The march of a global airports brand

Interview: Nicolas Notebaert,
CEO VINCI Concessions,
and President, VINCI Airports
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OLIVIER JANKOVEC, DIRECTOR GENERAL, ACI EUROPE

Editorial: When airlines say it best

NICOLAS NOTEBAERT, CEO VINCI CONCESSIONS, AND PRESIDENT, VINCI AIRPORTS

The march of a global airports brand

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- know what current and prospective customers are thinking and doing;
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- help you understand the specific attitudes, needs, expectations and concerns of your passengers;
- address gaps in service based on these insights; and
- benchmark your results with other participating airports.

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- help you understand arriving passengers’ moods and impressions of the airport, from walking distances and washroom cleanliness to wayfinding, immigration, baggage claim and much more; and
- help differentiate the key drivers of satisfaction among arrivals passengers, which can be distinct from the needs of departures passengers
- give you the actionable intelligence you need to enhance your service offering to arriving passengers, and means by which to gauge the effectiveness of these enhancements.

Don’t wait to take the next step in improving the customer experience journey at your airport.

Contact ACI’s ASQ team for more information by emailing aciasq@aci.aero.
When airlines say it best

By Olivier Jankovec, Director General, ACI EUROPE

European Commission decisions on competition & merger cases rarely make for juicy reading, unless of course you are a lawyer, or you have a particular interest in the subject matter. The latter is certainly the case for airports when it comes to the decisions published earlier this year on the Air Berlin/Lufthansa & easyJet mergers. Not only do these Commission decisions show that airports have become the battleground for airline competition, but they also confirm that airlines are able to exercise significant dominance over larger airports.

What is even more interesting, is the fact that airlines themselves are the ones pointing this out – by way of the comments they sent to the Commission while it was assessing the impact of Lufthansa and easyJet taking over Air Berlin’s aircraft, crews and airport slots. So, as you can imagine, it would be quite remiss of me not to share these airline comments with you, as duly reported by the Commission in its decisions:

“Controlling a large slot portfolio and the operations associated therewith also enables airlines to exercise significant pressure on the respective airport (...) such behaviour clearly limits the commercial freedom of the airports, potential airline new entrants and thus ultimately the choice of customers – individual passengers and tour operators alike.”

“A dominant airline has numerous possibilities to use its influence at an airport in order to foreclose the airport for competitors notably by using its negotiating power and this influence to develop the airport infrastructure even more in its own favour.”

All this will be familiar to many airports across Europe. They are experiencing first-hand the increasing dominance and pressures that come from large and powerful airline groups. Slowly (for now) but surely, airline consolidation has advanced on our continent. Along with other market developments – think airline hybridization by way of LCCs moving upmarket and FSCs trading down flexibly – consolidation means fewer airlines, with more market power.

Beyond specific anti-trust cases, this is something the Commission ought to reflect upon as part of its Aviation Strategy for Europe. If the Aviation Strategy is about connecting the dots and putting consumers first, then surely the Air Berlin case gives much food for thought – and hopefully even more: cause for action.

Apart from pointing to increasing airline market power over airports, the Commission decisions state: “the current EU rules do not have a sufficient deterrent against the anticompetitive use of slots”. This surely calls for a reform of the EU Regulation on the allocation and use of slots. As it stands, it’s no secret that the current Regulation essentially legitimates a system designed by incumbent airlines for incumbent airlines, decades ago.

But the fact that airlines are able to exercise market power over airports should also guide the Commission in its ongoing evaluation of the EU Airport Charges Directive. In its preliminary findings on the evaluation presented in May, the Commission expressly acknowledged that competition amongst airports of all sizes has increased and that there is no clear evidence of misuse of market power at any airport in Europe.

Market outcomes confirm this assessment and clearly challenge the need for more regulation of airport charges. Rather, it is high time to ‘normalise’ the airport-airline relationship.

“Market outcomes confirm this assessment and clearly challenge the need for more regulation of airport charges. Rather, it is high time to ‘normalise’ the airport-airline relationship.”

As Alexandre de Juniac, the Director General of IATA just said: ‘Regulators must recognise the power of competition’ and “Governments should not distort market effectiveness with regulations that second guess what consumers want”. Airports cannot agree more.
**Paris Charles de Gaulle Airport**

Groupe ADP has recently launched a driverless bus trial at Paris Charles de Gaulle Airport, which consists of two autonomous shuttles provided by Keolis and NAVYA. Trials will be ongoing until July 2018, offering free rides to passengers with limited mobility. Both shuttles are currently taking on routes from the business district of the airport to the Environmental and Sustainable Development Resource Center, as well as Groupe ADP’s headquarters. The units are capable of carrying up to 15 people – 11 seated and four standing. Individuals can access the on-demand shuttle service via a QR code.

**Belgrade Airport**

French group VINCI Airports has signed a 25-year concession contract for the operation of Serbia’s Belgrade Nikola Tesla Airport. As a concessionnaire, VINCI Airports will aim to support flag carrier Air Serbia to offer new long-haul routes as part of its hub strategy. VINCI Airports will build on its partnerships with over 200 airlines to further increase the airport’s traffic and connectivity, in line with Serbia’s strong economic growth potential. Belgrade Nikola Tesla Airport will serve as the company’s hub in Southeast Europe, a geographical area in which VINCI Airports has not operated until now.

**Rome Fiumicino Airport**

Aeroporti di Roma has launched its new Rome Fiumicino Business City construction project at Rome Fiumicino Airport. The project covers a 91,000sqm sustainable airport city design, requiring investment of €150 million. The final design features a 1,300-seat conference centre with integrated hotel service, public and private offices in tourism and insurance, business lounges, consular and embassy offices, a medical centre, retail activities, supermarket and 41,000sqm of green spaces, urban furniture and pedestrian routes. The city will have direct access via rail and road transportation services. The airport city’s first four buildings to be available between 2022 and 2023, with the remaining three opening in 2024.

**Dublin Airport**

Dublin Airport has won the Innovation in Technology & Systems Award for its Fire Alarm App at the Facilities Management Awards. The App was designed to help Dublin Airport’s fire alarm responders find the location of a fire alarm activation using a graphical map interface so they can react without delay. There are approximately 14,000 fire sensors located across both terminals, so speed is key in pinpointing the source of a fire alarm so that any potential impact on the passenger journey is minimised.
Minsk Airport

The Belarusian Transport & Communications Ministry has outlined three major projects in anticipation of the 2nd European Games, planned to be held in Minsk in 2019. The authority’s plan for the aviation sector is to boost Minsk Airport’s capacity with an addition of a second runway. The development will be commissioned this year and should be operational just in time for the games. Minsk Airport will be able to offer a more convenient schedule of regular flights and charter flights as the two runways are meant to be operational simultaneously.

Tel Aviv Ben Gurion Airport

Israel Airports Authority (IAA) has opened its new Concourse 4 at Tel Aviv Ben Gurion International Airport Terminal 3. It will be able to handle up to 1,800 more passengers per hour once fully operational and facilitate the simultaneous departure of 32 aircraft on international flights. The new passenger wing includes telescopic glass pathways, eight plane exit gates, shops, restaurants and a VIP lounge. It will be able to accommodate many more arriving and departing flights.

Amsterdam Airport Schiphol

The Royal Schiphol Group has announced that Amsterdam Schiphol and its entire Dutch airport network will utilise wind power from next year. The group worked with sustainable energy provider Eneco and the municipality of Vianen to build three wind turbines, two of which will provide energy for the Schiphol Group. This supply amounts to around 20GWh per year, which is comparable to the annual energy consumption of 17,000 households. Eneco will build more wind turbines for Royal Schiphol Group over the next two years, so that by January 2020 all of the power for the airport company will come from newly-constructed Dutch wind farms.

Lapland Airports

Finavia plans to spend €55 million in 2018 and 2019 to expand its airports in Lapland. It estimates the investment could raise the number of passengers using airports in Lapland and nearby Kuusamo to two million annually by 2030 and create 500 new permanent jobs in the region. The biggest investment of €25 million will go to the airport in Rovaniemi, capital of Finnish Lapland. Kittilä will receive €20 million, while Ivalo in the far north is to see investment of €10 million. The expansion work is to begin immediately and be wrapped up by the end of 2019.

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An interview with Nicolas Notebaert, CEO VINCI Concessions, and President, VINCI Airports. By Ross Falconer

**The march of a global airports brand**

Airport ownership across Europe has undergone a transformation in recent years. Over 50% of Europe’s airports now have private shareholders – more than double what it was in 2010.

VINCI Airports is among the most dynamic players in the market, and is pursuing the ambitious expansion of its concession portfolio. Today, it has a network of 36 airports in seven countries, with 12 airports in France and 10 in Portugal including majors such as Lyon and Lisbon. By the end of the year, that will have grown to 45 airports in 12 countries, handling nearly 200 million passengers. “So, our growth strategy has been very successful so far, allowing us to create real momentum,” says Nicolas Notebaert, CEO of VINCI Concessions, and President of VINCI Airports. “The branding strength of our parent company VINCI, and the fact that it is a household name, allows us to be an investor, contracting authority, and operator, all rolled into one.”

The scale of the VINCI operation is clear as we approach the company’s headquarters in Rueil-Malmaison, in the western suburbs of Paris. The VINCI Group complex is vast – its myriad interconnected buildings housing VINCI Autoroutes, VINCI Construction, VINCI Energies and Eurovia, as well as VINCI Airports.

Our interview takes place late-afternoon, in between meetings ranging across the global airports portfolio, rounding off a typically very busy day for Notebaert. Taking the opportunity to enjoy the beautiful Parisian Spring sunshine, we begin our discussion and photoshoot in one of VINCI’s courtyards. The space is decorated with ornamental elephants handcrafted by local artisans in Cambodia, where VINCI operates three airports (Siem Reap, Phnom Penh and Sihanoukville). While working alongside the Cambodian Government, VINCI Airports provides support for Les Artisans d’Angkor – a social enterprise maintaining traditional Khmer crafts. VINCI Airports funds the training of artisans and makes the goods available to travellers in over 40 locations in Siem Reap and Phnom Penh airports. It is just one example of VINCI Airports’ comprehensive CSR strategy.

**VINCI acquires Airports Worldwide: first UK, US airports**

The breaking news just a few days before our interview was the announcement that VINCI Airports is to acquire the portfolio held by Airports Worldwide. This includes two freehold properties – Belfast International Airport and Stockholm-Skavsta Airport; two concessions – Orlando-Sanford International Airport, and Daniel Oduber Quiros International Airport in Liberia (Costa Rica); four full management contracts covering Hollywood Burbank Airport, Ontario International Airport, Macon Downtown Airport and Middle Georgia Regional Airport; and three partial management contracts covering US airports: Atlantic City International Airport, Raleigh Durham International Airport, and a share of the international terminal at Atlanta Hartsfield-Jackson International Airport.
VINCI Airports

2017: 156.6 million system passengers
2017 passenger traffic growth: 12.4%
2018 passenger traffic growth (Q1): 11.6%
Airline partners: 200*
Current portfolio: 36 airports, 7 countries

• France: 12 (Lyon-Saint Exupéry, Nantes Atlantique, Rennes Bretagne, Toulon Hyères, Clermont-Ferrand Auvergne, Grenoble Alpes Isère, Chambéry Savoie Mont Blanc, Dinard Bretagne, Poitiers Biard, Saint-Nazaire Montoir, Lyon Bron, Pays d’Ancenis)
• Portugal: 10 (Lisbon, Porto, Faro, Funchal, Ponta Delgada, Horta, Porto Santo, Santa Maria, Flores, Beja)
• Cambodia: 3 (Siem Reap, Phnom Penh, Sihanoukville)
• Japan: 3 (Kansai International, Osaka Itami, Kobe)
• Dominican Republic: 6 (Las Américas, Puerto Plata, Samana, La Isabela, Arroyo Barril, Barahona)
• Chile: 1 (Santiago)
• Brazil: 1 (Salvador)

Coming soon
Belgrade Nikola Tesla Airport

Airport Business

*This is very significant,* says Notebaert. *“With the acquisition of Belfast International, we take a step into the UK market, which shows our investment confidence in managing the asset despite Brexit creating a lot of uncertainty in the European air travel market. We also know that a major wave of airport privatisations is on the verge of happening in the US. So, it was very important for VINCI Airports to develop a high profile entry into this market. Last but not least, I am very pleased with the co-control stake we took in Liberia airport in Costa Rica. Costa Rica is a destination on the rise at the moment, so this considerably reinforces our strategic presence in Central and South America.”*

Overall, the Airports Worldwide acquisition builds on the important announcement in January that VINCI Airports has secured a 25-year concession to operate Belgrade Nikola Tesla Airport – the gateway to the Balkans region.

**Airport privatisation trends**

Notebaert expanded on his belief that VINCI Airports’ latest acquisitions supported a strong global trend towards more airport privatisation. "Emerging countries need to invest in infrastructure, but they don’t necessarily have the substantial financing capacity, nor always the required expertise. And mature countries, which need to grow and modernise, are also short of cash – largely because their political priorities are reducing deficits and public debt," says Notebaert. "Our experience has proven successful in fast-emerging countries like Cambodia, where our capability is to quickly provide the quality airports they need as their economy expands and the middle class grows. In mature markets like Japan, Portugal, or here in France, we are also able to find the necessary investment to pave the way for further development at the local, regional and national levels.”

Of course, while some governments are cautious about privatising their airports, Notebaert is emphatic about the essential role of private investment in “unlocking the full potential”. He highlights the example of Japan, where VINCI was the first private airport operator to enter the market in 2016, operating Kansai International and Osaka Itami. “Relying on private operators to run public infrastructure is not a conventional part of Japanese culture, but our partnership was so successful that, less than a year later, the government gave us the honour of entrusting us with a third airport, Kobe.”

Nicolas Notebaert, CEO of VINCI Concessions and President of VINCI Airports: “With the acquisition of Belfast International, we take a step into the UK market, which is quite strategic with Brexit creating a lot of uncertainty in the European air travel market. We also know that a major wave of airport privatisations is on the verge of happening in the US. So, it was very important for VINCI Airports to develop a high profile entry into this market.”

VINCI Airports global factbox

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Coming soon
Belgrade Nikola Tesla Airport

Airports Worldwide portfolio:

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• 4 full management contracts: Hollywood Burbank, Ontario International, Macon Downtown Airport, Middle Georgia Regional Airport
• 3 partial management contracts: Atlantic City International, Raleigh Durham International, and a share of the international terminal at Atlanta Hartsfield-Jackson

*subject to approval expected 2018
Notebaert says integrating with local partners is key to this success. In Kansai, VINCI partnered with Orix, a Japanese leader in real estate and financial services.

The value of (private) airport investment

Despite championing private airport ownership, Notebaert also has to face down his detractors. IATA has been particularly vocal in its criticism of privatised airports and Notebaert agrees that airports operate in a competitive environment in which they must carefully monitor pricing (notably the EU Directive on Airport Charges is currently being reviewed, with the European Commission expected to publish proposed reforms in the autumn).

“Against VINCI Airports our airport charges are very competitive. We see the benefit of flexibility, either in a risk-sharing spirit with our airline partners, or to optimise investment in capacity. We apply airport charges that promote route development and growth. But to achieve this flexibility we need to be allowed to increase prices when traffic is growing, and equitably, when our airline partners are prospering; this is no different to the way that airlines manage yield, except that airports are far more exposed to regulation.”

Notebaert also thinks it is important to recognise the permanent value that investment in airports brings to communities. “Airports not only facilitate the fast movement of people and goods, and thereby foster trade and commerce, but also support job creation and serve as a catalyst for local investment. And, since airports are the first and last thing a traveller sees of a city or region, they are a vitally important showcase of specialties and heritage.” Rising to the theme, Notebaert asserts: “The first, and strongest, community benefit is to expand transportation capacity at the right time in a region’s development. Our investment approach is ‘just in time and fit for purpose’.

“A great diversified wave of acquisitions” – and robust growth

VINCI welcomed 157 million passengers through its airports in 2017 – a rise of 12.4%. The positive trend has continued into 2018, with Q1 figures showing total traffic across the network up 11.6% to 38.6 million. Growth was very strong in Cambodia (+26.1%) and Portugal, particularly in Lisbon (+15.9%).

“We had sustained growth in our 12 airports managed in France (+10.6%), Japan (+10%) and Chile (+14%), and we salute the good performance of Salvador Airport in Brazil, which joined the network in January 2018 and has already grown by 6%,” says Notebaert. “We have undergone a great diversified wave of acquisitions lately and we believe all these newly-acquired airports have great potential, whether it is Belgrade, Belfast or the Airports Worldwide portfolio.”

The 12 regional airports in France saw a combined growth rate of 9.4% in 2017, and the double-digit Q1 increase builds on that with 4.2 million passengers. The high growth trend continued for Nantes Atlantique, with traffic up 18.6%. This reflects the upturn in North African traffic and strong performance on services to Portugal, Belgium, Germany, Czech Republic, and the UK.

Meanwhile, 2.3 million passengers travelled through Lyon-Saint Exupéry (+8.2%). Growth was driven by significantly higher load factors, the opening of no less than five new routes during the quarter, and a sharp increase in international traffic to North Africa, Turkey and Russia in particular.

After a transition year, traffic at Chambery returned to growth (+16%). TUI, British Airways, and Titan Airways have all increased capacity, with additional frequencies and new routes from the UK. “We take nothing for granted, we go to great lengths have great relationships with our airlines, to understand their needs, and then work with local communities and tour operators to ensure that both new and existing routes are successful. We are consolidating Lyon’s position as one of France’s main gateways by growing traffic and adding new routes. We not only achieved those goals in 2017, we over-performed. We even convinced Volotea, which has a base at our airport in Nantes, to begin serving Lyon. In all, 20 new routes have already been announced for the 2018 summer season, across our 12 French airports.”

Second Lisbon airport “absolutely critical” – and urgent

ANA Aeroportos de Portugal was one of VINCI Airports’ headline investments in 2013, and VINCI has subsequently invested over €200 million in both the infrastructure and passenger experience improvements at the 10 Portuguese airports it manages. Flagship projects include the complete refurbishment of Lisbon, Porto, Faro and Madeira airports.
“In addition to investing in infrastructure, we have actively worked with Turismo de Portugal to attract new airlines and new destinations, developing traffic and promoting Portugal as a tourist destination,” Notebaert explains. “This work has been carried out at all national airports since privatisation, and by the end of 2017 had resulted in a total of 51 new routes.”

Indeed, the growth in airport traffic – the latest figures show a 12% increase to 10.4 million passengers in Q1 2018 – has brought an economic boost to the country, especially in tourism. Lisbon further confirmed its position as an international hub with traffic rising 15.9% to 6 million in Q1, while Porto, which exceeded the 10 million passenger milestone in 2017, recorded 12% growth to 2.4 million in Q1.

“Tomorrow, our challenge will be to absorb this ever-increasing demand and expand Lisbon airport capacity accordingly,” says Notebaert. “To achieve that, we are ready to invest more than €500 million in the construction of a secondary airport on the Montijo air base and the development of the existing airport. The project is absolutely critical for the development of Lisbon’s airport capacity. We have made the proposal to the Portuguese Government, and the decision is in their hands. We are ready to move forward quickly and, in our opinion, it is an urgent project.”

