

The pre-boarding experience

Taking calm for granted

Now airside, the traveler sips their coffee, eats their croissant and waits for news of their departure – hopefully on time, and hopefully at a gate that isn’t too far away (our research found that 18% of travelers get anxious about having to walk a long distance).



Of travelers get anxious about a too far away gate

Travelers are so used to the airport experience that there’s no conscious consideration of the huge game of Tetris which goes on behind the scenes. There isn’t an acknowledgement of how complex it is to ensure that the right plane is at the right gate, at the right time, with the right crew, and with the right amount of catering. And this is just one aspect of the operational puzzle.



Silo-avoidance

Airlines and airports work well when they're operating as a unified entity – using something which Pierre-Olivier Bandet, CIO, Air France-KLM, calls 'a common currency'.

The effect of this unified approach can be witnessed at JFK International Airport too, where its use of Amadeus' cloud-based ACUS solution ensures that the single view of the customer remains true and consistent throughout over 140 touchpoints in Terminal 4.

This approach is echoed through Amadeus' Virtual Airport Operations Center (APOC), a pioneering approach built in partnership with Microsoft and its expertise in cloud technologies. It acts as a centralized hub bringing together data from across the airport ecosystem to give an unrivalled view into operations for all those responsible for planning and service delivery.



Planning for all eventualities

Successful unification requires continuity. Interruptions to the process of bringing all pieces of the puzzle together risk slowing it down or throwing it off course entirely. As such, scenario planning is crucial to run through all possible eventualities and prepare accordingly. This removes the risk of operational downtime should disruption happen. This preparation doesn't only inform response approaches from an operational perspective, it can also prepare the communications structure for passengers, airport staff, and crew alike.



“Operations within the travel sector often deal with unplanned events and their impact, which places a high value on information timeliness and accuracy. This is hindered, however, through an inability to view real-time or near real-time operational data due to information that is contained in many disparate systems.

“The adoption of platforms that unify across siloed data estates enable holistic views of business operations, resulting in more optimized forecasting and planning systems.”

Julie Shainock
Global Travel and Transportation
Industry Leader,
Microsoft



Holistic agility

A core critical approach to improving the passenger experience today relies on replacing Departure Control Systems (DCSs) with more modern Delivery Management systems (DMS). These sit at the epicenter of airline operations and extend control and visibility beyond passengers to the entire airline operations including real-time dynamic gate allocation and on-the-ground resource management, ensuring buses, aircraft tugs, and boarding stairs are where they need to be. This agility is made possible through cloud-enabled connectivity allowing for real-time analysis.

This data-driven insight uses machine learning capabilities to subsequently allow operational teams to make informed, confident decisions that optimize operations and processes – including anticipation of traveler needs and appropriate proactive responses. It helps create the great experience expected throughout any journey.

Removing anxiety through insight

A multi-touchpoint understanding of every traveler can enable personalization to deliver tailored offers throughout the journey and in doing so, create a foundational, unified, traveler profile. When it comes to driving loyalty, this is crucial – as humans we all want to feel recognized, understood, and valued.

Not knowing what’s happening is unnerving in any journey, but presenting options and up-to-date information across all airline touchpoints ensures the traveler remains informed. The insight also allows the airline to pre-empt issues; and either ensure they’re stopped before they happen or are resolved swiftly, subsequently reducing their impact.

Delivering this when travelling (which is embedded in scenarios where hope for a smooth experience sits side-by-side with varying levels of anxiety), makes for an enjoyable, stress-free journey.

Creatures of airside habit

It turns out that leisure travelers love a routine. Amadeus research uncovered several touchpoints airside where passengers have developed specific habits while waiting for their gate – they’ve become a core part of any holiday!

Indeed, when asked whether they ‘follow a ritual’ at the airport, 81% of those on a family trip or a trip with a partner agreed – dropping only slightly to 79% of those on a trip with friends or 72% of those travelers on a solo trip.



In terms of what these rituals are:

