Airport Experience Research 2024

AX24: The Age of The Airport Experience

April 2024

Contents

Contents

Foreword

With the resounding return of global travel demand, Airport Dimensions is committed to helping airports meet the needs of next generation travelers so they can compete more effectively, grow revenues and strengthen profitability.

We're a world leader in actively leveraging insights to enrich experiences, offering a broad array of choices to meet travelers' evolving needs and unlock new opportunities.

Since 2014, we've been tracking the views of regular travelers through our annual Airport Experience Research. During that time, we've seen satisfaction steadily rise from 53% in 2014 to a high of 72% last year.

But our AX24 research suggests we've reached a watershed. For the first time, overall airport experience satisfaction has fallen over the past year. The needs and desires of travelers, particularly amongst younger generations, are changing faster than airports in parts of the world are keeping up with, so new thinking and technology is required for them to pivot from a focus on facilities and to experiences.

Younger travelers want their time at airports to be more inspiring, enjoyable and rewarding, and for their digital devices to access everything they need or want. So, it's crucial for airports, and the brands seeking to grow within them, to understand and respond to this quickening pace of expectation.

You'll find this white paper full of thought-provoking data and insight on the evolving expectations of regular global travelers, as well as case studies and quotes that highlight the opportunities for forward thinking airports. We've also concluded each section with a set of growth drivers we believe leaders should be actively considering.

> We hope you find it as stimulating and valuable to read as it was to create it. We'd love to hear your feedback or help with the discussions it might spark in your organization.

Mignon Buckingham, CEO, Airport Dimensions

Airport Experience '24 Research Overview

9,306
Global Respondents

Fieldwork carried out 18th Oct – 6th Nov 2023 independently by Dynata

Country	%
USA	11%
Brazil	8%
China	8%
UK	8%
India	8%
Germany	5%
Italy	5%
Mexico	5%
Australia	5%
Japan	5%
Indonesia	5%
Peru	5%
UAE	5%
Vietnam	5%
Hong Kong	4%
Singapore	4%
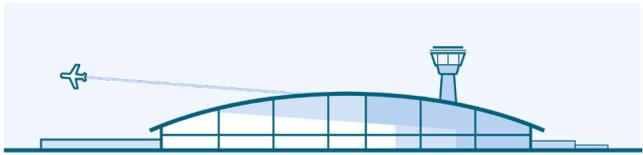
2+ return trips taken in the last 12 months

Male: **50%**   Female: **49%**

Average Age: **42**

Median Gross Annual HH income: **$52, 000**

U.S Purchase Power, Natural Fallout, U.S. Population Median $75, 000

GEN X	BOOMER	ELDER
27%	17%	1%

GEN Z	MILLENIAL
18%	36%

Research Highlights

In an era where travel demand continues to surge, airports face both challenges and opportunities in meeting the evolving needs and expectations of passengers.

All the respondents in our survey are classed as regular travelers, defined as those who have taken a minimum of two return trips in the last twelve months – this means they offer feedback based on multiple trips and airport experiences.

Key highlights from our AX24 research findings include:

Achieving Satisfaction

8% Regular travelers tell us they plan to travel 8% more this year and even more in emerging markets, putting more pressure on airport facilities and infrastructure.

70% Global traveler satisfaction with the airport experience is running at 70%, which is slightly down on last year and the first fall since our annual research began.

54% Satisfaction continues to dip with the airside facilities, with only 54% saying they are happy with this key spending phase of the journey.

Experience Expectations

The most valued experience improvements are more comfortable seating (83%), a reduction of queuing (79%), a single app to enable smoother journeys (71%) and increased lounge access (70%).

Dining experiences (15%) and lounge access (13%) are top of travelers' priorities when it comes to airside discretionary spend.

Research Highlights

Positive Connections

Travelers spend more than a third of their airport time on revenue-generating activities, with dining, shopping and going online the most popular activities.

Despite the desire, 21% of travelers do not engage with the airport they are travelling through via any digital interface channels, e.g. social media, email dialogue or dedicated airport apps.
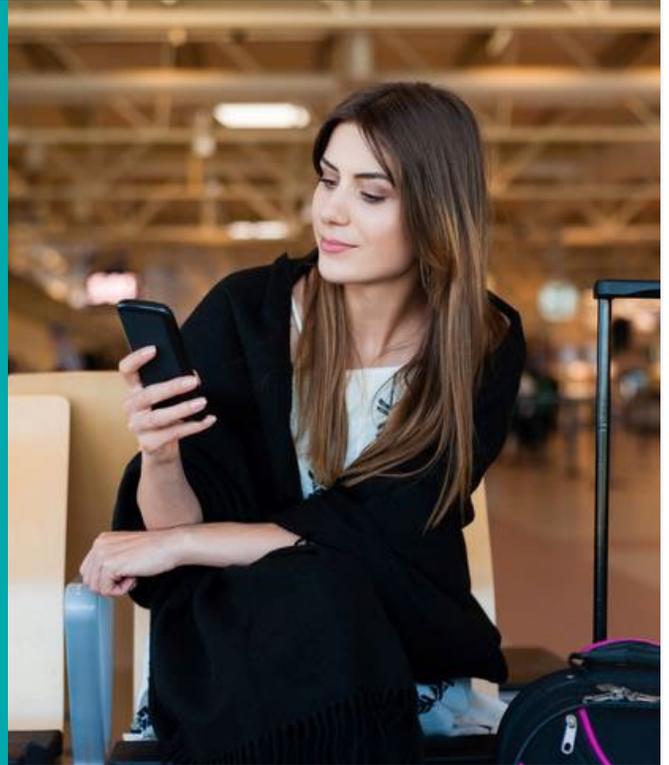
Retail Revolution

Interest in conventional airport retail is waning, because travelers are increasingly focusing on experience and value. More than half expressed interest in airport shopping via their mobile device from the lounge.

