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A new European Parliament: what can we expect?

The moment when things really started to blur

A driving force for Cypriot tourism – the first industry of Cyprus

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Hermes Airports
A driving force for Cypriot tourism – the first industry of Cyprus

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A snapshot of stories from around Europe

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European Elections
A new European Parliament: what can we expect?

Airport Industry Connectivity
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As I am about to step down from my role as President of ACI EUROPE at our 29th General Assembly in Limassol (Cyprus) on 27 June, Europe is embarking on a new political cycle.

The European elections that took place last month have reinforced the democratic legitimacy of the EU – thanks to a strong turnout and 75% of voters supporting pro-EU parties. This is an important signal for Europe’s airports, as for many of them the fundamentals of their business rest on the EU’s Single Aviation Market and the benefits of EU integration. At the same time, these elections have exposed significant divisions and risks of fragmentation – and also clearly reflected changing societal values and the urge to address the Climate Emergency. Indeed, environmental issues are no longer the preserve of the green parties: they are permeating across most of the political spectrum.

This is putting aviation in the spotlight like never before – for its contribution to global warming. Judging from both mainstream and social media, aviation seems to have gone (in a matter of months) from the positives of being associated with individual freedom and personal fulfilment to the negatives of being considered as damaging to society and the planet. Indeed, the positive externalities of air connectivity in terms of jobs, social equality and territorial cohesion no longer seem to matter – in fact, they are becoming inaudible.

While these developments are still not widespread all over Europe, one thing is sure: they are already driving EU politics. The result is almost everyone in Brussels – including the candidates to the Presidency of the European Commission – seems to be into curbing demand for air transport through taxation. This means the focus is more on a punitive approach – doing with less flying, rather than a rehabilitative one - actually decarbonising flying. Taxes are seen as an easy way out of the problem (with considerable “side benefits” for finance ministers), but I have strong doubts this would ultimately be a good thing for citizens and the planet – unless their proceeds would actually be earmarked for decarbonising aviation.

There is no escaping the fact that carbon emissions from aviation are growing in absolute terms, in spite of all the efforts made so far to reduce them. Hence, showcasing what the sector has been doing to reduce its carbon footprint cannot be the answer. Similarly, carbon neutral growth through CORSIA is an important and urgent step. But it will not be enough to align aviation with the Paris Agreement – and the need to keep global warming at +1.5°C.

This is why we need to complement CORSIA and the current ATAG goals with an unambiguous ambition to net zero carbon emissions for aviation. Achieving this will be a daunting challenge that will take much time, considerable effort and investment – and unconditional support from our regulators. But setting that ambition out clearly and establishing an initial roadmap is indispensable if we want to address the challenge of keeping aviation acceptable to society. And let’s not forget, air connectivity remains a pillar of our modern, decarbonised and inclusive societies.

ACI EUROPE stands ready to contribute. And that contribution starts now, with our formal commitment for the European airport industry to achieve net zero carbon emissions by 2050. Three airports have already achieved that - Luleå, Visby and Ronneby airports in Sweden – and with close to 200 others having undersigned this new industry commitment, I am thrilled that our airport members are supportive and willing to act.

I wish the next President of ACI EUROPE and all the team every success in pursuing that goal.

**Net Zero**

*By Dr Michael Kerkloh, President ACI EUROPE & CEO, Munich Airport*

We need an unambiguous ambition for net zero carbon emissions for aviation... setting that ambition out clearly and establishing an initial roadmap is indispensable if we want to address the challenge of keeping aviation acceptable to society.
Dubrovnik Airport

American Airlines has inaugurated its seasonal service between Philadelphia and Dubrovnik, marking the resumption of flights between the United States and Croatia after 28 years, as well as the return of scheduled long-haul flights to the Adriatic city. Flight AA148 took off from Philadelphia just after 18:30 local time (00:30 CEST) on 7 June, with 209 passengers onboard the Boeing 767-300ER aircraft, while the return service has had 169 travellers. American Airlines will maintain three weekly services between the two cities from June until September.

+25.4%

DUBROVNIK AIRPORT ACHIEVED IMPRESSIVE GROWTH OF 25.4% IN Q1 2019, HANDLING ALMOST 120,000 PASSENGERS.

Berlin Brandenburg Airport

Berlin Brandenburg Airport (BER) has begun establishing airlines’ locations for flight operations at the airport, which is due to open in October 2020. The airport invited the airlines, all participating authorities and ground-handling service providers to a meeting at BER to determine more details on the airlines’ operations. In the future, easyJet and Lufthansa will be found in T1. Eurowings will be located in the currently under-construction T2, which will have a direct connection to Pier Nord. Ryanair will use the current Schönefeld Airport terminals, which will be converted to T5 at BER.

+14.8%

BERLIN’S TEGEL AND SCHÖNEFELD AIRPORTS HANDLED ALMOST 11 MILLION PASSENGERS IN THE FIRST FOUR MONTHS OF 2019, UP 14.8% ON THE SAME PERIOD LAST YEAR.

Paris-Orly Airport

Paris airport operator Groupe ADP inaugurated the new ORLY 3 junction building at Paris-Orly airport on 18 April, in the presence of French Prime Minister Edouard Philippe, Minister of Transport Elisabeth Borne and Groupe ADP CEO Augustin de Romanet. ORLY 3, with a surface area of nearly 80,000sqm, links the former Orly South and Orly West buildings. It comprises a public departure hall with its check-in counters, Schengen and International inspection area, commercial area, boarding lounge and arrival itineraries, connecting flight area, baggage delivery, baggage handling system, etc. The new junction building has created a single terminal building, allowing customers to travel between all areas of the airport under one roof.

+0.3%

PARIS-ORLY AIRPORT WELCOMED 10.2 MILLION PASSENGERS BETWEEN JANUARY AND APRIL 2019, AN INCREASE OF 0.3% ON THE SAME PERIOD LAST YEAR.

Milan Malpensa Airport

Air Italy’s first non-stop flight to San Francisco was inaugurated on 10 April, taking off from Milan Malpensa at 13:35, adding a fourth direct service to the United States, following the launch of Milan-Los Angeles, Milan-New York JFK and Milan-Miami last year. Air Italy’s Chief Operating Officer Rossen Dimitrov inaugurated the new four times weekly Milan-San Francisco IG937 service with a traditional cake and ribbon cutting ceremony and warm thanks to SEA Aeroporti di Milano officials, departing passengers and the media before the take-off was marked with a celebratory water cannon.

+10.3%

2.8 MILLION PASSENGERS TRAVELLED THROUGH MILAN MALPENSA AIRPORT BETWEEN JANUARY AND APRIL 2019, A 10.3% INCREASE YEAR-ON-YEAR.
Frankfurt Airport

Frankfurt Airport is trialling a new robotic concierge service called ‘FRAnny’ that it hopes will ensure passengers enjoy an even smoother journey through its facilities. The new addition is part of a co-operative project between airport operator, Fraport AG, and DB Systel GmbH, Deutsche Bahn’s dedicated IT service provider. FRAnny is an expert on Frankfurt Airport and is able to answer a wide range of questions ranging from identifying the correct gate for airline departures, directing the way to a specific restaurant, and how to access the free Wi-Fi.

Brussels South Charleroi Airport

Brussels South Charleroi Airport has become a transit hub for passengers with 27 connections available. Starting on 11 April, Ryanair has launched a connection service via Brussels Charleroi from 15 cities in the Ryanair network, including Alicante, Budapest, Milan Bergamo and Prague. Passengers can now arrive at and depart from Brussels South Charleroi Airport while remaining in a new, specially designed transit zone. This new path for passengers on connecting flights will simplify the experience and offer new opportunities for European travel, via Brussels South Charleroi Airport.

Aena

The European Investment Bank (EIB) and Aena have confirmed they will work together to improve the environmental impact of Spanish airports, with the EIB granting a loan of €86 million. This contract was made possible by the European Fund for Strategic Investments (EFSI) and the credit line will be available for use by Aena for the next two years, enabling it to finance 75% of the investments set to improve energy efficiency and promote the use of renewable energy in Aena’s network of 46 airports and two heliports across Spain.

London Heathrow Airport

Heathrow announced it is implementing new measures to protect local air quality, reduce congestion and tackle emissions, as the airport joined London and Birmingham as the third UK zone to impose charges on the most polluting cars, with an Ultra-Low Emission Zone (ULEZ). The world’s first airport ULEZ is set to be introduced in 2022. It will impose minimum vehicle emissions standards identical to the London Mayor’s ULEZ for passenger cars and private hire vehicles entering car parks or drop-off areas at any of Heathrow’s terminals, 24 hours a day, seven days a week. The goal is to tackle the main source of local air pollution – road vehicles – and reduce congestion by encouraging more people to use sustainable ways of getting to and from the airport.
An interview with Eleni Kaloyirou, CEO Hermes Airports. 
By Ross Falconer

**Hermes Airports: A driving force for Cypriot tourism – the first industry of Cyprus**

Cyprus – ‘The Island of Aphrodite’ – is a vibrant mix of compelling culture and Mediterranean landscapes, and a tourist hotspot, enjoying 300 days of sunshine and welcoming four million visitors annually.

Hermes Airports manages Cyprus’ two gateways – Larnaka and Pafos – which together handle 11 million passengers a year and are experiencing sustained growth (+4.7% in Q1 2019).

Leading Larnaka and Pafos through this period of growth is Eleni Kaloyirou, CEO of Hermes Airports. She joined the company in 2014 as Executive Manager Business Control and then CFO, subsequently taking the helm as CEO in 2016. This followed a background in finance and a 20-year career with Cyprus Airways. After studying economics and qualifying as a Chartered Accountant, Kaloyirou worked for KPMG in London, where she became a banking specialist.

“I have to admit though, I was always interested in travelling,” she begins. “One of my early ambitions was to visit all the countries in the world, or as many of them as I could manage. In a fortunate twist of fate, after qualifying as a Chartered Accountant and returning to Cyprus, the national carrier, Cyprus Airways, needed a finance person and I could not refuse the challenge of working within my area of expertise, in a field that was so close to my heart. This is how my career in aviation began, which developed into a passion for the sector over the years.”

Beginning our interview in Kaloyirou’s office, we take in the panoramic views of the airfield. A Rossiya Airlines 747 with a special livery featuring the face of a Siberian tiger on the nose is parked at the gate nearest to us. Seeing this Kaloyirou remarks she is currently planning her very first trip to Russia – now the airport company’s second-biggest national market.

We are meeting on a typically busy day for Kaloyirou. After our interview, she travels straight to the capital Nicosia for a meeting with the Cypriot government. Cyprus recently appointed its first dedicated Minister of Tourism, and Hermes Airports works in close partnership with government and all tourism stakeholders to promote Cyprus as a year-round destination.

**Every flight worth 100 jobs**

Earlier, as we had landed at Larnaka, we could see this very much for ourselves: The crystal-clear Mediterranean water, popular and pristine beaches, and many new hotels under construction. The airport, just 4km from downtown Larnaka, is a vivid picture of the economic importance of the country’s tourism, which is sometimes called the first industry of Cyprus.

“It certainly is heavy lifting, contributing 14% to the country’s GDP, and it was the tourism industry which enabled the country to recover swiftly from the financial crisis of 2013,” says Kaloyirou. “Hermes Airports through its operation contributes 4% to the country’s GDP every year. The airports are a major part of the well-being of the island, and the numbers speak for themselves. It is estimated that for every additional flight that arrives at the two Cyprus airports, around 100 additional jobs are created. Over 18,000 jobs at Larnaka and Pafos airports, and in the wider tourism industry, are sustained by the operation of the airports.”

**Five years, 4 million passengers, 55% growth**

Cyprus’ connectivity has developed significantly over recent years, with 70 airlines now operating to 120 destinations in 40 countries. This is the result of Hermes Airports’ proactive air service development strategy, through which it has established long-term partnerships with airlines and tour operators, introduced incentive schemes, and promotes Cyprus together with airlines and other stakeholders.

“The result is 55% cumulative growth in passenger traffic over the past five years, and four million additional passengers,” Kaloyirou explains. “A significant part of this growth was recorded during the winter months, which is also one of the main strategic objectives of the company in order to reduce seasonality.”

2018 saw another record year with 10.94 million passengers (+6.7%), and the growth trend has continued into 2019. Building on that, the aim is to enhance connectivity beyond Europe and the Middle East to destinations in North America and Asia.

Indeed, Hermes Airports is hosting this year’s ACI EUROPE Annual Assembly & Congress, 25-27 June, where a key theme is sustainable tourism. “Synergies between airports, airlines and destinations are a crucial element in the promotion of sustainable tourism,” says Kaloyirou. “Hermes Airports places emphasis on the promotion of the destination in order to build demand, and has created partnerships with airlines under the direct marketing umbrella, through which targeted campaigns generate leads with existing and new passengers. The target is to achieve long-term and sustainable route operation,”
Changing trends in improving the passenger experience

We take the opportunity to tour the Larnaka Airport terminal, conducting our interview amidst enterprising commercial areas that themselves are undergoing an 18-month transformation. The feel is of modern, redesigned retail and food & beverage, which fuses globally-recognised brands with a true taste of Cyprus. A defined walkway is taking shape, which will provide natural wayfinding through the space to facilitate passenger flow.

Eleni Kaloyirou, CEO Hermes Airports: “Hermes Airports through its operation contributes 4% to the country’s GDP every year. The airports are a major part of the wellbeing of the island, and the numbers speak for themselves. It is estimated that for every additional flight that arrives at the two Cyprus airports, around 100 additional jobs are created.”

Gender Diversity

Hermes Airports takes pride in being among the leading companies in Cyprus in creating a positive organisational culture for all employees. Women make up 47% of the Hermes Airports’ workforce, while 36% of the senior management team are female.

“I never felt different to anyone else because of my gender while progressing in my career,” says Eleni Kaloyirou, CEO Hermes Airports. “Today, I can say that when I sit around the table with my colleagues, industry stakeholders or customers, I never think about their gender. We are all here to do our job, in the best possible way.”

Developing effective leaders should be a strategic priority for any organisation, as the leadership group has significant impact on the performance of the organisation and its culture. "The knowledge, way of thinking, problem solving capabilities and management style of women are accepted as having a valuable contribution to the development of the business," says Kaloyirou.

She comments that airports, much like other businesses, are increasingly acknowledging the importance of women and avoid differentiating between the sexes. "Personally, I never thought that women should be treated as different to men. As CEO of Hermes Airports, one of the biggest companies in Cyprus, I believe that creating equal opportunities for women is not only a matter of gender equality but also an economic priority.”