VINCI is also developing a distinct ‘sense of place’. In Madeira, the passenger journey has been revamped to focus on the magnificent views of the coastline surrounding the airport; phase one of a €35 million expansion project.

“The new airport environment has generated a significant commercial benefit, with average spend-per-passenger increasing by 45% over the past 18 months,” says Notebaert. “In Faro, we enhanced check-in and security capacity to give passengers the opportunity to enjoy a revamped commercial offer. The commercial zone has been completely redesigned, with customised offers for Schengen and non-Schengen passengers. Processing times have been reduced and security capacity more than doubled.”

VINCI is also using its Portuguese-island duty free operations as a test bed for innovation, with a view to spreading
Vincent Airports

Commitment to sustainable development

Overall, VINCI Airports has €4 billion of investment planned across its portfolio in the next five years. Last September, it laid the foundation stone for a new international terminal at Santiago International Airport, serving Chile’s capital as part of a renovation and extension project that will double its capacity to 32 million passengers by 2020. “This is VINCI Group’s biggest construction programme outside France,” Notebaert explains. “We also have a €136 million renovation project at the newly-acquired Salvador Airport in Brazil, and have entered the second phase of the €126 million extension and renovation programme at Cambodia’s Phnom Penh and Siem Reap airports. These works demonstrate our ability to deliver highly complex projects on time without interfering with daily operations. That’s what we did in Faro, where traffic was up 20% during works, and in Osaka-Itami where the revamped terminal opened in April.”

While investing in the expansion of its airports, Notebaert says VINCI is also committed to sustainable development demonstrated by the introduction of its “AirPact” environmental policy in 2015. Key goals are to reduce energy consumption by 20% by 2020, compared with 2013 levels, and to implement a biodiversity assessment and to obtain ISO 14001 certification at every airport.

“We go far beyond just meeting regulatory requirements, because we are convinced that by reducing our environmental impact and increasing sustainability, we can also reduce risks and costs, while improving performance,” adds Notebaert.

Another key pillar of AirPact is achieving ACI Airport Carbon Accreditation at each of VINCI’s airports. Its three Cambodian airports are the latest to achieve Level 1 Mapping, while last year Lyon-Saint Exupéry reached Level 3+ Neutrality, which Notebaert says “is a great source of pride.”

“Since 2011, 100% of the electricity consumed at Lyon-Saint Exupéry has come from renewable sources, and the airport has continually reduced its energy consumption despite major expansion and increasing traffic. The airport also has a ‘Carbon Club’ to involve all stakeholders in the reduction of greenhouse gases, and in 2017 offset 4,600 tonnes of carbon dioxide.”

A digital state of mind

Notebaert speaks eloquently about VINCI’s progressive approach to new technologies. “We are always projecting ourselves towards the future, and always thinking about what makes our airports unique in tomorrow’s digital world.”

Indeed, it is in the enhancement of passenger experience that knowledge exchange between VINCI’s network of airports really comes to the fore. The VINCI digital vision – ‘Think Differently’ – is very much a state of mind, and is based on internal collaboration between VINCI’s 36 airports, and cooperation with its partners (airlines, retailers, startups, etc). “When we identify, at one of our airports, innovative initiatives in terms of passenger experience or operational efficiency, we strive to deploy them across the entire network,” Notebaert explains. “We also work in conjunction with a number of external partners, including startups, on setting up new services. Of course, simplifying the passenger journey is front and centre of these efforts, with unlimited free WiFi across the network of airports being the starting point.”

Ongoing projects include the extended roll-out of self-service bag drop kiosks, which began in Nantes; robotic valet parking at Lyon-Saint Exupéry; a virtual queuing system, which has been tested in Lisbon; intensive use of biometrics, and a baggage delivery and pick-up option.

Notebaert says VINCI encourages a ‘test & learn’ attitude. “We can claim to have 36 airport innovation labs. Our strength lies in being able to identify an innovative idea and spread it quickly throughout our network, with real implementation before our competitors.”

VINCI Airports has experienced strong organic growth across its network, and plans to expand its global operator model to more new markets. Its three Cambodian airports are the latest to achieve Level 1 Mapping, while last year Lyon-Saint Exupéry reached Level 3+ Neutrality, which Notebaert says “is a great source of pride.”

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Until just a few years ago, aviation safety did not have an EU dimension as far as airports were concerned. Naturally, there was supervision based on ICAO’s regulatory material, but the way that each Civil Aviation Authority implemented this material tended to vary. This meant that an otherwise highly integrated aviation system approached aerodrome safety in a manner that was, in many ways, inconsistent and without a common European baseline. Fast forward to 2014 and Commission Regulation 139/2014 set out essential requirements (supported by EASA soft law) that the vast majority of European airports would have to be certified against by their authorities by the deadline of 31 December 2017.

So, understandably, nerves began to fray at the European Aviation Safety Agency when a survey of National Aviation Authorities (NAAs) in October 2017 revealed that a large number of airports in the Agency’s scope had not been certified. With less than three months remaining before the rapidly approaching deadline of 31 December 2017 for the conversion of national aerodrome operations certificates to the EASA rules of Reg. (EU) 139/2014, the risk of a large number of airports missing the deadline looked entirely possible.

Happily, Christmas turned out brighter than feared, as 95% of the 459 airports to be certified met the deadline. National Aviation Authorities had almost 4 years from the time the Reg. 139/2014 entered into force on 12 February 2014 to work with the airports under their jurisdiction to implement the requirements and administrative procedures related to aerodromes.

During the certification process many airports in the scope of EASA had raised concerns about the time, effort and cost involved in meeting regulation requirements. ACI EUROPE is currently carrying out a survey about certification managers’ experiences and views of the certification process. The survey also includes the challenges of implementation and perception of the benefits of the certification compared with the previous licencing/certification at national level.

So far, there are three main trends emerging from the initial responses of the survey:

Firstly, airports were struggling in their coordination with stakeholders – particularly their Competent Authority (CA) but also their Air Navigation Service Provider (ANSP) which were partly to blame for the slow pace of certification.

Secondly, more than half of responding airports felt that their NAA had a tendency to interpret EASA rules more strictly than envisaged by the Agency. One frequently mentioned example was the treating of Guidance Material as mandatory for their certification. Clearly this is something the Agency will need to look into in their Standardisation Inspections of the Competent Authority. The different use of EASA’s flexibility tools by the competent authorities is also an indication that we are far from a uniform European application of aerodrome rules.

Its four main tools “Equivalent Level of Safety” (ELoS), “Special Condition” (SC), “Deviation Acceptance and Action Document” (DAAD) and “Alternative Means of Compliance” (AltMoC) allow for flexibility at the national level. All responding airports issued DAADs. These generally document and accept a current situation to be corrected at a later time – for instance when major maintenance or expansion projects are undertaken. Over 90% of airports used SC which are often the result of virtually unchangeable topographical conditions at an airport. Less frequent use was made of ELoS (46%) or AltMoC (38%) tools. Some CAs avoid these tools altogether possibly because the use of flexibility tools is regarded as longwinded and complex.

On the critical question about the perceived benefits of certification according to Reg. (EU) 139/2014, the view that the exercise was largely beneficial prevailed – but only just. Standardisation of rules and procedures across EASA member states, development of closer relationships with stakeholders including the competent authority as well as
the identification of non-compliances and updating of outmoded procedures were mentioned on the plus side. However, the significant workload and required investments in infrastructure personnel, systems and procedures, especially for smaller airports with less flexibility on the resource side was seen as a major challenge. The more sceptical airports also had their doubts about the additional safety benefits of the certification based on EASA rules when compared with the status quo ante. Surely on the latter point the jury is still out? The benefits will only be seen after the new regime has been in place for a number of years, allowing for a real “before and after” comparison.

We should mention here that though implemented in their current form, EASA aerodrome rules are designed to be a dynamic set of texts that changes every year through rulemaking. So, what’s coming around the corner? The benefits will only be seen after the new regime has been in place for a number of years, allowing for a real “before and after” comparison.

Looking ahead, airports have three main expectations of EASA rulemaking:

- Simplification & clarification of existing rules
- Significant slow down of rulemaking including fewer revisions of existing rules
- Ensuring new rules/amended rules are performance based (PBR)

The Agency has already committed to cooling down its rulemaking. It has also taken organisational steps, by combining rulemaking and standardisation functions in order to ensure that these activities work more closely together. EASA also subscribes to PBR – this is an area, however, where the industry needs to continually remind the agency of its worthy goals and actively participate in rulemaking groups.

As a next step, authorities will focus on harmonising how these common rules are applied in the different EU Member States. Meanwhile, airports will implement a more permanent and dynamic system of compliance management, partly to enable them to implement rule updates as those happen in the future.

The process known in EASA circles as “standardisation” has already begun earlier this year and it involves a series of EASA inspections of Member State authorities to assess how Regulation 139/2014 on aerodrome regulation has been applied. The first countries visited this year were Portugal and Croatia, to be followed by Lithuania (June 2018) and France (September 2018). It is important to note that these standardisation visits are not audits of the airport processes directly, but audits of the Civil Aviation Authorities (CAAs). However, they consistently involve a visit of the airport and can involve findings against an authority with a bearing on the airport operator. Overall, an effective standardisation process will be essential in shaping a consistent application of EU rules across all the Member States.

From the airport perspective, the period that begins now is focused on compliance management. Compliance management is how an ever-changing airport operation can ensure that it meets regulatory requirements whether EU or national in origin. As aviation authorities have already given their approval to existing processes, equipment and operations, the focus going forward will be on changes (both in airport operations as well as the rules themselves). As a result, the process where new ways or means of airside operations will be checked for alignment with safety and other objectives is known as “change management”.

Efficient compliance and change management can enable an airport to easily adopt innovative solutions, new regulations, as well as new equipment in order to keep improving its operation. Airport directors, take note – agile responses will be key, going forward.

Panos Spiliotis is Safety Manager at ACI EUROPE.

Ansgar Sickert is ACI EUROPE’s Liaison Officer to EASA.
Most of us are familiar with the privacy conundrum of using our personal data in the digital world. We are often uncomfortable sharing it, as we do not control how it will be used, who it will be shared with and how it will be managed. At the same time, we want to use technology to serve us, facilitate processes, narrow distances and eliminate stress.

Airports are becoming an exciting playground for technology, taking advantage of the widespread use of mobile technology, biometrics, and the availability of new startling interactions based on the tokenisation of identity, the Internet of Things (IoT) or artificial intelligence.

Data plays a fundamental role in enabling the digitisation of airports. Capturing and understanding it can translate into enhanced security, optimisation, as well as revenue: comprehending profiles, behaviours and trends helps stakeholders to better serve passengers, enhance loyalty and do more business.

The aviation industry needs to find the perfect spot, where data use and privacy meet. The creation of a Trusted Chain of Identity in a digitised airport environment is fundamental to establish a multi-stakeholder model of data sharing that is dependable and credible by all. It relies on two major assumptions:

- The passenger is the central stakeholder of the ecosystem and feels accomplishment and rewarded. Swiftly going through modern, flexible and timesaving processes, controlling their own way across a seamless journey, is perceived as great value for the passenger. Mobile ID technology is becoming ubiquitous and will soon replace physical passport identity checks with seamless experiences. Passengers will use their mobile devices to trigger transactions with all other stakeholders, sharing their identity data to opt in to services or keeping it restricted to opt out. Mobile phones will carry their identity and a simple face scan is enough to check in, drop their bag, cross a border or board a plane.

- The passenger trusts the ecosystem. Passengers need to feel that they are making informed decisions when sharing data. They exercise sovereignty in managing its confidentiality, integrity and availability, activating or deactivating the sharing of information for predefined purposes and with identifiable stakeholders. The Trusted Chain of Identity relies on a privacy-designed flow data management platform, Orchestra, which connects the passenger to all virtual and physical security assets, thus with all other stakeholders in real time. It addresses operational, safety, passenger flow and management needs, as well as passenger interactions. Orchestra clearly and securely maps all data collection, processing, retention and access components, as well as processes. It embeds privacy protective thinking into every link, channelling every information stream within the Trusted Chain of Identity. Orchestra is currently the only passenger flow management solution certified by the Privacy by Design Center of Excellence of the Ryerson University (USA). The privacy of data is assured by default and remains intact from the time a flight is booked and beyond the airport.

When the system is trusted, value-based relationships emerge. The passenger opts in to a fully seamless journey, enjoying the speed of self-service contactless interactions via IoT touchpoints, AI avatar assistants and dedicated services delivered to their mobile devices. Airports, airlines, border control authorities, retail and even partners beyond the airport positively engage with passengers and benefit from data-driven decision-making, basis of improved security, capacity increase and revenue growth opportunities.

Create a trusted seamless environment and reap the benefits of an engaged passenger. A Trusted Chain of Identity framework offers the perfect spot between privacy and business.
false accusation has hung in the air since last year, when Airlines for Europe (A4E) redoubled their campaign for more airport charges regulation, by calling airports ‘connectivity disrupters’ and claiming reductions in airport charges ultimately get passed through to passengers, in the form of lower air fares. The accusation ignores the dynamic nature of airline ticket pricing, but that didn’t stop IAG CEO Willie Walsh and others from feeding it to the media.

We did not want to leave it unaddressed. With the participation of key EU policymakers, airports and other aviation representatives, the 2nd Airport Investment Symposium was the occasion to launch a new study by global consultancy ICF, commissioned by ACI EUROPE. The Study entitled Identifying the Drivers of Air Fares has also been synopsised by ACI EUROPE, available under the title: Insights into the Logic of Air Fares. The study provides clear evidence that there is actually no one-for-one correspondence between airport charges - and any change in their level - and air fares. In other words, lower airport charges are generally not passed through to passengers in lower air fares. Rather, any investment that increases the capacity for competition is likely to reduce air fares, as there is clear evidence that airlines use their ability to charge higher air fares for routes where there is limited competition.

ACI EUROPE’s Director-General Olivier Jankovec opened the event before an audience of 80 with the reminder that infrastructure spending in Europe is still 20% below the levels of 2009. Deferred and delayed investment today undermines long-term growth potential of air transport. More than that, it threatens economic convergence and means that the full benefits of the European Union’s Single Market aren’t quite as mature as they should be. But the most telling sign is the one you may have seen with your own eyes, on your own travels. Demand for air travel growing at such a steady clip, the pressure on the current level of infrastructure is building.

Over the course of the afternoon, including 2 panel sessions and a closing speech by Henrik Hololei, Director General, DG MOVE at the European Commission, 5 key points emerged out of the discussion.
POINT 1: Whilst airports are an essential part of the air transport ecosystem, they account for a relatively modest share of the financial structure. According to the analysis by ICF, amongst European airlines, 80% of passengers travel with carriers that have total airport costs of less than 6% of their total costs. It’s no surprise! We all know the costs that drive an airlines pricing are fuel, staff and equipment. Changes in airport charges are small, counted in cents, that they have little impact if any on the final airfare. But those changes in charges can have a pronounced impact when it allows for new competition at an airport. The European Commission’s Director for Competition Henrik Morch reported that the European Commission has seen that the move from 1 to 2 competitors on any given route decreases prices 4-5%, and by up to 10% if a low-cost carrier enters as a competitor. 

POINT 2: Connectivity is the primary demand of consumers. Travellers want to take the airplane to a variety of destinations. As a result of services, at a price that they can afford. MEP Deirdre Clune spoke about the importance of connectivity provided by regional airports, such as her home airport Cork, Ireland, while John Hanlon of Norwegian Airlines reaffirmed the message that passengers increasingly want point-to-point connectivity, for example from the regions of Europe to the regions of the US. An implication is that airline interest should not be considered as a proxy for passenger interest. 

POINT 3: Airports’ users do not make long-term commitments, which increases risk to investors. Sandbach noted that Birmingham Airport invested heavily to become BA’s Euro-hub, but then BA changed its business plan and left Birmingham with hub infrastructure that its airlines did not need. And Hanlon of Norwegian said that in his personal view we are in danger of focusing on the airline business model of yesteryear; the shifting air transport market increases uncertainty. A concern raised by Dr. Harry Bush is a regulatory regime that puts too much control of an airport’s business plan into the hands of the one dominant airline. This in turn impedes competing airlines from entering and offering connectivity for their market segment, which may have different demand as passengers. Ultimately, regulation should aim to ensure optimal outcomes for all passengers. 

POINT 4: Consumers don’t benefit if regulatory uncertainty is increased. If top of traffic risk, we add regulatory uncertainty, then the business case is less certain for investors, stated Pierre-Hugues Schmit of VINCI Airports. Deepu Chintamani of IFM investors was clear that to attract private financing for infrastructure projects, governments should not interfere with a regulatory regime that is working. Nearly all the speakers repeated the phrase “competition is the best regulator”. The risks today of airports abusing market power is minute; the bigger risk is that rigid regulation stifles the efficiency of market allocation and delays investment. The nature and intensity of airport competition is changing. Groupe ADP’s Edward Arkwright noted that the market for connecting passengers is around 450 million passengers, and that ADP’s market share of that is around 5%. Other European major hubs, along with Istanbul and the Gulf hub airports, are trying to capture the transfer passengers with their hub carrier partners. The European Commission’s Henrik Morch asserted the regulators view that if you see the discussions between airports and airlines about a common future and if you see how planes are moved between airport bases, then it is clear that competition exists. Competition increases the risk to airports but also ensures better outcomes for consumers who benefit from the dynamic rivalry of airports competing for airlines and passengers. 

POINT 5: Increasing airline consolidation in Europe is going to intensify the dominance of some airlines – with implications for consumers and airports. ICF vice president Kata Cserep reminded the audience that it is highly likely that there will be further concentration of airlines, through bankruptcy or mergers, in Europe. In Europe, the top 6 airlines currently carry 50% of the market, while across the Atlantic, the top 6 airlines in the United States have a 94% share of their market. Hanlon of Norwegian said that consolidation should be welcomed as long as it is predicated on liberalisation and market access, which have enabled the tremendous growth of aviation. The trend of airline consolidation impacts the relative relation between an airport and its biggest airline customer, according to Jonathan Sandbach, former chief economist of Heathrow Airport and advisor to AlixPartners. When one airline is the primary customer for an airport, the threat of that airline reducing its traffic is credible. More and more airports have one airline that provides 2/3 of the departing seat capacity, according to data in the ICF report. In these cases, governments have been implementing measures to protect the airport. The final message from the investment symposium was that the air transport market is shifting. Investment into airports fosters competition (not just among airports, but also among airlines) and that can be best supported with a regulatory system which doesn’t fix what isn’t broken.

Michael Stanton-Geddes is the Head of Economics at ACI EUROPE.
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Currently, there are 237 airports around the globe accredited at one of the four levels of the programme.

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It’s actually next year that we will mark the 10th anniversary of the launch of the Airport Carbon Accreditation programme. But the real work started a decade ago, when it went from being an idea on paper, to something that we had to deliver. Climate change resolutions were not uncommon at the time. In communications terms, the big thing was to have a target number you could mention and of course, a deadline. Interestingly, we had neither. We just had the substance that an actual tool would be developed and delivered within a year. A leap of faith, based on the philosophy of “if you build it, they will come”.