70% Alongside retail, younger travelers are interested in experiences such as gaming, wellness or private shopping. Over 70% are also interested in sleep suites or pods.

Research Highlights

Elevated Lounge

30% Regular travelers plan to travel 8% more this year and even more in emerging markets, putting more pressure on airport facilities and infrastructure.

Travelers' spending patterns are changing, with lounges now claiming the second spot in their discretionary spend priorities, overtaking airport shopping.
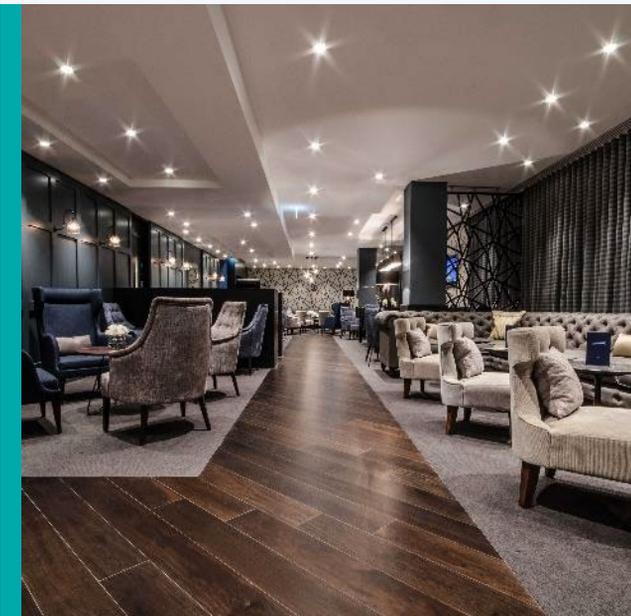
Dining Demand

64% With 64% of travelers choosing to dine while awaiting their flights, it's crucial for airports to uphold the dining experience for their travelers.

When considering additional paid services, travelers consistently are increasingly interested in premium F&B options (61%) and full table service dining (58%).

"

The AX24 research tells us that we have reached a pivotal point in our relationship with travelers. Travel is set to grow again this year, and regular travelers tell us they are increasingly looking for new and different experiences at the airport, ones which represent new revenue opportunities for airports and concessions. But with capacity constraints in many parts of the world, the airport risks becoming a more crowded and frustrating experience.

Airports should consider how they can seize and build upon this opportunity, whilst working to mitigate the challenges. The digital airport is key to this, helping to connect with all travelers, understanding and building a rapport with them before, during and after the journey. Travelers tell us they would welcome this, and engagement goes hand in hand with growing e-commerce, which offers up the flexibility, choice and control that travelers need to access and be inclined to purchase the experiences they want, at the time that they want them, and on their own terms.

Stephen Hay, Director of Global Strategy, Airport Dimensions

Section 1: Achieving Satisfaction

Travel Demand Rises

Global demand for air travel goes from strength to strength. Travelers included in our global survey took on average five return trips in the past year and expect that number to grow by an average of 8% in the next 12 months.

Stated Travel Past and Next 12 Months

Country	Stated – Past 12 Months	Stated Change – Next 12 Months
Vietnam	5.7	0.8
USA	4.2	-0.1
UK	4.1	0.0
UAE	5.8	0.4
Singapore	5.7	0.4
Peru	5.8	1.1
Mexico	4.8	0.4
Japan	4.4	0.3
Italy	4.0	-0.1
Indonesia	5.5	1.2
India	5.6	0.9
Hong Kong	5.4	0.0
Germany	3.9	-
China	6.2	0.6
Brazil	5.2	1.3
Australia	4.1	0.3
All	5.0	0.4

■ Stated – Past 12 Months ■ Stated Positive Change – Next 12 Months
■ Stated Negative Change – Next 12 Months

The rate of anticipated growth differs around the world, with some mature markets showing low or no increases. This contrasts to travelers in developing markets such as Brazil, India, Indonesia Peru and Vietnam, where travelers expect strong double-digit growth in their international travel over the coming year.

Generation	Stated – Past 12 Months	Stated – Next 12 Months
Gen Z	5.7	0.7
Millennial	5.3	0.4
Gen X	4.7	0.3
Boomer	4.0	0.1
Elder	3.8	-0.1

■ Stated – Past 12 Months ■ Stated – Next 12 Months

Across all markets, younger traveler segments such as Gen Z and Millennials, are the real drivers of travel growth. Their demands of the airport experience are evolving in different ways to previous generations, creating future opportunities for airport operators.

Airport Satisfaction Dips

Traveler satisfaction with the airport experience is running at 70%, which is a like for like drop of 2% compared to last year. This is likely being driven by growing passenger numbers in the past year leading to more crowded airports.

Emerging markets in Asia continue to lead in levels of traveler satisfaction. Whilst Singapore and Japan registered impressive gains from the earlier challenges of the post pandemic travel surge, many markets showed a drop in satisfaction. In the USA, Italy, Australia and UK, only 60% or less say they are satisfied with their airport experience.

