

Travel takes off as passengers begin to board

Richard Branson, never knowingly catching the public mood, says he is going to beat Jeff Bezos into space by nine days. Because that's important.

The non-celestial travel industry has got its own problems, but there were signs today of some sort of lift-off heading into the summer.

Ryanair says it flew 5.3 million people in June up from 0.4 million a year ago when the pandemic was raging. Planes lately have been 72% full.

Flash sales of £5 flights to Ibiza and Majorca have stoked interest this week, and perhaps airlines might even turn a profit before long.

Wizz Air says it flew 1.1 million customers in June, a threefold increase on a year ago in planes that were 64% full.

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The airline is offering new routes, including to Barcelona and Cologne, hoping to cash in on Brits desperate to get out of the country..

Wizz CEO Jozsef Varadi said earlier: "We are ramping up."

Planes shares enjoyed a small boost, with Ryanair up 0.5 cents to e16.6, while BA owner IAG gained 1p to 182p. Wizz Air slipped 31p to 4698p.

Elsewhere, old fashioned City scribblers showed they still have relevance in the digital age, as analysts notes moved prices.

Berenberg raised Informa to a buy, making it the biggest gainer in the FTSE 100, up 13p to 526p.

Jefferies told clients to buy Bellway stock, and some did – it was up 80p at 3378p.

The FTSE 100 itself searched for direction ahead of US job figures. It was up 11 points at 7136.

Some old-time brokers noted with amusement last night's IPO filing by Robinhood in the US. The trading app is behind much of the meme stock boom that was in fashion earlier this year.

Robinhood has revenues on the up, but still made a loss of \$1.4 billion in the first three months of the year.

Its float may attract interest and indeed lead to a transfer of wealth. But probably not from the rich to the poor.