And make no mistake, a lot of work went into developing it – all at a time, when the global economy was turning and economic & financial turmoil would ensue. Objectively speaking, not the best circumstances in which to get people and companies to prioritise the environment. But nevertheless, we persisted, with the help of some courageous airports who were willing to pilot the programme.

Fast forward to today. They are all over the world. Almost every second air passenger is travelling through them. They map and calculate, reduce, engage and compensate to keep their emissions in check. They are the 237 Airport Carbon Accredited airports worldwide. It’s all about being a responsible business operator, caring about its impact on the global environment, while being a good neighbour to the local communities. It’s about making continuous efforts to become better and better, having the courage to set ambitious objectives, and guiding the innovation to achieve them.

That’s probably also where the analogies between the members of the Airport Carbon Accreditation community stop. They are small and large, commercial hubs and general aviation airports, situated in the biggest countries of the world and in the small island states. Each of them is at a different stage in its carbon management journey. Airport Carbon Accreditation provides a general framework and beacons, but the exact path is charted by each airport individually, as is its pace of progression.

Airport Carbon Accreditation is first of all about understanding your emissions. What are the sources and how much do they emit? And which of them can I influence? Once this understanding is achieved, the next step is to reduce emissions from those sources that the airport operator controls. For instance, the lighting and heating of terminal buildings, or the fuel used in airport ground vehicles. This means identifying actors and targets, defining priorities and actions, and then proceeding with the implementation.

This summer marks ten years since a certain promise was made – the first piece of paper by European airports not just committing them to addressing their carbon emissions with the ultimate goal of becoming carbon neutral, but also to get ACI EUROPE to deliver a proper tool – within a year – that would help make it a reality. Marina Bylinsky takes a look back at the journey so far and ponders the road ahead.

The power of a good idea

Next year will mark the 10th anniversary of the launch of the Airport Carbon Accreditation programme.

A landmark moment for airport climate action when all 10 of Swedavia’s airports became Airport Carbon Accredited as carbon neutral, in 2012.
Once the airport operator is confident about having reached a good level of addressing these emissions, the next step is to look beyond their boundary and also reflect on ways to involve other stakeholders, in particular airlines or ground handlers, in their efforts to reduce emissions. The ultimate objective of these efforts is to achieve zero emissions from airport operations or, in other words, carbon neutrality. This is a very ambitious goal and, in most cases, an impossible one to reach without external help. While airports can make efforts to switch from fossil fuel and conventional electricity to zero carbon sources, there will still be sources of incompressible emissions, such as emergency power generators, or firefighting vehicles, for which more sustainable alternatives are not available yet. Therefore, to become carbon neutral, the residual emissions that an airport cannot reduce have to be compensated. This usually happens by investing in carbon reduction projects in other sectors.

I think it’s fair to say that Airport Carbon Accreditation has clearly exceeded the expectations raised upon its launch. From an exploratory initiative that began with 17 of the environmentally most advanced airports in Europe in the first year (2009-2010), it has become a global industry standard for airports all over the world, winning praise from the most authoritative institutions in the area of aviation and climate change, such as the United Nations Framework Convention for Climate Change (UNFCCC), the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO), the European Commission and the US Federal Aviation Administration (FAA). Airport Carbon Accreditation could come so far thanks to two main reasons.

Firstly, its methodological robustness and relevance for airports came as a big advantage. It is based on international, cross-industry standards for emissions management – translated into airport language. There are actually many airports for whom Airport Carbon Accreditation was the starting point for developing and continuously improving their carbon management.

Secondly, by showing year on year quantified results in terms of emissions reductions, the programme is proving its effectiveness. In the last programme year (May 2017-May 2018), European airports alone have reduced their emissions by 163,277 tonnes of CO2, a 7.6% reduction compared to the baseline. And what about that ultimate objective of reaching carbon neutrality?

39 airports worldwide have today already achieved this objective, and every world region has at least one carbon neutral airport. Europe remains at the forefront of this movement, with 32 airports being carbon neutral. This also means 30% progress towards the objective of reaching 100 carbon neutral airports in Europe by 2030, announced at the 27th ACI EUROPE Annual Congress in June 2017.

What next?

So, as Airport Carbon Accreditation approaches this anniversary moment, there are certainly many reasons to celebrate the programme’s success, but it is also the right time to reflect on what it can do more or better. Airport emissions are estimated to represent 2% to 5% of the global aviation emissions, which are on the rise. In Europe alone, CO2 emissions from aviation are expected to increase by 44% by 2035, compared to 2005. While Airport Carbon Accreditation requests from its participants at the highest accreditation levels to engage with third parties, including airlines, to help them reduce their emissions too, it will be important to analyse whether the programme can provide greater incentives to do so.

Furthermore, the Paris Agreement will enter into force as of 2020, raising another key question: are airports providing their fair share of contribution to the objectives of the Agreement, i.e. limiting global warming to below 2°C and aiming to reach 1.5°C? And is there anything Airport Carbon Accreditation can do to further stimulate airports to reduce their emissions accordingly?

We also need to ask ourselves whether airports all over the world are equally empowered to take action against their emissions. Depending on the region they are located in, airports have different emissions reduction opportunities. For instance, access to sustainable alternative fuels or electricity generated from renewable sources is not equally developed in all countries. Airport Carbon Accreditation could help raise awareness amongst authorities in this regard. Policy-makers are likely to have such expectations for airports in their constituencies too. Questions such as: “Why are some of my country’s airports not yet accredited?”, or “Why doesn’t my country have any carbon neutral airports?” could help identify relevant policy interventions, opening up new opportunities for airports to reduce emissions – that other sectors could ultimately also benefit from. To create such a dynamic, Airport Carbon Accreditation probably needs to achieve even more uptake and visibility, stimulating more open source-thinking and knowledge-exchange.

Watch this space, to see how a simple idea can continue to prompt even more of them.

Marina Bylinsky is the Head of Environmental Strategy & Intermodality at ACI EUROPE. For more about climate action by airports, visit [www.airportCO2.org](http://www.airportCO2.org)
How did you become involved in the fight against climate change?

In my past life, I have spent 10 years living in Asia. While travelling in this region, I had too many opportunities to witness the negative sides of human impact on nature, such as deforestation, waste spread over acres of land, skyrocketing levels of air pollution, difficult access to clean water, etc. These issues were not per se climate-specific, but they have channelled my interest in the matter. During the many hours spent in traffic jams on my daily commute, I had enough time to come to a realisation, that we can’t go on like this. I wanted to be involved specifically in Climate Action, seeing it as the most pressing matter. At the time, I was working at UN Environment but after a while I had the opportunity to more exclusively focus on climate action by joining the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC).

What exactly is the role of the UNFCCC and how does it facilitate progress on this issue?

The United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change is an international convention set in 1992, whose main focus is on limiting the impact of human interference on Earth’s climate system. Our initial task, that took us quite a lot of time, was to develop a blueprint on how this global reduction of greenhouse gases could be achieved by the signatory countries. In fact, this blueprint was only finalised in 2015 and is known widely as the Paris Agreement. 195 countries worldwide have signed the Agreement so far. The deal aims to limit the increase of global average temperature to well below 2.0°C, through Nationally Determined Contributions (national climate action plans), but also through ‘bottom up’ action, driven by the private sector, civil society, local communities and individuals. Our mission now also includes to encourage all these stakeholders to take immediate and continued action to reduce the collective carbon footprint.

Given the growing pressure and the reaction to the US withdrawal from the Paris Agreement, are you still optimistic that the signatory countries will meet the targets?

I am, actually. The US Government is completely alone in this decision. The announcement of Donald Trump, that he would like to withdraw the United States from the Paris Agreement spurred a completely opposite result to weakening it. The one country that until then refused to sign the agreement, namely Nicaragua, put pen to paper almost immediately.

Also in the US, numerous stakeholders, including states, cities, private companies and influential individuals, have pledged to step up their climate action in the absence of leadership of the Trump Presidency in this regard.

What are the industries which, through their own voluntary actions, are making a particularly positive contribution?

We can observe a range of initiatives spanning across different sectors, that bring climate action forward. There are sectors that have quite large footprints, such as transport, energy, construction, but which invest a lot in climate solutions and are eager partners of our efforts. Notably, one such initiative that comes to my mind is Airport Carbon Accreditation, the voluntary climate action led by airports worldwide. This is a great example of an industry push towards low carbon economy, that forms an important part of the overall solution.

What plays a more important role in advancing global climate action: innovation or motivation?

I would say that it’s motivation. We have all the technologies we need to be able to keep the average global temperature well below 1.5 degrees, but we just need the push from governments and individuals to use them. There are of course a couple of innovations, that may become major breakthroughs in the way we do things.
I’m thinking here about the hydrogen economy or solar powered flights, but I’m also convinced that we shouldn’t wait for them. Motivation is the most important factor, because it drives habits, and as we know, good habits can reduce the effort to accomplish something by far.

How do you see the role of mobility within the realm of climate action, especially in the context of organising the annual Conference of the Parties? How could we better embrace the opportunities it brings about?

Mobility is absolutely essential for us. We simply wouldn’t be able to deliver our work on climate without the ability to travel. As inevitable as it is, staff travel and that of the delegates coming to our conferences constitutes the biggest bulk of our carbon footprint as an organisation. UNFCCC is already climate neutral since many years, and in fact, the entire UN system plans to become fully climate neutral by 2020. Going climate neutral means that we measure our climate footprint, proactively seek to reduce it, and offset what we are not able to avoid. For instance, we have our own UNFCCC-supported, Certified Emission Reduction units (CER), which are developed under the Clean Development Mechanism. These projects have a vast range of application, including support of sustainable travel options, wind and solar energy generation, implementation of clean cook stoves, etc.

Can you describe the scale and the ambiance of the COP meetings for us?

Frankly, it’s very hectic. To give you a rough idea of the scale of such an event, there are over 25,000 people gathering in one place during two weeks, to participate in over 2,000 separate meetings. 195 countries trying to agree on something is not easy in the first place, and then you need to add a layer of political game that comes into play. Even though at times I find the process quite frustrating, I still believe that COP is the meeting place for people that care about the climate and really want to do something about it. For the representatives, the conference is also very tiring physically. The negotiations are intense and sometimes go on well into the night. For us at the UNFCCC Secretariat, the conference means literally a fortnight without sleep… Over the years, the COP conference has also evolved to include a vast array of side events. To me, this part of the conference is very interesting, because these meetings and pavilions push specific issues. For instance, we’ve had a science pavilion put in place by NASA, a high-tech pavilion brought by India, etc. At last year’s conference, there was an airport-specific event as well, relaying the role of airports in forging a more sustainable air travel.

We are most of the time talking about stopping the change, but it cannot be done without implementing changes. What change are you most looking forward to?

Personally, I really look forward to climate neutral travel. I think we are on the right track to implement solutions for local transport, for example, with the non-fossil fuel-based rail getting closer to realisation. At the current pace of action and innovation, I’m sure that the aviation industry will follow through shortly, especially with initiatives such as Airport Carbon Accreditation paving the way. Further to my wish list, I think there is still more to be done in terms of online communication. A really good online conferencing tool has yet to be developed. There are some solutions on the market, but conducting an efficient meeting with more than 10 participants is quite difficult, let alone 25,000.

Lastly, I would like to see a shift to a culture of increased consumer awareness. In my view, the different industries should provide consumers with a panoply of more sustainable products and services and to inform their choices. Once this culture shift takes place, the critical mass of individual, smart choices will create an unstoppable tide of positive change.
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From the sky to the ground

A former maritime expert with 15 years of experience, Eugene entered the airport industry by a funny twist of fate, linked to a family passion for aviation. When his brother became an airline pilot in the US, he had to build flight time in order to get a job as pilot. The easiest way he found to do it was – you guessed it – teach Eugene how to fly! Then, what? “I said OK, let’s do it,” Eugene recalls joyfully. And he did it. Eugene got his private pilot license and became an active private pilot 23 years ago. “To date, I have piloted different types of aircraft – single engine and high performance ones,” he says. What initially looked like just a small adventure to make his brother’s dream come true eventually became the springboard for Eugene to join Amsterdam Airport Schiphol as Airside Operations Manager in 1998. In that role, Eugene was responsible for the safe and efficient use of runways, taxiways and aircraft stands. Back then, Schiphol accommodated 34 million passengers per year – half of the traffic it had last year.

After 10 years in airside operations, Eugene felt he needed to better understand airlines’ business model and was based in KLM Operations Control Centre for three months, thanks to an agreement between KLM & Schiphol. His interest had started a year – half of the traffic it had last year.

To strengthen the cooperation and the operational link between airports and EUROCONTROL’s Network Manager, which runs the European Air Traffic Management network, ACI EUROPE has a Liaison Officer to the Network Manager. He is Eugene Leeman, who – with his extensive professional background in aviation and his private pilot’s license – can justifiably be called ‘the Flying Dutchman’. Interview by Inês Rebelo.

Meet Eugene, the man helping to forge better cooperation between airports & ATM

Eugene Leeman, ACI EUROPE Liaison Officer to EUROCONTROL’s Network Manager: “I am now a real bridge-builder between the airport community and the NM and I want to make sure that a strong, effective communication between them is set up. I am keen on determining what information the NM really needs from airports and how I can help the NM to see what it is going to give back to the airport community.”

With such a solid portfolio of roles, Eugene has joined the team to bring his operational and SESAR expertise in order to identify and propose potential solutions for airports. He is clearly enthusiastic about his new responsibilities as Liaison Officer: “I am now a real bridge-builder between the airport community and the NM and I want to make sure that a strong,
effective communication between them is set up. I am keen on determining what information the NM really needs from airports and how I can help the NM to see what it is going to give back to the airport community.” He adds: “I also want to optimise the use of the Airport Corner [the Network Manager’s airport-focused data repository] by convincing more airports to join. For this reason, I need to understand where airports should improve the information they send to the NM and what benefits they get in doing it. Filter what is really needed for the NM to know and better explain why airports should contribute is key to bring airports in.” Eugene says firmly. It is thus helpful that Eugene is participating in the ACI EUROPE Technical & Operational Safety Committee (TOSC): “My role in TOSC allows me to better liaise the airports and the NM on airport and traffic related topics, such as Performance-Based Navigation (PBN), European Wake Vortex Re-categorisation (RECAT-EU), A-CDM and the integration of drones into the airport environment,” he recognises.

EUROCONTROL will soon publish the latest edition of its Challenges of Growth, a series of studies that aim to identify and understand the main challenges for the aviation industry, such as airport capacity crunch and climate resilience, and look into ways to address them effectively. Photo: Tom Dhaenens Brussels Airport

Moving the Ground Coordinator concept forward

Eugene is so engaged in his work that he does not hesitate one second to mention his other priorities as Liaison Officer: “Apart from the complete integration of airports in the NM, my other main task is the development of the Ground Coordinator concept, initiated by ACI EUROPE in collaboration with its stakeholders. In particular, I am helping to develop this concept for regional and small airports to see how it could work there in practice and what information is relevant for these airports to know in order to better operate.”

He stresses: “The coordination at a local level should be appropriate to the specificities and needs of the local airport community and bring clear benefits in order to be fully embraced.”

Looking at the main challenges ahead

EUROCONTROL will soon publish the latest edition of its Challenges of Growth, a series of studies that aim to identify and understand the main challenges for the aviation industry, such as airport capacity crunch and climate resilience, and look into ways to address them effectively. Lack of airport capacity continues to persist as a problem, due to a historical air traffic growth rate and very limited expansion opportunities. Eugene considers that a shift in mindset is needed to help prioritise airport capacity and investment: “We have to be creative and win people over, because doing the same thing over and over again will never give us different results.”

If your airport is connected to the Airport Corner and wants to valuably contribute to the airport network or has any operational issue to raise to the Network Manager, please contact Eugene at eugene.leeman@aci-europe.org or via phone at +31 651 69 45 59.
Encouraging new ideas and fresh thinking is critical for innovation in aviation in order to respond to the growing demand for air travel and the increasing number of air vehicles, such as drones, taking to the skies. That is why the SESAR Joint Undertaking (SESAR JU) supports exploratory research and has created an innovation pipeline in the research programme that transforms innovative ideas into solutions to increase the performance of air traffic management (ATM). Triona Keaveney reports.

Exploring innovative technologies for airport operations

To increase the airport & ATM community’s awareness about some of the SESAR exploratory projects, ACI EUROPE and SESAR organised a dedicated workshop on 12 April in Malta, kindly hosted by Malta International Airport (MIA) and supported by Malta Air Traffic Services (MATS).

The workshop keynotes were given by Martin Dalmas, Head of Airport Operations at Malta International Airport, Dr. Kenneth Chircop, CEO Malta Air Traffic Services, and Luca Crecco, Project Officer & ATM Expert at SESAR JU.

Bringing together 40 representatives from the aviation industry, the airport operators and European research centres, the workshop successfully provided insights into the way synthetic vision and augmented reality technologies can be applied by the airport control tower to enable air traffic controllers to seamlessly operate, particularly in low-visibility conditions (RETINA).

It also showed how augmented multimodal solutions can support air traffic controllers in a remote tower environment (MOTO) and how automated systems help to optimise ground traffic management in complex airport environments (TaCo).

In addition, it gave a clear picture of how big data analytics and passenger-centric geo-located data can identify patterns in passengers’ behaviour and how this information can be used to support airport and ATM decision-making processes (BigData4ATM).

The workshop also presented the EUROCONTROL-led SafeClouds project, which aims to improve aviation safety and increase runway capacity by developing machine learning tools. There was also discussion about the need for competition in ATM with the presentation on the COMPAIR project, which studies various institutional and market design options for introducing competition for ATM services.

A presentation on probabilistic nowcasting of winter weather for airports (PNOWWA) provided another highlight – a project that produces methods for the probabilistic short-term forecasting (i.e nowcasting) of winter weather and enables the assessment of the uncertainty in the ground part of 4D trajectories for all the involved actors from de-icing to APOC.

Finally, representatives from the EU-Funded Project AirportIQ, presented techniques to improve aircraft turnaround process and its predictability in real time.

As most of these projects draw to a close, the SESAR JU is currently reviewing the results in order to identify solutions (research) that are already mature enough to move into the industrial strand of the programme.


Learn more about the latest developments of ATM research in Europe by visiting the SESAR Knowledge Transfer Network: www.engagektn.net
EU funding is allowing European airports to modernise their Air Traffic Management (ATM) infrastructure, in order to deliver the Single European Sky. Large airports are not the only ones to benefit from it. Regional airports can also have access to funding to improve their performance. More funding opportunities will be available in 2019. Barbora Smolikova reports.

