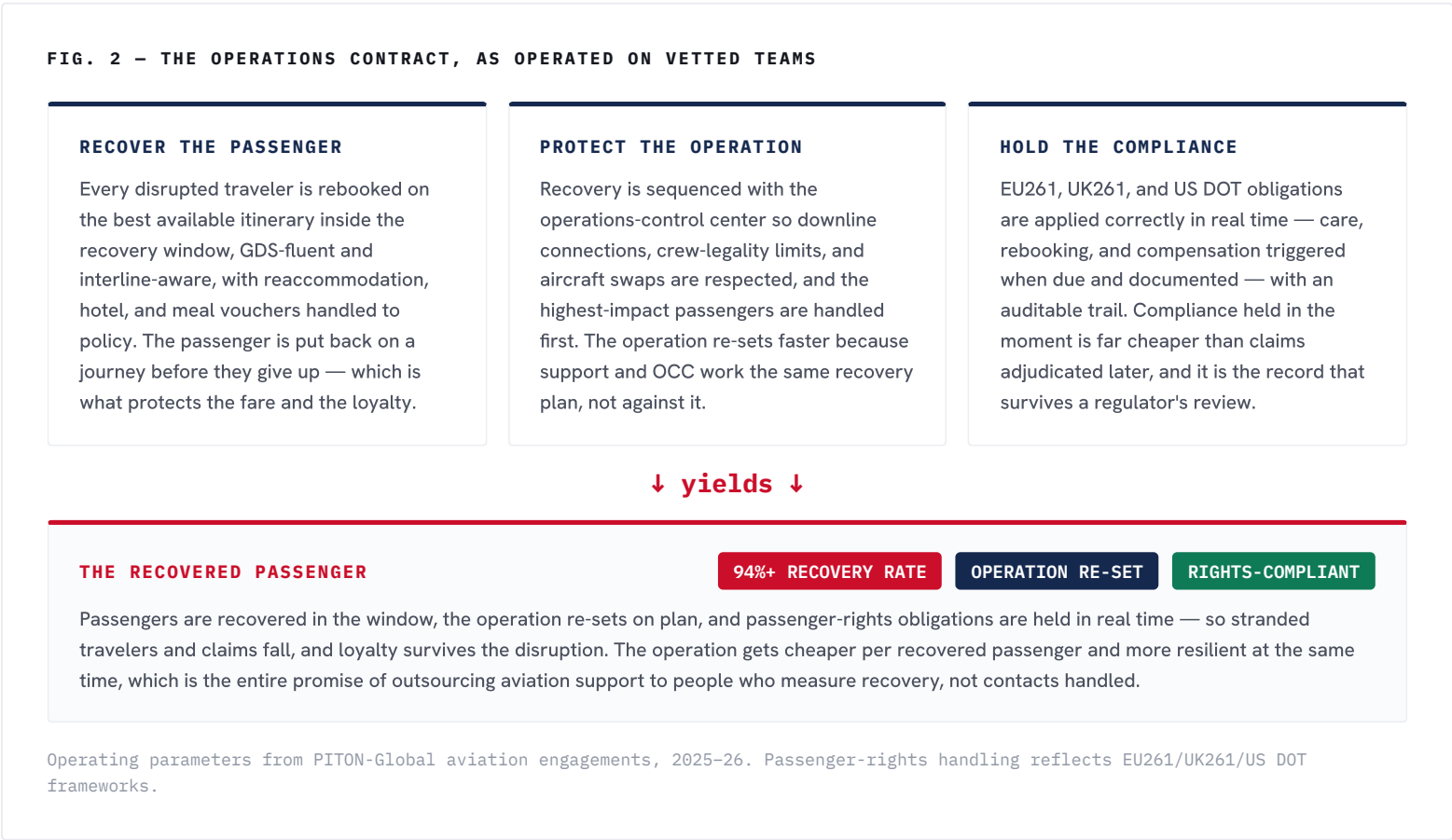
Left: PITON-Global engagement instrumentation, 2025-26, recovery-audited across IRROPS events. Right: composite of pre-engagement vendor reporting reviewed in diligence.