Overall Airport Satisfaction by Market

Change on last year

Market	Satisfaction	Change on last year
Singapore	93%	10%
China	88%	- 4%
Hong Kong	84%	-1%
Indonesia	83%	
India	82%	-1%
Vietnam	80%	
Peru	72%	
UAE	72%	- 4%
Brazil	71%	- 5%
Overall	70%	- 2%
Mexico	66%	
Japan	66%	11%
Germany	61%	5%
USA	60%	- 3%
Italy	59%	- 4%
Australia	52%	- 5%
UK	51%	- 1%

Satisfaction: 73%

- Check-In and Baggage Drop **80%**
- Public Transport to The Airport **75%**
- Security Checks and Queues **74%**
- Private Car Parking **62%**

LANDSIDE

Satisfaction: 70%

- Cleanliness **80%**
- Ease of Navigation **81%**
- Comfort of Seating **73%**
- Range and Quality of Retail/ Dining **73%**
- Crowds **60%**
- Value for Money **53%**

DEPARTURES

Satisfaction: 54%

- Wi-Fi Access/Speed **62%**
- Working Areas **59%**
- Availability of Retail Delivery Services **54%**
- Transport Services **51%**
- Entertainment **51%**
- Retail Pre-Order **50%**

FACILITIES

Satisfaction: 65%

- Experience at Gate **74%**
- Walking Distance **71%**
- Gate Facilities **70%**
- Priority Boarding **68%**
- Delivery Services **55%**
- Transport Services **55%**

GATE

Levels of satisfaction across the four phases of travel through airports – landside, departures, airside facilities and the gate declines as the traveler journey progresses, only to recover when they get to the gate. The core part of the journey, where airports hope travelers will be spending, is being dragged down by issues such as perceived poor value for money, crowds and limited entertainment options.

However, there are regional differences with this challenge, with Asia and the Middle East ensuring that top notch facilities and services maintain high levels of satisfaction during the journey phases with spending potential when airports most want travelers to spend.

In contrast, Europe and USA score particularly poorly, which may reflect a higher frequency of older infrastructure and more limited facilities.

	Satisfied					Not Satisfied			
	Landside	Departures	Facilities	Gate / Departure		Landside	Departures	Facilities	Gate / Departure
Australia	65%	65%	39%	55%		14%	14%	16%	12%
Brazil	72%	65%	50%	65%		12%	17%	18%	12%
China	80%	77%	72%	76%		4%	4%	6%	5%
Germany	66%	62%	41%	52%		15%	16%	14%	12%
Hong Kong	72%	70%	59%	65%		4%	7%	6%	6%
India	85%	82%	71%	81%		5%	6%	8%	5%
Indonesia	88%	82%	62%	76%		4%	6%	6%	6%
Italy	68%	63%	42%	60%		11%	13%	14%	9%
Japan	54%	60%	39%	46%		14%	9%	9%	8%
Mexico	69%	66%	52%	63%		15%	16%	18%	14%
Peru	72%	70%	62%	75%		12%	13%	13%	8%
Singapore	87%	87%	77%	78%		2%	3%	3%	3%
UAE	80%	78%	68%	73%		8%	8%	9%	9%
UK	63%	62%	39%	52%		16%	16%	13%	14%
USA	69%	66%	44%	60%		10%	13%	13%	9%
Vietnam	78%	73%	64%	73%		7%	8%	9%	6%

Conclusion

Both the stated intent of travelers we surveyed and long-term market forecasts confirm that the volume of people traveling, particularly internationally, is set to continue growing for the foreseeable future.

According to research by the ACI World Airport Traffic Forecasts (WATF) 2023-2052, global passenger traffic will overtake pre-COVID volumes this year and will double from 2024 to 2042.

In many places, airport capacity may not keep pace with this growth, so we can anticipate more crowded airports at a time when our industry needs to enhance the overall experience.

Satisfaction with the airport experience is at a tipping point. Emerging markets with modern, efficient airports look set to pull ahead with higher levels of satisfaction, setting new standards and expectations. Airports in mature markets, with older infrastructure, higher costs of operation and limited space to expand, could struggle to keep up.

Action for airports

Three potential growth drivers:

1. Airports can benefit from recognizing and responding to the significant change that is underway in travelers' expectations. This is the perfect time to start engaging more actively with all generations, collecting more data, listening to their needs and exploring how to drive better levels of satisfaction.

2. There is work to be done to better understand younger travelers' needs and develop strategies (products, services, experience, engagement) to meet them. At the same time, it may be useful to explore how to better support older travelers so that plans to improve satisfaction remain balanced.

3. Where older airports cannot easily upgrade terminal hardware and infrastructure, it is worth considering how more flexible digital and other 'add on' experiences can raise satisfaction and help to transform the airport experience.

Section 2: Experience Expectations

Prioritizing Enhancements

Meeting the growing experiential expectations of travelers is our collective challenge. Airports around the world are becoming busier as travel continues to grow, but capacity expansion and new investment are not keeping up with the pace.

Enhancement	Worsen	Improve
More Comfortable Seating Areas	-3%	83%
Queue-Free Airport Journey	-4%	79%
More Public Transportation Options	-4%	74%
Single App Enabled Airport Journey	-5%	71%
More Options To Access Airport Lounges	-4%	70%
Facial Recognition At Security / Boarding	-7%	69%
New In-App Features When Using An Airport Lounge	-4%	64%
More Private Parking Options	-5%	64%
Exclusive Seating Or Waiting Areas For A Small Fee	-10%	60%
Ordering Food From Your App With Collection	-6%	60%
Health And Wellness Facilities	-5%	60%
Shopping From Your App and Delivery	-6%	56%
More Grooming / Shower Facilities	-6%	55%
Turning Some Retail Space Into Other Facilities	-7%	54%

■ Improve ■ Worsen

Travelers would welcome enhancements to the airport which would improve their overall experience, such as better digital services and more options for access to airport lounges, but our research suggests getting the basic hygiene factors right first is more important when it comes to improving the airport experience. Better seating and shorter queues are top of travelers' list of enhancements.

