

# American Passengers Are the Unhappiest Flyers in the World

A recent survey conducted at SITA, by the aviation IT specialists revealed that American passengers are the unhappiest flyers in the world.

Almost 28% of the American population expressed their dissatisfaction with the travel experiences they had. The people of the Middle East on the other hand turned out to be the happiest, with only 16% of them being dissatisfied. The Europeans were close to the Middle East in terms of travel satisfaction, with a low dissatisfaction rate of 18%.



Americans will not remain the most dissatisfied passengers for long probably. As per the market experts, Asia will outnumber the American population in terms of being the biggest air travel market globally, by the 2030s. The percentage of Asian population dissatisfied with air travel experience remains at 23%.

The major reason for disappointment and dissatisfaction among the passengers was regarding baggage claims. Around 27% would like to see some significant improvements, and 48% would like to see at least some improvement.

This may be surprising, but the shrinking in-flight cabins are the last thing the passengers worry about. With, less than 20% stating that some significant measures need to be taken in this area.



The other major priorities for the flyers include: improved security and border control (25%), smoother flight transfers and connecting flights (24%), easier check-ins and baggage drop-offs (23%), better fare comparisons and price searches, and assistance for providing travel at destination (20%).

Apart from these, the survey found three crucial areas for enhancing the passengers travel experience:

54% of them wanted to get better flight comparisons while booking , 52% of them wanted to know the in-flight information better and thought in-flight Wi-Fi would be a great idea.

SITA emphasizes the need for improved technologies for the flyers for giving them a better experience, from online booking, to mobile apps and self-service kiosks. As per the survey, 53% passengers find the online booking services to be very useful, 43% of them feel that mobile apps have addressed their needs and 40% think that self-service kiosk save time and enhance their altogether travel experience.

Dave Bakker, President of SITA Europe, while speaking at the "European Aviation ICT Forum", 2014 said that customers have accepted the self-service kiosks, mobile apps and web booking at a large scale. Witnessing the continuous growth in these fields will be a good sign for the industry in future.



The survey also showed the increase in a number of gadgets being carried on board by the flyers. Out of 100 people, 97 of them step on the plane with a gadget of some sort. 81% of them travel with their smartphones, 43% with their laptops, and 43% with their tablets. Carrying multiple devices is on high rise, and 18% of them carry all three: laptops, tablets and smartphones. 76 percent of smartphone owners use the airline app.

The survey also shows a rising market promoting the "Bring Your Own Device (BYOD) IFE". 56 percent of the flyers travelling with their mobile devices use it for entertainment, 54% use it for doing some in-flight communications and 45% use it for doing duty free shopping.

So what efforts are required to attract the highly dissatisfied international American flyers?

As per the data from SITA survey, 55% percent customers expect to see substantial improvements in booking process, 57% persons look forward to customized rearrangement options for smoother voyage, 45% want improvements at self-service kiosks and 45% better services on mobile apps.

The area that comes as a big surprise is the communication between the passengers and the airlines. 53% would like to get better notifications on their smartphone app, 51% look forward to enhanced email notifications, whereas 53% of flyers expect to be called up for any urgent/useful information and 29% expect to be informed about any travel disturbances via the social media.

As a part of the Big Data Technological revolution, 7 out of 10 people do not mind trading off their privacy for better travel experience. With 40% of them having no issues, on data gathering as long as it is being used for betterment of travel services.

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