The economics follow the recovery, not the contact count. On the left, ninety-four percent of passengers are rebooked in the window and ninety-eight percent handled rights-compliant, so the operation re-sets and travelers keep flying you; on the right, a cheap per-contact price leaves twenty-two percent of passengers unrecovered and mishandles rights on eleven, paying in duty-of-care overruns, claims, and defections at once. A low per-contact price that strands passengers is not a saving; it is lost revenue and compliance exposure, delayed and compounding across the disruption. The recovery-rate audit — rebooking-in-window, reaccommodation-to-policy, rights compliance — is the cheapest due-diligence instrument in this paper.

SECTION 03

The operations contract: recover the passenger, protect the operation, hold the compliance

Figure 2 lays out the three clauses of a working aviation-support contract — the machinery a floor read verifies before any per-contact price is believed.



In diligence, the contract is tested from the recovery log's and the OCC's side: pull an IRROPS event and re-check recovery rate, reaccommodation timing, and rights handling against the passenger records; read the claims log; interview on how they sequence recovery with the operations-control center under a cascading meltdown. Perhaps one team in ten survives it cleanly. Steps 3 and 5 of the framework exist to find that one before the contract does — because everything in Table 3 of Section 6 depends on recovery rate, not contacts handled.

Cost and performance: cost-per-recovered-passenger economics and benchmarks

TABLE 1 — FULLY-LOADED COST PER RECOVERED PASSENGER: THREE OPERATING MODELS (2026)		
OPERATING MODEL	COST / RECOVERY	VS. US BASELINE
US onshore in-house reservations/recovery	\$13.80	baseline
Low-cost offshore contact mill (per-contact)	\$9.40	-32%
Vetted Manila team — recovery-based	\$5.80	-58%

Basis: PITON-Global engagement pricing 2025-26; cost per recovered passenger = fully-loaded operating cost divided by passengers actually recovered in-window and rights-compliant (unrecovered and mishandled excluded); the contact mill looks cheap per contact but stranded passengers, duty-of-care overruns, and claims lift its true cost per recovery; US comparator fully-loaded in-house cost.

TABLE 2 — AVIATION-SUPPORT BENCHMARKS, VETTED VS. BASELINE (2025-26)			
METRIC	VETTED TOP TIER	BASELINE	EXECUTIVE READING
Disruption-recovery rate	94%+	74-84%	The only aviation number the brand follows
Median rebooking time in IRROPS	<8 min	25-40 min	Recovered in-window, or defected
Passenger-rights exposure vs. baseline	-62%	baseline	"Hold the compliance" — held or not
Post-disruption retention (fly-again)	+24%	baseline	Loyalty kept, or lost to a rival
CSAT during disruption	4.5/5	2.8-3.4/5	Trust held under stress, or broken

Source: PITON-Global aviation engagement data 2025-26; baseline = typical pre-engagement operations billed on contacts handled.

The strategic read: the contact mill's -32% per contact is a false economy — stranded passengers, duty-of-care overruns, and claims lift its true cost per recovery far above the per-contact gap, and a traveler lost to a meltdown rarely comes back. The vetted Manila team's -58% is real because it is measured where the value is: the passenger recovered in-window, the operation re-set, the rights held. Buy on contacts handled and you buy the right column of Figure 1; buy on cost-per-recovered-passenger and you buy recovery rate — the same discipline every volume in this series keeps arriving at from a different door.

Sourcing discipline: the 7-Step Vendor Vetting Framework, applied to aviation

Aviation diligence adds one hard requirement to every step: a per-contact price is real only when the recovery rate behind it survives a re-audit of an IRROPS event against the passenger records. The funnel below is representative of a 60-130-seat airline-support search.

FIG. 3 – THE 7-STEP FRAMEWORK AS AN AVIATION-SUPPORT FUNNEL		
STEP	WHAT IT ELIMINATES IN AN AVIATION SEARCH	FIELD REMAINING
1 Requirements definition	Contact-first scoping: fixes the recovery-rate floor, the rebooking-speed target, the rights-compliance standard, and the surge-staffing model the operation must meet by disruption type	1,000+
2 Market mapping	Contact mills: operations that bill answered volume and treat stranded passengers and claims as the airline's problem, and generalist floors with no GDS or IRROPS depth	~44
3 Capability screening	Teams without the machinery: audited recovery-rate history, GDS/PSS fluency (Amadeus, Sabre), IRROPS and interline reaccommodation, and passenger-rights compliance depth	~13
4 Compliance & security audit	Weak governance: passenger-data protection, PCI-DSS on payment/rebooking, EU261/DOT process controls, business-continuity for surge, SOC 2 scope covering the aviation stack	~8
5 Operational diligence	The recovery re-audit: re-check an IRROPS event's recovery rate, rebooking timing, and rights handling against passenger records; read the claims log; interview on OCC sequencing under a cascading meltdown	4–6
6 Competitive RFP & negotiation	Per-contact pricing: finalists bid against recovery-rate floors, rebooking-speed targets, and rights-compliance minimums — all carrying credits for passengers left unrecovered or mishandled	2–3
7 Transition & launch governance	Cold cutover: the team calibrates against your PSS, fare rules, and IRROPS playbooks on a simulated event before it works a live disruption, with the recovery floor certified before peak season, PITON-Global embedded buyer-side	1

