



Creating an Airport Experience Travellers Love

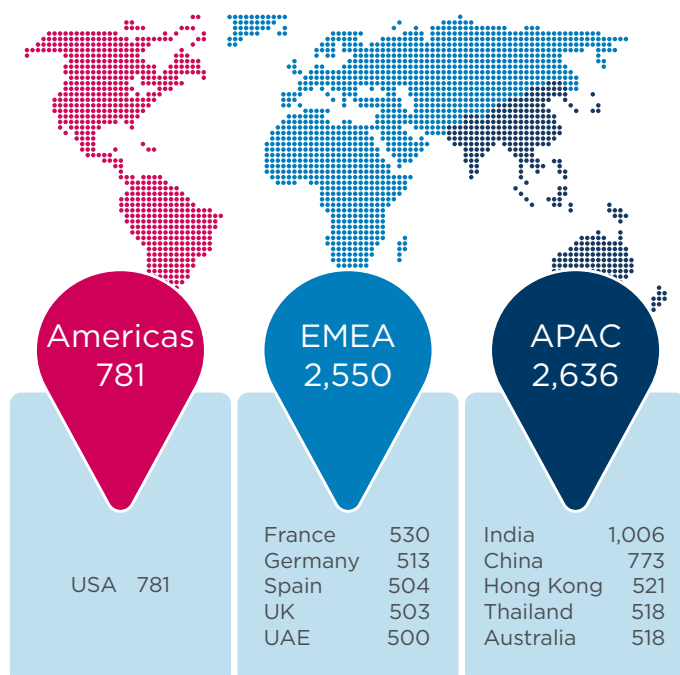
Every airport wants to deliver a seamless and enjoyable journey to travellers. Providing the right airport experience has a major impact on customer loyalty, engagement and spend. When travellers are in the right frame of mind, they can relax and enjoy themselves at the airport – spending a little more time, and a little more money.

But understanding and providing an exceptional airport experience is anything but simple. It requires every player in the airport ecosystem to collectively work towards the common goal of deeply understanding what travellers want and delivering a significantly optimised experience.

To reveal up-to-date insights around evolving traveller preferences and behaviours, and help airports and airport partners give travellers an airport experience they will love, Collinson has been conducting research on the airport experience since 2014.

Collinson's 'Airport Journey' Research

Collinson's 'Airport Journey' global report surveyed 6,667 people across 11 countries in the Americas, EMEA, and APAC.



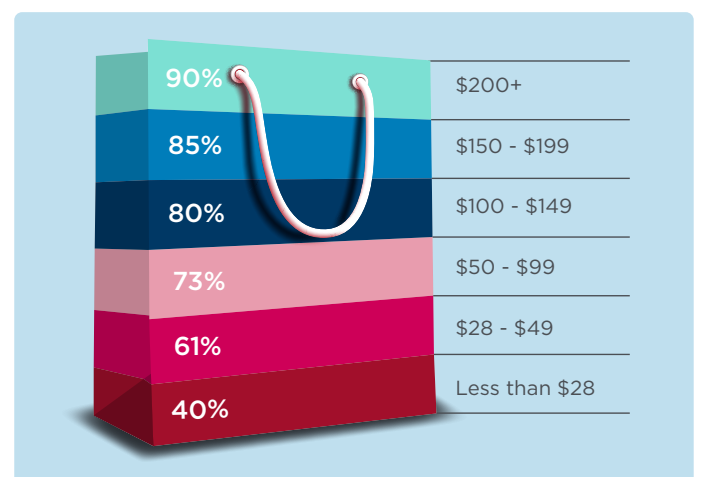
What is the 'airport experience'?

The airport experience is an interconnected ecosystem of moments, often delivered by different parties – airport authorities, merchants, food and beverage outlets, duty-free and airlines, all contributing to the traveller's overall enjoyment. Is there a long line to queue for security? What payment options are available at in-terminal restaurants? Are there exclusive offers at duty-free shopping outlets? Can passengers access a shared-use lounge, regardless of flight ticket class or airline? These are just a few examples of key moments that can affect travellers' impression of the airport.