A similar redesign will take place in Pafos, starting as the work at Larnaka nears completion in 2020.

The commercial developments are just one element of continuous efforts to enhance passenger experience and flows through the airports. “This is a reflection of changing trends in passenger processing, as well as shifts in regulatory requirements, particularly in areas such as security,” Kaloyirou explains. “Works that have been carried out, or are in progress, include upgrade of the Hold Baggage Screening system to meet the new ECAC Standard 3, which has recently been completed in Larnaka and will be undertaken in Pafos before the end of this year.”

Other developments include the addition of CT scanning technology for cabin baggage screening, enabling laptops and liquids to be screened without being removed from the passenger’s bag; eight new check-in counters and four new bus gates at Larnaka; new security screening lanes at Larnaka and Pafos; and redesign of Larnaka’s apron space to create more aircraft stands.

Also under consideration is the introduction of bag drop facilities at both airports, and the increase of mobile check-in kiosks. Meanwhile, in the area of immigration and security, Hermes Airports is considering expanding the use of the BorderXpress kiosks, which were introduced last year.

“Achieving operational excellence and improving the customer experience are among our key strategic priorities and, of course, technology plays a key role in helping us attain both,” says Kaloyirou. “We are considering a lot of technological advancements – some new, some already tried at other airports – which we are evaluating based on our own airports’
Within this framework, it aims to introduce solar plants at both airports this year, which will provide 30% of energy requirements from renewable sources at Pafos and 25% at Larnaka.

Significantly, just a few days after our interview, Hermes Airports received news that it has achieved Level 3+ Neutrality of ACI’s Airport Carbon Accreditation.

Another important project this year is the implementation of a Noise Management System for Larnaka Airport. The system will also include mobile devices that can be used in Pafos when required.

“At the same time, in the framework of the broader sustainability strategy, Hermes Airports is working within the UN Sustainable Development Goals 2030 Agenda by implementing a series of initiatives focused on the environment, sustainable development, quality education, zero hunger, partnerships and others, with particular focus on projects impacting the communities neighbouring our two airports,” Kaloyirou adds.

“At the same time, in the framework of the broader sustainability strategy, Hermes Airports is firmly committed towards sustainability initiatives. Indeed, it is embedded in the company’s mission statement: “To serve our customers by operating innovative, safe and efficient airports in an environmentally friendly and socially responsible manner”.

Hermes Airports is committed to reducing the carbon footprint of both airports.

Energy: 25-30% from renewables
While growing, Hermes Airports is firmly committed to sustainability. Indeed, it is embedded in the company’s mission statement: “To serve our customers by operating innovative, safe and efficient airports in an environmentally friendly and socially responsible manner”.

Strategy is evident by the continuously growing numbers of fans and followers on all social media platforms. During 2019, we also aim to introduce real time communication with passengers, which will include commercial and operational information sharing, in order to further improve and individualise each passenger’s journey through the airports.”

Hermes Airports has also upgraded its website, with a responsive design based on the latest Web Content Accessibility Guidelines, making it accessible to people with disabilities.

A new website for Hermes Airports’ magazine will also be launched soon, through which the company will promote Cyprus through the eyes of locals, and provide ongoing updates on events and things to do in Cyprus.

“At the same time, we have initiated a ‘Sense of Place’ project, which we expect to roll out over a three-year period, giving passengers travelling through both airports a unique sense of what Cyprus looks and feels like, projecting local nature, history, culture and tradition,” says Kaloyirou.

Indeed, as we continue our stroll through the Larnaka terminal, Kaloyirou points out several pieces of Cypriot art, which punctuate the traveller’s journey.

Award-winning accessibility
Hermes Airports is committed to providing high-quality customer services to all passengers. Indeed, Pafos Airport won the ACI EUROPE Accessible Airport Award in 2018 – Larnaka Airport won the award in 2017!

Kaloyirou explains that the company takes a holistic approach to its accessibility strategy, combining the introduction of new technologies, improvement of existing infrastructure, and a high level of care by dedicated staff. “We work very closely with local disability organisations and, having built a relationship of trust and mutual respect, we are able to better understand their needs, resulting in more effective services and initiatives to meet their requirements and expectations.”

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Eleni Kaloyirou, CEO Hermes Airports, explained to Airport Business’ Ross Falconer that the company has initiated a ‘Sense of Place’ project, “giving passengers travelling through both airports a unique sense of what Cyprus looks and feels like, projecting local nature, history, culture and tradition.”

Hermes Airports takes a holistic approach to its accessibility strategy, combining the introduction of new technologies, improvement of existing infrastructure, and a high level of care by dedicated staff. Machines provide easy accessibility. All persons with reduced mobility (PRMs) are offered priority check-in, boarding pass control (e-gates), immigration, security screening, and aircraft boarding.

“A dedicated Changing Place is on offer in Larnaka and we plan to offer one in Pafos soon,” says Kaloyirou. “This facility is separate to our fully accessible toilets and is designed as a restroom equipped with a hoist and a height adjustable changing bed to provide sanitary accommodation and changing/washing/toilet facilities for people with multiple and complex disabilities who have one or two assistants.”

Other recent improvements include the introduction of ‘Roommate’, a way-finding electronic device installed in a PRM toilet at Larnaka Airport to provide audio guidance to people with visual impairments. Meanwhile, the Blind Paths at Larnaka and Pafos are being reconstructed based on the Guardian Tactile System to guide travellers from the designated points of arrival/pick-up for PRMs to the dedicated Assistance Desk.

“We also recently added fully accessible BorderXpress kiosks, used for self-service immigration control,” Kaloyirou adds.

Hidden disabilities and the ‘I Can Fly’ programme
Supporting travellers with hidden disabilities is another key element of the accessibility strategy. Hermes Airports is supporting people with autism and their families through the ‘I Can Fly’ programme, which was launched a year ago.

“Caring for people with disabilities is most commonly associated with assisting people in a wheelchair, yet fewer than 1 in 10 disabled people use a wheelchair,” Kaloyirou explains. “Think of people with autism, epilepsy, low vision, hearing impairment, heart problems, and many others we meet in everyday life who have no visible signs of a disability. We worked closely with the association of friends and relatives of autistic people – Together for Autism – to develop a dedicated programme addressing autistic people’s needs, fears and specific requirements.”

With the use of a distinctive blue hat bearing the ‘I Can Fly’ logo, airport authorities recognise travellers with autism and offer priority. 240 passengers with autism have so far used the programme. In recognition of its initiatives for people with autism, Hermes Airports has been made an honorary member of the ‘Together for Autism’ organisation.

Kaloyirou emphasises that effective customer service is based on well-trained and motivated employees. Over the past two years, Hermes Airports has won numerous awards for Human Resources management and development, including Platinum Investors in People accreditation (2019-2021), as well as being highly commended in ACI EUROPE’s HR Excellence Award category in 2018.

“Continuous learning and development is a significant area we have focused on,” says Kaloyirou. “We have developed the Hermes Academy, where training is provided on a holistic learning structure based on individual developmental needs. Focus on our people is a key strategic priority, and we consider the results achieved to date a step in the right direction – a direction we intend to continue pursuing.”

As our interview draws to a close, Kaloyirou’s genuine passion for the industry is clear. “I think it is a unique privilege to be able to work in the airport business, where what we do impacts so many lives, both directly and indirectly, and particularly because our airports are so closely related with our island country’s tourism sector. I feel a great sense of responsibility in delivering our vision of operating best-in-class airports with a unique Cypriot sense of place. For the remainder of 2019 and beyond, we will continue along the path we have designed, implementing our strategic priorities in order to be able to deliver our vision, which will be Hermes’ legacy.”
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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Climate takes centre-stage

Since autumn 2014, the issue of climate change has gradually come back to the fore. At that time, in the space of a few months, there were marches, a much-viewed speech to the UN Assembly by movie star Leonardo DiCaprio, the release of the book ‘This Changes Everything’ by Naomi Klein and the blockbuster movie ‘Interstellar’, which was set in climate-changed, resource-depleted mid-21st century USA.

Skip ahead a year later, when COP21 brought together the world’s leaders and the Paris Agreement was signed. Throughout the disruptive year of 2016, the issue garnered further attention due to the polemic positions of world leaders such as Donald Trump (who does not believe in climate change) and Emmanuel Macron, who actively courted climate change scientists to move to France, appealing to them to ‘make our planet great again’.

All of this has helped sustainability become a prominent watchword in corporate circles, but the issue of climate change received its most significant boost last year, with the publication of the IPCC (Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change) Special Report on Global Warming of 1.5°C in October. The report spelled out the problem in very arresting terms and its release occurred at a time when various extreme weather incidents occurred across the world.

Over the nine months that have passed since then, media attention on the issue has had a growing number of story angles to pursue – the emergence of 16-year-old Swedish activist Greta Thunberg is already well-documented, as are the school protests she has motivated in over 100 countries. The ‘flygskam’ or flight-shaming movement which also began in Sweden is increasingly inspiring other movements elsewhere, notably against travel bloggers and influencers. Between these actions and the implementation of a new aviation tax on flights last year in Sweden, it’s no wonder that Sweden is currently the only EU country to report loss of passenger traffic.

However, it would be a mistake to think that the situation is limited to Sweden or even Europe. Activist movements such as Extinction Rebellion and Stay Grounded have mobilised a burgeoning groundswell of public support through networks all across Europe and in other continents, all calling for meaningful action on climate change – and a shift in the way businesses respond to the issue. In April of this year, the series ‘Our Planet’ addressed the subject of climate change and its impacts on the 4 corners of the world. Narrated by Sir David Attenborough and produced by Netflix in collaboration with the WWF, it has brought the issue of climate change closer to home for millions of people.

A major report issued by the Intergovernmental Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES) in May received extraordinary coverage that made a clear link between climate change and habitat disruption and its implications. However, it would be a mistake to think that the situation is limited to Sweden or even Europe. Activist movements such as Extinction Rebellion and Stay Grounded have mobilised a burgeoning groundswell of public support through networks all across Europe and in other continents, all calling for meaningful action on climate change – and a shift in the way businesses respond to the issue. In April of this year, the series ‘Our Planet’ addressed the subject of climate change and its impacts on the 4 corners of the world. Narrated by Sir David Attenborough and produced by Netflix in collaboration with the WWF, it has brought the issue of climate change closer to home for millions of people.

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These punitive solutions do little to address the actual problem – and to date, the money raised from such taxes has never been invested in environmental research or any other sorts of green projects. In its recent report “Mission Possible: Reaching net zero carbon emissions from hard-to-abate sectors by mid-century”, the Energy Transitions Commission estimated that increases in prices for air travel are unlikely to lead to more than a 9% reduction in total aviation emissions – because of the value people place on air travel, both for leisure and business purposes. Accordingly, it concluded that “progress towards significant emissions reductions will have to rely primarily on supply-side rather than demand-side measures.”

Tax – a convenient idea for some, but not the answer
While taxing aviation is thus unlikely to yield significant environmental benefits, it might have negative social consequences. At the ACI EUROPE Regional Airports conference in Krakow last month, Olivier Jankovec, Director General ACI EUROPE commented “There is no doubt that aviation collectively needs to up its game when it comes to climate action. But, while taxing aviation to curb demand looks like an easy fix for some, the reality is that it does little if anything to decarbonise air transport. In fact, it would primarily impact regional connectivity, hurting smaller communities and lower income citizens. Air routes serving smaller regional airports would be the first to be axed, as these are typically the least profitable for airlines.”

He added “Taxing aviation raises serious issues of social & territorial inequality – the very themes that are driving public debates and politics across Europe right now. Doing so would actually question the core EU objectives of fostering cohesion and economic integration. It is an unavoidable fact that these objectives rely on affordable and extensive air connectivity. The challenge of greening aviation deserves better than that. It must be addressed in an effective & inclusive manner.”

Airport climate action
Climate action is nothing new for Europe’s airports. 174 of them are currently certified under the Airport Carbon Accreditation programme, with 40 having achieved the carbon neutrality level and 3 having even reached net-zero carbon emissions without offsetting. But more needs to be done.

The above-mentioned IPCC Special Report concluded that in order to avoid catastrophic consequences of global warming on mankind and the planet, our societies and economies need to reach net zero emissions by mid-century – meaning that any additional man-made emissions would have to be removed from the atmosphere as of 2050. Accordingly, the European Commission has also adopted the vision of a net zero emissions Europe by 2050 in its Communication A Clean Planet for all issued last November. For ACI EUROPE, this vision means that in 2050, there will be no place for the offsetting of emissions – every sector needs to reduce them as much as possible in-house and ideally eliminate them. This is why ACI EUROPE decided to review its position on climate change, which so far has been mainly articulated around the objective of 100 carbon neutral airports by 2030. While this target remains valid, the scientific and political developments of the last months made obvious that it needs to be complemented by a more ambitious and long-term target – net zero carbon emissions airports, at the latest by 2050. This objective is part of a comprehensive ACI EUROPE Sustainability Strategy, released at the ACI EUROPE Annual Congress on 26 June.

This commitment will not only require more efforts to be achieved than carbon neutrality, because any residual emissions can only be addressed through carbon capture, not offsetting, it also engages more airports – as a matter of fact, the whole ACI EUROPE membership of 500 airports. As ACI EUROPE announces this
commitment, nearly 50 airport operators, managing close to 200 European airports have already undersigned it. Ensuring the buy-in to this commitment from such a diverse group of airports was not an easy task and required extensive research and analysis on the technological, economic and political conditions of the decarbonisation of airport operations.

This analysis has confirmed that reaching net zero emissions by 2050 will be both technically feasible and financially affordable, for different types of airports located in various European countries.

Based on the total number of passengers in 2018 (2.34 billion), the industry’s Net Zero commitment will eliminate total annual emissions to 3.46 million tonnes of CO2 in 2050.

**Vision 2050**

But you may wonder, isn’t 2050 too far away? Doesn’t it allow the industry to wait for decades before stepping up its climate action? No, it does not. Airport infrastructure is designed for the long-term and investment decisions made today need to take account of the decarbonisation goal, otherwise an airport operator will simply fail to reach net zero emissions by 2050. Furthermore, a shorter timeline would have compromised the buy-in from some airports, and thus the engagement of the whole airport community. That being said, ACI EUROPE strongly encourages airports to achieve net zero emissions prior to 2050. Three of Swedavia’s airports, including Visby Airport pictured, have already achieved this goal, and the whole group is set to follow this example by 2020.

A Global Campaign to Demand Climate Justice demonstration took place before the final session of the COP24 Summit in Katowice last December.