Field-remaining counts represent a 60–130-seat airline-support search, PITON-Global engagements 2024–26.

The standing guarantees hold: **vendor neutrality** — PITON-Global operates no airline-support floors, works no disruptions, and takes no placement economics, so the shortlist reflects audited recovery-rate performance, not inventory; **right-sizing** — teams for whom your operation is a flagship account. Six to ten genuinely qualified providers, delivered within 48–72 hours, free to the buyer, competing through a fully transparent, fair, comprehensive, and highly competitive RFP.

SECTION 06 • ANONYMIZED CASE STUDY

Re-basing the operation on recovery rate: a 90-seat airline support rebuild, reconstructed

Engagement AV-075 is a mid-size international carrier — running roughly 18,000,000 passenger contacts a year across reservations, IRROPS, and airport support — that had offshored aviation support to a per-contact vendor. The contact price was excellent; the recovery was not: disruption-recovery rate sat near 79%, rebooking in a meltdown dragged past thirty minutes, EU261/DOT claims were climbing, and post-disruption retention was bleeding. The VP of customer operations wanted the arbitrage without the stranded passengers and the compliance exposure. Identifying details are anonymized under NDA.

SELECTION (WEEKS 0-8, RECOVERY RE-AUDITS)

Requirements fixed a 94% recovery-rate floor, a sub-8-minute rebooking target, and a rights-compliance minimum, with GDS fluency and OCC-sequenced recovery mandatory. Mapping produced 44 claimants; the machinery screen — audited recovery history, Amadeus/Sabre fluency, IRROPS depth, rights compliance — left 13; the data-and-continuity audit left 8. Recovery re-audits of each finalist's IRROPS events against passenger records shortlisted 5. A Manila team won priced against recovery rate and rights compliance, with a re-audit written into the reporting spec.

TRANSITION (MONTHS 2-7, CALIBRATED FIRST)

The team calibrated against the carrier's PSS, fare rules, and IRROPS playbooks on simulated meltdowns before working a live disruption; the recovery floor was certified in month 3, ahead of peak season. The recovery-and-compliance loop fed agent coaching from day one. By month 7 disruption-recovery reached 94.6%, median rebooking dropped below 8 minutes, rights exposure fell 62%, and post-disruption retention rose 24%. PITON-Global chaired the recovery review board to steady state.

TABLE 3 – AV-075 FIRST-YEAR VALUE BUILD-UP (US\$)

VALUE COMPONENT	YEAR 1	BASIS
Labor arbitrage on the 90-seat operation	\$2.34M	168.8k productive hrs × (\$23.40 – \$9.50)
Retained revenue (recovered passengers)	\$0.94M	Fares held by in-window recovery & fly-again
Claims & duty-of-care exposure avoided	\$0.42M	EU261/DOT claims and care overruns removed
Rebooking-leakage & rework reduction	\$0.18M	Off-carrier rebooking and rework removed
Gross value created	\$3.88M	
Less: engagement & transition costs	(\$0.61M)	Calibration, IRROPS simulation, PSS integration; advisory fee \$0 (provider-paid model)
Net value ÷ cost = first-year ROI	6.4×	\$3.88M ÷ \$0.61M

Figures rounded; recovery, rights, and retention effects audit-verified. Method in Methodology & notes.

Sixty percent arbitrage, forty percent from retained revenue, avoided claims, and reduced leakage — a typical split for the series, earned because the operation was re-based on recovery rate rather than contact volume. Every line traces to a diligence step: the recovery floor to Step 1, the recovery-based pricing to Step 6, the OCC-sequenced recovery to Step 3's contract. The VP of customer operations' line at the year-one review: "The contact price barely moved. What moved is that when we go IRROPS, the passengers get home — and they book us again."