It also highlights that travelers' expectations are being raised by what they can access and experience through brands operating in the airport space and beyond. They are now armed with unprecedented access to information and opportunity through the power of their connected devices.

Introducing travelers to new experiences will be crucial for airport operators around the world looking to drive revenue and profitable growth.

Pivot to Experiences

Across our research we see indicators that traveler demands are moving away from traditional airport revenue drivers such as retail and parking, into new areas which are more experiential focused.

When we asked travelers about how they want to direct discretionary spend at the airport, we see a clear trend emerging where better dining experiences and lounge access are now the top two spend priorities and interest in conventional retail is waning, as more informed and empowered travelers question the choice, value and convenience of airport shopping.

Category	Value
Airport transfers	10%
Luggage collection / delivery services	6%
Airport parking	10%
Priority Check in / Bag drop	8%
Exclusive /Private dining experience	15%
Fast track services	7%
VIP / Private shopping experience	10%
Lounge access	13%
Sleep suites / pods	9%
Electronic gaming centre	4%
Wellness and grooming	8%

Across new and innovative experiences such as sleep, gaming and wellness, travelers tell us these would account for 21% of spend overall and this pivot to experience is further amplified for younger generations.

Younger travelers (Gen Z and Millennials) tell us they are less interested in spending on amenities such as parking and fast track, but motivated to spend on new experiences. Given their higher frequency of travel, the importance of this evolving desire to spend will be amplified.

Not only are Gen Z and Millennials emerging as experience seekers, they are also far more likely to share and advocate for their experiences on social media, so airports need to consider how to support them in creating 'Instagrammable Moments' in ways similar to those that retail and hospitality brands have begun to do in urban centers.

Understanding Traveler Motivations

For many years, the important role that demographics play in understanding traveler needs and wants has been clearly recognized. This research highlights the critical importance of Millennials and Generation Z in shaping the future airport experience. However, that is only half the story. We need to better understand traveler motivation and how this impacts on their behavior whilst at the airport.

To help with this, we developed the concept of 'Traveler Tribes' in 2022 as part of our ongoing Airport Experience research. By analyzing traveler interests and spending priorities, we have identified six distinct tribes – Streamliners, Affluents, Premiers, Wayfinders, Aspiring and Explorers.

This draws upon eight years of research data to cluster travelers across two key dimensions. Firstly, what sort of airport journey are they looking for - is it greater efficiency and utility, or an enhanced experience? Secondly, how willing or able are they to spend more to achieve their desired journey experience?

Younger travelers tell us that they are less interested in spending on amenities such as parking and fast track, but motivated to spend on new experiences.
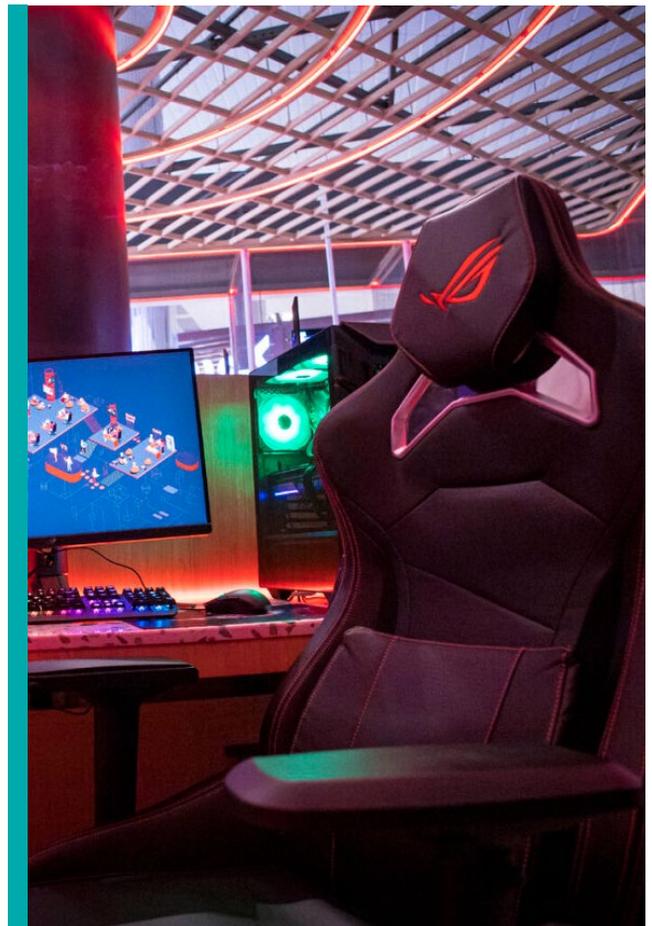
Tribes are not limited by demographic or background. Whilst higher spending and experience seeking tribes tend to come more from younger generational segments, the approach does not exclude travelers from other backgrounds. It also recognizes that behaviors and tribes can change based on circumstances. A business traveler today is looking for speed and efficiency, but could be going on holiday tomorrow, so would then be looking for a more relaxing experience.

An important insight about the tribes is that they show a strong correlation between spend and satisfaction. In other words, those that spend more enjoy their airport experience more, and vice versa.

The table below provides a high-level overview of our six tribes.