**Vision 2050**

Schiphol and Copenhagen Airports aim for net zero by 2030 already.

So all of that looks great – if there was not a significant BUT… Emissions under airport operator’s control account for 2-5% of the total emissions from aviation. The European Aviation Environmental Report 2019 concludes that emissions from European aviation have grown by 16% since 2005 and are expected to increase by another 21% by 2040. This trajectory is far away from what would be needed to achieve net zero emissions by 2050 on an economy-wide scale.

While recognising that decarbonising aircraft operations is particularly challenging, it was therefore important for ACI EUROPE, as part of our new position on climate change, to also call the whole aviation industry and ICAO to work on a vision and roadmap towards net zero aviation. With climate change being an existential threat, we believe that there is simply no alternative than performing this difficult and challenging task. European airports are committed to support this process.

At the COP24 Summit in Katowice last December, Sir David Attenborough gave a speech in which he implored for more action, saying “Time is running out. The people want you, the decision makers to act now. To help make change happen, the UN has launched the Act Now campaign to help people to discover simple everyday actions that they can take, because they recognise that they too must play their part. Leaders of the world, you must lead. The continuation of our civilisations and the natural world upon which we depend, is in your hands.”

If your local community or your national government has not already asked about your climate change position and your climate resilience contingencies, it will only be a matter of time.
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It started with a promise that airport operators would reduce carbon emissions with the ultimate goal of becoming carbon neutral. Then, in June 2008, Airport Carbon Accreditation provided them with an independent, progressive programme to empower the promise.

Ten years on, 274 airports are now Airport Carbon Accredited, renewing on an annual basis, finding new ways to lower the carbon emissions under their direct control.

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A new European Parliament: what can we expect?

The European Parliament asserts its institutional role in European policy-making by exercising these various functions: participation in the legislative process, budgetary and control powers, involvement in treaty revision and its right to intervene before the European Court of Justice. Regarding the legislative process, the European Parliament’s role has progressed from a purely advisory role to co-decision on an equal footing with the Council.

In the ninth election since 1979, Europeans chose to renew the 751 members of the European Parliament for the 2019-2020 term. After the withdrawal of the United Kingdom from the European Union, the number of MEPs will be reduced to 705.

After the elections and according to the official information provided so far, this is the new face of the European Parliament for the 9th term:

The European elections in May left a scenario in which, for the first time, the Social and Christian-democratic parties do not have an absolute majority in the European Parliament. This fact will have a decisive influence on parliamentary arithmetics, since the forces that have dominated European politics so far (European People’s Party and the Party of European Socialists) will require a third pro-European parties (Liberal or Ecologists) to be able to take forward the legislative agenda marked by the new European Commission. Report by Federico Bonaudi.

So what did we learn?

• Europe matters. There was a higher turn-out compared to previous elections. The democratic legitimacy of the EU is reinforced, due to the highest turnout of voters in 25 years and the fact that 75% of voters still chose pro-European parties.

• The EU has resisted the assault of the extreme right and Eurosceptic parties thanks to the rise of liberals and greens. The European People’s Party (EPP) and the Socialists (S&D) have lost the absolute majority that they have had for 40 years and will need support to contain the Eurosceptic parties that have performed well in Member States like France, Italy, the United Kingdom or Poland.
European elections 2019:
inside the Plenary chamber
Three main subjects will be on the agenda of the legislators in the 2019-

- Traditional parties (EPP and S&D) lost substantial ground to a variety of new-comers: they lost to the centrist liberal-democrats, to the leftist greens and to right-wing conservatives. The EPP is now in a weaker position – especially as S&D, ALDE and the Greens are keen to challenge its leadership in the EU institutions.

- There was a substantial increase in the seats of the ALDE-Renaissance group (liberal-democrats). Not (just) because it gained substantially in absolute numbers, but because its position has become vital for making any sort of coalition.

- The smaller-than-expected gap between the EPP and S&D (combined with poor results of both) will make it harder for EPP to push through their (initial) candidate for the Presidency of the Commission.

- EPP and S&D remain the strongest groups mainly because of the smaller countries. From among the big Member States, these two traditional forces have won only in Germany (EPP) and Spain (PES/S&D). They had big losses in France, Italy, Poland (in the case of EPP), and in Germany, UK and France (in the case of the socialists). The S&D will be, nevertheless, stronger than forecast thanks to their good results in Spain and Italy.

- EPP manages to edge the Socialists thanks to its Central Eastern European strongholds.

- The smaller EPP-S&D gap will also make it even harder for the EPP to lose any of their members, ie. FIDESZ, who scored very high in Hungary and would be EPP’s third largest national party delegation.

- The rise of Eurosceptic forces has been mitigated in some countries (Germany) and neutralised in others (Holland and Austria), thanks, in part, to a participation that has soared for the first time in 40 years of parliamentary elections European. But the four days of voting have unleashed a political shake-up of important dimensions, with a European Parliament without sharp majorities and with several weakened governments like Germany.

- The next European Parliament will be more fragmented than ever and, in legislative practice, coalitions will continue to be made on an issue-by-issue basis. Majorities will be smaller and the votes of a few MEPs will make the difference. This reflects an EU which is increasingly divided and will thus be more difficult to steer and govern. The tensions between Member States that have already emerged over the designation of the new President of the European Commission are illustrative of that.

- Similarly, the impossibility of a grand coalition can have unforeseen effects on the power sharing that happens after each election.

- Three main subjects will be on the agenda of the legislators in the 2019-2024 term: sustainability & climate change, social issues and digitalisation & innovation. In particular, taxing aviation is now high on the agenda of most of the European parties and of the candidates for the role of President of the European Commission.

- A very tough negotiation between the European Parliament and the Member States is currently under way to appoint the President of the European Commission, the President of the European Parliament, the President of the European Central Bank and the High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy.

ACI EUROPE and the European Parliament

As part of our advocacy efforts to defend our members’ interests, we have traditionally engaged with the European Parliament. So far the different parliamentary committees have been receptive to our main messages thanks to a long-lasting relationship of mutual trust.

After the elections, only 37% of the members of the European Parliament were re-elected. This means that, besides continuing our work with our core of contacts, important educational efforts will need to be made with the 63% of them sitting for the first time. An immensely challenging Parliamentary term is ahead, and ACI EUROPE is ready to make its contribution to the agenda.
We are proud to be one of the ‘World’s Top 10 Airports’, and winners of:

‘World’s Best Airport Terminal’ for Terminal 5
‘Best Airport in Western Europe’ for the 5th year running
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Source: Skytrax World Airport Awards
Back in 2014, when Ryanair’s combative CEO, Michael O’Leary announced the airline’s move to serve more primary airports and become nicer and customer focused, there was some scepticism about his sincerity. However, it was all part of a bigger plan to focus on yields, as easyJet had done with impressive success. Gradually, over the intervening years, Ryanair has reoriented much of its operation to serve primary airports – the vast number of routes it is now serving from Frankfurt and Schiphol (two of Europe’s Top 5 biggest airports) are emblematic of this.

According to the findings of the latest ACI EUROPE Airport Industry Connectivity Report, over the past 10 years Europe’s direct connectivity gains (+30%) are almost entirely attributable to Low Cost Carriers (LCCs, +150%) as a result of their dynamic expansion and the near stagnation (+3.6%) of Full Service & Other Carriers (FSOCs). Looking at the EU market alone, LCCs have increased their direct connectivity by +134%, while FSOCs have actually decreased theirs by -6.5%.

When we look specifically at hubs, the share of direct connectivity offered by LCCs at the major hubs (Frankfurt, Amsterdam-Schiphol, Paris-CDG, Istanbul, Munich and London-Heathrow) has increased from 5% to 10% over the past 10 years, reflecting their move upmarket. Their highest penetration has been achieved at Amsterdam-Schiphol (21%), Paris-CDG (14%) and Munich (14%). Interestingly, the increase in direct connectivity offered by LCCs at major hubs has generally not been achieved at the expense of the share of direct connectivity offered by their home based hub carriers (the notable exception being Paris-CDG, where Air France’s share of direct connectivity decreased from 58% in 2009 to 52% in 2019). However, where LCCs have been unable to increase significantly their share of direct connectivity (Istanbul and London-Heathrow), home-based hub carriers have seen their own share of direct connectivity increase very significantly.

In another break of tradition, the recent development of connecting products by easyJet and Ryanair at London-Gatwick, Bergamo, Brussels-South Charleroi and Porto is also giving to these airports new hubbing capabilities, in addition to their initial point-to-point focus. Full Service Carriers can only be thinking that imitation is the sincerest form of flattery.

Similarly, the initiative launched in June by Nice Cote d’Azur (‘Nice Connect’ – 23,000 weekly connecting opportunities) to facilitate self-connections is also putting the airport on the hub map.

So the lines are blurring. Airports of all sizes are vying for a slice of that all-important LCC growth. In parallel, airports like Istanbul-Sabihə Gökçen (+2334%) and Keflavik (+924%) have now established themselves as fully fledged hubs, while Dublin (+409%), Warsaw (+336%), Moscow-Domodedovo (+304%), Lisbon (+156%) and Stockholm-Arlanda (+129%) have also taken a leading position in hub connectivity growth since 2009. All of which essentially reflects an increasingly diversified market where hub connectivity is no longer the preserve of the largest airports or full service carriers.

For the past 5 years, ACI EUROPE has published its annual Airport Industry Connectivity Report highlighting the ebbs, flows and trends in air connectivity – a key metric of the EU Aviation Strategy. In that time, in parallel to tracking airports’ connectivity, it has also reported the implications of intriguing shifts in airline business strategies. This year’s edition is no exception. Robert O’Meara reports.

Illustration by Jack Hudson
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On 12 March 2019, the European Commission announced the Single European Sky (SES) Awards winners at the World ATM Congress (WAC) in Madrid. The SES Awards have been created by the Directorate-General for Mobility and Transport (DG MOVE) of the European Commission in order to give visibility to the many stakeholders that are contributing to the achievement of the Single European Sky (SES) objectives through their initiatives. It is also a way to encourage all the stakeholders to continue to commit themselves to SES deployment.

SESAR Related Deployment Airport Grouping (SDAG, part of ACI EUROPE) is delighted to announce that the implementation initiative “Initial Airport Operation Plan (IAOP) project”, led by Brussels Airport Company and set up by SDAG, was the winner of the “Cooperation Award” among 9 applications.

This project brought together 12 major European airports and 2 Air Navigation Service Providers (ANSPs) in one single team, ensuring a harmonised and synchronised approach to bring benefits to passengers, local operational stakeholders and to the European ATM Network. It aims to improve performance and predictability for passengers, local operations and Network operations through the implementation of Initial Airport Operations Plans (IAOPs). This will enable airports to act more proactively for the benefit of the passengers and to move towards more integrated operations locally through a collaborative set up of Initial Airport Operations Plans (IAOPs). This will enable airports to act more proactively for the benefit of the passengers and to move towards more integrated operations locally through a collaborative set up of an Initial Airport Operations Plan. The operational coordination of all the stakeholders involved will ensure safe flights, more efficient operations and the best possible use of existing capacity. It will also help to reduce the impact of airport operations on the environment.

It is amazing to see that airports have evolved significantly over the past decades: although the focus has always been on operational excellence, airports are nowadays increasingly focused on the end customer – the passenger – in order to provide passengers with the most seamless and pleasant experience during their journey through the airport. Airport operations are a cornerstone to enable a positive passenger experience. Over the past years, many airports have worked on changing the way they operate to meet passengers’ expectations.

The crucial paradigm shift is from operating in isolation to collaboration, cooperation and integration of operations for a common goal: the passenger experience and the performance of the European ATM network. It is worth mentioning that this project, by bringing 14 European operational stakeholders together, is a unique demonstration of how airports are collaborating in a multi-stakeholder way across the European Member States (cross-border) to deliver the best use of local and Network capacity and to future proof System Wide Information Management (SWIM) operations. In this respect, the project also enables the use of data through efficient digital automation to improve the different operational models.

This project is an excellent example of SES deployment with the passenger at the heart of it.

For more information, please contact SDAG on the following email addresses: barbora.smolikova@airportgrouping.org and luc.laveyne@aci-europe.org. You can visit the SDAG website (www.aci-europe.org/sdag.html).
Europe’s regional airports gathered in Kraków, Poland for the 12th Annual ACI EUROPE Regional Airports Conference & Exhibition on 20-22 May 2019. The event, hosted by Kraków Airport, provided the opportunity to review trading conditions and discuss the challenges they face in developing air connectivity and advancing regional cohesion & social inclusion. Over 180 delegates, including representatives of regional airports from 32 European countries, as well as local and national authorities, airlines and ACI EUROPE World Business Partners attended the conference taking place on the eve of European elections.

The theme of this edition, “Regional airports facing the challenges of seasonality - threats and opportunities”, stimulated discussions on sustainability, passenger experience, advances in technology, essential tools for performance management and other key issues for the continent’s regional gateways.

The 13th ACI EUROPE Regional Airports Conference & Exhibition will take place on 10-12 May 2020 in Palermo, hosted by Palermo Airport.

By Agata Lyznik

The 12th ACI EUROPE Regional Airports Conference & Exhibition lands in Kraków

Henrik Mørch, Director for Transport, Post and other Services, DG Competition, spoke about the EU State aid rules, the importance of regional air connectivity for social inclusion & the dangers of airline consolidation.

Pictured from the left: Radosław Włoszek, CEO, Kraków Airport; Andrzej Miłaszewicz, CEO, Lagardère Duty Free; and Olivier Jankovec, Director General, ACI EUROPE.

Maria Villanueva, Senior Consultant, m1nd-set, set the stage for Session Three: Knockout KPI’s for regional airports, with a data-driven presentation on passenger satisfaction at regional airports.

Mikołaj Wild, Plenipotentiary of the Government for the Central Airport and Railway Hub (Centralny Port Komunikacyjny – CPK), filled the room in on the plans for the new Solidarity Hub and the improvements to the connectivity of the region it will bring.

Rafał Milczarski, CEO at LOT Polish Airlines: “Our home turf is Central Europe – there are highly motivated, proactive people here, who have the EU at heart. We want to deliver the best connectivity to fuel their success.”
EU Transport Attachés deep dive into airport operations at Brussels Airport

By Agata Lyznik

On 26 March 2019, ACI EUROPE organised in cooperation with the Romanian Presidency of the European Council a visit to Brussels Airport for EU Transport Attachés. The exclusive tour aimed to show key areas of activity of Brussels Airport and educate the policy makers on the reality of running an airport. The participants were given a first-hand impression of airside operations, ground handling, firefighting services and security.

