MANAGING AIR PASSENGERS CONTROL WITH CAPACITY CONSTRAINTS

The world is recovering from the pandemic, and nearly 4.4 billion people are expected to fly by 2023. International travel has picked up significantly since April 2020 and is now at around 84% of 2019 levels. As the number of air passengers is predicted to double by 2040, there's a renewed focus on aviation infrastructure on the ground. There were congestion issues during the summer of 2022 at critical locations in the air transport network, such as London Heathrow and Amsterdam Schiphol. This resulted in flight restrictions being put in place at these airports.

Capacity Limitations

Most top 100 airports are predicted to face capacity constraints by 2030. As there is a need for more new airports, particularly in major cities, the industry's best option to meet the demand is to enhance passenger facilitation within existing airports.

Automation is key

Automating manual processes and moving them away from the airport is crucial for this initiative's success. According to Alan Murray Hayden, Iata's Director of Operations and Compliance Solutions for Airlines, Airports, and Security, passengers must be screened for identification, access control, and travel documentation verification. Nonetheless, many of these procedures can be completed outside the airport using Timatic and contactless travel, which are part of Iata's One ID initiative. Timatic is essential in speeding up passenger processing times and boosting productivity, as it is integrated into almost every airline departure control system as part of the check-in process.

Timatic update

Timatic is a platform airlines use to verify whether a passenger is eligible to fly. Before the pandemic, Timatic screened over 700 million passengers annually to confirm their passport details, visa requirements, and other travel-related documents. Generally, around 85% of passengers are approved for travel, while the remaining 15% are excluded due to various issues. The process happens almost immediately, from receiving the latest government requirements to the passenger screening results.

IATA has announced the release of an updated version of Timatic AutoCheck, set to take effect on January 1, 2024. The migration to this platform is expected to be completed by December 31, 2024. The new version promises a better passenger experience, more efficient operations, and reduced costs. According to Hayden, passengers will now receive clear and colloquial language when encountering issues. They can also upload the necessary details for an automated process. This will free up check-in staff to provide more value-added services and reduce mistakes due to time pressure.

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