	Utility Seeker	Hybrid Seeker	Experience Seeker
Looking to Spend More	**Streamliners 8%** Pays for efficiency across the journey Satisfied: 73%	**Affluents 25%** Spends on a balanced experience across the airport journey Satisfied: 82%	**Premiers 17%** Seeking the very best experiences that the airport has to offer Satisfied: 80%
Medium to Low Spend	**Wayfinders 17%** Looking for lower cost utility Satisfied: 56%	**Aspiring 19%** Wants a balanced airport experience but needs value and offers Satisfied: 63%	**Explorers 15%** Looking for new but more affordable experiences across the airport Satisfied: 62%

Conclusion

As they pivot to experiences, traveler needs are evolving rapidly, and airports should change with them. Travelers today are more informed and connected than ever before, with access to a wealth of information and experiences both within and beyond the airport environment. As such, it is advisable for airport operators to not only meet but exceed travelers' expectations in order to drive revenue and sustainable growth.

Our research highlights the significance of understanding the distinct traveler tribes and their evolving preferences. The decline in satisfaction among certain traveler segments underscores the importance of tailoring the airport experience to cater to diverse needs effectively.

To unlock new revenue opportunities and meet the demands of younger travelers, airports should embrace innovation and develop experiences that resonate with their preferences. From prioritizing health and wellness facilities to offering immersive gaming and rethinking their traditional retail experiences, airports have the potential to tap into new sources of revenue.

Actions for Airports

Three potential growth drivers:

1. Understand the rising interest in experiences amongst travelers at your airport by tracking revenue shifts for different segments, tribes or behaviors.

2. Take a flexible approach to piloting and testing new experiences, ensuring faster more economic deployment and agile adaptation to evolving needs.

3. Consider how the future airport experience and revenue may extend landside where more space and greater flexibility often exists.
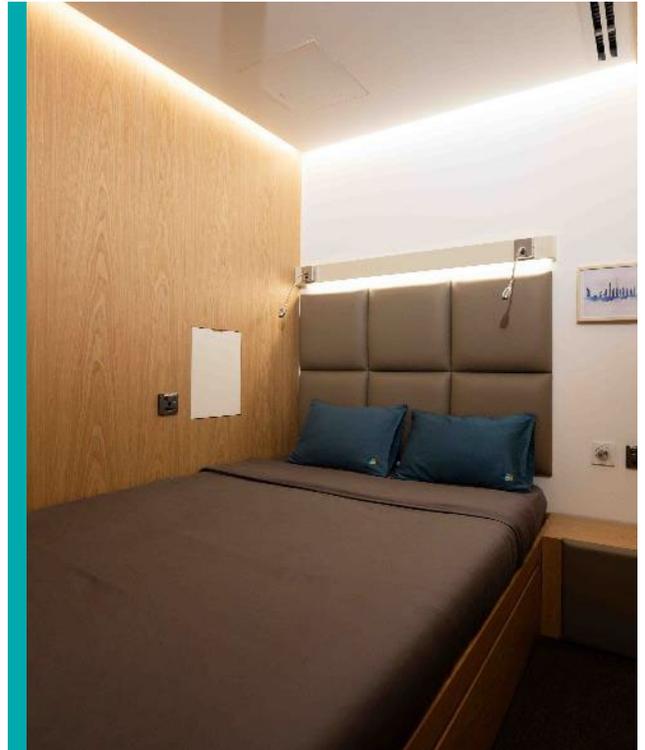
Case study:
Dubai International Focuses on Experience and Satisfaction

2023 was a record-breaking year for Dubai International (DXB), as it welcomed 87 million guests, which surpassed not only its annual forecast but also pre-pandemic traffic levels.

DXB may be the world's largest international airport by passenger traffic, but its growth strategy extends beyond growing capacity and improving efficiency to becoming a world leader in guest experience and satisfaction.

Like many large international airports, DXB offers travelers the chance to indulge in shopping for everything from duty-free products to high-end designer wear. But to stay ahead of the competition as a hub of choice for global travelers, it has been busy expanding the range of experiences available to book and enjoy.

Whether it's a relaxing spa visit, invigorating swim, fine dining experience, exciting gaming session or the calm of private sleep space, DXB offers it all.

Those overseeing airport operations can sometime perceive themselves to be solely in infrastructure management, when in reality they're also enabling a hospitality business. By meticulously managing journeys from the passengers' viewpoint, an astonishing amount of capacity and new opportunity can be released.

Eugene Barry, Chief Commercial Officer of Dubai Airports, explains why pivoting to experiences and focusing on guest satisfaction is helping drive commercial growth:

> As a hub airport, and from a competitive standpoint, we want our customers to consider DXB as their number one choice. Our customer satisfaction levels, and the volume and the number of people that come back, matter more than anything else.

"

