

Checking In Via Cell Phone

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Airline passengers will soon be able to check in with their cell phones. Together with SITA, a leading provider of IT services to the airline industry, Siemens Business Services has developed a mobile solution that eliminates the need to wait at the check-in counter. The first airline to test the mobile application is the Brazilian carrier TAM, which is currently using it on two domestic routes and plans to implement it across the board before the end of the year.

Using the cell phone, the passenger checks in and chooses a seat, which can also be done beforehand from home. Then the passenger only needs to stand in line at the security check. This eases the burden on check-in counters and results in huge time savings, particularly for travelers without luggage.

The “mobile passenger solution,” as it’s called, will eliminate the need for the boarding card with a magnetic strip. After providing his information, the passenger obtains the software for his Java-enabled cell phone through a one-time GPRS transfer. To start the check-in process, he uses a phone call to select the airline ticket stored on a server, chooses the desired seat and confirms with a click. Seconds later, he receives his flight data displayed as a bar code. These bar codes then serve as an electronic boarding ticket at the security check and the gate.

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