How airports are benefiting from European funding

In line with what SDAG highlighted at the 11th ACI EUROPE Regional Airports Conference & Exhibition in May in Naples, the interest of the non-PCP airports in European funding is growing as well. Also, non-PCP airports (e.g. Lisbon Airport, Fraport Slovenia, Riga International Airport, Birmingham Airport, etc.) have become an important element of the ATM modernisation. In the last 3 years, 12 non-PCP airports have implemented SESAR procedures and technologies for a total investment of €36.6m, securing €14.6m of co-funding. These airport operators are mainly focused on the implementation of the following initiatives:

- Performance Based Navigation (PBN)
- Collaborative Decision Making (CDM) / Advanced Collaborative Decision Making (A-CDM)
- Initial Airport Operations Plan (IAOP)

In view of enlarging the scope of the support that ACI EUROPE provides to its airport members, ACI EUROPE is part of a consortium with Deepblue and ENAV (the Italian Air Navigation Service Provider). This consortium won the project “Airport Operations Management for Regional Airports”, launched by EUROCONTROL under SESAR 2020 PJ.04 “Total Airport Management” (TAM). TAM aims at integrating the airports into the ATM network through sharing information in a timely manner between the Network Operations Plan (NOP) and the individual Airport Operations Plan (AOP). The specific objective of this project is to elaborate operational requirements and use cases which would be aligned with the concepts developed in PJ04 “Total Airport Management”, but which will specifically “fit for purpose” for the regional airport community. The main findings of this project, which has the direct and proactive involvement of the selected sample of airport operators, will be shared upon its finalisation.

Considering that CEF Transport Calls for Proposals are published periodically, the next one is expected to be launched by INEA in 2019. This gives your airport a unique opportunity to start preparing your application well in advance. SDAG is ready to support your airport during the application process, so get in touch with SDAG to explain what your airport’s plans and needs are for the next years (in terms of investments, innovations, etc.) and SDAG will explore the most appropriate funding possibilities available.

SDAG is open to questions for clarification and potential investigation. You can visit the SDAG website (www.aci-europe.org/sdag.html) and contact SDAG on the following email addresses: barbora.smolikova@airportgrouping.org and luc.laveyne@aci-europe.org.

The SESAR Deployment Airport Grouping (SDAG, part of ACI EUROPE) continues to help ACI EUROPE’s airport members – both large and regional airports – to apply for Connecting Europe Facility (CEF) funding with very positive results so far.
THE LATEST EUROPEAN AIRPORT TRAFFIC DATA AT YOUR FINGERTIPS

www.airporttraffic.app
The well-known saying “Protect me from my friends, I can take care of my enemies.” demonstrates that the insider threat is not a new concern as such. If anything, it illustrates all too well the complexity and reality of the fact that a trusted collaborator can sometimes make more damage than a potential known attacker. Although this risk is not new, it is nevertheless garnering more and more attention, a growing concern for organisations and airports today, in particular those that have historically been attractive targets, such as aviation. And some lessons from the past have already taught us that we often give our enemies the means for our own “destruction.”

The insider threat remains one of the main potential risks to airport security, as airports can be vulnerable to criminal and terrorist attacks by airport employees, contractors and other entities working on the airport site.

It is a threat that comes in many shapes and forms at airports, but the perpetrator is often the same: an airport employee or contractor. In a malevolent attack, this employee will mislead an employer into thinking the employee can be trusted, sometimes with control over an entire physical security system. In an unintentional attack, it is an employee who threatens the critical infrastructure of an organisation, often via human error or plain recklessness.

Insider threat can be defined as one “posed by unauthorised access, use or disclosure of privileged information, techniques, technology, assets or premises by an individual with legitimate or indirect access, which may cause harm or damage.”

In 2017, to help address the issue ACI EUROPE developed best practice guidelines aimed at better understanding the challenges and identifying possible actions and solutions to mitigate this risk.

The resulting ACI EUROPE Insider Threat Best Practices Guidelines cover inter alia: background checks, recruitment and continuous supervision, prevention (training, protection of documents, sensitive information, PC passwords etc.), access controls – for example how many people need access to the baggage make-up area or the critical IT systems, ID card management (lost and stolen, removal, change of job internally, cancelled badges etc), SeMS type management systems, balancing risk and response, security culture.

Good management practices include: strengthen the security culture through all levels; reporting procedures should include both anonymous and open reporting options; good cooperation with relevant authorities and airport partners with regard to information exchange; SeMS type management system; managing poor performance; resources for internal investigations and for checking of open social media (local legislation permitting); systematic quality and audit programme focused on all companies at the airport with airport ID-badges; and performance appraisals should be open and honest.

Some of the challenges faced by airports are inter alia: legislation; that many different entities work within the airport ecosystem; intelligence and information sharing; knowing when to intervene; sometimes limited security culture; the enforcement of rules; access controls; or low pay of the work force with privileged access.

ACI EUROPE together with Airpol (Airport Police Federation) recently invited police from the EU member states and airports to a two-day on Insider Threats Conference on 18-19 April in Brussels. The conference included a number of presentations on the threat from insiders, followed by a number of exercises where Airport Police and Airport Security staff worked together to better address how threats from within can be minimised. There were 28 participants representing 23 European airports and including an equal number of representatives for airport police. A great deal of experience was exchanged and important connections between airport police and airport staff was made.

It was announced at the last ICAO AVSEC Panel in March 2018 that there will be an ICAO High Level Conference on Aviation Security in November 2018, the focus will likely be the Insider Threat and GSeP implementation.

As a continuous effort to help its members, ACI EUROPE and Airpol agreed to organise another conference in 2019, to continue to promote knowledge exchange and to further explore the challenges of the insider threat that persist.

Jérôme Morandiére is Aviation Security Manager at ACI EUROPE.

**Inside Man**

Aviation Security is often perceived as consistently dealing with new threats and the technology needed to detect them, but there is much work ongoing on the issue of a threat that is all too familiar – a person within your organisation. Following the publication of special guidelines on Insider Threat last year, a special conference on the subject was held in April. By Jérôme Morandiére
Over 150 delegates from European regional airports, local and national authorities, airlines and ACI EUROPE World Business Partners gathered in Naples on 14-16 May for the 11th ACI EUROPE Regional Airports Conference & Exhibition, hosted by Naples International Airport. Under the theme “What are the strategic pillars of dynamic regional airport development?”, participants discussed a range of topics affecting regional airports, such as airline strategies, digital trends, customer experience in a time of growth, remote technologies and sustainability.

The 12th ACI EUROPE Regional Airports Conference & Exhibition will take place on 20-22 May 2019 in Krakow, hosted by Krakow Airport.

Session 2 allowed for an interesting discussion about digital trends in airport retail with Giovanni Russo, Director of Operations of Geneva Airport; Marco de la Feld, Business Strategist of ENCO; Stéphanie Metz-Thevenod, Executive Vice President Marketing & Digital Duty Free Global, Lagardère Travel Retail; and Salvatore Landolina, SAGAT Administration Planning, Control and ICT Manager of Turin Airport.
Welcome to Estonia!
2017 was a challenging, yet triumphant year for Tallinn Airport, when it undertook myriad expansion projects to ensure its readiness to respond to growth, while maintaining exceptional levels of customer service. An interview with Piret Mürk-Dubout, CEO Tallinn Airport, by Marta Dimitrova.

Tallinn Airport: “Remaining resilient in agile times”

Tallinn Airport achieved record-breaking results in 2017, while facing many operational challenges. As the main international airport serving Estonia, a country of 1.3 million people, Tallinn welcomed 2.65 million passengers last year, marking a growth spurt of 19% year-on-year. To put these figures into perspective, it’s worth noting that the overall passenger volume growth during the preceding ten years was approximately 500,000 passengers in total.

The airport authority had to accommodate the substantial increase in passenger numbers, while also facing extensive reconstruction and renovation projects both landside and airside, and also acting as the main gateway for entering Estonia during the country’s EU Presidency in the second half of the year.

“The main reason for our success can be attributed to this ‘golden era’ in global aviation – demand was driven by the supply of seats provided by the airlines, and affordable ticket prices introduced completely new segments to the passenger mix,” explains Piret Mürk-Dubout, CEO Tallinn Airport.

Among the airport’s greatest achievements during 2017 was attracting British Airways to its portfolio, while this year it has already added Wizz Air. Meanwhile, the main growth-drivers remain Nordica/LOT Polish Airlines and airBaltic.

Breaking the 3m passenger threshold

The airport is continuing steady growth this year, and in April passenger numbers increased by 17%. Mürk-Dubout is positive that double-digit growth will be maintained throughout 2018.

“According to the current outlook, we could be breaking the 3 million passenger threshold for the first time ever this year,” she enthuses. “It is an amazing achievement considering that during 2006-2016 the airport’s total passenger volume increased by 500,000 passengers and last year alone we grew by more than 420,000 passengers. Coping with this increase is a great challenge, but we are feeling confident thanks to the superb results we achieved last year.”

Attracting more traffic and expanding connectivity is essential for maintaining growth. The airport is working closely with the Estonian Tourism Board to identify which markets could bring more inbound tourism to the country. A current focus is the Middle East, where Mürk-Dubout says she sees “great potential as a hub for both business and leisure travellers”.

Tallinn offers a variety of incentive programmes to promote air traffic and to encourage airlines to expand their flight operations to the airport. It’s clearly a challenge for an airport with a smaller catchment area and with longer flights to and from European capitals to attract its “dream list” of airlines and routes. However, with the right tools Tallinn has been successful at winning new airlines and encouraging existing partners to launch new routes and expand their networks. “The living standard in Estonia has been increasing consistently and this has made us appear more attractive as well as to international carriers,” Mürk-Dubout explains.

“Still the tourism potential of the country remains somewhat locked and thus we put considerable effort into promoting Estonia as a tourism destination to airline customers.”

€127m development programme

An array of development projects was completed in 2017, such as the expansion and reconstruction of the airside traffic area, extending the runway from 3,070m to 3,480m and replacing the runway cover. Another highlight is the extension of the airport’s passenger terminal to accommodate a new state-of-the-art pre-flight security screening checkpoint, provided by Vanderlande, doubling
capacity during peak hours. The extension also houses the new VIP centre, which served over 1,000 international delegates during the EU Presidency in the second half of the year – a figure even more remarkable considering that Estonia’s EU Presidency term was brought forward by six months due to the UK referendum on leaving the EU.

Access to the airport improved considerably when the new tramway linking the airport’s passenger terminal with the city centre was completed last September. Passengers can now take the tram from the city centre to the airport in 15 minutes and walk from the public transport centre to the departure gates, thanks to a new gallery connecting the terminal with the public transport station. The construction of a new multi-storey car park commenced at the end of 2017 and will be completed at the end of 2018. The car park will accommodate 1,200 vehicles, making it the largest car park in the entire country.

Service quality and ‘sense of place’

However, despite the extensive construction projects and increasing passenger flows, customer satisfaction has remained high. In fact, Tallinn Airport was recorded as the third best airport in Europe among 109 airports in the ACI ASQ customer satisfaction survey in Q4 2017.

The shopping area at Tallinn Airport had been under development since the beginning of 2017 and the new duty free shop operated by Baltona was launched in May. While there has been on-site building going on with shops and cafes being relocated, concession revenues at Tallinn Airport increased by 11.3% in 2017. Moreover, the airport’s business lounge was recognised as European Lounge of the Year by Priority Pass.

“We aim to combine two key objectives in our passenger experience – to be the cosiest airport, while promoting Estonia as a tourism and business destination,” Mürk-Dubout explains. “Therefore, in terms of retail and food & beverage development we focus on our service quality, ‘sense of place’ and a satisfying variety of goods and services.”

Baltona’s walkthrough design concept highlights elements of Estonian nature, while also blending in seamlessly with the design theme of the airport’s new checkpoint. “Sometimes being small has its advantages – it is easier for us to work with our operators, adapt where we needed and introduce improvement based on customer feedback,” Mürk-Dubout adds.

Handling the record-breaking passenger volumes without compromising on service quality is a main ambition for the airport, and Tallinn is already taking measures to deal with further growth hikes in the future to avoid a capacity crunch.

“We are currently conducting a feasibility study to understand the future expansion possibilities of our passenger terminal and other facilities. And while these double-digit growth numbers may not continue forever, we still need to futureproof ourselves in order to remain resilient to adversities in these agile times.”
The East Midlands is a vibrant region of the UK, founded on a strong manufacturing base, with established global companies that include Rolls Royce, JCB and Toyota. East Midlands Airport is perfectly-positioned to contribute to, and capitalise on, the economic growth, productivity, and skills offered across the wider region.

Currently handling around five million passengers a year, the ambition is to double that to 10 million. Leading these efforts is Karen Smart, the new Managing Director of East Midlands Airport. She took the helm in April 2018, having previously been Operations Director at London Stansted, which like East Midlands is part of Manchester Airports Group (MAG). Prior to joining MAG, Smart spent several years at the service provider Serco, and had a distinguished career in the Royal Air Force.

“My first few weeks in post have been spent familiarising myself with the business. Airports are complex, multi-layered organisations, and getting to know, not only the people, but how we function and operate, is absolutely key,” says Smart. “Stepping up from an operations role to Managing Director means that I need oversight of every aspect of what we do.”

As well as getting to know the team and ensuring the airport is well-prepared for the busy summer period, Smart has been spending a considerable amount of time getting out and about, meeting stakeholders and partner organisations to further her knowledge of the local political and business landscape. Already, she has hosted MP visits, met with business and local government leaders, and is proactively seeking opportunities to sit on regional boards and steering groups. “Being Operations Director at the UK’s fourth-largest airport has set me up nicely to take on this bigger role. I know how to run an airport, but being Managing Director is much more than that – you become a figurehead and a regional ambassador, which I’m relishing,” says Smart. “My career as an RAF Officer prepared me well for leading large teams in demanding environments: strong leadership will be key to driving further success at the airport, but also more broadly within the region. My military career also developed my resilience, which is an important quality in delivering change and driving success. Meanwhile, at Serco I developed my business acumen, delivering large contracts and managing transformation prior to me leading a successful aviation portfolio within the defence business area.”

Karen Smart, Managing Director, East Midlands Airport: “We are capable of supporting a range of strategic new industries that can create jobs and boost skills. As the region’s global gateway, we play a critical role in getting people and products to overseas markets. Our growth will strengthen the region’s links to key markets, which will benefit business growth and stimulate regional imports and exports.”

Attracting new networked carrier

What excites Smart most about her new role is the huge potential. East Midlands has one of the largest population catchment areas of any UK airport (8 million within a one-hour drive, and 30 million within two); it is located at the heart of the country, neighboured by three cities (Derby, Leicester and Nottingham); and has the capacity to accommodate more flights and larger aircraft.

“My focus is working out how we want to grow, what’s realistic and where this growth will come from,” Smart explains. “We’re talking to a number of airlines about new routes and increased capacity, but fundamental to our growth is securing links to Europe’s major hub airports, such as Paris CDG, Frankfurt and Amsterdam Schiphol, from where passengers can catch connecting flights all over the world. Our job is to convince airlines that there is demand for certain routes. If we are successful with this, I think we’ll be connecting many more people to a wider choice of destinations soon.”
The airport aims to secure a new networked carrier, allowing passengers to fly with one airline from East Midlands to the other side of the world via a major European hub, on one ticket. "EMA is one of the largest airports in the UK that does not offer this service, which leaves the eight million people who live within an hour’s drive of here without a dedicated networked global carrier," says Smart.

"We’re also engaging with existing operators with a view to increasing capacity. Our low-cost leisure offer is really strong, and we’re keen to build on this with existing airline partners."

Absolutely key to future growth is improving access to the airport. At London Stansted, a quarter of passengers use rail to get to the airport. At East Midlands, that figure is only 1%. "We’re lobbying hard for better rail services, increased frequency and improved timetabling. We’re also beginning to think about how this airport can benefit from the wider connectivity linked to HS2 Toton (the East Midlands HS2 hub). This may seem a long way off, but if we don’t start planning now, we’ll miss out from this major piece of infrastructure, which has the potential to radically reshape the East Midlands."

Enhancing infrastructure and passenger experience

Significant development is taking place across the airport and the wider site. UPS has started building a new €130m facility adjacent to the east apron. This will employ 1,000 people and significantly boost UPS’ East Midlands operation.

Meanwhile, not directly linked to the airport, but complementary to its offer, is the development of the SEGRO Logistics Park East Midlands Gateway. Over the next few years this will double the number of jobs across the wider airport site, making the area one of the largest employment sites in the region.

"We’re looking at our current capacity issues and what this means for enhancing our infrastructure," Smart adds. "I can’t go into details here, but there are plans on the table that we’re currently working through."

The airport is also constantly looking at ways to improve the passenger experience, and recently extended its free WiFi offer to passengers from one hour to four hours.

"We’ve also recently introduced Click and Collect. Passengers can now browse over 4,000 World Duty Free products online and, along with Dixons, can reserve items to collect as they travel through the airport. This means passengers travelling through EMA can access more products than are available instore," Smart explains.

Meanwhile, a live chat customer function on the airport’s car park page is being trialled, with a view to it being rolled out at sister airports London Stansted and Manchester.

"We recognise that many customers want to self-service their way through the airport wherever possible, so we will continue to work with our airlines and UK Border Force to develop plans to enable this," says Smart. "We know our arrivals process needs improving but, to help improve matters for passengers, we’ve introduced Fast Track Passport Control which, for a fee, means passengers can bypass the queues and go straight to the e-gates."

Last summer was East Midlands’ busiest since 2008 and it is hoping to build on that, making 2018 one of its strongest years in terms of total passenger numbers. "We’ve made a strong start, which is looking promising," says Karen Smart, Managing Director, East Midlands Airport.

While East Midlands remains a very seasonal airport with summer passenger numbers far exceeding winter’s, it is beginning to see a shift with more people flying through EMA for winter sunshine or to Europe’s ski resorts.

"I also hope that by enhancing our engagement with government, local stakeholders and partners, we can add meat to the bones for our longer-term vision of a future in which thousands of new jobs are created onsite, people can get here more easily, and passengers have a greater choice of destinations to travel to for both leisure and business. I hope to see the shoots of this vision starting to appear as the year progresses."
On 1 November 2017 Montserrat Barriga officially took up office as Director General of the European Regions Airline Association (ERA). Barriga took time out from her busy schedule to discuss her ambitions for the association and her thoughts on the prospects for regional aviation in Europe.

"Traditionally, a regional airline was defined by the type of aircraft, the business model or the geography," explains Barriga. "We have evolved that model as many of the old regional airlines have wider types of operations and operate a different range of aircraft sizes. Any European airline primarily operating in Europe can be a potential member of the ERA."

The latest organisations to join the ERA are Gates Aviation and Chorus Aviation Capital, neither of which are airlines. This highlights the association’s broad variety of members. "The ERA’s members include 50 airlines and 146 other companies covering the entire spectrum of the aviation industry, including 21 airports, manufacturers, Maintenance Repair and Overhaul (MRO) and service providers," explains Barriga. "It is important that our members share common interests. Some consider themselves regional and some don’t, but what matters is that their association unites their voices and combines efforts for the sake of the European aviation industry."

"The ERA’s main objectives are to represent member’s interests and priorities with Europe’s main regulatory bodies, protecting them from changing regulatory environments, while also raising the profile of the association and its members by promoting the contribution of our sector to the overall development of Europe. We also provide exclusive business-to-business networking opportunities for members by being a platform for exchanging experience, best practices and support within the ERA network."

