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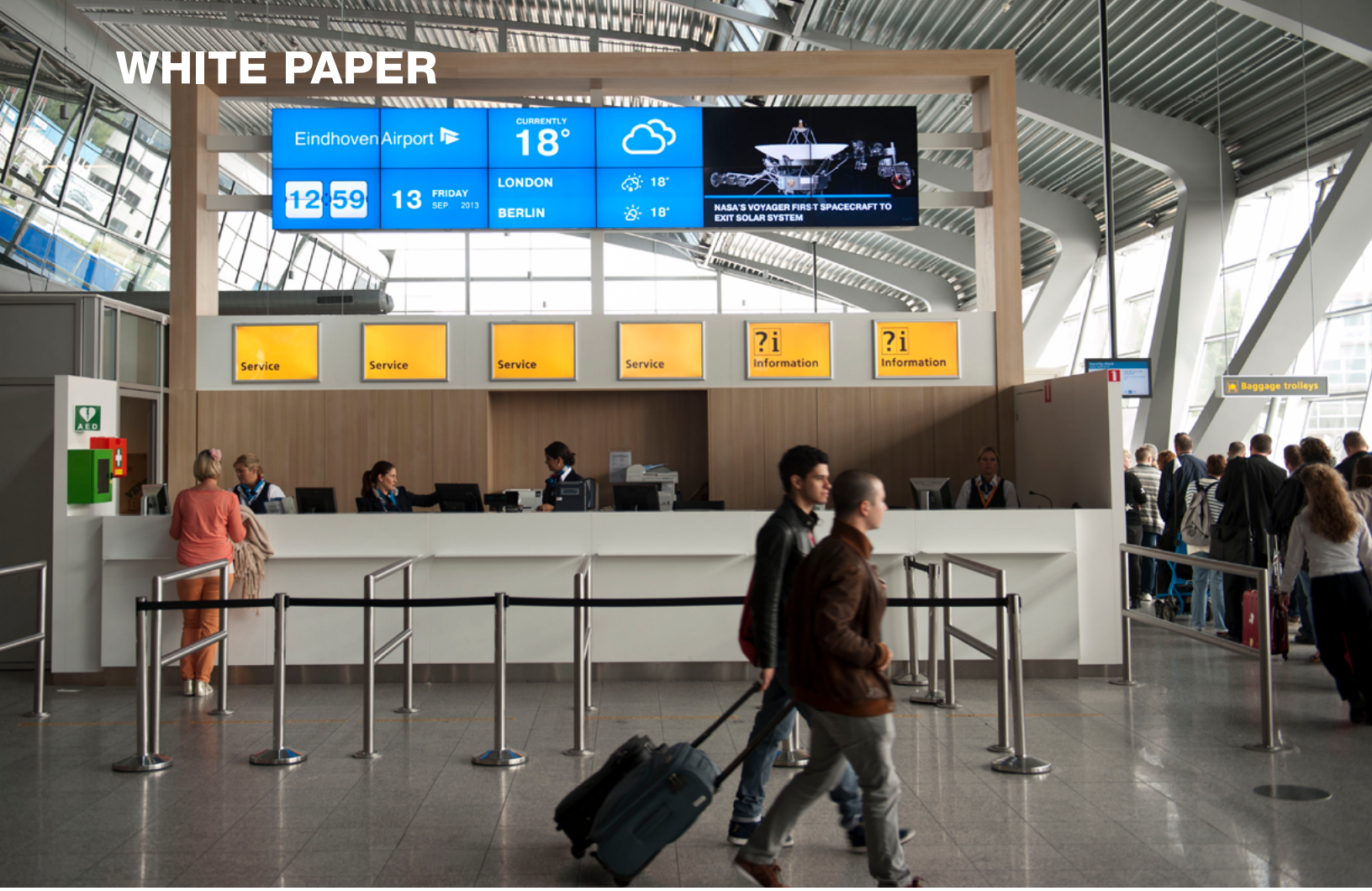

Managing Airline Passenger Flow with Digital Signage

Getting airline travelers to their destination quickly and safely begins with guiding them through the airport.

By Richard Slawsky | Contributing writer, Digital Signage Today

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Global airline passenger traffic has been growing for the past nine years, and that growth is expected to continue through 2019 and beyond.

According to the Federal Aviation Administration, more than 2.6 million passengers fly in and out of U.S. airports every day. The country's business airport, Atlanta's Hartsfield-Jackson, serves more than 100 million passengers a year.

And while the airline industry relies on more than 14,000 air traffic controllers to move those passengers safely and efficiently while they're in flight, the airports themselves are responsible for those passengers while they're in the terminal.