Preceding the tour, ACI EUROPE Director General, Olivier Jankovec, gave a presentation on the state of the airport industry. Geert Van Dessel, Senior Aviation Development Manager, and Kurt Daels, Head of Regulations, Charges and Contracts at Brussels Airport, debriefed participants on the airport’s route development, traffic growth and expansion plans, as well as economic regulation and airport charges.

The comprehensive tour, kindly provided by the Brussels Airport team, helped shape the understanding of the 30+ participants of the current conditions in which European airports operate.

Prior to the tour, the participants tuned in to presentations delivered by ACI EUROPE’s Olivier Jankovec, as well as Geert Van Dessel and Kurt Daels from Brussels Airport.

The Brussels Airport Fire Brigade showcased their state-of-the-art equipment and the newly refitted, energy-efficient fire stations, opened only a fortnight before the visit. In the event of an incident on the tarmac, the Fire Brigade must be on site within 3 minutes.

The visit was attended by EU Transport Attachés, representatives from DG MOVE (European Commission’s Directorate for Transport & Mobility) and the Secretariat General of the Council of the European Union.

Pictured: Ivona Stan, Counsellor for European Affairs at the Romanian Permanent Representation to the EU and ACI EUROPE Director General, Olivier Jankovec. Romania is holding the six-month rotating Presidency of the European Council until 30 June.

As part of the tour, the EU Transport Attachés witnessed the arrival of Emirates’ Boeing 777-300ER.

Last but not least, Wilfried Covent, Senior Security Expert at Brussels Airport, explained the particularities of their security platform, one of the largest security screening areas in Europe.
Gothenburg is the largest city on the west coast of Sweden, and the country’s second-largest. A prominent shipping and industrial city, it is home to major corporations including Volvo and Stena Line, and a hub for creative innovations spearheaded by Lindholmen Science Center. The city and surrounding region is also a burgeoning tourist destination, popular for its green spaces and stunning coastline.

Göteborg Landvetter Airport delivers vital connectivity for the business and tourism sectors. Leading its continued development is Anna Strömwall, who took the helm as Airport Director in February 2019, having previously headed Swedavia Group’s consultancy unit, Swedavia Consult. Her experience in the transport and logistics sector also includes roles as Planning Manager at Scandinavia’s largest network of container ports, APM Terminals, and as Head of Security Screening at Stockholm Arlanda Airport.

“I have always worked within the transport sector, first as a consultant within supply chain management, and then in different management positions,” Strömwall begins. "I started working at Stockholm Arlanda over 10 years ago and, with knowledge both from a strategic and an operational perspective, I have a good overview and understanding of how to operate an airport and how to secure customer value.”

Her first months as Airport Director have, naturally, involved getting to know her team and the wider business. “After my introduction programme, I have had the opportunity to meet most of the airlines operating at our airport, and some of our partners in the region where we have a common goal in securing the connectivity to western Sweden.”

That connectivity is growing. The latest available figures show that Göteborg Landvetter welcomed 455,000 passengers in April 2019 – an increase of 5% year-on-year. Strömwall attributes this to increasing international traffic, driven by a number of new routes that were not served the year before. These include Ryanair’s new services to Manchester, Prague and Barcelona, Laudamotion to Stuttgart, and SAS to Faro.

“Markets that have increased are especially Germany and Qatar, both of which had capacity added since last April, and we forecast a slight increase in international traffic on a whole-year basis,” says Strömwall. “We are continuously working on securing and improving the connectivity to and from the Gothenburg region. Even if the number of airlines and routes is constantly increasing, there are of course still some destinations on our wish list. The number one unserved destination from West Sweden is New York, followed by European cities like Milan, Birmingham, Reykjavik, Madrid, Lisbon, and others.”

Göteborg Landvetter works very closely with its airline partners on analysing new route potential. “We also have great cooperation with local stakeholders in the Gothenburg region, both from the leisure and business side, who support our analyses and discussions with business intelligence, marketing communication channels, and other valuable input,” Strömwall adds.

The airport is building on this growth with the largest expansion in its history. €300 million is being invested between 2016 and 2025 in the Terminal Expansion North project. “We are building a larger terminal with three new gates connected to the terminal and four new bus gates,” Strömwall explains. “We are also building a larger baggage basement with room for new X-ray machines, a new hotel, and are preparing for a single security checkpoint and a railway connection.”

Zero emissions from own operations by 2020

Environmental sustainability is central to the Swedavia strategy, and its progressive approach to the environment means all 10 of its airports are recognised at Level 3+ Neutrality of ACI’s Airport Carbon Accreditation. The aim is for all 10 of Swedavia’s airports to have zero fossil carbon dioxide emissions from their own operations by 2020. Efforts to achieve this are currently focused on investments in biofuels and the electrification of ground-based vehicles. Göteborg Landvetter’s fleet of large airside vehicles, such as snow ploughs and buses, already operate using sustainable fuels, and the airport is working together
with taxi and bus companies to increase the proportion of vehicles that are either electric or use renewable fuels.

“In addition to the carbon dioxide target, we work to optimise our storm water treatment, which is an important part of our sustainability work to minimise our environmental impact,” Strömwall adds.

“Actively pursuing innovation and testing new ideas”

This eco-innovation is mirrored by Göteborg Landvetter’s similarly progressive approach to digital communication, which begins with free unlimited WiFi and a comprehensive social media presence (30,000 ‘likes’ on Facebook; 5,000+ followers on Instagram; 1,000+ followers on Twitter).

“We work continuously and proactively to map and analyse the customer’s digital needs to give them the right information where it is needed,” says Strömwall. “We use social media as our most important channels. We have also started up projects with Beacon technology.”

As part of its focus on the traveller experience, Swedavia is continuously working on the implementation of a wide range of new self-service solutions, from check-in and bag-drop to automated document control at security and at boarding. “We have also implemented a chatbot that supports passengers with information and automated updates on their flights 24/7,” Strömwall explains. “Swedavia is also actively pursuing innovation and testing new ideas like off-airport bag drop and advanced hand luggage classification and control. The future within automated solutions is the use of biometric technology, which Swedavia is looking into.”

Anna Strömwall, Airport Director, Göteborg Landvetter Airport: “After my introduction programme, I have had the opportunity to meet most of the airlines operating at our airport, and some of our partners in the region where we have a common goal in securing the connectivity to western Sweden.”

For Swedavia as an airport company and Göteborg Landvetter Airport, Strömwall emphasises that it is important to be a reliable partner and keep on delivering consistent quality for customers. “Göteborg Landvetter Airport will stay as the gateway to the world in western Sweden. We need to continue being a long-term sustainable company. This means our engaged employees delivering customer value at the right cost. Long-term forecasts are that air traffic will double in the next 20 years, and for the business to be climate friendly we are working hard towards fossil free jet fuel and the next generation of aircraft.”

Anna Strömwall, Airport Director, Göteborg Landvetter Airport: “We are building a larger terminal with three new gates connected to the terminal and four new bus gates. We are also building a larger baggage basement with room for new X-ray machines, a new hotel, and are preparing for a single security checkpoint and a railway connection.”
Norway is a vast country with a challenging geography, and is very dependent on aviation. The country is committed to eco-innovation, pledging to become climate-neutral by 2030, being a major producer of hydropower, and having ambitious plans for electric vehicles. This progressive approach to the environment is mirrored by Norway’s airports, 43 of which are operated by Avinor, including its major – Oslo Airport.

Four of Avinor’s airports – Oslo, Trondheim, Bergen and Stavanger – are accredited at Level 3+ Neutrality of ACI’s Airport Carbon Accreditation.

“Our near-term goal is to halve our emissions by 2022 compared with 2012,” says Olav Mosvold Larsen, Manager – Carbon Reduction Programme, Avinor. “Given that use of diesel in our heavy snow removal vehicles is more than 40% of our own emissions, phasing in sustainable biodiesel is crucial. We are also replacing our light vehicles with electric vehicles, and we have a very interesting project ongoing in Spitsbergen – one of the world’s northernmost airports – to produce more of our own electricity with solar and wind power.”

The latest news coming out of Norway is that from 2020 all aviation fuel sold in the country for civil purposes must contain at least 0.5% sustainable jet biofuel. “That, I think, is a world-first, and the goal of the government is to increase that share to 30% in 2030,” Larsen explains. “We are also working on some very interesting projects, but I cannot disclose the details yet. We will, for sure, continue to be a driver for phasing in sustainable aviation fuels in Norway.”

2025: first small electric or hybrid-electric aircraft to enter passenger service

Avinor has also established a long-term project for the introduction of electric aircraft in Norwegian aviation. The project partners are Widerøe, SAS, the Norwegian Association of Air Sports (NLF), and climate foundation ZERO.

Last year, Avinor and NLF acquired Norway’s first electric aircraft, a two-seater Pipistrel Alpha Electro, and Norway’s first fully-electric flight took place at Oslo Airport on 18 June 2018. Electric aircraft will be exempt from landing charges and will be allowed to charge up for free at Avinor’s airports until 2025.

“This summer, we will continue to fly our little Pipistrel Alpha Electro,” says Larsen. “It has about one-hour endurance and is a fantastic platform for demonstration and communication, but also for getting to know the future technologies of aviation.

Together with the civil aviation authorities in Norway, we are also working on a report for the Norwegian government advising on policy instruments and incentives for accelerating the transition to electrified domestic flights in Norway.”

Avinor sees huge potential because, on Norway’s network of smaller airports, 20 routes operated today are shorter than 180km. “We believe that Norway is in a unique position to utilise the first generation of small electric and hybrid electric aircraft thanks to the established local network of small aircraft, great public interest and government support for transport electrification, and almost 100% renewable electricity,” Larsen explains.

He adds that, based on the information Avinor has obtained from the aircraft manufacturers, a realistic expectation is that the first small electric or hybrid-electric aircraft will enter passenger service in Norway around 2025.

“Our vision is that all domestic air traffic in Norway is electrified by 2040. Aviation will then be a part of the solution, not a part of the problem. We believe that reducing carbon emissions – also outside our direct control – is the right thing to do. And that it makes business sense.”
Do you simply process passengers, or do you delight your customers?

Today’s passengers expect seamless travel. Amadeus understands that to meet these expectations, airports and airlines need flexible solutions that let them adapt and respond to any situation. Whether travelers prefer face-to-face interaction or contactless facial recognition; manned or self-service touchpoints; bag drop on or off the airport; our scalable and agile technology ensures the right services are in place, when and where they are needed.

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Airports are extremely busy places, where convenience and efficiency are of high priority to passengers. But if seamless travel is in high demand, why have some airports been slower than other industries, such as retail, to adopt automated solutions?

Unlike the retail industry, airports form part of critical national infrastructure. As such, they can be more conservative about deploying new digital technologies. There are other factors that might contribute towards this attitude. Regulation differs between countries, security imperatives must be considered, and there is also the challenge of introducing new technology at scale. But attitudes are beginning to change.

Over the last 20 years, airport passenger numbers have grown significantly, fuelled by a combination of deregulation, population growth, and regional development, particularly in Asia and Latin America. IATA predicts that by 2037, passenger numbers could double to 8.2 billion. These rising passenger numbers place immense pressure on airports.

One solution, of course, is to build more runways and terminals, but regardless of restrictions on space, this isn’t a sustainable solution in the long-term. Instead, airports are increasingly looking to automated technologies to help deal with these challenges and improve the passenger experience.

Airports are investing in automation as a response to rising passenger numbers and the challenges of capacity constraints. By Iyad Hindiyeh, Global Head of Strategy, Airport IT, Amadeus

Why airports are investing in automation

A foundation for automation

Airports looking to automation as a response to their capacity constraints recognise the fully-automated airport won’t be realised overnight. Instead, they are investing in common-use solutions as a foundation for further innovation.

Delivered over the cloud, modern centralised common-use technology provides airports with the flexibility to solve their challenges of scale. At airports around the world, passenger numbers fluctuate from day to day. Operating from a centralised data centre, new common-use technology allows airports to scale up and down at their convenience and raise capacity where it’s needed, on demand.

The airport of convenience

Long airport queues are an altogether too familiar inconvenience for passengers. In many cases, congestion is caused by sudden spikes in passenger numbers, which can place pressure on resources and strain capacity.

Increasingly, airports around the world are turning to automated and self-service solutions to make passenger processing more efficient. In order to help airports achieve this, Amadeus recently acquired ICM Airport Technics, the global leader in self-service bag-drop solutions. In May this year, ICM helped Sydney Airport T1 International process its millionth bag checked in by a passenger. It was an immense achievement considering the solution had only been rolled out to the international terminal the previous year. Similarly, ICM’s ‘Auto Bag Drop’ units are being rolled out at some of the most innovative airports in the world, including Singapore’s Changi Airport.

These innovations not only allow passengers to quickly and easily drop off their bags at their convenience, but also help airports deal with congestion before it arises, transforming the design of airports to improve passenger flow.

A fully-automated airport

With the flexibility to scale up and down at their convenience and the ease of automation, airports can effectively redesign passenger handling. By implementing a solid automation foundation, airports will be well-placed to incorporate biometric technology, an important realisation of the fully-automated airport. With these automated solutions in place, the most innovative airports can look beyond self-service, creating a seamless path through the airport to transform the experience of their passengers.
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An interview with Nicolas Notebaert, CEO of VINCI Concessions, President of VINCI Airports. By Ross Falconer

Lyon-Saint Exupéry’s innovation culture “a preview of airport of the future”

Since VINCI Airports arrived in late-2016, Lyon-Saint Exupéry Airport has gained new momentum. It has generated strong traffic growth, substantially improved customer satisfaction by applying a customer-centric policy, and strengthened partnerships with all airport stakeholders in order to achieve operational excellence.

Traffic rose 9.7% in Q1 2019, outperforming average growth in French airports. Among the highlights fuelling growth were the opening of a new route to Tel Aviv by easyJet, Aeroflot’s doubling of frequencies on its Moscow route, and the strong performance of domestic traffic.

“Driven by VINCI Airports’ recognised marketing expertise and close cooperation with virtually all airlines, traffic at Lyon Airport actually increased by 27% over the last three years, to reach 11 million passengers in 2018, driven by the opening of 52 new routes and the arrival of 11 new airlines, including Air Canada, Volotea, Wizz Air, Finnair, and Aeroflot,” says Nicolas Notebaert, CEO of VINCI Concessions, President of VINCI Airports. “The airport now offers direct flights to 131 destinations.”