Barriga believes her previous position as Director, International Development & Industry Affairs at Binter Canarias provides her with the perfect insight for understanding the needs of ERA members. "Binter gave me the experience to understand the strategic priorities and challenges for a European operator of average size, expanding internationally,"

**The Brexit challenge and complementary connectivity: prospects for European regional airlines**

Nick Preston talks to Montserrat Barriga, who was appointed as the new Director General of the European Regions Airline Association in late 2017.
opening new routes in new markets, and gaining and operating Public Service Obligation (PSO) routes, while competing locally, operating in a complex geography, etc. This experience will help me to better serve our airline members, as I can put myself into the operator’s shoes in terms of their operational, commercial and regulatory needs.

“I am very lucky to have come into a strong, well-established trade association,” continues Barriga. “I would like to take the ERA to the next level by retaining and increasing membership and by continuously improving our service to the members.”

**Challenges and opportunities lie ahead**

Looking to the future, Barriga identifies several challenges facing ERA members, but is certain that regional aviation will continue to play a key role in Europe. “Brexit is one of the biggest challenges for European airlines and our goal is to ensure UK and non-UK members get the support they need from their association throughout the process, and that after its full implementation, they become even stronger,” says Barriga. “Other relevant issues to consider in the future include passenger rights, in particular the development of EU261, slot regulations, and pilot and maintenance engineer shortages.”

Among the potential challenges, Barriga sees opportunities for ERA members. “Limited slot capacity means airports need to maximise aircraft size for each slot used, as this maximises both aeronautical and non-aeronautical revenue. This has the effect of making smaller aircraft more expensive on a per-passenger basis. This does create opportunities for regional airports, which have capacity and are therefore looking to attract ‘spill’ traffic from the larger airports.”

Barriga believes PSO routes will continue to be a key part of the European regional aviation sector. “PSOs have always been an important tool for developing connectivity in Europe, while limiting the commercial and financial risk for the smaller operators. Many ERA members operate under PSO routes as part of a much wider network. The PSO routes can then benefit from the operator’s larger fleet and scale of operations and be more efficient overall, costing less public funds. We support PSOs as a way to continue developing underserved regions, bringing economic benefits to them in an effective manner.”

Regional aviation could also stand to benefit from an increase in demand for offbeat tourism. “Social media is a key tool and travel bloggers are definitely prescribers to this, especially among younger generations that seek value for money and see flying as the most efficient way of transport,” says Barriga. “Regional operators can provide access to secondary cities and secluded places in Europe, such as islands and remote regions, most of which are very attractive for tourists looking for new destinations.”

In the longer-term, Barriga argues regional airline services will remain in demand due to the complementary connectivity options they offer alongside other business models. “Consumers want two main things: choice and value for money. The airline industry is no different from any other in this regard. Passengers travelling within Europe want to be able to access the best point-to-point connectivity, this means maximising the network of European secondary airports. Regional carriers provide such services. Additionally, regional airlines are seen by passengers and authorities as an important brand for the regions they represent, since they have been providing quality service for many years. Regional carriers are complementary to low-cost and legacy airlines, and are needed to maintain the level of connectivity in Europe and its near regions.”
Ljubljana is a green oasis in central Europe. The city has become a symbol of how respect for the environment, excellent quality of life and economic growth, can all be successfully combined. The riverbank, running across the town centre is home to numerous cafés, quality restaurants, and great shopping, making it a desirable destination for tourists.

Moreover, Slovenia has a well-developed economy and is, per capita, the second richest of the Slavic countries by GDP behind the Czech Republic.

Benefitting from its strategically-attractive location at the intersection of the traffic flows between the Carpathian Basin and the Po Valley, as well as the corridor from the Middle East through the Bosporus to the European Union, Ljubljana Airport welcomed 1.7 million passengers in 2017, marking positive growth of 19.8%.

“The economy is currently doing well not only in Europe, but worldwide, which means people can afford to travel,” says Zmago Skobir, Managing Director, Fraport Slovenija. “Secondly, knowledge of Slovenia worldwide is getting better and better. And one of the most important factors is that our home-based carrier Adria Airways has restructured successfully and is adding more routes to its network.”

For Skobir, aviation is more than a professional life, it is in fact, his hobby and he has gained a wealth of experience in the aviation and tourism business, holding positions in Adria Airways, Slovenian-based tour operator Globtour, as well as being a Board Member of ACI EUROPE.

“A lot of my experience came from the airline, tourism and infrastructure sectors, which gave me many opportunities to develop and make future-oriented decisions. Because all three businesses are interrelated, I have gained valuable expertise in the field.”

“A more efficient and more recognised airport”

Four years ago, Aerodrom Ljubljana went through a historical transformation when it was acquired by Fraport AG, and then rebranded as Fraport Slovenija. Ljubljana Airport’s attractive proposition as Slovenia’s national air transportation
gateway and a vital infrastructure engine for the country’s diversified and growing export-driven economy, as well as an important hub serving the Balkan region, makes it an invaluable asset for the group. “Fraport AG is one of the biggest airport groups not only in Europe, but worldwide. As a global operator, the brand itself means a lot for the airlines and our partners. For us, the Fraport brand really internationalised us, so we now are on the map worldwide.”

The airport recorded a slight decline in passengers in 2016, mainly due to the restructuring of home carrier Adria Airways and other challenges such as increasingly high traffic peaks, however, Skobir explains to Airport Business that Fraport’s knowledge has helped reorganise and restructure the processes within the company, which together helped develop the strategy. Despite its small population (2 million), which leads to limited network possibilities, Fraport Slovenija has attracted an array of new routes this summer, including flights to Bucharest, Geneva, Hamburg, Sofia, Düsseldorf, Dubrovnik, and Brāč. “We are constantly working on the Gulf area, so we are very active in this respect. Not only for Fraport, but also the Slovenian National Tourism Board. It is one of the most important goals for the country and the airport itself. The more direct lines, the more investors, and the more tourists. So, the Gulf is our priority, but we would also like to add more flights from Italy, Spain and Scandinavia to our network.”

He adds: “Germany is also one of the most important countries for Slovenia, as the biggest export partner. That’s the reason why Adria Airways and other carriers will introduce the northern part of Germany, while easyJet introduced flights from Berlin Tegel this summer.”

New terminal to “future-proof the airport”

Last year, the airport launched a new expansion project, an extension of the existing passenger terminal, in order to avoid a capacity-crunch, caused by a growing number of passengers and a changed traffic structure. One of the biggest challenges is completing the new terminal extension by the 2020 summer season. “The new terminal will allow us to serve peak traffic periods better, as well as future-proofing the airport for the next 15-20 years, resulting in a better experience for the passengers and the airlines.”

10,000sqm will be added, including a new departure hall with 22 check-in counters, five security lanes, three baggage reclaim carousels, a new baggage sorting area, a large duty free shop, a new business lounge, as well as renovated food & beverage and promotional areas. This will significantly increase capacity from 500 to 1,280 passengers per hour. Currently, the terminal is in the final stages of design, and this year will see the issue of the public tender. Skobir is positive that construction on the new terminal will start by the end of the year.

Diversifying the non-aeronautical business is a key element of Fraport’s strategy for its airport portfolio. Following the acquisition, Ljubljana Airport adopted a new progressive strategy defined by four pillars – commercial traffic, cargo, real estate, and the development of a new training centre for aviation training.

Education and training of its employees, maintaining high operational standards, and delivering top customer-focused services are among the main priorities of the company.

In 2016, Fraport Aviation Academy was established at Ljubljana Airport, underscoring Fraport Slovenija’s commitment to enhancing Ljubljana as a sustainable location. The academy will initially provide training in the fields of airport management, ground handling and rescue management. Additionally, a new firefighting training centre is being built. “A lot of institutions around us are offering theoretical knowledge. We are focusing on the practical knowledge, which is missing elsewhere. The location we thought is also quite appropriate geographically. Those are the main factors where we see this should be a success, and also a little bit different than other competitors. Apart from Fraport AG, we are also partnering with Adria Airways and Slovenian Air Traffic Control, and we are hoping for a good development of this project,” Skobir enthuses.
“A future potential hub and consolidating centre”

Due to its strategic geographical position on the crossroad from Central Europe to the Balkans, Slovenia is destined to be a logistic hub. This is clearly translated in the development of the new Airport City, which will develop the airport’s commercial infrastructure in order to meet the needs for logistic services, hotel accommodation, office space and commercial premises.

“Our airport is also becoming an increasingly important logistics hub. Novartis, one of the biggest pharmaceutical producers, is finalising its European warehouse here. Cargo-partner has started building a big warehouse near the airport. Other international companies are also recognising this area as a future potential hub and consolidating centre.”

Another aspect of the newly-adopted strategy is the commercial and retail development. “The retail business is quite an important part of our activities here at the airport, revenue-wise,” says Skobir. “We have different passengers. We have to find ways to attract passengers to spend more time at the airport. Together with our partners, we have outsourced the food & beverage offering. We strive to change our offer quite often. In retail, more and more local products are desired by passengers.”

Carbon neutral by 2020

As capital of one of Europe’s most forested countries, it is fitting that Ljubljana was named European Green Capital in 2016 by the European Commission, recognising the city’s high environmental standards as part of its sustainability strategy ‘Vision 2025’.

Ljubljana Airport is currently accredited at Level 2 Reduction of ACI’s Airport Carbon Accreditation, and has reduced its carbon footprint by 40% since 2012. “This means that from 3.6 kilos of carbon dioxide per passenger in 2012, we dropped down to two kilos per passengers in 2017,” says Skobir. “We have established a carbon management plan, implemented LED lighting where possible, and are introducing more energy-efficient ways of heating the terminal.”

The airport has also implemented a new mobility system, which includes electric car-sharing and bikes around the city. The electric car sharing is available for passengers, as well as employees. Travellers can make a booking via their smartphone and then use the code to unlock the car.

The next step will be to introduce electric ground-handling equipment. “We are starting with some of the forklifts and tractors. Then we will introduce e-vehicles every year into our plan, thus further reducing our carbon footprint and helping Ljubljana and Slovenia to be even greener – not only as a country, but as Slovenia’s gateway to the world.”

“Creating a feel of Slovenia”

Arriving at the airport, passengers are instantly captivated by the picturesque landscape of the Alps surrounding the city. Ljubljana Airport works closely with the Slovenian National Tourism Board in Slovenia to implement digital advertising in the arrivals hall dedicated to promoting this view.

“For example, when Turkish Airlines was increasing its frequencies, it put in a lot of effort with our Slovenian National Tourism Board to bring the tour operators from Korea, Japan, and China to introduce them to Slovenia,” Skobir explains. “Even though Slovenia is a small country, it is the best place for travellers from Asia to start their journey and continue to our neighbouring countries.”

A key focus is the friendly customer experience provided by the airport’s staff. “Professionalism, kindness and good information are the main tasks for our staff to create the feel of Slovenia.”

It is also hard not to notice the rich art collection that can be seen in the terminal, as well as at Fraport Slovenija’s headquarters. The company boasts an art collection of renowned painters, which presents a significant overview of Slovenia’s modern art.

After a record year in 2017, and the opening of a new road link, in line with the four-pillar strategy, the company is ready for further growth in 2018. It plans to further develop its commercial activities within the airport complex, while at the same time ensuring enhanced passenger and customer satisfaction by investing in the new passenger terminal and developing cargo transport.
Welcoming you has been our passion for 60 years

Over the past 60 years, Brussels Airport has grown to become one of the best airports in Europe, connecting the European capital to no less than 238 destinations around the world and providing 25 million passengers a year with the best of Belgian hospitality: passion for food, love for music, creativity in art and fashion, and a warm sense of humour.

Join us on #BrusselsAirport60years
It is a landmark year for Brussels Airport, which celebrates its 60th anniversary in 2018. Over the years, the airport has developed into the second economic engine of the country, employing 20,000 people and accounting for 1.8% of GDP.

“Although Brussels Airport experienced severe setbacks, such as 9/11, the Sabena bankruptcy, or the 2016 terrorist attack, and has to operate in an extremely competitive and dense catchment area, staff always keep a positive mind-set and do their utmost to give our passengers the best possible service,” says Arnaud Feist, CEO Brussels Airport Company. “It is with great pride that this year we hope to reach the level of 25 million passengers in a year, joining the top league of airports.”

Indeed, traffic grew strongly in the first four months of 2018 – by 5% to 2.25 million – putting the airport on course to achieve its 25-million goal. This growth was driven by the strong performance of Brussels Airlines on intra-European destinations and especially by notable growth in intercontinental traffic, thanks to the strong recovery of traffic to Turkey, Tunisia and Egypt.

The leisure segment, including TUI fly, also performed particularly well thanks to the strong recovery of traffic to Turkey, Tunisia and Egypt.

The Brussels Airport strategy is primarily focused on strengthening its position as a key Star Alliance hub. It collaborates strongly with home carrier Brussels Airlines, and the 16 other Star Alliance carriers operating at the airport.

“The extensive network of Brussels Airlines in sub-Saharan Africa offers a unique advantage for the Star Alliance carriers,” Feist explains. “We also continue to work closely with other airlines to further build our long-haul network. It is no secret that we eye new routes to the Americas, such as Boston, Philadelphia, Houston, San Francisco or Los Angeles, and Sao Paulo. In Africa, Johannesburg and Lagos are on our list, as are Asian destinations such as Delhi, Singapore, Seoul, Manila, and second-tier cities in China.”

Intra-European flows, however, bring the highest traffic volumes, and the airport works closely with all European airlines, be it legacy, low-cost or leisure, to further improve the network. The entry of carriers such as WOW Air in 2017 and Georgian Airways in 2018 are testament to this successful approach.

Indeed, BRU’s progressive route development strategy was recently recognised with the overall Routes Europe Marketing Award 2018. “We have a very attractive incentive scheme for new destinations with a direct rebate on passenger charges for three years,” says Feist. “Long-haul routes receive a rebate of €15 in the first year and €10 and €5 in the second and third years. Short-haul routes receive a rebate of €10 for three consecutive years. In 2016, we also introduced a growth incentive scheme, as we want to reward those airlines that bring additional frequencies and seats to Brussels Airport, or succeed in growing their load factors. There is a €10 rebate on passenger charges for one year.”

BRU also works closely with the tourism authorities of Flanders, Brussels and Wallonia to bring more visitors to Belgium.

Major investment and Strategic Vision 2040

The airport is building on its route development and traffic successes with significant infrastructure investment. It has launched a long-term €52 million investment plan to replace all boarding bridges at Pier B, which handles most intercontinental traffic. The first phase was recently completed with the installation of a triple boarding bridge capable of accommodating the A380. Replacement of the 22 other boarding bridges in Pier B will commence at the end of 2018. To maintain full operational capacity, the work will be rolled out in phases, with the project completed around 2022.
Meanwhile, three large-scale ongoing projects include construction of two new state-of-the-art fire stations that will be inaugurated after this summer; the €100 million development of the west side of the BRUcargo area, where construction of the first 50,000sqm building has already started; and a €100 million investment to prepare for the new European standard – Standard 3 – in hold baggage screening, which involves the purchase of new screening devices and construction of a new baggage hall.

Looking further ahead, BRU’s Strategic Vision 2040 will take full speed from 2020. “The runway infrastructure will need to be upgraded in order to step up capacity during peak hours, and to ensure the same capacity under all weather conditions. The airport is looking at two options: an extension of the taxiway alongside runway 07R/25L, or an extension of the runway itself,” Feist explains. “Two additional piers are to be built: Pier A West by 2023 and Pier C by 2035.”

Another strategic project is the Airport Business District, which is located within walking distance of the terminal. The first two buildings are already rented out to Deloitte, KPMG, Microsoft and Tribes, with 3,000 employees onsite.

“Our Strategic Vision 2040 unlocks the potential of an additional 10,000 jobs over the next five years and will add a total of 60,000 jobs by 2040,” Feist adds. “It is crucial that this growth is achieved via a balanced approach that considers both the economic development of the airport and environmental sustainability.”

Indeed, Feist is passionate about environmental innovation. BRU is on the cusp of becoming carbon neutral. “We are committed to only buying green energy and have two large solar panels that produce the equivalent of the yearly energy consumption of 800 families, or 3% of our own electricity use.”

The airport has also purchased 30 electric buses and installed electric charging points, while 40 service vehicles have been replaced in the last two years with vehicles running on natural gas.

“We have dedicated teams constantly on the lookout for any technological solution that could facilitate our passengers’ journey,” Feist explains. “Their mission is to develop prototypes and test numerous digital features. For example, we recently upgraded our WiFi network throughout the airport, tested a new Messenger chatbot, and are reviewing a free entertainment platform.”

Delegates at this year’s ACI EUROPE/World General Assembly, Congress & Exhibition will experience many of these innovations for themselves. “As host, we hope our guests will experience the very best of Belgian hospitality, culture and gastronomy. In this important year, our guests will be welcomed with a real showcase of 60 years of Brussels Airport.”

**Brussels Airport factbox**

**2017:** 24.8 million passengers  
**2017 passenger traffic growth:** 13.6%  
**2018 passenger traffic growth (Jan-April):** 5.1%  
**Key airline customers:** Brussels Airlines, Ryanair, Lufthansa, TUI fly, SAS  
**Number of routes:** 238  
**Top 5 destinations:** Madrid, London Heathrow, Barcelona, Frankfurt, Geneva

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Cathay Pacific launched the important new Brussels-Hong Kong route in March. The service was inaugurated by Arnaud Feist, CEO Brussels Airport Company; Shirley Lam, Special Representative for Hong Kong Economic and Trade Affairs to the European Union; Kris Peeters, Belgian Vice-Prime Minister and Minister for Economy; and James Ginn, Cathay Pacific General Manager.
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550+ Airports
$70+ Billion Planned Investment for Airport Construction Projects
620+ Million People
Hamburg Airport enjoyed a successful 2017 with annual passenger numbers up 8.6% to 17.6 million. It is planning for the future with its gaze firmly fixed on a responsible, sustainable path to growth. “As an inner-urban airport, Hamburg has a very special responsibility towards its employees, towards the environment and, above all, towards its neighbours,” says Michael Eggenschwiler, CEO Hamburg Airport.

The airport believes that dedicated efforts to protect the environment, along with open and honest dialogue, are essential for mutual success. There are a number of long-term initiatives and efforts underway at Hamburg Airport, which are dedicated to the environment. It achieved a global first in 1999, becoming the first airport to be awarded double EU Eco-Management and Audit Scheme (EMAS) and ISO14.001 certification, with both certifications being maintained without interruption ever since.

Mobility Concept 2020 aims for 50% of all Hamburg Airport vehicles to operate on alternative, low-emission power by 2020. Last year 44% of vehicles met this target. Since 2013 all of the airport’s newly-acquired vehicles use alternative power. It has also made charging stations available for electric cars and offers free parking for users of electric vehicles.