Managing the flow of passengers throughout an airport more effectively not only makes for a better passenger experience, it can help improve the profitability of airlines as well the businesses operating in that airport. Digital signage can help achieve those goals.

Delays can be costly

The importance of managing passenger flow can't be understated, and keeping air travel humming depends as much on getting people to their destination when they're in the airport as it does when they're on the plane.

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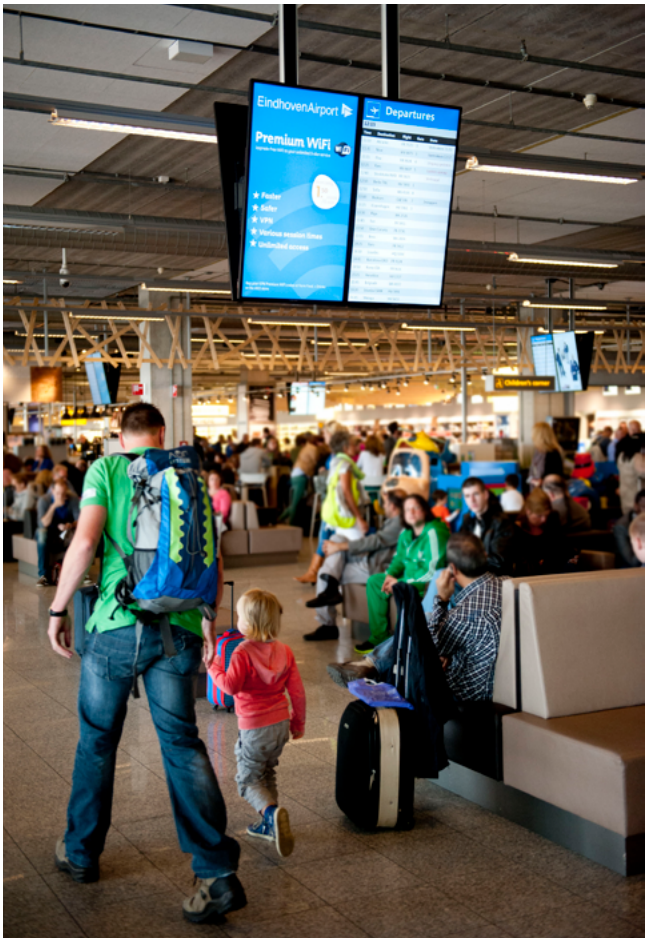
Recent airline industry estimates indicate that it costs nearly $69 per minute to operate a passenger aircraft. Even a 10-minute delay waiting for a late boarder, then, can cost an airline $700 or more. Assuming that even just 1 percent of the 5,000 aircraft operating throughout the country during peak travel times are delayed each day due to passengers running late, the costs can quickly add up to tens of thousands of dollars.



It's not just the airlines who suffer, either. Revenue at airport businesses falls when passengers have difficulty getting where they need to be, both because they're pressed for time and because they're dissatisfied with the airport experience. Also affected are the passengers themselves, in terms of both time and aggravation.

While some form of digital signage has been used in airports for years to display flight arrivals and departures and direct passengers to the appropriate gate, its capabilities extend far beyond those basic tasks.

The PADS4 flight information display system (FIDS) software developed by The Netherlands-based NDS, for example, not only can help get passengers where they need to be more quickly, but can make for a more enjoyable experience and help to reduce perceived wait times.

PADS4 is a complete digital signage platform, offering data integration for 70+ sources, interactive and touch compatibility, design and network management tools, plus smart solutions for System-on-Chip support, context-driven data sharing, and presentation control with Viewer Variables.

The PADS4 platform can display flight information in English, Spanish, Arabic or any other language. Users can easily connect the software with their existing FIDS database or airport operational database (AODB) to display real-time flight information or use the PADS4 FIDS software to manage their timetable and operational flights. That information can be combined with advertising, news feeds, social media posts or even live TV.

Airport managers can define business rules, enabling screens to automatically respond to situation changes such as a gate change, outside weather, a significant delay or even

