

Coordinated turnaround means a more efficient travel experience for airline passengers

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The EU INTERACTION project has coordinated aircraft turnaround processes such as passenger, baggage, freight and ramp operations for a more efficient and predictable travel experience.

Whether for business or leisure, at some point we all succumb to the allure of [air travel](#). From arriving at the airport, checking our luggage and boarding a plane to be whisked away to some faraway place. What once seemed so serene can quickly unravel into stress-filled chaos.

For many of us, this is the all-too-familiar reality of modern air travel. However, according to INTERACTION, it doesn't have to be this way.

Evolving needs

INTERACTION aims to evolve airport operations beyond the chaos by introducing a fully integrated and coordinated management process for all passenger, baggage, freight and ramp operations. 'Airport operations need to evolve in terms of enhancing the predictability and control of the various processes that happen during a [turnaround](#) operation,' says INTERACTION Scientific Coordinator Ruben Martínez.

An aircraft's turnaround is the core process that drives all other processes, including passenger, baggage and freight processing and ramp operations. Thus, the turnaround needs to be executed on-time and in

compliance with the planned schedule – a complex process requiring a number of ground operations to be performed both in sequence and in parallel.

'Even the most minor of delays can be extremely costly for airlines,' says Martínez. 'Unfortunately, currently turnaround operations are comprised of a set of separately managed processes with little to no communication between them, meaning there's lots of room for inefficiencies and delays.'

Practical solutions

To remedy this situation, INTERACTION looked to implement an improved and more streamlined operational process. It started by studying the current situation and identifying key inefficiencies and points for improvement. This study served as the project's baseline, from which it both defined the current turnaround process and created an initial list of potential solutions. 'Overall, the project introduced 19 solutions, all aimed at improving either one single turnaround process, such as passenger, baggage, cargo or ramp activities, or enhancing the coordination of all process and increasing the collaboration among airport partners,' comments Martínez.

For example, one INTERACTION solution dealt with improving the passenger experience by empowering them to be in control of the process. This was accomplished by assigning time slots for passengers to go through security screening facilities and implementing high-speed moving walks in different parts of the terminal. To reduce the operational costs of turnaround services, another solution helps airports pool their equipment and centralise services.

Increased efficiencies and coordination

As a direct result of INTERACTION's work, all airport stakeholders involved in the turnaround process – operators, airlines, ground handlers and other service providers – are already seeing increased efficiencies and coordination across the turnaround value-chain. Furthermore, passengers too are benefiting from INTERACTION's results as airport and airline information channels are being enhanced in a two-way direction, thanks to the availability of new and more reliable information coming from the INTERACTION information platform.

'Through the implementation of INTERACTION solutions, aircraft turnaround performance will be improved at airports across Europe and, by doing so, we are helping to bring back some of that missing allure to air travel,' concludes Martínez.

More information: INTERACTION - INnovative TEchnologies and Researches for a new Airport Concept towards Turnaround coordinatION: cordis.europa.eu/project/rcn/111006_en.html

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