Hamburg has also been proactive in terms of its responsibility for noise protection programmes. Voluntary efforts have been running for more than 20 years and over that timeframe Hamburg has invested more than €40 million towards noise-proof windows and low-noise ventilation systems for local residents. Its Noise Protection Programme 8+ will incorporate even larger areas in future measures and the airport has already allocated €150,000 for noise protection in 2018. Hamburg is the first airport in Germany to implement new noise protection standards.
Other environmental efforts include Hamburg’s commitment to carbon management. In 2014 the airport achieved Level 3 Optimisation of ACI’s Airport Carbon Accreditation, the second-highest available, for its measures to identify and reduce CO₂ emissions. Compared to 2009, Hamburg now produces 50% less scope 1 and 2 emissions, which equates to 18,700 less tonnes of CO₂. Since 2005, 100% of the electricity purchased by the airport has come from climate-neutral generation. Around 70% of the heat and electricity required by the airport is generated using its own natural-gas-powered, block-type thermal power station and the central heating plant.

Hamburg promotes the use of public transport by employees, with graduated supplements for public transport tickets. Travelling to work by bike is also encouraged, with more than 400 bike rack spaces and an air pumping station for tyres available, as well as free bike checks with an on-site repair service twice a year.

Looking ahead
A total investment of €540 million will be made at Hamburg over the next 10 years for the step by step optimisation of the terminals and aprons. “This will mean we are well equipped for future air traffic demand and Northern Germany’s ever-growing need for mobility,” explains Eggenschwiler.

Among the infrastructure improvements underway or in the planning, phase five of a comprehensive refurbishment of the main apron commenced in February, and this marked the halfway stage of a €120 million project which is scheduled for completion in 2020. In 2019 the construction of the new Southern Passenger Pier will begin. This will include six air bridges and involves an investment of €160 million.

Hamburg has also seen developments in its route network with eight new routes launching during the summer season. “We have deliberately planned conservatively for 2018, because the airlines are still on a consolidation path,” says Eggenschwiler. “We expect passenger figures to remain stable at a high level, and a tendency toward fewer aircraft movements. Eight completely new routes have launched this summer, so that one thing remains constant for our passengers: a broad range from which to choose. Passengers will continue to have the choice between numerous airlines with different service levels and a large route network.”

Hamburg Airport factbox

2017: 17.6 million passengers
2017 passenger traffic growth: 8.6%
Key airline customers: Eurowings, Lufthansa, Ryanair, Condor, easyJet
Number of routes: 133
Top 5 destinations: Munich, Frankfurt, London, Palma de Mallorca, Zurich

Investing in the local community
Hamburg Airport is actively involved in social projects in the local region. It is also active in various initiatives to implement projects and exchange know-how with partners. In 2017, the Hamburg Airport Community Prize was introduced. This is open to non-profit clubs, associations and organisations from Hamburg and the surrounding area. The total prize money available was €10,000 in 2017 and will rise to €12,000 in 2018. Last year there were 40 participants, with the winners determined via online voting.

This year marks the 20th anniversary of Hamburg Airport’s community newspaper called ‘Hamburg Flughafen’. There are four issues a year and the newspaper contains information for neighbours and interested members of the public. This might include information about what is happening on the airport site, events and activities being planned, as well as advance notice of restrictions.

The airport has a dedicated department for neighbourhood and community work, which includes an ‘Info-Mobil’. This is a dedicated and customised truck in airport livery containing information and material to maintain a presence in the community, and at events and markets.

The Hamburg Airport
Info-Mobil is a dedicated and customised truck containing information and material to maintain a presence in the community, and at events and markets.
Iceland is the perfect place to get away from the busy life in the big city. Visit the “little” big island in the North Atlantic where you find clean water, fresh air, glaciers and tranquility. Keflavik International Airport has received numerous awards for service excellence and is consistently ranked among the top airports in Europe in terms of service and gives a warm welcome to all travellers.

In 2017 we welcomed 8.8 million passengers and this year we expect 10.4 million passengers.
Iceland is often referred to as ‘The Land of Fire and Ice’, and is famous for the majestic beauty of its natural landscapes. It is home to some of the largest glaciers in Europe, and most active volcanoes in the world. Tourism is, therefore, a vital segment of the country’s economy, generating about 10% of Icelandic GDP in 2016 according to Statistics Iceland. Visitor numbers grew by an impressive 24.2% to 2.2 million in 2017 (several times the country’s population of 334,000).

“Tourism has played a very important role in reviving the Icelandic economy in the past decade since the banking crash,” says Björn Öli Hauksson, CEO Isavia. “Keflavik Airport has played a pivotal role in promoting Iceland as a tourist destination rivalled by few others. Airlines have increasingly seen Keflavik as a hub bridging Europe and North America. With connections becoming easier with ever-increasing destination options, Keflavik Airport is fast becoming the ideal way to connect the continents.”

The recent connection to Dallas/Fort Worth by three carriers – Icelandair, WOW air and American Airlines – is yet another important building block for the future. “Our biggest markets are the US and UK. We now have all of the North American ‘Big 4’ – Delta, American, United, Air Canada – operating to Iceland. We are also experiencing a lot of growth from Asia and see a definite opportunity there. Our main goals now are to maintain growth and look for new opportunities, for example a direct Asian service.”

Keflavik Airport has experienced rapid growth in passenger numbers – from 4.8 million in 2015 to a projected 10.4 million in 2018. There are a number of reasons for this success. One is airlines’ increasing use of widebody aircraft, which has resulted in higher passenger load factors.

“Then there is the positioning of Keflavik as a hub, which is facilitated by fast turnarounds and short connection times,” Hauksson explains. “Keflavik is a large airport with capacity available at off peak times,” Hauksson says. “This is something we have utilised and, as of spring 2017, we have offered an off-peak incentive to try and get better use of the terminal infrastructure, release pressure from the peaks, and get a better overall operational efficiency.”

Of course, such rapid growth presents operational challenges, and Isavia has invested tens of billions of Icelandic kronur in construction projects to meet this. Continued development is on the cards. Design of two major terminal expansions will commence this summer, with construction to start in 2019. “The first phase includes expansion of the north terminal to the east, which will host completely new baggage screening facilities,” says Hauksson. “The expansion will only be on the basement level, and is tactically-placed to be able to serve its purpose within the scope of the airport’s masterplan. The size of the baggage screening basement is expected to be around 8,000sqm.”

Secondly, the connection corridor between the north terminal and south satellite is to be widened, along with a substantial expansion of the north terminal to the south. The widening of the corridor will bring hugely improved waiting areas for the gates located in the corridor, and open up the possibility of new bus gates.

Phase 2 will see construction of pier east and, in the longer-term, pier west, which is included in the airport’s masterplan. “The expansion will host a centralised passport control, as well as a significantly larger commercial area in the north terminal, where the food & beverage selection, in particular, will be increased,” Hauksson adds. “The widening of the connection corridor, and expansion of the north terminal to the south, are expected to be around 25,000sqm spread over three floors.”

The first phase of Keflavik’s major development plan involves an investment of some €245 million. The second phase, which includes the pier east and a new passenger processing terminal, along with airfield improvements, is expected to be completed between 2023 and 2025.
Visit HAMburg – Germany’s Gate to the World.

17.6 million passengers at HAM
13.8 million overnight stays in Hamburg
4.5 million visitors at Elbphilharmonie

Hamburg has a new tourist attraction, the Elbphilharmonie.

A total work of art: it combines innovative architecture with an exceptional location, outstanding acoustics and a visionary concert programme.
Qatar has one of the fastest-growing economies in the world. The country is currently striving to boost its profile as a regional hub for tourism, culture, education, science and research, building a more diversified economy away from the hydrocarbons sector. "Hamad International Airport plays a major part in the equation and is positioning itself as the gateway to Qatar, the Gulf and to the world," says Engr. Badr Mohammed Al Meer, COO Hamad International Airport (HIA).

Indeed, the airport’s strategic partnership with Qatar Tourism Authority (QTA) has boosted tourism through visa-free entry to nationals from a total of 80 countries, making Qatar the most “open country” in the region. HIA launched the +Qatar Stopover Programme in partnership with Qatar Tourism Authority and Discover Qatar, an initiative that promotes the country as a stopover destination. HIA and QTA also announced the opening of several tourism information centres and kiosks at the airport in a bid to ensure tourists and visitors enjoy a warm welcome and seamless visitor experience.

This year, Al Meer was appointed as a Regional Board Director of ACI Asia-Pacific, following his tenure as Special Advisor to the Board of ACI Asia-Pacific since 2017. "Joining the council gives me the opportunity to share experiences and exchange best practices with our industry leaders," he comments. "It is also a significant distinction for Qatar’s air transport sector and reflects HIA’s international recognition. At a time which is critical for the aviation industry and the airports sector within it, I aim to contribute, at the Asia-Pacific level, towards the challenges we are facing, such as capacity, security, and the environment, and use our clear advantage of being part of a global organisation to act in an integrated manner. I look forward to collaborating with my peers in the years to come."

Hamad Airport served 35.27 million passengers in 2017 with 3.8% increase in the second half of the year, after the initial
drop in volume in June 2017, due to ongoing operational restrictions. The recovery from this initial downfall is also evident this year. In Q1 2018, the airport handled 8.72 million passengers, 52,244 aircraft movements, and 514,299 tonnes of cargo. “The growing number of passenger and cargo operations this year is testament to our resilience and sustainable airport operations since the blockade,” says Al Meer.

The airport welcomed several new airlines in 2017, including SalamAir, Wataniya Airways, Jazeera Airways, Regent Airways, US-Bangla Airlines, and IndiGo, while Qatar Airways accelerated its global expansion with the launch of 10 new destinations, all to encourage and promote tourism and travel in Qatar, as well as bring passenger growth to the region.

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An interview with Steven Yiu, Acting Deputy Director, Service Delivery, Airport Authority Hong Kong. By Ross Falconer

HKIA airfield transformation to “deliver operational excellence and efficiency”

Hong Kong International Airport (HKIA) has been seeing continuous traffic growth. In 2017, passenger throughput, cargo throughput, and flight movements, all reached new annual heights. During the year, HKIA handled 72.9 million passengers and 420,630 flight movements, while cargo and airmail throughput exceeded five million tonnes for the first time.

These impressive figures meant that, for the eighth consecutive year, HKIA ranked as the world’s busiest cargo airport, and is the world’s third-busiest international passenger airport since 2013. Growth has continued in 2018. Over the first four months of the year, HKIA handled 24.7 million passengers (+3.4%) and 1.6 million tonnes of cargo and air-mail (+4.2%).

“HKIA now handles over 1,100 flights every day,” says Steven Yiu, Acting Deputy Director, Service Delivery, Airport Authority Hong Kong. “In the face of the saturation of the existing two-runway system, HKIA seeks various ways to enhance operations and efficiency before commencement of the ‘Three-runway System’ in 2024, delivering operational excellence and efficiency for better passenger experience, thus initiating the airfield transformation.”

Several key projects are underway as part of the overall airfield transformation:

• Airport-wide vehicle and equipment location tracking: Since 2015, a GPS system utilising RFID technology has been installed on all motorised vehicles and ground service equipment (GSE), enabling more effective management of vehicles.

“The trackers allow users and companies to track the real-time location and status of their vehicles, allowing more efficient deployment of resources,” Yiu explains. “Tracking for non-motorised GSE is expected to be rolled out in 2019.”

• Ramp handling services will be transformed on renewal of licences in July 2018. “For example, the GSE pooling scheme will improve ramp operation efficiency by providing essential GSEs at parking stands for lease to ramp handling operators (RHO). Centralised arrival and transfer baggage unloading services, scheduled to commence in July, will enhance service efficiency at the near-saturated baggage handling facility. Also, a performance-based licence fee mechanism will be introduced, reducing fees for operators that have achieved above-target performances to encourage better services.”
Virtual reality training facilities are being developed to provide all-weather, round-the-clock training facilities for various ramp operations. Air bridge operation training will commence later this year, with other training to follow.

An automated foreign object debris (FOD) detection system is in place and commenced full operation in April to provide uninterrupted scanning of FOD on HKIA’s runways.

On-time performance: Airport Collaborative Decision Making is implemented at HKIA, enabling airport stakeholders to work together and share updated and accurate operational data, including statistics on ramp operation and aircraft movements, optimising work processes and coordination of resources to boost operational efficiency.

Airport Authority Hong Kong is actively involving community stakeholders to collaborate on a technology trial to devise location trackers for non-motorised GSE. “The proof-of-concept trial will focus on the deployment of new technology, including NB-IoT, LoRA and Bluetooth technology for airport-wide non-motorised GSE tracking,” says Yu. “Collaboration with major stakeholders, including RHo and Cargo Terminal Operators, for the installation of trial units on pallet dollies will be kick-started by mid-2018. Equipment location data will be collected for further evaluation of system performance and potential large-scale implementation.”

Meanwhile, an operational modelling tool has been developed to forecast and simulate the daily operational flow and peaks of the baggage handling system. This enables the baggage handling team to better predict the peak load and usage of different components, such as the early bag store, baggage sorters, and arrival reclaim carousels, throughout the day. “The benefit is more dynamic resource allocation through advance planning, resulting in improved efficiency,” Yu comments.

A truly seamless end-to-end experience

A similarly progressive approach is being applied to the passenger journey from kerb to gate, through application of the latest technologies to streamline airport processes. For example, the self-bag drop service introduced in 2016 reduces the processing time from 2-3 minutes at traditional check-in counters to just 60 seconds. 120 self-bag drop counters have been installed at the airport.

“A truly seamless experience from check-in to boarding at HKIA,” says Yu. “After validating identity, the passengers’ face will become the single token to pass through multiple checkpoints from security to immigration, and to boarding. Biometric-enabled auto gates will be installed. The complete end-to-end service is expected to roll out in phases from the second half of 2018 until 2020.”

The HKG My Flight mobile app is central to the digital offer, providing end-to-end airport information and services for travellers, including real-time flight status updates, as well as transport, shopping and dining information. Utilising the iBeacon, the app can alert passengers about their current location in the airport, and time needed to get to their boarding gate by the fastest route. The app also provides augmented reality wayfinding and signage translation, with over 10 languages to be supported in the near future.

Meanwhile, HKIA has launched the smart luggage tag, MyTAG. “When MyTAG is paired with HKG My Flight, passengers will receive notifications when their checked bags are about to arrive at the baggage reclaim carousel,” Yu explains. “Passengers could freshen up, shop in duty free, or sit back and relax before their baggage is ready for collection, without having to crowd at the carousel or anxiously watch for their baggage to come out.”

HKIA also strives to be one of the greenest airports in the world, and is accredited at Level 3 Optimisation of ACI’s Airport Carbon Accreditation. The airport reduced carbon emissions by 25.6% by 2015, compared with 2008 levels, which surpassed the original reduction target of 25% set in 2010. “HKIA and its business partners further pledge to reduce airport-wide carbon intensity by 10% by 2020, as compared to 2015 levels,” says Yu. “HKIA was recently presented with the Platinum award in the ACI Asia-Pacific Green Airports Recognition 2018 for its outstanding achievements in environmental projects.”
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LG Electronics provides exceptional visual experiences for modern airports and passengers with traditional display ratio of 16:9 up to 86”/88” Ultra Stretch formats and more. LG’s exclusive OLED Signage are your optimal solution for the highest picture quality and flexible format. We work to exceed your expectations.

Airport Business: What digital signage solutions does LG offer to airports?

**DP Kim, Vice President, LG Information Display Overseas Sales & Marketing:** Well, to start with we have a large range of Flight Information Display Systems (FIDS) showing real-time arrival and departure information. These FIDS-signage solutions use In Plane Switching (IPS) technology, which means that it doesn’t matter from which angle passengers read the flight information, the signs will always be clear. From 2018, LG provides FIDS displays with built-in Open Pluggable Specification (OPS), requiring only one power supply to power the display as well as the OPS-kit.

We also added haze-treated displays and video walls to our line-up. Both offer the best viewing experience with a much lower reflection, so that passengers can always read the information whatever the lighting conditions. Besides airport-specific displays, LG offers other signage solutions that are designed for use in and around high traffic areas – from outdoor to retail signage solutions. One of the most innovative products is LG’s Ultra Narrow Bezel Video Wall. This product ensures clear picture quality and is favourable for large video walls installed in large public spaces.

**AB: What changes do you foresee for airports in the coming years and what solutions does LG offer to meet these future demands?**

**DP Kim:** We envisage airports to be places where people want to go and spend time, instead of associating them with stressful journeys. In the coming years, signage will also be even more entwined with architecture.

**AB: How does LG ensure excellent performance that is unaffected by external factors, such as sunlight, dust or humidity?**

**DP Kim:** LG’s haze-treated screens reduce reflections and are capable of providing clear images at all times, both during the day in natural light and at night in artificial light. The products also offer protection against other external factors, such as sunlight, dust or humidity. These innovations have contributed to the success of LG in other industries dealing with similar challenging conditions, such as restaurants and outdoor.

**Digital signage solutions to cope with rapid airport growth**

With air traffic expanding rapidly, airports need clear and effective signage solutions performing non-stop. **DP Kim, Vice President, LG Information Display Overseas Sales & Marketing, explains.**
Hong Kong International Airport (HKIA) has a global network covering over 220 destinations worldwide. HKIA is one of the busiest aviation hubs in the world which handled 72.9 million passenger trips and moved over 5 million tonnes of cargo and air mail in 2017. HKIA is committed to sustainable growth and development, and aspires to be the finest in the world.
Travellers today seek a fast and efficient airport experience. For Vision-Box, providing a continuous, stress-free flow, combined with a comfortable environment and enjoyable interactions, is the most important aspect of its strategy. This has, indeed, been translated into the company’s 2018 motto ‘Transforming the Passenger Lifestyle.’ "Airports are becoming small cities, and it is now time to offer a new lifestyle for those micro-societies, where there’s no one-size-fits-all approach. Everyone’s unique lifestyle is to be rewarded," explains Miguel Leitmann, CEO Vision-Box.

As part of the new strategy, Vision-Box has also introduced a new line of products using the Internet of Things (IoT), biometrics technology and artificial intelligence (AI) to empower travellers with a ‘one-identity’ experience by eliminating travel documents, while prioritising the protection and privacy of their information. "Additionally, it equips stakeholders with interactive decision-making, and real-time monitoring of the passenger journey, unleashing an unprecedented usage of available information. That’s what ‘Airport 4.0’ is about," says Leitmann. The company is working with Amsterdam Airport Schiphol and Sydney Airport to transform the airport ecosystem. The concept is powered by the use of biometric recognition devices. "We are transforming the airport ecosystem to a digital Seamless Airport. The use of biometric recognition devices and digital interfaces enables a document-free, self-service passage controlled by frictionless passenger-centric clearance points," Leitmann comments.

"Achieving symmetry between security and passenger experience"

Miguel Leitmann, CEO Vision-Box, interviewed by Marta Dimitrova.