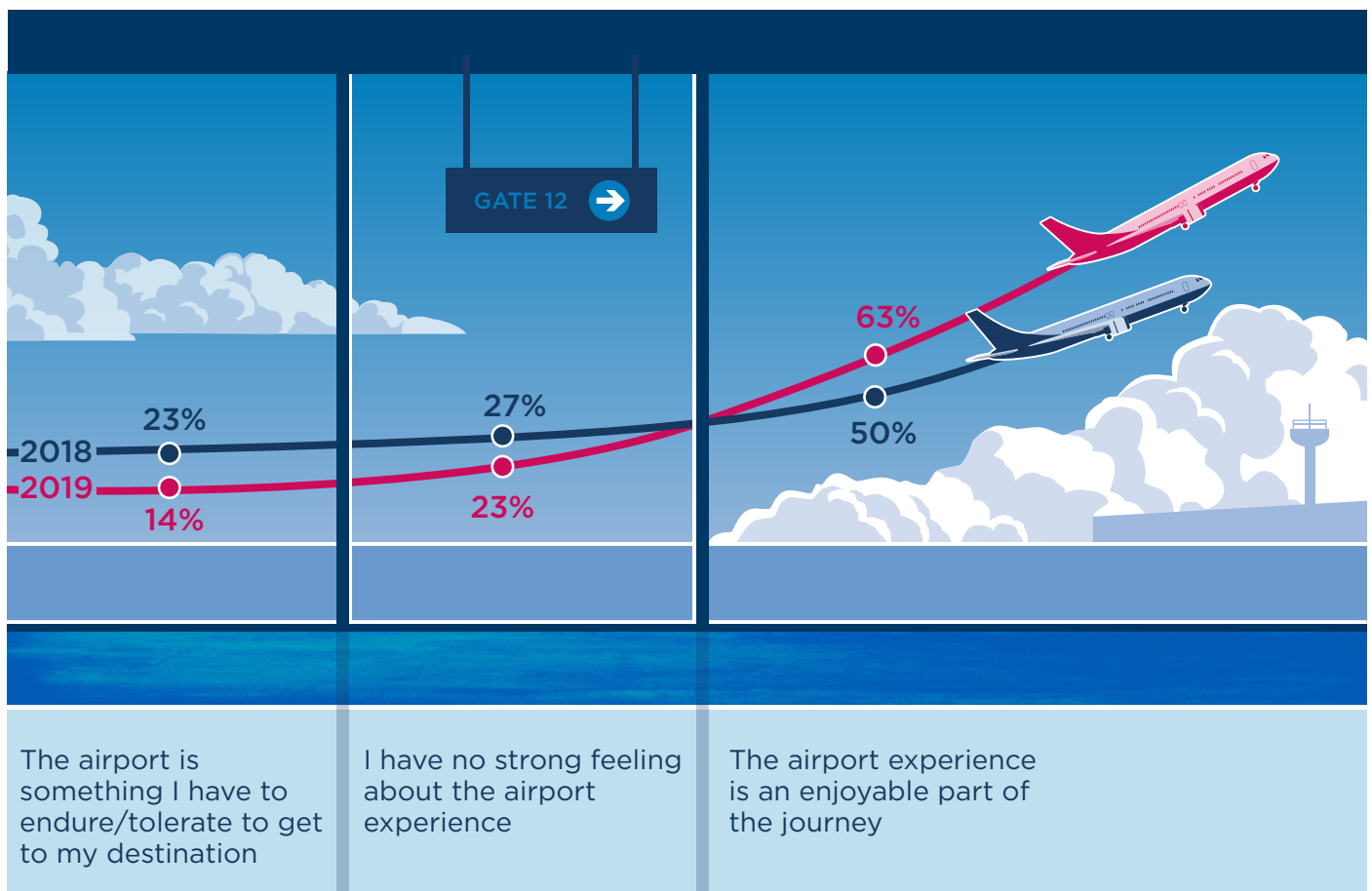
Collinson's research shows that traveller satisfaction should be a paramount concern for airports, travel and travel-focused businesses and brands, because happy travellers are more engaged and more likely to spend at the airport. In short, the entire airport ecosystem needs to be focussed on delivering a positive airport experience because there is a direct correlation between enjoyment and spend:

The happier travellers are, the more travellers will spend

The airport experience is an enjoyable part of the journey...



Enjoyable airport experiences are generally on the up...



Are travellers satisfied with their airport experience?

The good news is that travellers today are more satisfied with the airport experience. In 2018, 50% of all travellers reported that the airport was a pleasant part of their journey, but in 2019 that number jumped 13 percentage points - with 63% of travellers now saying they find the airport experience enjoyable*.

