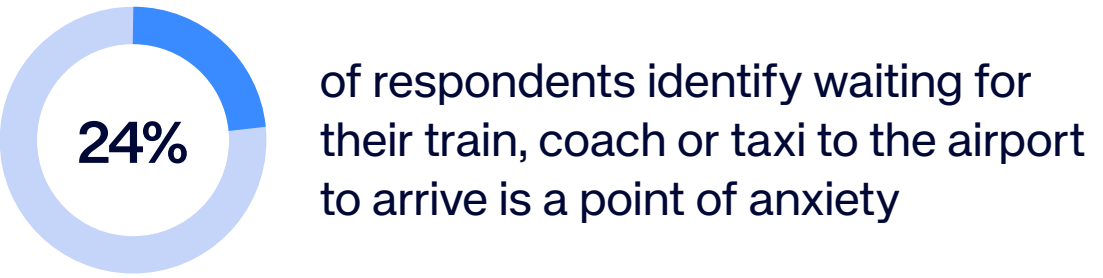# The transfer experience

Door-to-door approach

The first and last miles of a traveler journey — home to airport, airport to hotel — can be fraught with worry, with 24% of respondents in our survey identifying the wait for their train, coach or taxi to the airport to arrive as being a point of anxiety. According to an in-depth Amadeus report on mobility ↗ some of the reasons behind this anxiety include unfamiliarity with local currency, language barriers, heightened safety concerns and trip fatigue. Having landed, the urgency with which people want to get to the hotel, dump their bags in their room, and get to the beach or business meeting is high. They've finally arrived.

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As such, the role of ground transport within the holistic door-to-door approach to travel is as critical as any — be it a taxi, rental car hire, a pre-arranged transfer, or the use of public transport. Integrating such services is nothing new; Amadeus has long-term partnerships with transfer companies and global car hire brands such as Hertz, Enterprise, Avis, Europcar, and Sixt, as well as smaller, local operators.

As part of its broader strategic vision, Amadeus is now also making access to rail express services seamlessly available via its transfer solution. In April this year, Heathrow Express, carrying around 16,000 travelers a day between London's Heathrow Airport and central London, was the first to be implemented. But this is just the beginning. Thanks to a partnership with Distribusion, a global ground transportation distribution company with an impressive portfolio of airport express operators worldwide, Amadeus will continue to integrate more intercity and airport express services as part of the company's ground transfers solution.

Backbone of operations

With these door-to-door services integrated into the Amadeus Travel Platform, the options open up for better service recovery in case of disruption. For example, airlines are not only limited to their own or partner airlines' services, but can offer rebooking of multi-modal journeys using train, taxi, rail and ground transport alternatives to provide the optimal choice for the traveler, taking the stress away from the traveler themselves needing to do so. The goal is that when disruption occurs, passengers can receive a single notification quickly that explains the travel provider's recommended alternative option, with the ability to accept or reject it digitally from their phone. From an emotive perspective, this acts as significant reassurance. It tells the passenger that despite the disruption, everything is under control. It also demonstrates an understanding of each passenger and their needs.

These kinds of solutions also need to take into account entitlements across partner airlines during disruptive events – meaning rebooking or, where necessary, the suggestion of 'multi-modal' options, using rail and ground transport to provide the optimal choice for the traveler.

Next-generation transfers

While transfer booking has previously appeared as a list of options based on offered criteria – budget, duration, model, location – the increasingly sophisticated use of AI is making recommendations proactively and fine-tuning options. This might include only serving options for SUVs to families or electric run-arounds to those on a city break.

In addition to AI-inspired recommendation, having transfer options within an Integrated Mobility App was cited as a very useful addition to the booking process by 66% of respondents to an Amadeus survey. This appetite for a one-stop-shop app that consolidates various mobility services is something the transfer sector needs to respond to. It is an indication of a future trend toward integrated digital solutions that simplify travel planning and execution.

Supporting environmental goals

Sustainability considerations and goals of both the industry and travelers will also drive the need to display potential carbon impact into the booking options, with the eco-conscious traveler wanting to be in control of their journey's carbon footprint (and reduce it wherever possible). This is particularly important when looking at corporate travel where the need to comply with policies is key – policies which are intrinsically aligned with sustainability goals and compliance demands including emissions reduction.

Growing Electric Vehicle adoption

A prime demand within more sustainable car rental is the use of electric vehicles (EVs), and here we can see another example of how travel booking solutions can share leisure and business traveler trends with third parties to inform their own strategies.

Through demonstrating an increase in EV searches at booking stage, airlines and travel sellers can communicate this demand to car rental operations, demonstrating that the need for investment in EV

fleets is justified. When considering the cost of doing so, having the empirical data to show demand is essential to taking the plunge.

Furthermore, forward-looking booking data can highlight where pockets of demand are high or low, allowing operators to over- or under-index accordingly.