Vision-Box has signed a long-framework agreement with Amsterdam Schiphol to implement a biometric-based seamless passenger walkthrough journey, which will modernise the airport experience as part of its ongoing Digital Airport Program. "It will facilitate the entire traveller journey by increasing throughput, and eliminating bottlenecks, while expanding terminal capacity within the existing footprint," Leitmann explains. Meanwhile, Sydney Airport will be supplied with the continents’ first automated contactless clearance, where the passenger’s face also becomes their passport. The passenger’s facial features are captured during check-in, after which the traveller can move through the subsequent checkpoints simply by having their face recognised. The elimination of having to show a passport or boarding pass substantially reduces queues and passenger stress, while increasing security. The industry is increasingly focusing on achieving the perfect balance between ensuring security and providing the best passenger experience. "New digital technology is proving that enhanced security and passenger experience do not have to be mutually-exclusive," says Leitmann. "Our mission, as an innovative human-centric company, has been to develop a technology portfolio creating solid value-for-money solutions that contribute to achieving a symmetry between both needs. We pioneered a process that establishes a trusted personalised experience by facilitating checkpoint clearance using a biometric single token. A stakeholder cooperative model, using real-time data management, melds ‘what the traveller carries’ with ‘who the traveller is’. We must eliminate the legacy silos the industry has been carrying for decades.”

Peeking into the future, Leitmann predicts a transformation of traditional paper ID’s into digital identification, carried in mobile devices, which will completely modify how travellers move through airports and how the aviation industry identifies individuals. "A key question to consider, as aviation industry digitalisation accelerates, is how governments and industry can develop a multi-stakeholder approach that defines the appropriate use of personal data. Our Orchestra identity management platform addresses this problem with its Privacy by Design certification. The system meets the levels of privacy and security enacted by new rules anywhere on the globe, including GDPR. It offers ideal interoperability and compatibility virtually worldwide, for a secure biometric identification, empowering a much faster and seamless experience, while assuring data privacy.”

Meanwhile, apart from innovative partnerships with major airports, airlines and governments in Seamless Flow programmes, Leitmann is also looking forward to the introduction of Vision-Box’s new digital ID projects that have the potential to be “game-changers.”
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Düsseldorf Airport is the largest in North-Rhine Westphalia (NRW), with a 60% market share, and gateway to the world for the most populated German federal state. The airport is an international trading centre for people and goods, for know-how, ideas, technical and cultural inspirations, and an important economic factor. Located at the heart of one of Europe’s strongest economic regions, and serving 200 destinations in 50 countries, Düsseldorf Airport plays a significant role in meeting the mobility needs of NRW’s citizens and economy.

“Air traffic has a positive effect on the labour market and facilitates economic growth,” says Thomas Schnalke, CEO Düsseldorf Airport. “Düsseldorf’s success in bringing top companies to the area – such as Mitsubishi Electric, Huawei, Kyocera, LG or 3M – is related to the airport’s proximity. Düsseldorf Airport helps create a targeted network of economic zones – for example through intercontinental air traffic, with non-stop connections to New York, Atlanta, Chicago, Dubai, Tokyo, and Abu Dhabi. Nearly 100 weekly long-haul flights to up to 25 intercontinental destinations connect NRW to the world.”

Düsseldorf Airport City underlines the airport’s support for businesses in the region. The modern office and business park is located on a 23-hectare area close to the terminal. Almost all of the properties are occupied, and there are plans to further expand the business park by five hectares. Meanwhile, traffic is also growing. The airport achieved its eighth consecutive record in 2017, handling 24.6 million passengers and exceeding the previous year’s growth rate of 4.8%. Impressively, it remains on its existing growth trajectory despite the bankruptcy of its biggest airline partner Air Berlin, which led to the loss of over 30% of all flights.

“Thanks to intense discussions with airline partners, the loss was addressed within six months and, today, the range of routes is back to the pre-Air Berlin bankruptcy level,” Schnalke explains. “Indeed, Eurowings, Europe’s fastest-growing airline, has stationed the largest part of its fleet in Düsseldorf.”

**Carbon reduction and electric mobility**

A commitment to environmental sustainability is at the heart of Düsseldorf Airport’s development strategy. It is accredited at Level 3 Optimisation of ACI’s Airport Carbon Accreditation and has already reached its target of reducing CO2 emissions to 2.55 kilograms per traffic unit, which was originally planned by 2020. Indeed, Schnalke comments that the airport has even exceeded that goal. “That means our carbon reduction initiatives have been successful. For example, the airport operates a solar plant, an absorption chiller, and two cogeneration units. Meanwhile, in 2019 the airport will be connected to the district heating grid of Düsseldorf. The terminal and other buildings will then use climate-neutral heat. Fine dust and nitrogen oxide emissions will be reduced noticeably, and carbon emissions will decrease by 70%.”

The airport is also increasingly relying on electric mobility, with over 30 electrically-powered vehicles to be operational onsite by 2020. Added to this will be increased use of LED lighting, and optimisation of the terminal’s air conditioning.

“Düsseldorf Airport is an example of a successful Public-Private Partnership, as it is one of the most economically successful airports in all of Europe,” Schnalke adds. “Thanks to its effective and lean structure, Düsseldorf Airport can react quickly and flexibly to the demands of the market.”
Perfectly Seasoned
Malta International Airport has been busy developing its terminal facilities to deliver a 5-star customer experience. According to Alan Borg, CEO Malta International Airport, 2017 was the airport’s fastest-growing year, as well as the eighth record year of uninterrupted growth in passenger numbers. The arrival of Malta’s six-millionth passenger on the last day of the year meant that traffic increased by almost one million passengers in just 12 months.

“The outstanding performance in 2017 was the result of persistent and ongoing efforts made by the team at Malta Airport, together with the main tourism stakeholders, to drop a pin on the island and keep it connected to the rest of the world through a growing airline family operating new routes and better frequencies,” Borg comments. “2018 is forecast to close with around 6.5 million passengers and promises to be another exciting chapter in the airport’s success story.”

2018 is also an important year in that it will mark the completion of the airport’s Terminal Reconfiguration Project. “Through this €12 million investment in the heart of Malta’s terminal facilities, the airport will be better poised to deliver the excellent service it promises to every one of its guests,” says Borg. “This project is a testament to the company’s commitment to continually invest in an airport that can continue to serve the island, while flying high among its European peers in the long-term.”

Some of the main improvements made to the terminal so far include the new La Valette lounge, which has already won a Priority Pass commendation since its unveiling in 2017, a central security area that now occupies double the original footprint, providing a brighter, more efficient passenger processing environment, eight additional check-in desks, and a new baggage handling system. Besides providing more baggage handling capacity, this system can be extended in the event of future terminal expansion. Thanks to the company’s recently-approved master plan, such expansion is on the cards in the not-too-distant future.

Malta’s master plan provides for the future development of the terminal to equip the airport to handle further growth together with the construction of more office buildings and landside facilities over the long-term. In the next five years alone, the company plans to channel at least €100 million into terminal improvements, a multi-storey car park, and the SkyParks Business Centre II development.

Borg explained that, in addition to office space, SkyParks II will introduce a business hotel in close proximity to the airport. He added that the primary aim of this development is to reinforce the airport’s non-aviation segment, which has become an important contributor to the company’s revenues and its long-term sustainability.

Investment is an important pillar of Malta Airport’s corporate strategy. “Serious investment in our infrastructure and our team of hard-working individuals enables us to step-up the game with regard to the quality of our guests’ airport experience,” says Borg.

In 2017 Malta overcame the challenges presented by construction works in every corner of the terminal, to secure a prestigious second place from among its peers in ACI’s Airport Service Quality awards for 2017. Borg describes this accolade as "a clear vote of confidence from the airport’s guests, which heartens all the team to keep pursuing excellence, while aiming at being the best airport in Europe."
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More than 19,000 foreign companies in North Rhine-Westphalia

Highest concentration of global market leaders within Germany

70 airlines serving more than 200 nonstop destinations worldwide

24.6 million passengers in 2017

One Airport
Intuitive self-bag tagging implemented at Maastricht Aachen

Borry Vrieling, founder and Managing Director, eezeetags, interviewed by Ross Falconer.

The prevalence of self-service technologies to streamline the passenger experience is growing exponentially. From booking and checking-in online or at a kiosk, self-service initiatives have expanded to include bag drop points, e-gates and self-boarding gates, for example, and airports are increasingly implementing these solutions.

In May 2018, Maastricht Aachen International Airport introduced eezeetags’ intuitive bag tags. Traffic at Maastricht is very seasonal, serving holiday package carriers such as Corendon and Sunweb, while Ryanair also operates at the airport.

“The strong seasonally-oriented operation puts a special challenge on staff, many of whom are employed part-time during peak season,” says Borry Vrieling, founder and Managing Director, eezeetags. “The airport was looking for a way to make things easier, not only for the passengers, but also for the younger and less experienced staff, taking away some of the time needed for training.”

Indeed, Maastricht Aachen International Airport chose to work with eezeetags for its desk-operated, agent-assisted bag drop. “In our opinion, we developed eezeetags for the inexperienced passenger that only flies once a year,” Vrieling explains. “However, the use of eezeetags speeds up the process so much that reports have come back to us that staff are able to check-in a full flight up to half an hour quicker. They especially like the fact that they create no waste behind the desk, as there is no backing paper to pull away.”

The operation at Maastricht was rolled out in collaboration with Bagchain, which provides check-in solutions for airports. Four printing stations have been commissioned, where passengers can scan their boarding passes, print out their eezeetags bag tag, and self-tag their bags.

Meanwhile, in the US, leading cruise line Royal Caribbean has undertaken a proof of concept with airport technology company IER to tag the bags of passengers arriving at the ship. This has traditionally been a manual process. “In combination with the IER technology and eezeetags, this process is much simplified, speeding up the whole end-to-end process, enhancing again the passenger experience,” says Vrieling.

Importantly, this potentially paves the way for implementation of the technology at US airports. “More airline-related tests will be conducted in the second half of 2018 in the US, enabled by the upcoming biometrics, making a non-assisted bag drop possible within the boundaries of the TSA regulations,” Vrieling adds. “While still behind what is happening in Europe, this new technology might be the real start of self-service bag drop in the US.”

Another innovative application has been developed for checking-in baggage at the gate. “We all have witnessed by now that you bring a carry-on to the airport, but once boarding the plane you find out that the overhead baggage compartments do not have enough space to carry all the items, and your cabin case needs to go in the hold,” says Vrieling. “For a gate agent, checking carry-on luggage is a stressful job. Not only are they confronted with lengthy discussions with passengers, but the administrative process is quite cumbersome. The agent manually writes a bag tag and must enter the pre-printed tag number manually into the reservation system. This process can take 2-3 minutes per passenger or bag.”

Bagchain has developed a so-called “gate-printer” that automates this process. By scanning the passenger’s boarding pass, they update the reservation directly in the DCS (departure control system) and print an eezeetags bag tag. “The use of eezeetags at this point is maybe even more important than the terminal, since you do not want to carry waste after checking-in a flight,” Vrieling comments. “It also speeds up the process – within 10 seconds a carry-on is identified, and passengers that volunteer can easily do this themselves.”

The solution will first be seen at Eindhoven Airport for Transavia.
Oman Airports
Growing Gateways to Beauty and Opportunity
Praha Airport reached the record milestone of 15 million passengers in 2017 and has announced extensive development plans going beyond 2035. Among the projects that will be realised over the next two decades are a new central security check area, new check-in desks, new aircraft stands, an extended terminal and a brand new parallel runway.

“We have recently introduced our development plans covering the period of time to 2035 and in some cases beyond,” explains Vaclav Rehor, CEO Prague Airport. “The plans can be split into three phases. The short-term development plan is focused on increasing passenger capacity within the current shape of the airport. That phase is happening right now. Mid-term development will include the first part of a new Terminal 2 and the construction of a new parallel runway. These two major projects should be realised approximately between 2022 and 2026 and are designed to increase the airport’s capacity up to 21 million passengers.”

“The long-term plan will involve the development of public areas in close proximity to the terminals – the so-called Airport City North and Airport City South – and this should be completed around 2035. We expect passenger numbers to double by the time the long-term development will be in progress,” continues Rehor. “In 2026, which is the year we expect the parallel runway to open, the number of passengers is forecast to increase up to 21 million.”

“The combined capacity of Terminals 1 and 2 is currently 15.5 million passengers per year, which is a limit we have already reached. However, in the last couple of years we have been working hard on increasing the capacity of the airport within the current shape of both terminals,” adds Rehor. “This year, for example, we are just about to open a new central security area which will increase security check capacity by up to 40%. We will also shortly open new high capacity carousels for checked baggage, as well as a new gate for long-haul aircraft. These developments and other projects should allow us to handle more than 17 million passengers this year, and to also manage potential growth in the coming years. The new parallel runway is absolutely necessary if we want to grow. Even now in peak times, we are struggling to satisfy demand from airlines for the most attractive landing slots. The new runway will be 3,220m long and will increase movement capacity at peak times by up to 50%.”

Harnessing digital developments

“Our development plans are based on two pillars: construction and technology,” says Rehor. “Within the technological pillar we are looking for new innovative digital solutions, as we are aware that the future is not just about concrete and glass, but primarily about new technologies which will be relevant for passengers in 10 or 20 years’ time. When it comes to digital, we are focusing on five areas: customer experience, future security, future mobility, virtual shopping and seamless passenger journeys.”

Looking to the airport’s future route network, Rehor identifies several markets with potential. “Prague is a destination-driven airport, which means our operational growth depends mostly on inbound demand. That is the reason we are looking primarily at markets with high inbound potential. On the other hand, a well-established route network satisfying incoming demand can also support growth of the outbound market. Destinations such as Hong Kong or Tokyo have significant inbound potential for us, while Bangkok is part of our outbound strategy as well. We aim to have a balance between full-service and low-cost carriers. Currently, low-cost carriers represent about 30% of our traffic, while legacy airlines hold a 70% share. That is a perfect proportion we want to maintain.”
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Managing queues and improving security: an intelligent video-based solution at Budapest Airport

Waiting times at airport security checkpoints are often unpredictable, making them a headache for travellers and Security Managers. The right technology can help – such as an intelligent solution that keeps lines from getting too long at Budapest Airport.

As part of a pilot project, the estimated waiting time is displayed on a screen at Terminal 2A. There are two checkpoints, one for each terminal, and travellers can choose where to get in line based on the current waiting time for each. For instance, if one of the checkpoints is very crowded, but there is hardly anyone at the other, travellers can go to the latter to save time.

"The challenge lay in distributing travellers evenly between the two checkpoints for the respective terminals," says István Szabo, Security Director, Budapest Airport. It wasn't necessary to invest in a wholly new camera infrastructure to make this possible – instead, five new Bosch cameras were integrated into the existing network.

The video cameras deliver excellent image quality, providing the right material for further data processing using an algorithm. This allows the solution to recognise how many people are waiting at each checkpoint entrance and when they pass through the exits. In turn, the solution can calculate an average waiting time and display this to travellers who haven’t passed through security yet.

Szabo wants to further expand this service: "The waiting times should be integrated into our airport app, so that travellers can receive this information when they’re on their way to the airport."

Maarten Wings, Global Vertical Manager Airports, Bosch Security Systems, adds: "It is great to see how Bosch cameras helped to turn the need of the airport into an innovative and reliable solution."

Arconas is launching two new airport furniture solutions, the inPower hub and Place wireless charging tablet.

The company has seamlessly integrated wireless charging technology into the tablet arm of its Place seating series, allowing users to conveniently and safely charge their compatible phones. The unit complies with the latest version 1.2 Wireless Power Consortium (WPC) standard, also known as Qi, a widely popular industry standard used by major smartphone companies including Apple, Samsung, LG, Sony, Google, and Blackberry.

An icon with the words 'wireless charging' identifies the available technology, inviting passengers to easily charge their mobile phones from the comfort of their seat.

Meanwhile, the inPower hub is a sleek wall-mounted counter system designed with an integrated inPower flex 3 module for passengers to charge their personal electronics.

The inPower hub takes advantage of unused wall space to create a calming respite area, with ample room for short-term multi-taskers to pause, work, eat, take a phone call, and recharge. The counter system, along with an optional noise dampening panel, offers an area for visual and acoustic privacy.

"The inPower hub was created to bring additional counter space and power solutions to unused walls and corridors," says Lynn Gordon, Vice President of Airport Solutions, Arconas. "It creates a quiet oasis where passengers can relax, charge, work, or take a phone call at ease."

The inPower hub was designed by Fig40, a leading Canadian industrial design studio, and can be mounted at three different heights: wheelchair, standing, and seated. Mounted below the counter is an inPower flex 3 module that includes two AC receptacles and two USB-C ports. Multiple inPower hubs can be mounted side by side and the power modules can be connected through a single power outlet to maximise power options for passengers without incurring additional coring costs.

Arconas is exhibiting at this year’s ACI EUROPE/World General Assembly, Congress & Exhibition, and at ACI-NA in Nashville, where visitors can learn more.
"Allow Prague to charm you. You know you want to be enchanted by her. She is gorgeous and magical. Which is why 8.5 million foreign visitors came to see her in 2017, resulting in a remarkable 4.5% annual growth in tourism. According to numerous surveys, she’s among the TOP 5 most popular European destinations. Well, her being the capital of the Czech Republic, the 6th most peaceful country in the world, also helps."
The new Oslo Airport was officially opened on 27 April 2017. Today, the airport boasts one of the most modern, customer and environmentally friendly facilities in Europe, with the capacity to handle up to 32 million passengers per year.

“Our aim is to be one of the top 10 airports in Europe, and this aim inspires us every day,” says Øyvind Hasaas, Airport Director, Oslo Airport.

Passenger numbers grew by 7.6% to 27.5 million last year, driven by the improving Norwegian economy and Oslo’s attractiveness as both a leisure and business destination.

“We don’t measure our success in growth alone. We measure our success in the daily feedback from the passengers, airlines and commercial partners,” Hasaas explains. “We want to deliver a top European airport experience in all parts of the value chain. If we succeed, we expect growth to be a consequence that will benefit all parts of our business. This holistic thinking gives every partner at the airport an incentive to deliver a great product every day, as we are all dependant on each other to produce the best possible result. If we succeed together, we are rewarded together.”

Indeed, one year on from the opening of the new terminal, the airport has seen a rise in every area of customer satisfaction, and in April 2018 it was pronounced the best airport in the Nordic countries in the ACI Airport Service Quality (ASQ) survey.

This year, Oslo is expecting to reach about 29 million passengers, driven by its strategy to create a great customer experience for airlines, commercial partners, and passengers.

Serving the Norwegian economy

Oslo Airport’s primary focus is to serve the Norwegian economy with top international connectivity. Among its main targets is to cater for strong demand for connectivity to Asia and the US. Interest in Norway as a holiday destination has increased among South Korean travellers. Compared to 2016, there was a 36.7% growth in South Koreans’ overnight stays in Norway in 2017. As a result, Asiana Airlines is launching a summer charter route on 10 July with flights on Tuesdays and Saturdays between Seoul and Oslo Airport until 29 August. Additionally, Korean Air is increasing the number of its charter flights between Seoul and Oslo from eight in 2017 to 11 in 2018.

Over the last few years, Oslo Airport has become a major hub for air cargo airlines in the Nordic region. Moreover, an important factor for Norway is its seafood exports. Oslo Airport saw a huge increase in air cargo in 2017, the biggest volumes of which were exports of fresh Norwegian seafood. Several new cargo airlines, including Atlas Air, CAL, Turkish Cargo and DHL, added Oslo Airport to their networks last year, reducing the onward journey length of Norwegian seafood and significantly increasing capacity.