That's why we constantly measure ourselves on providing a safe, secure, reliable, high-quality environment for them, to embrace the products, services, and touchpoints they expect.
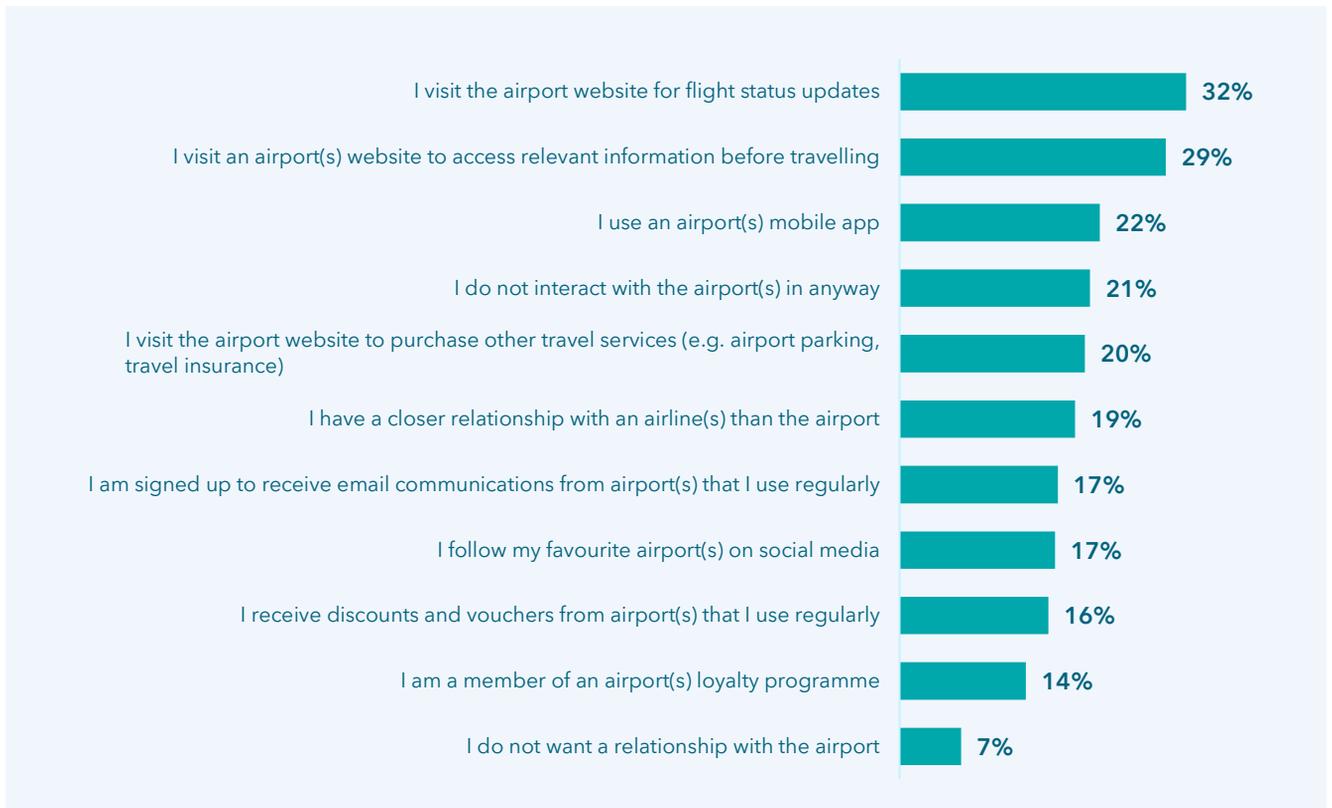
There's no doubt the high levels of operational efficiency we achieve in our airport leads to happier guests because we give them more quality time for shopping, dining, relaxing and being entertained, all of which contributes to our commercial return. It's a strategy that helps everyone win.

Section 3: Positive Connections

Engagement Opportunity

Building closer relationships with travelers through mobile technology and digital engagement is essential for airports to enhance customer satisfaction and drive revenue growth. Many airports have invested in this area, but the AX24 research suggests perhaps not always successfully.

Overall traveler engagement with airport communication channels has actually dropped slightly in the past year. Only 17% of travelers receive emails from their favourite airport and only 20% visit the airports website to make purchases - somewhat paradoxical when 93% of travelers say they are open to having a relationship with their airport.

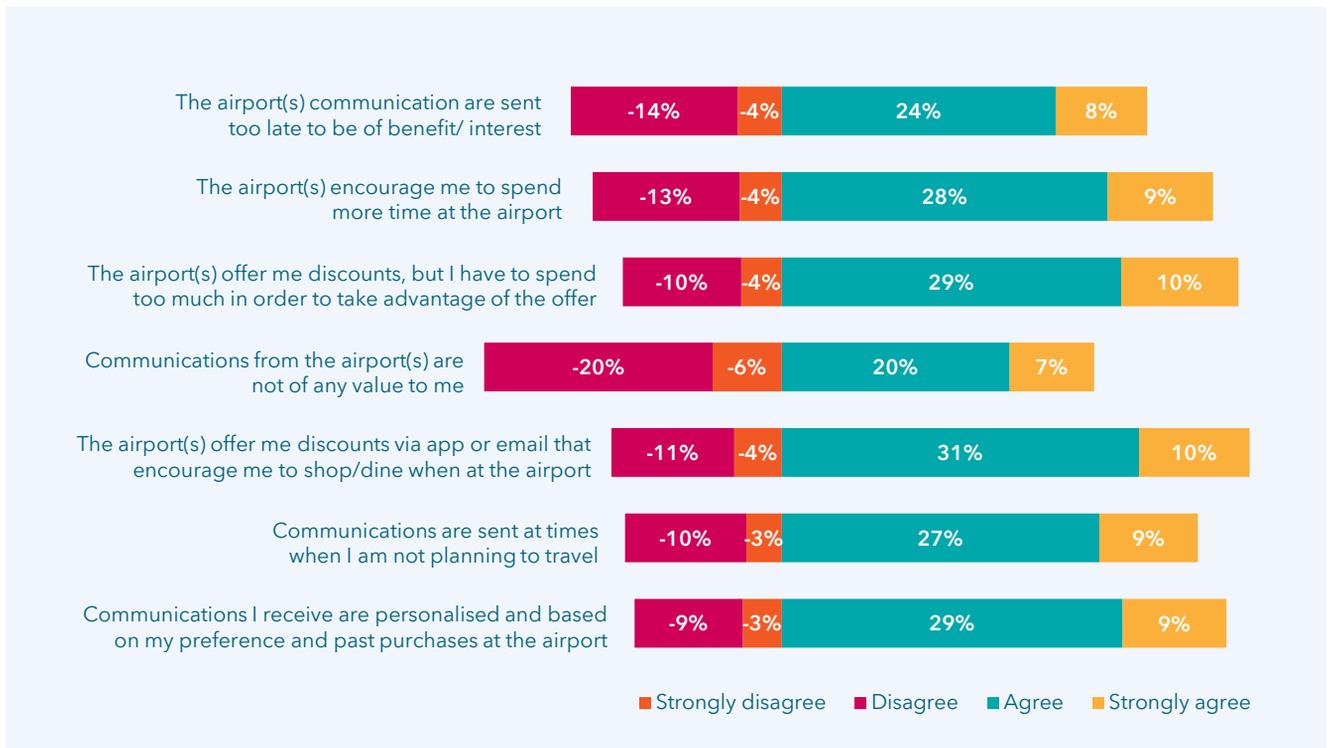| Statement	%
I visit the airport website for flight status updates	32%
I visit an airport(s) website to access relevant information before travelling	29%
I use an airport(s) mobile app	22%
I do not interact with the airport(s) in anyway	21%
I visit the airport website to purchase other travel services (e.g. airport parking, travel insurance)	20%
I have a closer relationship with an airline(s) than the airport	19%
I am signed up to receive email communications from airport(s) that I use regularly	17%
I follow my favourite airport(s) on social media	17%
I receive discounts and vouchers from airport(s) that I use regularly	16%
I am a member of an airport(s) loyalty programme	14%
I do not want a relationship with the airport	7%