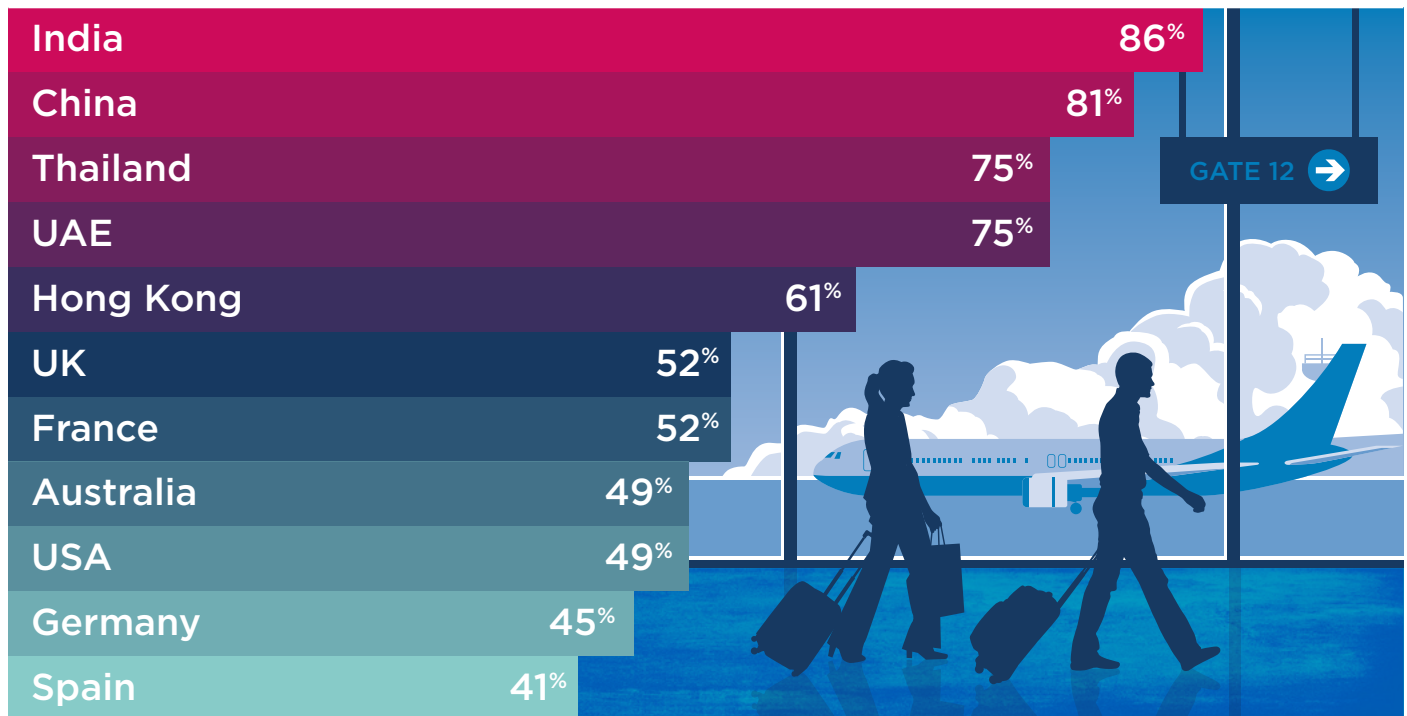
Similarly, whereas nearly a quarter (23%) of travellers felt the airport was something to be “endured” in 2018, just one year later that figure fell to 14% - indicating that over eight in ten travellers see the airport as more than just a bothersome point of transit.

The upsurge in traveller satisfaction year-on-year is great news for the industry and speaks volumes to the innovative, customer-centric solutions now emerging across the airport and travel ecosystem. At the same time, we must recognise that airport satisfaction varies depending on a number of factors, including age and income which see an inverse relationship to airport enjoyment. Collinson’s research found that 67% of travellers aged 18-34 say they are satisfied, compared to only 57% of travellers aged 55 and above. In terms of income, 80% of travellers with annual household incomes under US\$20,000 say they are satisfied, compared to only 55% of travellers earning more than US\$100,000. This points to a need for airports to deliver more customised offerings that will cater to the needs of different traveller segments.

* Collinson’s 2019 data draws on five additional markets not included in the 2018 data; with markets held constant, a jump of eight percentage points YoY was recorded.

Who enjoys the airport experience?

percentage of travellers in market from global Collinson Airport Journey research



Growing polarisation in the delivery of positive experiences for travellers

A key finding in the research is that travellers in Asia and the Middle East enjoy the airport experience significantly more than travellers in western markets like the US and Europe. On average, three in four travellers (74%) across markets like India, China and the UAE enjoy the airport experience, compared to less than half (48%) across markets like the US, the UK and Germany.

Why the gulf in traveller satisfaction?

It is easy to point to the challenges of long-standing legacy infrastructure as seen in the US and Europe, compared to airports in Asia and the Middle East which have been able to build ultra-modern facilities, cherry-pick best-of-breed features, and keep the customer experience absolutely central to it all. Airports in Asia and the Middle East are renowned for leveraging innovative design and offering seamless technology and services to passengers, as seen in some of the world's top airports like Singapore Changi, Incheon International and Dubai International.

