

Three ways airports can transform on-time departures

Customer satisfaction for airlines and airports often pivots on ‘on-time departure’ performance. How can airports proactively ensure punctuality and smooth the guest travel experience?

Punctuality is a key factor for travellers when choosing both an airline and an airport. A recent survey by Ipsos MORI, on behalf of [NATS](#), the UK’s Air Navigation Service Provider, confirmed that operational performance is influencing travel decisions for a majority of passengers.

Still, many airports lack good visibility and control of their crucial performance levers.

With upfront awareness of possible late arrivals, airports can make the best decisions to limit potential capacity constraints. Even for timely arrivals, ensuring availability of the right crew and resources for turnarounds, alongside insights that reduce the likelihood of late passenger arrivals at the gate, can significantly improve on-time departure performance.

By connecting passenger movement prediction with insights into operations from key systems, such as Total Airport Management and Collaborative Decision Making, airports can make significant steps toward a holistic and collaborative approach, to a performance-driven ecosystem.

1) Ensure timely gate show ups

The heightened focus on airport security and capacity constraints can translate to longer wait times and late passenger arrivals at the gate.

By accurately forecasting wait times, based on flight schedule, weather, and seasonal factors; communicating wait times and delays proactively to passengers; and flexing resourcing to manage peak demands, airports can significantly reduce guest bottlenecks.

+ [Copenhagen Airport](#) was an early adopter of predictive guest planning for security checks. Its ability to accurately match staff with demand and anticipate busy periods led to an average wait time of under five minutes.

However, what happens when the delay is beyond the airport – like when traffic congestion or a road accident hampers timely arrival for passengers, airport staff and airline crew?

+ Auckland is a city facing significant traffic congestion. [Auckland Airport](#) took proactive steps to address late arrivals by using predictive analytics, which helps guest understand the best time to leave home. As a result, the airport has, on average, shaved 10 minutes off arrival-to-terminal door times. Layering this type of traffic analytics with passenger movements predictions can then be used to optimise the entire door to gate journey.

2) Activate the ecosystem for faster turnarounds

Coordination of resources and airport partners can accelerate the turnaround process, and get more flights leaving on time.

+ [Birmingham Airport](#) – recently given a [5-star rating by OAG](#) for on-time performance – has boosted turnaround efficiency with intelligent automation. As daily events unfold, airport resources, such as stands, are dynamically reallocated to best fit the new flight schedule, minimising disruption.

Connecting operations to the rest of the airport, from ground handlers to catering, using software such as Collaborative Decision Making (CDM) can drive even higher performance. By creating more awareness of each's role in the turnaround process, airports generate more accountability.

3) Tap into historical trends to drive improvement

With hundreds of sensors and systems, airports have significant opportunities for data-driven optimisation. Predictive collaboration offers airports a way to make sense of that data to make better decisions, in real-time and long-term planning.

+ [Cincinnati/Northern Kentucky International Airport \(CVG\)](#), awarded Skytrax best world airport 2018 (5-10 million passengers), is working with their partners at TSA to use live and empiric guest movement data to refine security resourcing and processing plans. As a result, security line wait times have been reduced by one third.

At the airside, opportunities to blend historical air traffic data, apron congestion and aircraft towing times could be used to predict a slip to a flight's Target-On-Block Time (TOBT). The flight could then be reallocated to a stand more suitable for a fast turnaround, and the planning model refreshed in a continuous cycle of improvement.

Passengers should not have to accept that delays are inevitable. With ecosystem collaboration, predictive analytics and intelligent automation playing an increasing role in an airport's operations toolkit, they do not have to. By transforming their approach to on-time departures, airports can not only reshape the travel experience, but successfully compete for, and retain the loyalty of guests and airlines alike.

About Veovo

Veovo is a predictive collaboration platform that enables over 110 airports including Auckland, Birmingham, Cincinnati/Northern Kentucky International and Copenhagen Airport to plan, predict, and perfect the airport ecosystem and create brilliant guest experiences. Take off at www.veovo.com