

# PAX Panel: Finessing the end-to-end passenger experience

Panelists speak about the role that biometrics and touchless technology will have in the future of travel, in airport facilities, lounges, aircraft cabins and more

Touchless and biometric technology will be needed more and more in the travel environment in the months and years ahead, and the challenge of easing anxiety and building confidence looms just as large.

In a [recent study](#) of the industry, Aerospace IT company [SITA](#) found an accelerated investment in automated passenger processing focusing on touchless and mobile services. Sixty-four percent of the airports surveyed are aiming to rollout self-boarding gates using biometric and ID documentation by 2023, three times as many as in 2020. Airlines plan to double investment for self-boarding using biometric and ID documentation by 2023 (82 percent).

Similarly, airlines are prioritizing a completely touchless check-in process, and most want mobile touchless payment options for all services provided. The majority (79 percent) is focused on enabling self-bag drop for passengers. All essential customer services will become contactless from booking to arrival, including automated lounge access and mobile delayed baggage reporting.

Tackling these challenges will be the task of airlines around the world, aided by companies and trade associations.



SITA's Air Transport IT Insights reveals a sharper focus on safety, automation and efficiency

In the fourth installment of PAX Panel, entitled *Finessing the end-to-end passenger experience*, representatives from Collins Aerospace, ACI and Acumen Design Associates speak about the latest tech rolled out at airports, how airports create a positive experience that extends beyond its walls and the role of airlines in building trust. Hosted by Editor-In-Chief Rick Lundstrom and Editor Jane Hobson, the panelists are Tony Chapman, Senior Director Strategic Programs, Global Airports for Information Management Systems at [Collins Aerospace](#), Dimitri Coll Vice President Airport Customer Experience at [Airports Council International](#) and Daniel Clucas, Senior Designer at [Acumen Design Associates](#).

Collins Aerospace has delivered its Kiosk Connect touchless solution to five airports with the launch customer [Mactan-Cebu International Airport](#) in the Philippines.

“Kiosk Connect is an application that allows you to control the kiosk with your mobile phone,” says Chapman. “Rather than having to touch the screen with your fingers you can take control of the kiosk and do all the functions with your mobile.”

Chapman says he sees Kiosk Connect as one element of the touchless travel journey that will be necessary in the future. It will not only change the habits of the traveling public but could potentially alter the physical makeup of the airport environment.

Airports Council International, based in Montreal, has been searching for best practices by airports for its annual [Airport Service Quality awards](#). The 2020 winners were [announced recently](#).

But the organization is doing much more, taking a deep dive into the psyche of the individual traveler and what it takes to create an experience that will allow them to leave the airport feeling confident that they want to return. The group has been looking at the passenger and airport employee experience from all sides, including examining the link between emotion and memory, past travel and how this informs expectations.

“Linking emotion to customer experience is a complex business, but it is crucial,” Coll says.

Building trust is an emotional aspect that is paramount for airlines as the demand for travel eases. It can be partially fulfilled with the smallest of details which is the specialty of companies like Acumen. The company has recently worked with architects and airlines such as [All Nippon Airways](#) on its fleet of 777s. Building reassurance through the brand itself will be the task of airlines in the months ahead.

People are putting their trust in these airline brands, says Clucas.

“There are people who are returning to the skies probably feeling quite anxious, not sure about what the experience is going to be like,” he adds. “The more you can see and feel that the brand has wrapped its arms around you throughout your entire journey, I think the more reassured or cared for people will feel.”