Notebaert highlights a number of innovations designed to promote traffic expansion, including:

- Definition of a calculation model to enable airlines to assess opportunities to open new routes.
- Partnership with Kiwi to develop ‘self-connect’ traffic, which made Lyon Airport the first 100% integrated airport for bus-rail-air connections in the world.
- Lyon-Saint Exupéry Airport has fully implemented Airport Collaborative Decision Making (A-CDM), which makes it possible for all airport partners (air navigation services, airlines, ground handling companies and the airport operator) to take the most effective operational decisions in a collaborative way in order to optimise operations at the airport.

Enhancing the customer experience

VINCI Airports has defined a global, network-wide innovation strategy designed to enhance the passenger experience and develop smart infrastructure.

“Lyon-Saint Exupéry, the largest French airport in the network, is an excellent example of this strategy,” says Tanguy Bertolus, CEO Lyon-Saint Exupéry Airport. “The strong innovation culture prevailing at Lyon Airport gives customers a preview of the airport of the future. In 2019, for the first time in the world, the airport rolled out Stanley Robotics’ outdoor valet parking on a large-scale. In 2018, it also launched a service in partnership with the start-up Eelway to collect the luggage of arriving passengers and deliver it to their home or hotel.”

Other projects include implementation of state-of-the-art security lines, which have reduced average security wait time from 20 minutes in 2018 to 7 minutes in 2019. Notebaert adds that these have lowered security costs over the long-term, improving the airport’s competitiveness. “Passport control has been speeded up by a factor of 5 following installation of 20 automated smart gates using facial recognition.”

The customer-centric approach also includes better interaction with travellers. Throughout the overall passenger journey, the airport has implemented a “Web to Wings” digital experience, with 8 million visits to the Lyon Airport website in 2018. Here, customers can find travel inspiration, a chatbot (also set up on Facebook), and car park reservation with a yield management system designed to offer the best price and optimise revenue and capacity.

From this summer, new ephemeral shops will be offered and six new food service points will be opened by the end of the year. Work on the new 120-room MOXY hotel in the heart of the terminals has begun for an opening in 2020. At the end of the year, a new concept shop based on techno-computer vision will enable passengers to scan their credit card, to select their product and then to leave, being automatically charged. This store will be a first in an airport in Europe.

The rollout of an e-commerce marketplace, selling services from both the airport and its partners, generated €15 million in annual revenue, while the Shop & Collect service enables passengers to collect their purchases at the airport on the return leg of their trip.

Notebaert adds that Lyon-Saint Exupéry has created a dedicated ‘Datalab’ team, which analyses passenger data to optimise the customer experience and expand sales.
‘Carbon Club’: Partnering to reduce emissions

The airport’s technological innovations are mirrored by a progressive approach to the environment. Since 2011, 100% of the electricity consumed at Lyon-Saint Exupéry has come from renewable sources – a key factor in it achieving Level 3+ Neutrality of ACI’s Airport Carbon Accreditation.

Other environmental initiatives include:

- HQE total certification of new buildings (Terminal 1 – 800 kWh / m³ / year for T2 vs. 195 for T1).
- All the shuttles on the tarmac are fed with biogas.
- The fast Rônexpress rail link between Lyon city centre and the airport represents only 4g of CO₂ per kilometre per passenger, which is very little compared to individual vehicles (200g CO₂).

Looking ahead, Notebaert explains that innovation and quality of service will remain at the heart of the airport’s challenges. “In 2019, Lyon-Saint Exupéry Airport will become one of the centres of excellence for VINCI Airports’ innovation programme, in order to share our expertise, skills and services with our entire airport network.”

Delivering successful Baggage Handling Systems for the modern airport

Perfect storm created by a compliance deadline, emerging technology and limited resources

Stripping out and replacing an entire baggage handling and security screening system for a European airport as it continues to manage the luggage of travelling passengers may sound like an impossible challenge. But the CHS Engineering blueprint for these massive infrastructure projects is quickly becoming the standard for an industry facing the perfect storm of a compliance deadline, emerging technology and limited resources.

“It’s like conducting a heart transplant whilst keeping the patient’s body fully working and operational,” said Colin Smith, Founder and CEO of CHS Engineering, who has been responsible for delivering many such projects.

Complying with security legislation

The challenge of deploying the latest Standard 3 Hold Baggage Screening X-ray machines on the baggage handling systems of Europe’s airports was put at the top of airport operator agendas by the European Commission. It passed legislation for the latest Standard 3-approved explosives detection systems (EDS) to be in place by 2018 in the UK, 2020 for the rest of Europe or by 2022 in specific circumstances.

Many larger airports have either completed the deployment or are in the final stages. However, many smaller airports across Europe are just getting to grips with the challenge and there are already many horror stories of long delays and over spend.

Success defined early

Success is defined at the outset of the project. The airport’s executive team must define clear accountability and control by appointing a single organisation as project lead accountable for the programme from concept through to delivery of the life cycle programme – this is where CHS Engineering excels.

Alongside single point of control, another important early step towards success is to ensure the concept design meets the user requirements and has a clear, phased programme and realistic timescales when it goes to tender.

Clear specification removes ambiguity

The final essential element of project management is the strength of technical administration. Productive meetings flow from clear documentation and specification of systems.

Deployment Challenges

When delivering projects there are four important considerations:

1. Which X-ray technology

Choosing the right Standard 3 X-Ray system is critical. The technology is still developing rapidly and understanding where each provider is in its development cycle, the product maintenance and life cycle support offered and the company’s financial stability are all important considerations.

2. Validation of Baggage Handling System and Hold Baggage Screening

Machine technology may have improved radically but it is still only one link in a chain. Validation of software controls and sufficient time for testing is critical to ensure the system is failsafe in every scenario.

3. Maintenance Strategy

As systems become more complex they require more comprehensive monitoring and maintenance.

4. Operational Readiness

Implementing a more complex Baggage Handling System requires new ways of working. Weekly stakeholder sessions to discuss operational issues and a live dashboard providing system and operational performance information is essential.

On time and budget

Using this blueprint, and lessons learned from similar projects successfully deployed around the world, CHS Engineering can bring these major operations online on time and within budget.

VINCI AIRPORTS

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+44 (0) 1245 496281 CHS Engineering Services Ltd
The Hamburg Airport focus remains firmly on the traveller in 2019. While last year was a challenging one for the airport, with a slight decrease in passenger numbers, it still served over 17 million and reports a consistently high level of satisfaction. “We never stand still in our efforts to offer passengers an optimal travel experience with the greatest possible comfort,” begins Michael Eggenschwiler, CEO Hamburg Airport. “We have invested heavily in passenger comfort, with qualified personnel onsite and with the latest technology bringing genuine added value for travelers.”

Optimised infrastructure, modernised security checkpoints, new self-bag-drop kiosks, and more personnel available to assist passengers, have all contributed to delivering increased efficiency and comfort. The self-bag-drop service has been particularly well received. 10 kiosks were installed in Terminal 1 last year, followed by another 10 in April 2019. They are currently being used by Eurowings, Air France, KLM and easyJet, recently joined by Lufthansa, Austrian Airlines, SWISS, and SAS Scandinavian Airlines.

“With fully automated baggage checking, passengers benefit from even more independence and flexibility at departure,” says Eggenschwiler. “The aim is to optimise the travel experience of passengers and offer them time-saving processes. What makes Hamburg’s self-service option so special is that the kiosks can be used by various airlines, so that passengers no longer have to look for the counter for their airline, or for a specific self-service kiosk. A further 10 kiosks are due to enter service in Terminal 2 in 2020.”

As part of the comprehensive efforts to implement further passenger processing efficiencies, the Federal Police will replace the lanes at the central security checkpoint, one at a time, over the coming months. “Two different models of the modern new checkpoints are being installed,” Eggenschwiler explains. “Because they are longer and broader than the current lanes, there will only be 18 instead of 25. But despite the lower number of lanes, overall capacity will increase. One reason for this is that, in future, three passengers will be able to place their baggage on each belt at the same time. Passengers can overtake one another. This means that experienced passengers, in particular, will pass through the security checkpoint more quickly.”

Hamburg Airport and the Federal Police have been testing the lanes in normal operations since summer 2017, and the results have been very positive. As part of the remodelling work, the airport installed new stations for pre-sorting of cabin baggage in mid-February 2019. Since April 2019, passengers have been enjoying a redesigned shopping experience at Hamburg Airport. Several shopping spaces on the Pier and in the Airport Plaza have been remodelled since the beginning of the year, including the flagship Heinemann Duty Free store with new brands and a modern design.

Meanwhile, a real sense of place has been created with Gebr. Heinemann’s Destination Hamburg concept store, which is now located in the Airport Plaza, and features a regional design and typical Hamburg souvenirs.

“A modern, environmentally-conscious company”
Sustainability and environmental protection play a central role at Hamburg Airport, which is accredited at Level 3 Optimisation of ACI’s Airport Carbon Accreditation. “The airport takes its responsibility as a modern, environmentally-conscious company very seriously, well beyond the legal requirements,” says Eggenschwiler.

He explains that alternative, green fuels are a core component of the airport’s sustainability strategy. “For more than two years now, we have been using synthetic fuels for our diesel vehicles on the apron, with great success. We consistently adopt alternative energies wherever possible. 70% of our fleet has already been converted to alternative fuels.”

Hamburg Airport is also supporting two pilot projects researching the use of bio-kerosene – one with Lufthansa and one with easyJet.
Eggenschwiler also highlights that a bicycle hire station was opened at Hamburg Airport in April 2019. There are 12 parking racks with bikes available for passengers, visitors, local residents and airport employees as an additional environmentally-friendly mobility option. “The station is well connected with the surrounding suburbs, so that the service benefits not only passengers with just cabin baggage, but also nearby residents.”

**New routes, more capacity, increased frequencies**

Significantly, Emirates introduced the A380 on its daily Hamburg-Dubai service in October 2018. “There had already been several A380 take-offs and landings at Hamburg Airport in recent years,” Eggenschwiler comments. “But the launch of daily scheduled operations with the world’s biggest airliner brings with it very special challenges if everything is to run smoothly.”

In preparation, two double jetbridges were constructed in mid-2017 as part of the apron refurbishment. Since then, they have been used for the 777s that Emirates was already operating on the Dubai route. For the A380, which has replaced one of the two daily 777 services, a third ‘finger’ was added. This allows passengers to board directly to the upper deck from the terminal. The waiting area in the adjacent gate was also enlarged to provide more space for the 500, or more, passengers.

Hamburg Airport has installed 20 self-bag-drop kiosks in Terminal 1. They are currently being used by Eurowings, Air France, KLM and easyJet, recently joined by Lufthansa, Austrian Airlines, SWISS, and SAS Scandinavian Airlines. A further 10 kiosks are due to enter service in Terminal 2 in 2020.

“There have also been a number of changes in daily operations behind the scenes, including in the area of safety, the most important concern in aviation,” says Eggenschwiler. “The airport fire brigade, for example, has an additional set of rescue stairs suited for this higher aircraft. An additional aircraft tug was also acquired, in case the other tug suitable for the A380 is unavailable or out of operation. Advance preparation was made for winter: four A380-capable de-icing vehicles are already in place to deal with the 24m-high aircraft. The special demands on personnel and equipment were also taken into account in general planning for snow and ice clearing.”

Meanwhile, Hamburg’s Summer 2019 timetable includes four completely new routes: SUN-AIR has introduced a twice-daily service to Friedrichshafen; Ryanair now operates twice-weekly to Zadar and three times weekly to Krakow; and Condor has launched a weekly service to Kalamata. There are also increased frequencies and additional airlines operating on several existing services.

Looking ahead, after a slight decline in passenger numbers in 2018, Eggenschwiler expects growth of 2-2.5% this year to over 17.5 million. “Air traffic is growing. Sometimes that growth is fast, sometimes it is slow. The people of northern Germany still want to be mobile and to discover the world in 2019.”
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The process of digital transformation began impacting airports 10 years ago with the shift from analog to IP-based video cameras. This new generation of digital cameras offered better image quality and benefits like less cabling. But as digital transformation continues, our industry needs another shift – this time from IP to data.

Why? Because image quality alone is not the answer to the challenges facing modern airport control rooms. With several thousand digital cameras installed, operators are overwhelmed by hundreds of video feeds on their screens. And it’s no secret that after 20 minutes, the average operator misses 90% of important scenes. What’s more, airports are under pressure to optimise efficiency and passenger experiences, for instance by reducing wait times and congestion across the terminal.

By Maarten Wings, Global Vertical Manager Airports, Bosch Security Systems

Digital airport: Control rooms went from analog to IP, now they need to shift from IP to data

Shifting from IP to data

As an answer to these challenges, airports need to go digital. And that starts in the control room by using neural networks and machine learning to turn data from ‘smart’ cameras into actionable intelligence. Cameras with built-in Intelligent Video Analytics add sense and structure by adding a layer of metadata to video images – processed ‘at the edge’ to reduce network computing loads – that support operators on three major levels:

• Security. Breaches, loitering attempts and perimeter incidents automatically detected by video analytics to automatically alert operators.
• Safety. Automatic alerts for fires, unsafe behaviour, over-crowding of spaces, speeding incidents in garage, and blocked exits.
• Operations. Detection of congestion, occupancy rates, processing times at gates as foundation for optimisation efforts.

Empowered with these data-based insights, the smart control room of the future will not only automate security processes for more situational awareness. Intelligent insights driven by video analytics will also allow operators to prevent incidents, instead of merely reacting, and drive operational efficiency on the strength of targeted first-hand data.

What our industry needs to get there, is a mind shift from considering a security camera as an image source to seeing it as a data sensor. A shift from IP to data. The data will carry you into the future of digital transformation. The image will not.
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- Largest international airport in northern Germany
- Over 17 million passengers per year
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TCR understood 20 years ago that owning, managing and maintaining GSE was a specific area of expertise and that the core for the end user, be it a ground handler or an airline or an airport performing handling operations, was guaranteed availability and reliability of their equipment at all times to provide handling efficiently and concentrate on their own core handling business, in a worryless way.

TCR’s answer was the Operating Lease or Full Service Rental model, making the above possible by encompassing all issues related to GSE management whilst achieving a lower total cost of ownership: by avoiding inefficiencies, by providing an optimised GSE fleet mix in terms of models and size with contractually guaranteed availability and up-to-date service level, by improving punctuality through reliable GSE and by increasing flexibility. Full Service Rental rapidly became a valid alternative to GSE ownership, resulting in well-maintained and ready to use equipment, and, for ground handlers, avoidance of massive investments which are not always covered on the long run as the handling contracts typically have a duration of 3 to 5 years.