SECTION 07

The executive playbook: governance for the first 180 days

An aviation-support transition succeeds when the team is measured and paid on recovery rate and passenger-rights compliance — client in command throughout.

DAYS 0-30

Define recovery, contract on it

Set the recovery-rate floor, the rebooking-speed target, and the rights-compliance and surge-staffing thresholds with customer-operations leadership before launch, and document the IRROPS playbooks and OCC-sequencing rules. Contract against recovery rate and rights compliance — never per contact alone — with floors and targets carrying credits. Stand up the recovery re-audit as the program's arbiter of truth.

DAYS 30–90

Calibrate, simulate the meltdown

Calibrate the team against your PSS, fare rules, and IRROPS playbooks on simulated events before it works a live disruption; certify the recovery floor and OCC-sequencing loop. Switch on the recovery-and-compliance coaching loop from day one. Publish the aviation dashboard: recovery rate, rebooking time, rights exposure, retention, disruption CSAT.

DAYS 90–180

Work live IRROPS, certify steady state

Route live disruptions to the team only after it holds the recovery floor and rights-compliance minimum. Review the recovery board monthly with the claims log and retention trend on the table. Certify steady state on two months at floor including a real peak-season or weather event; hand over on documented criteria; keep the quarterly recovery re-audit standing.

THE FIVE FAILURE MODES WE ARE HIRED TO PREVENT

Paying per contact while passengers are stranded · answering calls instead of recovering travelers · rebooking too slowly for the recovery window · mishandling EU261/DOT duty-of-care · working live IRROPS before recovery is proven. All five are settled at selection and contract.

The aviation argument, in one sentence: a handled contact is activity and a recovered passenger is a traveler put back on a journey, an operation re-set, and a rights obligation held, and a vetted Philippine team delivers –58% cost per recovered passenger with a 94%+ recovery rate, sub-8-minute rebooking, and passenger-rights exposure cut by nearly two-thirds — for buyers who audit the recovery instead of counting contacts handled, and compete the finalists through a fully transparent, fair, comprehensive, and highly competitive RFP. Anyone can answer a call in a meltdown. We make sure you buy the team that gets the passenger home.

METHODOLOGY & NOTES

How the numbers were built

Recovery and rights figures (Fig. 1, Table 2) derive from engagement instrumentation in PITON-Global aviation engagements, 2025–26. Disruption-recovery rate and reaccommodation timing are measured by re-auditing IRROPS events against passenger records; passenger-rights exposure, retention, and disruption CSAT are measured against the client's pre-engagement baseline. The weak-provider column is a composite of pre-engagement vendor reporting reviewed in diligence, shown for contrast.

Cost-per-recovered-passenger figures (Table 1) are fully loaded — wages, benefits and statutory charges, facilities, technology and GDS/PSS tooling, management and QA overhead including recovery coaches and compliance specialists, surge and attrition-driven recruiting — divided by passengers recovered in-window and rights-compliant, with unrecovered or mishandled passengers excluded from the denominator; US comparators reflect fully-loaded in-house cost on the same basis. A recovered passenger is rebooked in-window, reaccommodated to policy, and handled rights-compliant.

The case study (AV-075) is anonymized under NDA; volumes and dates are generalized, figures rounded. Recovery, rights, and retention effects are audit-verified; the retained-revenue line reflects fares held, and the claims-avoided line is a conservative estimate. ROI = net first-year value ÷ all engagement-related client costs. PITON-Global's advisory fee is provider-paid and appears at \$0 in the client cost base; neutrality safeguards are documented at piton-global.com.

Market context draws on IBPAP reporting and PITON-Global's proprietary provider mapping (1,000+ operations; recovery rate and passenger-rights performance re-verified May 2026). Passenger-rights handling reflects EU261/UK261/US DOT frameworks; airlines remain the responsible carrier of record. Estimates and projections are PITON-Global analysis and should be cited as such. The full series is available at piton-global.com.

Would your provider's contact price survive a recovery re-audit?

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Thirty minutes with John will tell you. Free to buyers, strictly vendor-neutral — a recovery-verified shortlist within two to three business days.