Whilst the causes of this decline are likely varied, we should recognize that enhanced search engines and emerging AI offer travelers more choices for trusted sources of information. These new tools risk cutting airports out of the picture, impacting ability to influence and diminishing ability to sell.

Our research suggests that whilst many airports are investing in this area and seeing success, more could be done to capitalize on the potential to achieve traction through traveler engagement, in particular the timeliness and relevance of communications.

Travelers tell us that airport communication performance has weakened slightly in the past 12 months, and it is clear that a promotional and value-focused dialogue from airports is a key opportunity to harness the full commercial potential of a closer relationship with travelers.

	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
The airport(s) communication are sent too late to be of benefit/ interest	-14%	-4%	24%	8%
The airport(s) encourage me to spend more time at the airport	-13%	-4%	28%	9%
The airport(s) offer me discounts, but I have to spend too much in order to take advantage of the offer	-10%	-4%	29%	10%
Communications from the airport(s) are not of any value to me	-20%	-6%	20%	7%
The airport(s) offer me discounts via app or email that encourage me to shop/dine when at the airport	-11%	-4%	31%	10%
Communications are sent at times when I am not planning to travel	-10%	-3%	27%	9%
Communications I receive are personalised and based on my preference and past purchases at the airport	-9%	-3%	29%	9%

■ Strongly disagree ■ Disagree ■ Agree ■ Strongly agree

Role of Incentives

Across all facets of commerce, promotional offers and incentives have an important role to play. Consumers expect competitive pricing from the retail experiences that permeate their daily lives via the likes of the high street and online retailers, which has sharpened even further in recent months with the increased prevalence of incentivized pricing, e.g. for loyalty card holders. Against this backdrop, it is perhaps not surprising that travelers increasingly feel that the airport does not always offer value for money.

Travelers increasingly feel that the airport does not always offer value for money.

The same prices as I can get online or outside of the airport	**40%**
Ability to earn cashback, rewards or discounts via my payment card when I shop	**39%**
Ability to earn airline frequent flyer miles when I shop	**36%**
If I could easily compare airport prices with high street prices. i.e. via an App or website	**32%**
Receiving airport retail offers ahead of travel	**31%**
If I knew what shops/brands/products were available in advance	**29%**
If I could compare prices between the inbound and outbound airports	**28%**
If the airport offered a home or destination delivery service for my purchases	**28%**
If I could make purchases on my outbound journey and pick them up once I return home	**28%**
If I could shop via an app or my phone from the airport lounge and pick it up at the gate	**26%**
Real-time, location-based offers once I'm through security	**23%**
If I could check the stock of my favourite airport retailers in advance	**19%**
Access to a personal shopper (virtual or actual)	**14%**
None of the above	**7%**

