Rules on Inflight Electronics May be Changing Soon

1) Problem
What
- Problem(s)
  Passengers annoyed by electronic device restrictions on planes, concern over safety with electronic device use
When
- Date
  New study Fall 2013
- Facility, site
  USA
- Unit, area, equipment
  Passenger aircraft
- Task being performed
  Primarily looking at taking off and landing
Impact to the Goals
- Safety
  Potential increase in crash risk with use of electronics
- Customer Service
  Passengers are annoyed by ban on electronics
- Property/Equipment
  Potential that an aircraft could be damaged

2) Analysis

The final step in the Cause Mapping process is to use the Cause Map to develop solutions to help reduce the risk of the issue recurring. In this example, an aviation advisory committee recommended several changes to the restrictions on the onboard use of electronics to better balance the desires of the passengers with the safety risk posed by the use of electronics.

If the new recommendations are approved, passengers will be able to use any device that doesn’t transfer data during the entire flight, including takeoff and landing. Passengers would be able to leave all devices turned on, but they would need to set them to airplane mode so that no data is transmitted. So you won’t be able to make calls on your smartphone or stream video, but you would be able to rock out to music already downloaded or read a book on a Kindle. Larger devices will still need to be stowed during takeoff and landing because nobody wants to be hit with a laptop, but smaller gadgets will be fair game if the new recommendations are adopted.

In welcome news to many airline passengers, it looks like the FAA may soon allow the use of personal electronic devices during the entire duration of flights, including takeoff and landing. The current restrictions on the use of personal electronics are being reviewed following a recent recommendation by an aviation advisory committee made up of pilots, mechanics, engineers and other aviation experts.

3) Solutions

In this example, an aviation advisory committee recommended changes to the restrictions on the onboard use of electronics to better balance the desires of the passengers with the safety risk posed by the use of electronics.

1. Implement new guidelines that allow the use of personal electronic devices during the entire duration of flights, including takeoff and landing.
2. Passengers would be able to leave all devices turned on but need to set them to airplane mode to ensure no data is transmitted.
3. Larger devices may need to be stowed during takeoff and landing, while smaller gadgets will be fair game.

This is in welcome news to many airline passengers, who are hoping that this change will improve their travel experience.