



# Easy come, easy go

## Three simple steps to get yourself an air ticket

Soon, hotel  
bookings too  
may be offered  
via SMS



GEETANJALI SHUKLA

### *What is it?*

A facility from travel portal Makemytrip and wireless transaction platform PayMate that lets you search, book and pay for your air tickets via SMS.

### *How does it work?*

Three simple steps and your tickets are booked. Step one: send an SMS to 676778 stating the cities that you wish to fly between and the date of your travel. You are then sent an SMS with eight flight options. Step two is where you

reply to this SMS giving your name and choosing a flight. In case you are unhappy with the first eight options you can SMS "more" to the same number. And step three is where you pay for the ticket. If you are a PayMate user, you can pay using the PayMate PIN; if not, your ticket is booked through the Makemytrip call centre. You can use PayMate if you have a Citibank credit or debit card. The company is also exploring a tieup with Corporation Bank.

### *What are the damages?*

The cost of the SMS will vary depending on your mobile service provider. For Hutch users, each SMS will cost Rs 3, so the entire transaction will cost Rs 9.

### *What's in it for me?*

You need no Internet connection, no computer, no high-end mobile handset, nor the services of a specific mobile service provider. All you need is a mobile phone which allows you to send text messages.

All the airfare options thrown up are the same as the ones that appear on the Makemytrip website and are sorted as per price with the cheapest fare coming first.

### *Why are we writing about it?*

The tie-up between Makemytrip and PayMate is not the first of its kind. Travel portal Flightraja provides this service, but it is available to Hutch users only. Cleartrip too has a similar service, the only difference being that you can only search for air tickets and the facility is available on select service providers.

### *Take it or leave it?*

It makes sense if you do not have broadband access. Also, most travel portals are latching on to this trend and soon they will look at providing hotel bookings through this mode as well. The only glitch is that the prices displayed are not the cheapest, you may discover a lower price on the airlines' own websites.