

JetBlue, Delta will test biometric boarding passes

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Boarding passes could someday become quaint relics for air travelers.

JetBlue Airways plans to test facial-recognition check-in for a few flights beginning later this month, and Delta Air Lines plans to let some passengers board with their fingerprints instead of a boarding pass.

The once-ubiquitous paper boarding pass is already shunned by many travelers who prefer to use mobile boarding passes on their phones. Now pilot programs could render those obsolete too, as airlines aim to increase convenience for customers, and government agencies look to increase security.

JetBlue and U.S. Customs and Border Protection will test facial recognition for passengers boarding flights from Boston's Logan Airport to Aruba starting later this month. Volunteers will be photographed and their images will be searched against a Customs database of passport and other photos. Passengers who are cleared will get a signal from a screen above the camera, telling them they can go ahead and board.

JetBlue said it will be the first airline to work with Customs to test biometrics for identifying passengers during boarding.

Delta recently started letting some members of its loyalty program use fingerprints as proof of their identity to enter the airline's lounge at Reagan Washington National Airport.

The airline says that it plans to expand the test at National to let members use fingerprints to check a bag and board a plane.

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