The handling industry and its complexity have evolved. Environmental constraints to comply with green policies, increased agility and solid safety guidelines whilst keeping a total cost of ownership as low as possible result in multifaceted GSE requirements. Customers expect more than just guaranteed GSE availability. The customised services depend on the type of handling operation and its specific challenges. In order to satisfy these complex expectations, GSE rental companies have to master strong expertise, to understand each customer’s specificity and to benefit from a large network of GSE to fulfill rapidly, when needed, any GSE request. TCR continuously adapts its offer and organisation to satisfy all those GSE challenges. Telematics, sharing of GSE, real time data management, reporting and GSE fleet consultancy are some of the services types that TCR offers to its customers on top of its original Full Service Model. An in-depth analysis with the client will result in recommendations to avoid economical and operational GSE related inefficiencies. “Each service is available independently but a catalyst-effect will result from the perfect combination of selected GSE services,” says Jan De Leeuw, TCR Group Commercial Director.

A rental company has to be up-to-date with the new trends to offer relevant, holistic and long-term vision solutions. The innovation team at TCR aims at tracking new technologies ahead of the market to offer a strong added value to avoid threats that may result from unexpected disruptive innovations and always keeping in mind how to make customers stronger on the long run.

In March 2019, Aeroporti di Puglia signed an agreement for Full Service Rental and GSE maintenance to tackle the management of the airport GSE fleet in an innovative way: guaranteeing the renewal of the most obsolete vehicles and the daily availability of a predetermined number of vehicles; reducing the frequency of breakdowns and the unavailability of vehicles due to need for repairs thanks to the more efficient and effective management of the maintenance programme; improving its protection of the environment with the greater use of electric GSE or with the latest generation of endo-thermic engines and finally increasing the safety of passengers and operators thanks to the introduction of telematic control systems for vehicles and aircraft assisted approach devices based on the new IATA AHM913 regulation.

For Aeroporti di Puglia this agreement is part of a policy that sees it involved, as a modern public sector company managing services and infrastructures in favour of a community, in guiding its choices with the highest attention to socio-environmental aspects and to the transparency and fairness of management processes.
Vienna Airport is on a dynamic growth curve. In Q1 2019, the airport serving “The City of Music” was the fastest-growing in Europe in its class (over 25 million passengers) with a 24.6% increase to six million travellers.

The trend continues – the latest figures for January to April show impressive growth of 26.6%. “The main growth drivers are the long-haul services and Austrian Airlines, as well as the low-cost carriers with Laudamotion, Wizz Air, easyJet, Eurowings, LEVEL, and many more,” explains Julian Jäger, Joint CEO and COO, Vienna Airport.

2019 will be another record year for the airport, in which it expects further growth on low-cost and long-haul flight connections, as well as with transfer traffic. Jäger is confident the airport will achieve a new record of over 30 million passengers – a 10% increase on last year.

“We want to continue strengthening the role of Vienna as a high-performance flight hub in the heart of Europe,” he says. “For example, thanks to 46 flight connections to Eastern Europe, we are already one of the leading flight hubs in this region. Our clear strategy is to expand our portfolio in long-haul and low-cost services, and we are successful on that.”

Indeed, new long-haul services from ANA, Air Canada, Austrian Airlines, and China Southern Airlines have increased connectivity, and Jäger sees potential for more. “The low-cost segment is also growing rapidly, up to a passenger share of more than 30%. Three low-cost carriers – Laudamotion, Wizz Air and LEVEL – operate market bases at VIE and are expanding their services, while Wizz Air will station a sixth aircraft in Vienna.”

Furthermore, in the low-cost segment, easyJet has increased its frequencies. Volotea recently inaugurated a new service to Bordeaux, and Vueling will fly to Florence starting in autumn 2019.

Jäger notes that the recent expansion activities by airlines in choosing Vienna as their base is partly a result of the Air Berlin insolvency in 2017, which prompted other carriers to step in and fill that gap.

VIE: “An indispensable driver of tourism”

Vienna is very well-established as a tourism and business destination, and the growing passenger numbers and increasing connectivity indicate that airlines see interesting market potential for their route networks. “To support that interest, Vienna Airport provides a very attractive incentive scheme, good service quality, and highly reliable handling services,” says Jäger.

“We manage the 25-minute minimum connecting time within the Star Alliance thanks to a pronounced service quality in comparison to competitive airports. Numerous awards, such as for the ‘Best Airport Staff in Europe’, which we recently received from Skytrax, confirm the success of our efforts. We won this award for the fourth time in five years. Moreover, we are one of the few European airports which boasts the 4-Star Airport rating issued by Skytrax.”

The airport also works very closely with the Vienna Tourism Board to promote Vienna and Austria as an attractive destination for airlines. Close to half of all tourists visiting Vienna arrive by air. “For this reason, Vienna Airport is an indispensable driver of tourism for Vienna,” Jäger comments.

Three new long-haul routes were welcomed in 2018 – Cape Town, Tokyo Narita, and Shenzhen. Meanwhile, a further three new long-haul routes have already been announced for 2019 – Tokyo Haneda, Urumqi & Guangzhou, and Montréal.
Together with the Austrian National Tourist Office, Vienna Airport pursues a strategy of attracting more direct flight connections to Vienna,” says Jäger. “Most of the tourists visiting Vienna come from distant markets outside of Europe. For this reason, we place a particular emphasis on long-haul flight connections. For example, we see considerable potential in expanding services to China.”

The airport works closely with its airline partners on the development and marketing of new routes. “On the basis of a fair incentive programme for new routes and frequency increases, we want to make Vienna ever more attractive as a flight hub, and also make it more enticing to open up new flight connections in Vienna,” Jäger explains.

He adds that a dedicated department focuses on the task of attracting airlines, and offers various marketing activities. “For example, Vienna Airport is represented each year at Austria’s biggest travel fair and offers airlines the possibility to participate in numerous campaigns.”

While being a key driver of tourism, Vienna Airport also makes a significant contribution to the city and region’s economic development. “One new job at the airport creates three more jobs in Austria,” says Jäger. “A high-powered airport is also important for Austria’s economy, in light of the fact that many companies locate their headquarters here due to the potential hub function. Several large companies have already located their business operations directly at Vienna Airport, for example MAKITA, DHL and Cargo Partner. Moreover, Vienna Airport is one of Austria’s largest employers, with 22,500 people working at the airport site.”

2019 will be another record year for Vienna Airport, in which it expects further growth on low-cost and long-haul flight connections, as well as with transfer traffic. The airport forecasts over 30 million passengers – a 10% increase on last year.

3rd Runway project approved

Building on its current growth phase, Vienna Airport is planning several modernisation projects to enhance the travel experience for passengers. The first noticeable new feature in the Terminal 2 Shopping Plaza will be evident to passengers in mid-2019. Here, a modern 800sqm multi-brand store will open, occupying a large part of the plaza space and housing several popular fashion brands in a modern ambience.

“The remaining part of Terminal 2 and Pier East will subsequently be adapted to today’s standards and modernised,” Jäger comments. “Terminal 3 will also be extended, adding 20,000sqm of space for new lounges, shops and a spacious security checkpoint for a relaxed departure.”

Meanwhile, the construction of a third runway was recently approved and, according to current estimates, that project could be put into operation in 2030.

Looking ahead to the remainder of 2019 and beyond, Jäger explains that the priority is maintaining service quality in the light of growing passenger volumes and upcoming renovation work. “Furthermore, positioning Vienna as a high-performance flight hub in Europe and opening up new long-haul destinations; finally, in the long-term, naturally it is important to add the implementation of the 3rd Runway project at the site.”

2018: 27 million passengers

2018 passenger traffic growth: 10.8%

Jan-April 2019 passenger traffic growth: 26.6%

Key airline customers: Austrian Airlines, Eurowings, easyJet, Lufthansa

Number of routes: 200+

Top 5 destinations: London, Frankfurt, Berlin, Zurich, Paris
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Remote towers have the potential to enhance the way air traffic is monitored and managed at airports of any size. While regional airports are often key to the economic prosperity of a region, providing local air traffic control operations can be a financial burden. "Using a remote tower solution, regional airports can substantially reduce this, and potentially share the remote tower facility with other airports," says Peter Gridling, Head of Sales, Frequentis & Frequentis DFS Aerosense. "In the next decade, we will see remote digital towers for all airports, just with different use cases.”

A remote digital tower can be in place as a contingency measure, or used as a supportive system for vision enhancement. "The system we have in operation for German air navigation service provider (ANSP) Deutsche Flugsicherung (DFS), since December 2018, is what is classed as a real remote tower system, with the tower solution for Saarbrücken Airport located 450km away in Leipzig," Gridling explains. Jersey Airport recently became the first in the British Isles to achieve approval for operational use of a remote digital tower. The airport currently handles around 23,000 commercial air transport movements annually and is the fifth-busiest British airport for corporate and general aviation traffic, with more than 45,000 movements overall.

"Considering the criticality of Jersey Airport for the regional transport infrastructure, the Frequentis solution was designed as a contingency in case of infrastructure or isolated airfields. "The partnership is ongoing and has provided a learning curve for both of us to better understand the challenges related to harsh weather, infrastructure and isolated airports," Gridling adds. "For airports with low traffic volume, or located in secluded areas where staffing proves challenging, remote towers could provide a lifeline.”

Multi-remote tower technology

In Europe, in addition to standard remote tower solutions, Frequentis is participating in SESAR testing for multi-remote tower technology, which involves multiple airports being controlled from one remote location. "This is where we will see the most significant benefits in terms of optimising air traffic controller capacity," says Gridling. Gridling explains that an ATM-grade network, like Frequentis’ NetBroker, part of the vitalsphere™ portfolio, is capable of detecting any degradation in network performance, known as brown-outs, while conventional networks only react to total link loss, blackouts. "It also allows dynamic rerouting based on application priorities and bandwidth availability, eliminating loss of service or reduced image quality.”

As remote tower develops and evolves, so does the importance of partnerships that combine technical expertise and operator know-how. DFS and Frequentis have been working on remote tower technology for four years, testing it in live operating conditions. After the successful project in Saarbrücken, the pair joined forces to create Frequentis DFS Aerosense in 2018, to build on the delivery of the remote tower concept. "The joint venture combines Frequentis’ technical expertise with 19 years of operational experience from DFS," says Gridling. “This means we can offer turnkey remote tower services to other airports and ANSPs.”
Welcome to the City Airport of Istanbul

2018

34.1m passengers
9% growth
7 new destinations
3 new airlines
8m additional capacity with new boarding hall

Customer Experience Enhancements

2019

35.5m passengers
5% growth
10 new destinations
2nd runway completion
10 new destinations
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Sabiha Gökçen positioning itself as “The City Airport of Istanbul”

An interview with Ersel Gőral, CEO Istanbul Sabiha Gökçen International Airport. By Ross Falconer

Located 40km from the city centre, Istanbul Sabiha Gökçen International Airport (SAW) is well positioned to be the city airport of Istanbul following the recent opening of the new Istanbul Airport, as well as the closure of Atatürk International Airport. Through its connectivity and direct accessibility via metro from June next year, together with its ongoing developments (second runway, new terminal), SAW is poised to play a significant role in Turkey’s aviation landscape.

In 2001, SAW became the first greenfield commercial airport to be built in Istanbul over the last 70 years. Since then, passenger volume has grown more than 10 times. Today, it handles over 35 million passengers annually, making it Turkey’s second and Europe’s 12th-busiest airport. SAW provides connectivity to over 150 international and domestic destinations. Indeed, the fast growth in passenger volume made it Europe’s fastest-growing airport for seven consecutive years between 2009 and 2015.

Over the next few years, SAW is expected to increase its passenger volume as it continues to serve a catchment area of over 25 million within a two-hour driving distance. Four of the most developed industrial cities sit within this catchment, making SAW an important cargo and logistics hub.

“As a traveller, we often look for the most convenient way to travel, ensuring that we reach the destination as quickly and easily as possible,” says Ersel Gőral, CEO of SAW. “With the growing demand for air travel, the impact of airports on the entire travel experience is extremely important, especially airports being the first touchpoint for a traveller or a tourist. SAW’s vision has been to provide a seamless and inspiring airport experience to all customers. Therefore, SAW has upgraded several of its terminal facilities to cope with the rapid growth, in particular screening machines, baggage handling, passport e-gates for local citizens, transfer counters, self bag drop and a terminal wayfinding system. In fact, SAW is the first airport in Turkey to introduce passport e-gate facilities to ease bottlenecks at border control.”

These upgrades, coupled with the fact that both international and domestic terminals are under one roof, makes SAW an efficient and user-friendly airport. This enables passengers to have a minimum connecting time, as well as a short walking distance within the terminal.

“As part of the airport’s future expansion programme, the smart use of technology will maximise our infrastructure,” Gőral adds. “It will also provide our passengers with a world-class experience and support our airline customers in managing their operations more efficiently. This certainly bodes well for SAW’s future growth. We will welcome at least four new airlines – Kuwait Airways, Jazeera Airways, Salam Air, and Royal Air Maroc – this year, while our base carrier, Pegasus, continues to extend its network with the introduction of six new destinations: Riyadh, Basra, Manchester, Venice, Eindhoven, and Casablanca. At the same time, beyond just Pegasus, Turkish Airlines, Qatar Airways and Emirates, we hope to attract more large network carriers, such as the likes of British Airways, Lufthansa, KLM, Ethihad, Saudia, Ryanair, Wizz Air, and easyJet in the coming years.”

With these developments, Gőral and his team are striving to realise their dream “to make SAW the leader in its airport category, as well as becoming the preferred city airport of Istanbul.”
LET’S MOVE THE WORLD, TOGETHER

At SITA we’re co-innovating with customers to give passengers greater control over their travel experiences. Through increased self-service options and more real-time information we’re ensuring they’ll enjoy more seamless journeys through the airport. Because when air travel is simple, it has the power to move passengers emotionally as well as physically.
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The smart path to a seamless journey

With passenger numbers rising inexorably, the need for smarter journey technology in airports has never been greater. Airlines and airports alike are eager to remove pain points at every step, with security and border checks top of the list. According to the SITA Air Transport IT Insights 2018 research, 77% of airports have set their sights on biometric ID management solutions.

SITA’s Smart Path™ solution represents a quantum leap forward in this area, with its use of biometrics and digital identity management to enable passengers to identify themselves at all steps of the journey after initial check-in without having to show their passport, boarding card or indeed any other documentation.