“Apart from working tirelessly to become one of the best airports in Europe, we have several projects that are important for us and for the value creation of Norway. We have plans of developing a top modern seafood centre that will improve the way we industrialise logistics with the seafood transportation, making sure Norwegian seafood can reach international markets fresher and better than ever before.”

Hasaas concludes: “We are continuously working to identify aspects of our business that make us relevant for Norwegian business. We are the main airport of Norway and hub to all the fantastic leisure and business opportunities that exist in the cities all across our 45-airport network.”

“Delivering a top European airport experience in all parts of the value chain”

An interview with Øyvind Hasaas, Airport Director, Oslo Airport, by Marta Dimitrova.
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Gatwick Airport has launched an end-to-end biometrics trial, where personal data collected at the airport’s self-service bag drops will be recognised by new self-boarding gates. The technology is designed to simplify and speed up the process for passengers and reduce the risk of human error.

The trial is being run in partnership with easyJet and the new self-boarding technology will identify each passenger and verify that their passport, face and boarding pass all match, which will take less than 20 seconds. Passengers who wish to take part in the trial, but who are travelling without luggage and do not need to use a self-service bag drop unit, will be able to have their data collected at the entrance to the boarding gate room. The trial will run for at least three months so that around 10,000 passengers take part on 43 Gatwick routes.

Gatwick will be looking at how long each interaction takes, what this means for queue times, how it simplifies the passenger journey, how passengers interact with the technology, and how intuitive the process is. The faster, more efficient process also has the potential to improve aircraft departure times. Once all the data is gathered, the technology will be adapted and adjusted before taking the idea forward for airport-wide implementation.

The board-ing process has traditionally been handled by airline staff, but can now be automated with this technology, reducing queue times and freeing up airline staff to assist travellers. “Gatwick prides itself on providing innovative solutions to enhance the passenger experience at every touch point,” says Chris Woodroofe, Chief Operating Officer, Gatwick Airport. “With the rate of growth we have experienced, it is essential we are able to find more efficient ways of processing passengers through the airport safely and securely. Self-boarding technology is the obvious next piece in the jigsaw following extensive investment in our automated check-in and security processing areas.”

Brussels Airport Company and De Lijn have given the go-ahead for the introduction of a self-driving electric bus on the airport campus. After the summer of 2019, tests without passengers will begin at 2getthere’s test site in Utrecht. The shuttle bus will then arrive at Brussels Airport at the beginning of 2020 for further tests.

In 2015, Brussels Airport Company and bus operator De Lijn entered into a partnership with the intent to deploy self-driving shuttles at the airport. After further study and the choice of the manufacturer, both companies have given their full support to the pilot project for testing an autonomous shuttle on the airport grounds.

“As an intermodal hub where various means of transport connect seamlessly with each other, Brussels Airport is constantly studying new possibilities for expanding this hub in a sustainable way,” says Arnaud Feist, CEO Brussels Airport Company. “This technologically innovative project, deploying a self-driving electric bus operating a fixed route, also fits in with our environmental commitment to keep the impact on our surroundings as low as possible.”

Minister for Mobility Ben Weyts adds: “In other countries driverless vehicles are already operational, but that is often in a separate lane with a steward on board. Here, the aim is to have the self-driving shuttle drive autonomously on the public roads. This is cutting-edge technology that really appeals to the imagination. We are making an investment in the future, in greater efficiency and in a more attractive range of public transport.”
Heathrow Airport, Jaguar and travel services company WeKnowGroup have signed a deal that will see a fleet of up to 200 fully-electric Jaguar I-PACE vehicles made available to passengers for travel to and from Heathrow.

The service, which will go live in summer 2018, will create the largest chauffeur-driven fleet of electric vehicles in the UK and support Heathrow’s commitment to improving air quality around the airport.

Initially the fleet will be made up of 50 I-PACEs, with the option to add a further 150 cars in the next 12 months. This fleet will support up to 1,000 electric vehicle journeys to and from Heathrow each day – saving over eight tonnes of nitrogen oxides (NOx) emissions each year. To support the service, WeKnowGroup will be installing a dedicated charging hub at Heathrow, which will be the largest in the UK.

Designed and engineered by Jaguar Land Rover in the UK, the all-electric I-PACE carries a state-of-the-art 90kWh Lithium-ion battery and is capable of a range of 298 miles. Emma Gilthorpe, Executive Director at Heathrow, says: “We will not compromise on our commitments to the environment and our local community and we remain focused on addressing the impact road vehicles have on air quality on the roads around the airport. These I-PACEs are the latest in a long line of initiatives we are taking to ensure that we do not force a choice between the economy and the environment – and that we can deliver benefits for both.”

Munich Airport has embarked on a new future-focused project, LabCampus, which will serve as an innovation centre at the airport campus.

The visionary project will foster cooperation between companies and industries by bringing together leading experts, global companies and startups at the heart of the airport.

“There are 150,000 people at Munich Airport every day: passengers, employees and visitors who are potential customers, business partners and visitors for LabCampus,” says Thomas Weyer, CFO and Director of Infrastructure at Munich Airport. “Nowhere else will you find better connectivity to customers and partners.”

The new campus will offer a unique meeting point for high-tech industries and key sectors working in such areas as aerospace, digitalisation, energy and mobility. Potential key partners include companies such as Siemens and Design Offices and research organisations including Fraunhofer Institute, Friedrich Alexander Universität Erlangen-Nürnberg and UnternehmerTUM, the startup incubator of the Technical University of Munich.

Munich Airport will serve as the curator, as FMG, the airport operating company, will ensure the appropriate mix of industries and companies bring the right partners together and develop the campus infrastructure and utilities. FMG will establish a separate subsidiary to manage the project.

Dr. Michael Kerkhof, CEO and President of Munich Airport, comments: “In the age of globalisation and digitalisation, airports have to blaze new trails to find and retain competitive advantages. In that regard, LabCampus is a step that anticipates the future.”
ATHENS INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT

Athens, the Greek metropolis and one of the oldest cities in the world, has countless stories to tell and offers an exciting mix of ancient history and a modern Mediterranean lifestyle.

The City of Athens, AEGEAN, and Athens International Airport, joined forces earlier this year to form the Athens Tourism Partnership. The aim is to promote Athens as an ideal, contemporary city-break destination, especially in spring, autumn, and winter.

"The promotion of the city as a final destination is a strategic target of the airport in order to strengthen the city’s foothold in the international tourist market on a year-round basis," says Dr Yiannis Paraschis, CEO Athens International Airport. "Joining forces with the City of Athens and AEGEAN is vital for the consolidation of a common effort, which needs to be sustained with the support of each and every party throughout the whole chain of tourism providers and stakeholders."

The airport handled a record 21.7 million passengers in 2017, with a growing network of 137 destinations operated by 60 airlines. Among the most significant additions to Athens’ connectivity was the launch of direct long-haul connections to Beijing, New York and Singapore.

The dynamic trend has continued in 2018, with 10.9% growth to over eight million passengers in the first five months of the year. While domestic traffic grew slightly (+1.2%), there was a sharp increase of 16.2% in the number of international travellers. Additionally, to date, foreign residents’ international arrivals grew by 25%. The figures for the summer season are certainly impressive, with four new airlines (Cyprus Airways, Flynas, Primera Air, Wizz Air), a new based airline (Volotea), 49 new routes, 24 new destinations and 320 new weekly flights. Frequencies have also been increased on 26 existing destinations, notably Air China adding a third weekly flight on its Beijing route, and Scoot with a fourth weekly frequency to Singapore.

"Reduced ecological footprint"

A significant achievement for the airport last year was reaching Level 3+ Neutrality of ACI’s Airport Carbon Accreditation. "By achieving carbon neutrality, Athens International Airport continues to tangibly demonstrate its commitment to the fight against climate change," says Paraschis. "We are proud to be among leading airports, not only as a major economic engine, but also through our reduced ecological footprint thanks to the environmental awareness and complementary efforts of our colleagues and partners across the airport community."

The airport has a progressive environmental agenda. It was one of the first airports to invest in solar technology, building a €20 million photovoltaic park on the airport site, as a source of clean, sustainable power.

"Athens Airport managed to drastically reduce its carbon footprint, from 2005 through 2015, following a years-long effort to diminish energy consumption in its installations, through a number of interventions and investments in more efficient equipment among other actions,"
A significant achievement for the airport last year was reaching Level 3+ Neutrality of ACI’s Airport Carbon Accreditation. Pictured at the certification ceremony are: Olivier Jankovec, Director General, ACI EUROPE; Dr Yiannis Paraschis, CEO Athens International Airport; and Angela Gittens, Director General, ACI World.

“Since the airport’s opening, we measure customer satisfaction systematically and have always scored very high among our European counterparts,” Paraschis explains. “However, this year’s award is a very important distinction on behalf of our passengers, as it rewards our investment programme for the total aesthetic, functional, and commercial upgrade in the terminal areas, a project implemented during the last years. Aiming at always improving customer experience, we shall continue, during 2018-2019, our investment programme with additional works and services for the travellers using our airport.”

Planning of other works are currently underway, relating to operational facilities for departures and arrivals, enhanced passport control for departing passengers, additional check-in and ticket counters, as well as new retail and food & beverage areas.

Meanwhile, renovation of the main terminal building toilet facilities is expected to be finished in October 2018.

At the same time, the Satellite Terminal Building (STB) has undergone a series of operational, commercial and aesthetic upgrades, targeted at improving terminal operations and enhancing passenger satisfaction. The project was completed in May 2018, involving an extensive operational and commercial reconfiguration at all levels of the building. Key upgrades include the creation of a centralised security filter, along with a fully enhanced boarding pass control facility at the centre of the STB basement entrance hall. An attractive and versatile retail environment has also been developed within a considerably larger area in departures, where a walk-through core duty free zone is combined with expanded food & beverage units.

In the same context, the 600m long underground connecting corridor between the main and satellite terminals has been aesthetically-enhanced in terms of offering passengers a dynamic and interesting experience through lighting and digital applications, as well as interactive cultural artworks.
The eyes of the world will be on Russia this summer, as the country hosts the 2018 FIFA World Cup. Moscow will, of course, host many of the games, including one of the semi-finals and the final itself – both at Luzhniki Stadium.

Daniel Burkard, Director External Relations, Deputy Airport Director (Commercial Development), explains that Moscow Domodedovo Airport expects to handle close to a million additional passengers during the month-long tournament. “Our main task will be to keep the queues short, and to process passengers quickly and comfortably, so they have enough time to enjoy the pleasant features of the airport such as our shops or 40 cafés, lounges, bars and restaurants,” he says. “A good example of our tailor-made solutions for FIFA World Cup visitors is that they can use all trains connecting the airport with Moscow’s city centre, including the non-stop AeroExpress, for free, just by showing their stadium tickets and ‘Fan-ID’.”

Indeed, the FIFA World Cup-related traffic will build on passenger numbers that are already performing well. Around 33 million passengers are expected through Moscow Domodedovo in 2018 (30.7 million were handled in 2017). “We have new airline partners launching services to Moscow Domodedovo, and existing airlines increasing frequencies and aircraft size,” Burkard comments. Domodedovo has, nevertheless, experienced some traffic changes since international sanctions were imposed against Russia. “Passenger numbers temporarily went down,” says Burkard. “The reason was not so much the sanctions, which the individual person in Russia does not feel much about, but the economic crisis Russia started to come out of. The Ruble having lost almost half of its value, or let’s better say, the exchange rate having become more realistic, drove a number of Russian holiday airlines out of business. On top of this, the exchange rate made Russians want to explore their own country more than before.”

This is why, in 2018, total passenger numbers are expected to exceed pre-crisis levels, but the split between international and domestic passengers will be different than it was four years ago. “Now we have slightly more domestic passengers. It used to be the other way around,” Burkard notes.

Commenting on the challenges of doing business in Russia during politically difficult times, he adds: “We are a private business, luckily by no means directly affected by the sanctions, and we believe that visitors will continue to come to Russia, and Russians will continue to travel abroad. Doing business, for my part, has not become more difficult since political relations with the West have cooled down. But as a company active in the travel and cargo sector, we of course welcome any improvement of political relations, as it would stimulate more travel and transportation of goods to and via our airport.”
New international terminal and new runway

The airport’s brand-new international terminal opens in phases, beginning in mid-June. It is effectively an extension to the existing terminal, as it forms part of Domodedovo’s “all-under-one-roof concept”, which is designed to make it easy for travellers to reach all terminal areas, check-in facilities, arrival halls, shopping and entertainment locations, without having to leave the building.

“In a climate with temperatures ranging from -35°C to +35°C and above, we would regard anything else as not very customer-friendly,” Burkard explains.

The total size of the new structure is 239,000sqm, which includes 44,000sqm of commercial space (16,000sqm dedicated to retail). “The capacity is at least 15 million additional passengers per year. In the future, all international flights will arrive at and depart from what we internally refer to as T2. Here we will, for the first time at Moscow Domodedovo, segregate arrivals from departures using different levels.”

Travel Retail Domodedovo, a joint venture between Gebr. Heinemann and local company Greenway, won the tender to be the exclusive duty free operator in Domodedovo’s new terminal. It will operate 7,000sqm of retail space – around 4,000sqm in the form of a walkthrough shop directly behind the security checkpoint, and two large areas for various fashion and accessories boutiques.

“Travellers can expect the most modern and customer-friendly airport shopping area in Eastern Europe,” says Burkard. “The range of brands and products will top everything offered in our duty free shops so far. Travel Retail Domodedovo was carefully-selected, following a very detailed process, because of its attractive concept, which has to be looked at in combination with the experience the two companies bring into their joint venture. Russia is not an easy market, but a market very responsive to fresh ideas, prestigious brands and high-quality products. This combination is a perfect match with DME.”

Another important project is the airport’s new runway, which goes into operation in the second half of 2018. “The capacity increase that we will gain doesn’t come directly from additional runway capacity, but rather from the fact that the new runway will be located further away from the terminal building, allowing us to add terminal capacity in that direction in the future,” Burkard explains. “It also comes with a new set of taxiways, including a high-speed taxiway in the location of the current runway number 2. This will speed up operations considerably and give us more capacity without more runways.”

‘DME lab’: an “endless source of creativity”

Moscow Domodedovo is progressive in its approach to the passenger experience. Indeed, DME Chairman, Dr. Dmitry Kamenshchik, initiated the creation of an innovation lab several years ago. Myriad working groups are constantly looking at new technologies, new behaviours, and examples of global best practice from both within and outside the industry.

“We have presentations and coordination meetings on an almost weekly basis, with Dr. Kamenshchik always participating himself,” Burkard comments. “He is not only our Chairman, but also concentrates very much on strategic development and is extremely interested in any form of innovation. Many of the solutions we explore in ’DME lab’ are tested somewhere in the airport under real-life conditions, rather than to relying on reports from testers outside. We employ approximately 18,700 people – this is a sheer endless source of creativity, which we would like to dip into even deeper.”

Looking ahead, the new international part of Domodedovo’s terminal will grow even larger during the next few years. There are also plans to start constructing additional terminal space for domestic flights, with building permission already granted. “This month, we opened our first multi-storey car park, and I am sure it will not remain the only one. Last, but not least, we continue developing the Domodedovo Aerotropolis on 7,000 hectares of land that have been reserved for this. The airport will, in the future, not just be an airport, but be at the heart of a new city development dedicated to business, learning and living. As you can see – we have a lot of plans for the future.”
What can the air transport industry learn from Formula 1? Well, the simple answer is: far more than you might ever have imagined. A year on from the announcement of a collaboration between McLaren Applied Technologies and Deloitte, who have teamed up to build data-driven business products for a variety of industries, Airport Business paid a visit to the McLaren Technology Centre in Woking, UK to find out how this unique relationship can benefit airports, airlines and their partners.

McLaren, which is best known for its Formula 1 and automotive businesses, is keen to share its expertise in engineering, design, sensors, simulations, data and analytics to help organisations in other verticals realise efficiencies and enhance operational performance.

“We’re particularly focusing on where there’s a dynamic environment, a constantly changing picture and where there are people within businesses that have to tackle the task of understanding that picture, see the way forward, and make the right operational decisions,” explained Jim Newton, Global Market Development Director, McLaren Applied Technologies.

Applying Formula 1 thinking to optimise operations in the air transport industry

An interview with Jim Newton, Global Market Development Director, McLaren Applied Technologies, and Martin Bowman, Director, Aviation Technology, Deloitte. By Ryan Ghee

“This is all about helping people make better decisions more often and using technology to support that decision-making process.”

Martin Bowman, Director, Aviation Technology, Deloitte, added: “We felt there must be potential for this within aviation. Aviation is a very dynamic industry, but it’s not always the most joined-up. Organisations tend to exist in data silos, when actually there is a lot of potential if this can feed into a central hub and provide a bigger picture. The ability to use these technologies to run millions of simulations, often in real time, in order to take a data-driven approach to making decisions will allow a step-change in thinking.”

To date, McLaren Applied Technologies and Deloitte have created three proof of concepts for products, two of which are for stakeholders in the air transport sector. The collaboration has grabbed attention partly because of the intriguing parallels between F1 and aviation. “You have to manage and navigate your way through a Formula 1 race, just as you have to manage and navigate your way through the day at an airport to reach the best possible outcome. Each industry is highly regulated, the rules change on a continual basis and they’re both safety critical,” said Newton.

The benefits of a closed loop system

Newton explained that the McLaren Formula 1 team reaps the benefits of a “closed loop system” in which the window between races – which can be as little as one week – is used to analyse the latest performance using data tools, identify what could have been done better, and rapidly implement upgrades.

“It’s fair to say in aviation there isn’t a closed loop system,” Bowman explained. “There isn’t a formal review process where we analyse what happened, and whether any different decisions would have driven a better outcome. Therefore, we don’t feed that back into the process so that when the event happens again in future, we are delivering with the best possible outcome in mind.”

Both Newton and Bowman suggested that in order for the air transport industry to achieve meaningful change, a shift in mindset is necessary. One area that this applies to is how to make use of the vast amount of data available. “People talk a lot about big data; we prefer small, important data, and the right data,” Newton stated.

In order to realise the potential offered by engineering, sensors, simulations, data and analytics, greater collaboration between air transport industry stakeholders is essential, Newton added. “There’s only so far this industry, or any other industry, can go by optimising things on individual bases. The next big step in performance is probably available where those previously separate worlds start working together, sharing performance data and ways of working in a much more open and collaborative manner. That should be good for everyone, right through to the passenger.”
Cyprus... yours to be unlocked

In May 2015, the Monachus monachus seal was discovered in the warm seas of Ayios Georgios, Alamanos, Limassol.

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Oslo Airport was the highest ranked Nordic airport in this April’s ASQ customer survey. In 2017, our passenger growth rate was 7.6 per cent and 27.5 million people passed through our airport. An almost similar growth rate will leave us with nearly 29 million people to please, or to not displease. That’s why we have set a goal that no passenger should have to wait in the security lane for more than six minutes.

We also aim to please seafood lovers around the globe, by revolutionizing seafood transportation. A state-of-the-art, fully automated seafood terminal opens here at OSL in a few years’ time. To sum it all up, it’s safe to say that you have not heard the last of Avinor Oslo Airport.

This year’s target at Oslo Airport: 28.8 million smiles