On the other hand, airports in western markets are on average much older than their counterparts in the east. Europe and the US are home to the world's 10 oldest airports while the average US airport is over 40 years old. Aging infrastructure can contribute to crowded terminals, inefficient transport links, and out-of-date facilities and design. This is no doubt a contributing factor to travellers' varying enjoyment of the airport experience.

With so many innovative travel experience solutions coming to market, Collinson believes that now is an exciting time for airports of all kinds and in every region to consider new ways to improve the airport experience.

Airports in Asia and the Middle East need to integrate cutting-edge products and services into their offering, to ensure travellers' on-the-ground experience matches the airports' modern physical infrastructure. A brand new terminal may look impressive to a traveller, but unless the services offered are equally cutting-edge, customer satisfaction will not be achieved. Airports in the US and Europe have a different challenge and must seek out solutions that enable a seamless journey and offer unexpected moments of delight, so that no matter the age of the infrastructure, travellers can enjoy a world-class airport experience.

Transcending physical infrastructure to make the airport a better experience, in every region

Collinson's research points to three key areas that airports and businesses in the airport ecosystem can focus on to improve the traveller experience and grow revenues:

1. Know your customer

Traditionally, customer data is owned by airlines and not airports and therefore airports have little ability to understand the demographic needs of customers, let alone communicate directly with them. The growing needs of millennials and millennial-minded consumers demand more from airports and so airports need to find ways of capturing consumer attention directly.

2. Focus on convenience, time saving and incentivisation

Collinson's research validates the oft-stated claim that modern travellers are time-poor. To deliver a positive experience and increase revenues,

airports should focus on helping passengers save time and enjoy a smoother journey – for example, through a pre-order food service like Grab, or a duty-free pre-order and delivery service like Inflyter. Airports can also make the shopping experience more convenient and enjoyable with seamless rewards and incentives delivered via card and payment-linked offers. These are particularly valued if they can be connected to airline loyalty currencies.

3. Create an ecosystem of happy moments

Collinson's research demonstrates that travellers who enjoy the airport experience are significantly more likely to spend at the airport – a key takeaway seeing as per-passenger airport spend has decreased 3.1% between 2013 and 2017**. In order to increase passenger dwell time and spend, airports and their ecosystem of travel-related businesses and brands must make traveller satisfaction across the entire journey a paramount concern; creating seamless and convenient experiences at every moment along the way.

I would spend more on retail if...



46% of travellers who spend upwards of \$200 would spend more if they could shop via an app from the airport lounge and pick it up at the gate

45% of travellers who spend upwards of \$200 would spend more if the airport offered a home or destination delivery service for their purchases

43% of travellers who spend upwards of \$200 would spend more if they could make purchases on their outbound journey and pick them up

**BCG, September 2018

Conclusion

Traveller satisfaction with airports is improving, but there is still a significant gap between passengers' ideal experience and what airports deliver.

Ultimately, every player in the airport ecosystem must make a collective decision to put top value on the satisfaction and happiness of travellers; to create an airport that people purposefully choose to visit and have a genuine preference for; where they arrive early to enjoy the experience and are eager to spend more time and money. Travellers want seamless experiences, to receive relevant and personalised communications and easy to use offers, and to feel that their varying needs in terms of age, income and regional identity are being understood and catered to.

When travellers can get this, that's when they will truly love their journey through the airport; when they will stay longer, and spend more.

Like to hear more from Collinson?
Visit our insights page for more of our latest thinking: www.collinsongroup.com/en-eur/insights

We know what travellers want, and we're pushing the boundaries to help our customers offer them the most efficient, enjoyable and stress-free journey possible. In other words – a journey they can love.

Christopher Evans
Joint CEO, Collinson

About Collinson

Collinson is a global leader in travel experience and loyalty. We deliver exceptional travel, assistance and insurance products that differentiate value propositions, and loyalty solutions that win deeper, more valuable customer relationships.

Our customer benefits products include the world's leading airport experiences programme, Priority Pass, as well as travel insurance, identity assistance, flight delay, international health and travel risk management solutions. Our loyalty expertise uniquely combines strategy, award-winning technology and programme management to create greater engagement and experiences for our clients' customers. Collinson is also the company behind Airport Dimensions, the developer and operator of airport lounges globally, including The Club and Club Aspire brands.

For over 30 years, we've been chosen by the world's leading payment networks, 1,400+ banks, 90+ airlines and 20+ hotel groups to craft customer experiences that win competitive edge. This enables them to acquire, engage and retain the most profitable, but most demanding customers. Our clients include Air France KLM, American Express, Cathay Pacific, Chase, Hackett, Mastercard, Radisson Hotel Group, RSA, Sephora, UnionPay and Visa.



18 locations



13 countries



2,000 talented individuals



800+ clients

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