Athens International Airport is the latest example of Smart Path™ in action, having become the first airport in Europe to trial the solution. Currently, the service is available to Aegean Airlines passengers departing from Athens Airport.

Venice Marco Polo is one of the world’s most evocative and spectacular airports. SAVE Group, the managing company, is mindful of the airport’s unique location in a delicate lagoon environment, and implements comprehensive actions aimed at sustainability, environmental protection, and improving energy efficiency. Indeed, Venice Marco Polo Airport is accredited at Level 3+ Neutrality of ACI’s Airport Carbon Accreditation.

On arrival at the airport, passengers during their check-in process get their passport scanned and their photograph taken. Once done, they can then proceed to security where they can be verified as a known traveller using facial recognition technology, in no more than 2-3 seconds. They are then offered fast track passage onwards and the seamless process can continue through the boarding gate and onto the aircraft.

Reaction to the Smart Path trial has been very positive. In particular, passengers appreciate the ease of use, the greatly reduced check-in time, and the fact that it takes only a few seconds to verify their identity at security.

A key benefit of the SITA Smart Path solution is the fact that it integrates with the airport’s existing common-use check-in kiosks and boarding gates, making it both cost-effective and available to multiple airlines. It can also be tailored to an airport’s or airline’s specific requirements.

Venice Airport “saving energy and reducing CO2 production”

SAVE Group has allocated €49.5 million in the current Venice Airport Master Plan for environmental sustainability initiatives. “In particular, there are many activities developed with a view to saving energy and reducing CO2 production,” explains Monica Scarpa, CEO Venice Marco Polo Airport, SAVE Group.

“In the last three years, replacement of the terminal lights with LED technology has led to a reduction of about 250 tonnes of CO2; added to this, there is a further reduction of 50 tonnes due to the introduction of low consumption engines in the baggage handling plant. We are already working on the reutilisation of water coming from the lagoon in the 2035 Masterplan in order to reach the zero emission level, thanks to the adoption of an extended range of energetic solutions.”

A gradual process of replacing airport vehicles with hybrid or electric models is also underway. Currently, there are 25 hybrid cars in use, while five are electric vehicles.

In terms of energy efficiency, approximately 80% of the electricity required for the operation of the airport is self-produced, with the remaining portion purchased from renewable sources. “In 2016, we inaugurated the trigeneration plant, which allows the self-production of thermal, refrigerating and electrical energy, with a consequent reduction in the cost of energy requirements,” says Scarpa.

Meanwhile, Venice Marco Polo is to become the second airport in Europe, after Oslo, to equip itself with a pneumatic waste disposal plant. This means waste is collected directly inside the terminal, at established points, and from there transported through a network of underground pipes to a centralised ecological island, which collects all the waste from the various buildings on-site. Construction of the plant will begin in September 2019 and it will be operational by 2020.

In addition, the airport plans to redevelop its green areas, with planting of new trees and plants characterised by a high CO2 absorption capacity. This follows the redevelopment of salt marshes along the Tessera water canal connecting the airport with the lagoon, which was undertaken as part of the Master Plan 2012-2021.
THE NEW DESTINATION
FOR WORLD-CLASS TRAVEL

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Airports are crucial for our interconnected world, but their role as traffic hubs also makes them emission hotspots. Fuel efficiency and a focus on renewable energy sources can help reduce the carbon footprint, but airport management has little influence on these issues. However, one underestimated source of energy waste (and thus unnecessary emissions) is traffic inefficiency – something airport management can tackle directly. Air traffic is already constantly monitored, analysed and optimised. Land-bound airport traffic, however, has room for swift improvements.

The status quo: chaos, stress, and waste

Passengers leaving the airport have three basic means of continuing their journey: public transport, having a personal acquaintance pick them up, or a taxi service. Public transport is usually already relegated to its own areas, but taxi pick-up zones are often chaotic. The advent of app-based ride-sharing services has exacerbated the problem by adding more drivers (and cars).

Competition, too, has increased. As most passengers are already tired of travelling, competition is not driven by lower prices or better service, but mainly by drivers’ speed in seizing an opportunity. A spot near the front of the queue is hotly contested, and few drivers dare switch off their engines lest they miss a chance. Break times are kept as short as possible to maximise earning potential. This makes electric cars less viable, as they are slower to recharge.

The solution: smart taxi management

At Stockholm-Arlanda and Berlin-Schönefeld, APCOA has implemented a taxi management system that cuts back on waste and chaos.

The first step was to assume control over who gets to offer their services. Taxi drivers at these airports have to register. This allows a preselection of officially certified taxi drivers. If fuel-efficient, hybrid or fully electric cars get preferential approval, this can also massively impact the overall carbon footprint of pick-up traffic. To help convince drivers of the fairness of the process, registration is free of charge. Unregistered cars are unable to enter the pick-up zones. Registered cars, upon arriving, are entered into the queue automatically.

Thanks to the virtual queue, drivers can park their taxis in a designated waiting area, where they can switch off the engine until they are called to the front. Electrical outlets allow recharging of plug-in hybrids and electric cars while waiting, making them more viable. Arlanda awards these vehicles better waiting positions. The results are impressive: between 2009 and 2017, the proportion of environmentally-friendly taxis at the airport rose from 16% to 94%.

The benefits: for drivers and passengers

In the case of the taxi management systems at Arlanda and Schönefeld, it was especially important to convince the drivers. Continuous dialogue and open feedback laid the foundation for improving the system and pointing out its advantages. The automatic queue guarantees that taking a short break does not impact the day’s earnings. A main concern for taxi drivers, as it turns out, was fairness, and this too is improved. Previously, whenever a trip was very short, the driver would have to get back to the end of the queue. Now, there is a grace period: if a trip is so short that the taxi gets back within that period, it is allocated a more favourable position in the queue.

Passengers benefit as well. Not only does the controlled number of taxis in the pick-up area lead to less chaos, a more relaxed atmosphere and cleaner air, but the taxi management system also allows them to specify what kind of taxi they need.

The next step: optimising private pick-ups and arrivals

Going back to the three main modes of transport, this leaves personal pick-ups as yet untouched. As these involve several very different actors, forced registration is not viable. The same goes for traffic generated by the passengers of departing flights. An app like our own APCOA FLOW can help streamline these types of traffic. Contact-less automatic payment and a guidance system that shows the shortest way to the best available parking space reduce waiting times and unnecessary driving distances, cutting down on energy waste and stress for drivers.
Over 650 aviation decision-makers will be available for unlimited meetings over a unique 3-day event, held in a 5* resort in Turkey’s most-renowned tourism region. Evening networking with a view of the beach, all within a stones throw of the event venue.

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Glasgow is one of the fastest-growing cities in Europe, and a large amount of real estate development is planned in and around the airport's economic cluster. With its recent economic impact study, upcoming 2040 Master Plan, and the recent arrival of the A380, these are also busy times for Glasgow Airport, which is owned by AGS Airports Limited. Leading developments is Mark Johnston, Managing Director, Glasgow Airport. He joined the airport as Continuous Improvement Project Manager in 2000, going on to hold various roles, including Head of Terminal and Security, Head of Infrastructure and Technical Services, and latterly Operations Director, before taking the helm as Managing Director in May 2018.

"My first year as MD has been both hugely rewarding and at times challenging," he begins. "We enjoyed a period of sustained growth up to 2017 – our record year which saw the airport welcome 9.9 million passengers. Things began to slow down in early 2018, and in February Ryanair announced the closure of the airline’s Glasgow base. Ryanair had grown considerably since arriving in Glasgow in 2014 and the closure meant the loss of 100 jobs, almost one million passengers and the number of routes operated by the airline cut from 23 to three – although, since then, four routes have been reinstated."

The airport’s response to such a significant loss was Johnston’s first priority. "The aviation world has changed and as an airport – and the wider group – we need to adapt by responding to the needs and wants of our airline partners and passengers through our future airport model."

Meanwhile, a stand-out highlight of Johnston’s first year as MD was introducing the A380 to regular service on Emirates’ Dubai route. "We were creating Scottish aviation history by bringing this iconic aircraft to Glasgow on a daily basis and we invested more than £8 million (€9m) ensuring our infrastructure was ready."

**Glasgow Airport Master Plan to “unlock huge economic benefits”**

An interview with Mark Johnston, Managing Director, Glasgow Airport. By Ross Falconer.

"Compelling propositions for carriers"

2018 was Glasgow Airport’s second-busiest year on record, with 9.7 million passengers. However, as we anticipated, 2019 has been challenging," Johnston explains. "The impact of Ryanair’s decision to close its base was always going to be most keenly felt this year and we expect passenger numbers for the year to be just over nine million. We anticipate a return to growth in 2020 and my route development team is continually speaking with airlines to add to our destination network."

The airport prides itself on its long-haul connectivity, and Virgin Atlantic recently announced additional capacity on its Orlando-Glasgow route. "Whether it’s Virgin’s 747, TUI’s Dreamliner or Emirates’ 777, or most recently the A380, we have continually demonstrated our long-haul capabilities to our airline partners," says Johnston. "The introduction of the A380 also allowed us to further improve our facilities with Scotland’s only triple airbridge. The stand used by the A380 is a Multi-Apron Ramp System (MARS) stand, so it supports a wide variety of aircraft types, including other long-haul aircraft – both Virgin’s 747 and Air Transat’s A330 aircraft have used it."

Securing a direct route to China continues to be a key focus. Last year, Glasgow Airport signed a partnership agreement with Shanghai Airport Authority to jointly petition the country’s main airlines to establish a direct link between China and the west of Scotland.

"We welcome 25,000 passengers per year from China’s two main cities Shanghai and Beijing, mostly through British Airways, KLM and Emirates – an increase of 16% in just two years and numbers are continuing to go up," Johnston explains. "Progress is being made and we continue to work together to increase visitor numbers and we regularly meet Chinese carriers to progress discussions and update them on the market potential of Glasgow."
Meanwhile, the airport continues the development of its short-haul European route offering, with new services to Frankfurt, Venice and Düsseldorf. “We play a key role in promoting Glasgow’s reputation as both a city-break destination and as the gateway to Scotland,” says Johnston. “It takes a partnership approach to not only tell Glasgow’s story, but to sell its growing reputation as a destination of choice to airlines. To do this, we work closely with our city and national partners to develop compelling propositions for carriers to choose Glasgow over competing cities.”

In addition, over the past decade Glasgow Airport has increased its freight throughput nearly four-fold and is the principal freight airport for Scotland, with more than £1.6 billion (£1.8bn) of exports and £1.8 billion (£2bn) of imports passing through the airport in 2017. “Of the 30 airlines operating at Glasgow Airport, 17 support Scotland’s export market by carrying freight,” Johnston notes. “Those airlines have helped Scottish businesses export almost 20,000 tonnes of cargo, which is predominantly belly hold, including whisky, Scottish salmon and oil well equipment.”

**Annual economic impact: £1.6 billion**

A recent study by York Aviation highlights that Glasgow Airport contributes £1.44 billion (£1.6bn) to the Scottish economy annually and supports over 30,000 jobs. “The study confirmed the huge economic benefits the airport generates today, but also highlighted that the economic benefits unlocked by the Master Plan can increase to £2.5 billion (£2.8bn) GVA and support 43,000 jobs as the airport grows,” says Johnston. “The findings were hugely significant and we want to continue to grow in a sustainable and responsible manner. We have invested more than £130 million (£145m) in our facilities since 2011 and have a strategy in place through our Master Plan to put us on the path to becoming a 17 million passenger airport by 2040.”

As well as developing Glasgow’s valuable role as a major cargo and maintenance hub in Scotland, the airport is collaborating with partners to promote inclusive growth which creates opportunities for all.

“We can’t do this on our own and it is imperative that through the ongoing support of our city and national partners we ensure Glasgow Airport continues to thrive and deliver for Scotland,” Johnston comments. “To do this we also need to address the current constraints, such as motorway congestion and delivering the planned rail link, to help realise our plans for growth.”

He adds that building the planned rail link is crucial for the airport and the wider region. The most recent plans proposed by the Connectivity Commission favour a city-wide metro system, much like London’s Docklands Light Railway, with Glasgow Airport the first stop.

While planning for further expansion, the airport is committed to environmental sustainability. “We’ve made significant progress, such as the recent investment in a nine-strong fleet of plug-in hybrid vehicles for our airfield operations and the pending introduction of Scotland’s first-ever full-electric buses later this year,” says Johnston. “Glasgow Airport’s electricity grid supply is also now 100% sourced from renewable energy, and we continue to work with our retailers and tenants to improve our waste performance.”

Looking ahead, he explains that the airport plans to launch the Master Plan consultation in the autumn, with a view to finalising it by the end of the year. “Without pre-empting the publication, it is likely to include major investment in expanding terminal and airfield facilities, the new cargo and maintenance hub, and plans to improve our surface transport infrastructure. Laying the foundations of our future airport model is absolutely critical to ensuring Glasgow Airport continues on a pathway to growth and remains an attractive proposition for our airline partners and passengers.”
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Established 35 years ago with the ethos of creating special travel moments, Virgin Atlantic has arguably grown to be one of the most desirable airline brands, offering what it aims to be a truly unique travel experience.

Airport Business’ Mohammad Bhimani met with Juha Järvinen, EVP Commercial, Virgin Atlantic, at the airline’s headquarters near London Gatwick Airport to discuss future plans, including the development of new routes, airline acquisitions, and a game-changing Upper Class cabin that will be retrofitted on the fleet of A350 aircraft it currently has on order.

Järvinen joined Virgin Atlantic in January 2019, having previously been Chief Commercial Officer at Finnair. Before that, he held senior commercial and operations positions at SAS. “My job within the organisation is to make sure that we have the growth engine and mindset to develop Virgin Atlantic,” he says.

Through his diverse background, Järvinen has amassed a number of skills across a range of areas within aviation. However, he has a clear specialty in network planning and distribution. “If you think about Virgin Atlantic right now, we are going through a growth phase, we are getting new aircraft in the A350, and we have announced three new routes, with two launching this year.”

Indeed, those three new services from London Heathrow are to Tel Aviv (from September 2019), Mumbai (from October 2019) and São Paulo (launching in 2020). Through its joint venture with Delta, the US is a key region for Virgin Atlantic’s development, in which it currently serves 11 destinations.

Meanwhile, Järvinen believes 2019 is a catalyst for change, with the aim of diversifying the airline’s network globally. Commenting on the new Tel Aviv route, he highlights Israel’s development as a technology and cybersecurity hub, as well as its strong pharmaceutical industry. Consequently, the route will support both Virgin’s cargo and passenger markets.