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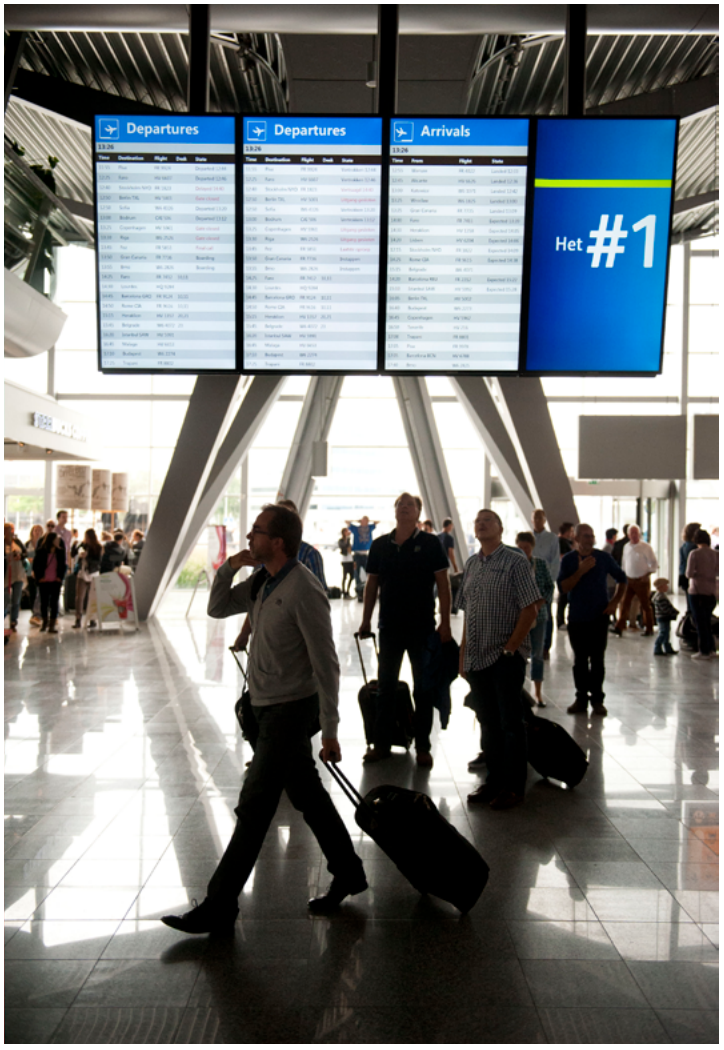
an emergency situation. Screens can offer updates and alerts, telling passengers when to board, where to stand and what information to have ready to speed up queues. Digital menu boards created with PADS4 can be programmed to display food items based on time-of-day or weather, while PADS4's advertising tools can be used to create targeted ads using data, context-driven display rules, sensors, and scheduling to optimize display throughout the facility. The PADS4 Crystal content management system features a Web-based interface, accessible from any browser.

And if the FIDS solution an airport manager seeks isn't included in the software, it can easily be created with the PADS4 Software Development Kit.

A demonstrated platform

NDS introduced its first digital signage solution in 1994, and its PADS4 software powers 500,000+ screens in more than 75 countries.

Billund Airport in Denmark is one of the facilities that recently selected PADS4 to improve their passenger experience. Located near the famous Legoland, nearly 3.3 million passengers per year are traveling through or from Billund Airport. The airport's existing system was more than 10 years old and had a negative impact on the passenger experience.



After in-depth training by NDS, airport staff was able to fully implement and develop the set-up of PADS4 themselves. They implemented data-driven sources such as weather forecasting and flight radar, eliminating the need for manual adjustments. PADS4 is now running on 175 NEC screens throughout the airport with a hardware combination of OPS media players and Windows-based PCs. Having a centrally based system makes it easy to quickly distribute and manage the information to all the screens around the entire airport, minimizing the chance of technical errors.

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And the Airport of Toulouse-Blagnac, France's fifth-busiest airport serving 9.2 million passengers per year, implemented PADS4 when it opened a new terminal. ATB chose the solution in part because of its Web-based content management software, which makes the management of displays throughout the facility easy and efficient. PADS4 powers duty-free screens, digital banners and multiple video walls, offering real-time flight information, tourist messages and safety information in the form of videos, images and templates.

Preserving profitability

Airports face a number of challenges today when it comes to operating in an efficient manner. Always-present security concerns are meeting head-on with an ever-increasing number of travelers.

As a result, congestion in the terminal is likely to be an ever-increasing issue. An effective, intelligent digital signage solution will be a key tool in addressing that issue.

Managing passenger flow in an airport is more than simply a matter of deploying flight information displays and some scattered wayfinding signage to help them get where they need to be. It's about leveraging data designed to ensure those passengers have an enjoyable experience during the journey.

About the sponsor:

NDS supplies reliable, high-end flight information display system (FIDS) software to airports all around the world. Whether you have a small or large airport, with the FIDS software from NDS you get a first-class solution to display your flight information against a competitive price.

As a specialist in digital signage software, we also provide various other airport solutions, managed from one platform. Increase your airport revenues or enhance the passenger experience with digital advertising, dynamic airport wayfinding, queue management, or one of our many other smart airport digital signage solutions.

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