In March 2019, Virgin Atlantic withdrew its London Heathrow-Dubai route. However, Järvinen explains that the Tel Aviv route is not a replacement. “Dubai was a completely different market and extremely competitive with Emirates leading that route. We felt that it was not strategic for us. Tel Aviv is more strategic, as it gives us more leverage for the local market and especially as a connection to the US.”

To fill the void left by debt-ridden Jet Airways, the return to Mumbai in October after a five-year hiatus means that, once again, Virgin has access to one of the fastest-growing aviation markets. “We already operate a daily flight to Delhi,” says Järvinen. “However, we need to secure our presence in the Indian market and re-enter Mumbai by filling up the capacity left over by Jet Airways.”

The re-launch of this route comes at a time when the London to Mumbai market has grown by almost 21% in terms of passenger capacity.
Virgin Atlantic recently revealed the newly-designed cabins on its much-anticipated Airbus A350-1000 aircraft. The long-awaited new Upper Class section, with a social space known as ‘The Loft’ was unveiled, giving the former dated premium section a refreshing new look.

In addition to the delivery of three 787-9 Dreamliner aircraft, and the acquisition of a further three A340s, the airline is investing in 12 A350-1000 aircraft valued at $4.4 billion (€4bn) as part of its fleet modernization strategy.

Though the cabin design onboard the A350 is described as “sophisticated and mature”, Järvinen says that the key focus is on evolving with the times. The A350 will be a direct replacement for some of Virgin’s older aircraft, including its fleet of 747s with an average age of 19.5 years, meaning the carrier will have a much younger fleet overall.

It may take time for a consensus to emerge about whether Virgin Atlantic’s product innovations and enhancements were worth the investment. However, it is clear that, through a renewed strategy and leadership approach, the airline is truly striving to achieve its aim of becoming “the most loved travel company and Britain’s second flag-carrier”.

Virgin Atlantic recently revealed the newly-designed cabins on its much-anticipated A350-1000 aircraft.

Airport Business’ Mohammad Bhimani met with Juha Järvinen, EVP Commercial, Virgin Atlantic, to discuss future plans, including the development of new routes, airline acquisitions, and a game-changing Upper Class cabin that will be retrofitted on the fleet of A350 aircraft it currently has on order.

Järvinen explains that, in addition to these three pillars, Virgin Atlantic is striving towards its vision of becoming Britain’s second flag-carrier.

Connect Airways consortium

In February 2019, Virgin Atlantic acquired Flybe and Stobart Air, as part of a consortium with Stobart Group and Cyrus Capital Partners, known as Connect Airways. Flybe is Europe’s largest regional airline, flying 8.5 million passengers each year to 170 destinations. Significantly, this includes connecting customers around the UK regions to Virgin Atlantic hubs at Manchester, London Heathrow and beyond.

“We currently do not have European Commission approval for an expanded domestic and European network through the new Connect Airways consortium of Flybe and Stobart Air,” Järvinen comments. “Until then, we cannot do any appropriate planning. However, with this consortium we see growth potential in both the UK and Europe, which we will develop once we have been given the go ahead.”

Gaining Velocity

Virgin Atlantic recently launched a new three-year plan – Velocity – which includes three key strategic pillars that are all designed to reflect the airline’s spirit:

• ‘Red on the inside’ is about the employees at Virgin Atlantic, with a clear focus on developing Virgin employees to better serve customers.

• ‘Red on the outside’ is all about growth opportunities from a revenue perspective, through increased distribution in sales channels, to ultimately build a network globally.

• ‘The best in partnering’ is focused on building Virgin Atlantic’s global footprint and developing its network through growth opportunities and partnering with other airlines.

Järvinen explains that, in addition to these three pillars, Virgin Atlantic is striving towards its vision of becoming Britain’s second flag-carrier.

VirginAtlantic recently revealed the newly-designed cabins on its much-anticipated Airbus A350-1000 aircraft.

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**Virgin Atlantic Factbox**

**2018:** 5.4 million passengers (+4.8%)

**Bases:** London Heathrow, London Gatwick, Manchester

**Fleet:** 46 aircraft (+12 A350-1000s on order)

**Destinations:** 27

**New routes:** Tel Aviv (September 2019), Mumbai (October 2019), São Paulo (2020)
I would like to invite you to join us in Geneva next June to celebrate not only the thirtieth ACI EUROPE Annual Assembly & Congress, but the hundred years anniversary of the airport, and contribute to the airports’ commitment towards environment and sustainable development.

André Schneider, CEO, Aéroport International de Genève
Heathrow Airport announces plans to introduce CT security scanners

London Heathrow has announced the £60 million (£65m) rollout of new computed tomography (CT) security equipment throughout the airport over the next few years. When fully deployed, the 3D equipment could end the need for passengers to remove their liquids and laptops from cabin baggage when passing through security.

With the support of the UK Department for Transport, Heathrow is beginning a programme to install the new equipment across its terminals by 2022. The new CT technology is the latest generation of security equipment, providing even better images of cabin baggage more quickly. The move to install this equipment airport-wide will make the screening process even more robust, helping the airport’s teams to provide a more efficient and seamless search experience. Once the rollout is complete, it will have the potential to transform the journey through the airport.

Heathrow is the first UK airport to trial the technology and is working with the Department for Transport to help other airports up and down the country as they look to begin trials of their own in the coming months.

“Heathrow has a proud history of investing in making every journey better and that’s why we’re delighted to be rolling out our new CT equipment,” says Chris Garton, Chief Operations Officer, Heathrow Airport.

“This cutting-edge kit will not only keep the airport safe with the latest technology, but will mean that our future passengers can keep their focus on getting on with their journeys and less time preparing for security screening.”

ezeetags integrating RFID for higher read-rates and fewer mishandled bags

ezeetags’ passenger-friendly self-tagging bag-tag is based on a patented unique linerless technology, with an adhesive that only sticks to itself. Significantly, the first steps are being made towards integration of RFID into the ezeetags.

“RFID in theory has the capability to create a higher tag read-rate compared to a barcode, due to the advantage of no line of sight needed. Therefore, it should create operational benefits to the industry and bring down the mishandled bag rate.” explains Borry Vrieling, Founder and Managing Director, ezeetags.

Most recently, Berlin’s Tegel and Schönefeld airports implemented ezeetags-capable hardware in combination with self-bag-drop from Collins Aerospace. “We are very proud to serve the two Berlin airports in close cooperation with our partner Collins Aerospace. It is too early to share results, since the installation is not fully up and running, but it will be in the coming weeks,” says Vrieling.

ezeetags are also used with Bagchain gate tagging devices at Amsterdam Airport Schiphol, tagging excess overhead bin luggage that needs to go into the hold of the aircraft. It saves staff 2-3 minutes per passenger.

In a further development, the first off-terminal application has gone into operation at Brussels South Charleroi Airport. Meanwhile, off-airport tagging for baggage companies like BagPoint is being installed in locations such as hotel lobbies.

Recognising progressive ideas in action transforming airport performance and reputations

CT security scanners, mobile apps, new payment platforms, and robotic concierges provide further evidence of the progressive approach to the passenger experience being taken among Europe’s airports. By Marta Dimitrova
TAV launches LoungeMe mobile app

TAV Operation Services has launched LoungeMe – a mobile app that provides access to over 400 lounges worldwide with just a few clicks. LoungeMe is the product of a three-year development, including the technical infrastructure and the establishment of its lounge network. “LoungeMe’s technical infrastructure has been designed with flexibility in mind to provide services for individuals, as well as businesses,” says Bora İsbulan, General Manager, TAV Operation Services. “LoungeMe is soon to become a prospective solution partner for airlines, airports and corporate companies that run loyalty programmes, thanks to an infrastructure that allows for API integration.” With its web infrastructure, LoungeMe is capable of integrating with all online portals that provide services in the tourism sector, such as travel agencies, hotels and ticketing. This way, passengers can easily purchase access to lounges when buying their flight tickets or tours. “Passengers can purchase a membership plan or a single lounge entry. In addition, they can win points for purchases made through LoungeMe and can use these points on their upcoming travels,” İsbulan explains. “Plus, LoungeMe offers a variety of functions designed with passenger needs in mind, such as sharing access to lounges, inviting friends, rating lounges and gamification.” In addition to accepting payment through credit or debit cards, LoungeMe offers over 15 alternative payment methods, including Alipay, Ideal and Sofort. LoungeMe predicts reaching 4.5 million users and generating three million lounge visits within the next five years, and has its sights set on the global market.

Budapest Airport and Heinemann Duty Free launch Chinese payment platform

As Budapest Airport prepares to introduce a significant enhancement to its Asian route development with the launch of its three times weekly link to Shanghai, the Hungarian gateway’s largest retail partner – Heinemann Duty Free – has launched a payment initiative for the airport’s growing number of Chinese visitors. Taking the opportunity to introduce Alipay and China Union Pay – two of the major merchant suppliers in China – both the airport and Heinemann realise the benefit of supporting specific visitor groups in the continued growth of non-aeronautical revenues. Joining Air China’s existing connection to Beijing, the arrival of Shanghai Airlines’ service – in partnership with China Eastern Airlines – will increase the Asian market to a potential 80,000 annual passengers visiting Budapest. “Having the ability to now utilise China’s largest payment vendors, Alipay and China Union Pay, at Heinemann Duty Free’s stores is a huge step forward,” says Jost Lammers, CEO Budapest Airport. “We are further looking forward to extend these services to our other partners at the terminals later this year, allowing our growing number of Chinese visitors to be assured that all main stores and restaurants will welcome their familiar payment methods. Coming just a few months after rolling out the BUD Airport Chinese Mobile app, we are well on the way to becoming a Chinese friendly airport.”

Fraport tests artificial intelligence at Frankfurt Airport

FRAnny is an expert on Frankfurt Airport, and is able to answer a wide range of questions, including the correct gate, the way to a specific restaurant, and how to access the free Wi-Fi. The robotic concierge is a cooperative project between Fraport AG and DB Systel GmbH – Deutsche Bahn’s dedicated IT service provider. Digital assistants and robots can support human personnel by fielding routine inquiries, thereby enhancing the customer service offering. A six-week trial at Frankfurt Airport is helping evaluate FRAnny in terms of functionality, customer acceptance and practical usefulness in everyday situations. FRAnny is based on an artificial intelligence and a cloud-based voice-user interface (VUI) that can be deployed in a variety of forms, including in chatbots, voice assistants and robots. Using data drawn from the airport’s information system, FRAnny is able to understand and answer questions relating to travel, airport facilities, and more. In addition to providing flight information, FRAnny is well versed in small talk and can communicate in German, English and seven other languages.
Today, customers expect to shop on ‘their’ terms, not the terms dictated to them by the retailer. There’s no longer so much choice for the customer, but this has naturally created a lot of complexity for retailers.

“Travel retail, in particular, must adapt to changing customer demands for near instant gratification and a frictionless instore experience,” says Natalie Berg, Retail Analyst, Author & Founder at NBK Retail. “The rise of mobile means that customers no longer see a distinction between online and offline, so it’s essential that travel retailers replicate the ease and convenience that was traditionally only found online. This means more frictionless navigation and checkout, as well as greater personalisation instore. In retail today, you need to save time or enhance it. There’s no longer a middle ground.”

We often hear about the ‘Amazon effect’, but does e-commerce, and Amazon in particular, really signal the death of the retail store as we know it? “It depends who you ask,” says Berg. “It could mean putting a company out of business or drastically enhancing the customer experience. Often, the ‘Amazon effect’ has a negative connotation as we think of boarded up shops, job losses and retailer bankruptcies. There is an element of truth here. A decade ago, online sales accounted for 5% of UK retail sales. Today, it’s a whopping 20%. And if we had to single out one retailer responsible for driving this growth and change in customer expectations, it would of course be Amazon. In the US, around half of e-commerce sales go through Amazon’s platform. But I don’t think it’s fair to position Amazon as the death-knell for the high street.”

Indeed, Berg argues that Amazon isn’t killing retail, it’s killing mediocre retail. “It’s exposing those weaker, complacent retailers and forcing everyone else to raise their game, all to the benefit of the customer.”

According to Berg, ubiquitous connectivity, leading to the growth of online/mobile, has created the “on-my-terms” shopper. “As low-level tasks like inventory and checkout inevitably become automated, employee time will be freed up to focus on greater customer engagement,” she says. “The role of the sales associate will become far more consultative, as bricks & mortar retailers cling to one of their last remaining USPs, albeit one that is enhanced by technology, which is the human touch. Sales associates will have to become genuine ambassadors for the brand – knowledgeable, passionate and motivated – and, therefore, it’s essential that retailers are empowering and incentivising their staff accordingly.”

The role of the store is shifting from transactional to experiential, and Berg believes we can expect to see greater collaboration with other retailers, including digitally native brands, in a bid to provide something new and unique to the customer. “It’s about offering something that you can’t get online – experience, service, community, curation, knowledgeable staff. This is why in the future I believe that retail will become more blended – we’ll see an acceleration in the convergence of physical and digital worlds, but retail will also become more blended in the sense that retail space will be less about retail. There will be a greater blurring of retail, hospitality and leisure.”

Berg recently visited one of her favourite retailers at London Gatwick Airport, and was disappointed to see that the range hadn’t been adapted to the traveller’s needs. “The store was filled with photo frames and other breakables, when more sunglasses and jewellery would have perhaps been more suitable in an airport setting,” she explains. “Also, at a time when shoppers are increasingly willing to sacrifice privacy for convenience or a more relevant shopping experience, there’s an opportunity for retailers to tailor their offerings based on a variety of factors – destination, purpose of travel, flight time, etc.”

It’s also important to recognise that an immediate transaction doesn’t equate to success. Digitally native brands do a good job here. Berg highlights interior design company MADE, with its branded waiting spaces at Amsterdam Airport Schiphol. “It’s functional with an element of ‘surprise and delight’, allowing shoppers to engage with the brand and test the quality of its furniture in the most practical of settings.”

In a world where shoppers can buy just about anything online, retailers need to give them a genuine incentive to ditch their screens. “Yes, there are constraints unique to travel retail – time and storage – but this should be seen as an opportunity to target customers with a very specific shopping mission,” Berg concludes.
Led by airport experts, the Innovative Travel Solutions team understands the passenger journey and develops solutions to meet the challenges of increased passenger traffic. Our self-service kiosks seamlessly adapt to updated border control protocols, such as the new EU regulations, taking place in 2020.

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