■ Rewards 38%　　　　　■ Offers 27%　　　　　■ Planning assistance 24%
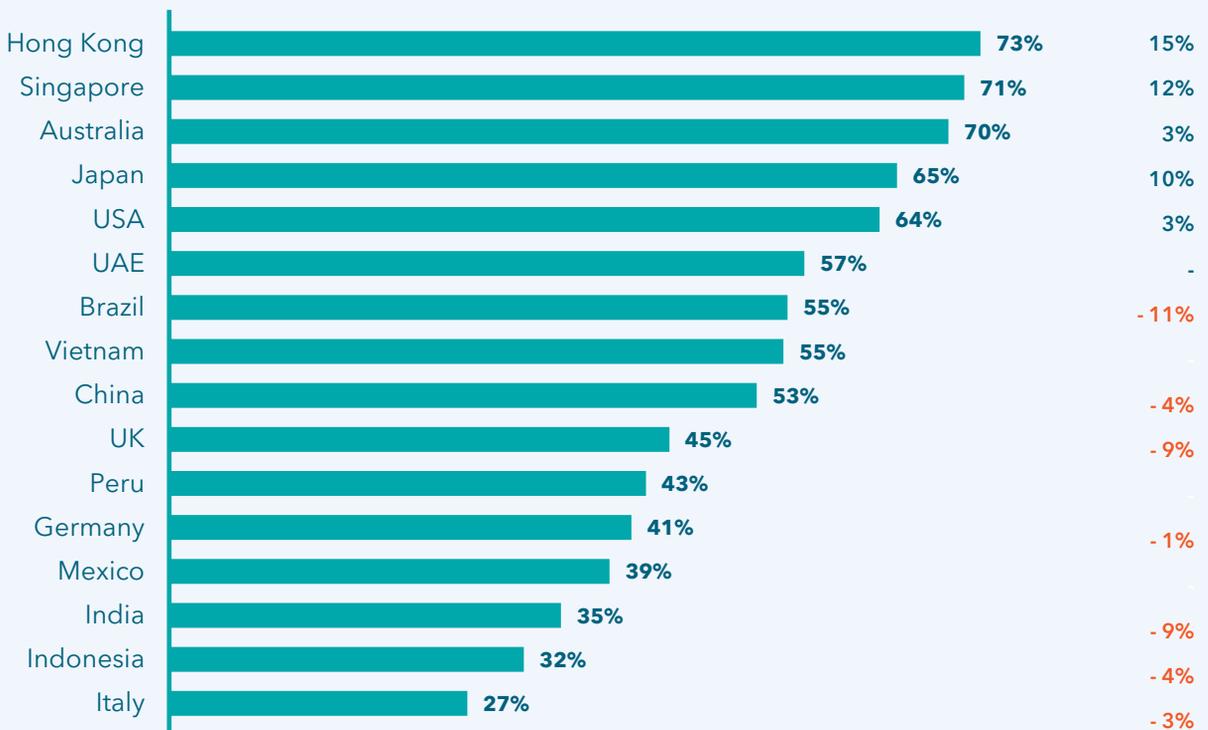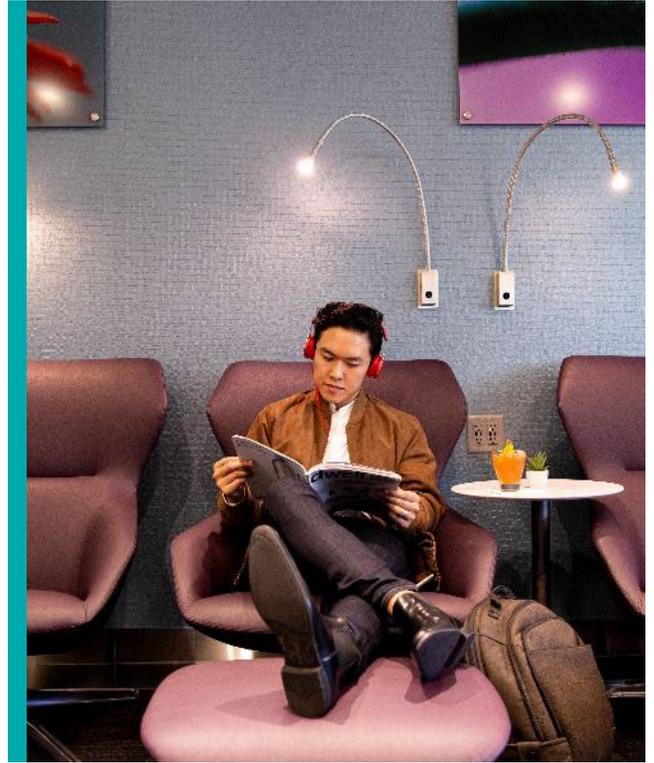■ Price comparison 33%　　■ Deliver/collect services 27%

We asked travelers what incentives would encourage them to spend more. The greatest additional spend driver is better pricing with 40% of travelers highlighting this, and this has moved to the top spot against last year's results. Just behind is payment card-based promotions (39%), highlighting the growing influence that cards and banks have over spending and once again exceeding FFP miles as an incentive (36%).

FFP membership changes

Airline Frequent Flyer Program participation amongst our researched group has fallen every year since 2019, with only half (51%) of regular travelers still participating. 77% of Elders still participate in FFPs but only 38% of Gen Z do, suggesting that the mileage proposition resonates less with the younger generation. With changes to flight redemption propositions and realignment of elite status qualifications, travelers are increasingly questioning the value and benefit of these once dominant travel loyalty programs.

Whilst Asian markets saw a stronger uptake in FFP membership with the delayed echo of the regional travel recovery, many other markets saw a significant drop.

The research shows that travelers (93%) are open to having a relationship directly with the airport, which in many cases are now globally recognized and trusted brands in their own right.

Country	Percentage	Change
Hong Kong	73%	15%
Singapore	71%	12%
Australia	70%	3%
Japan	65%	10%
USA	64%	3%
UAE	57%	-
Brazil	55%	- 11%
Vietnam	55%	
China	53%	- 4%
UK	45%	- 9%
Peru	43%	
Germany	41%	- 1%
Mexico	39%	
India	35%	- 9%
Indonesia	32%	- 4%
Italy	27%	- 3%

This airport-led relationship can range from establishing a simpler but hard-working digital dialogue with travelers all the way through to more structured initiatives such as paid experience and benefits packages.

Conclusion

The importance of building increased engagement with travelers through a mobile first, digital dialogue, serving up more relevant and appealing promotions, cannot be overstated.

Our research indicates that many airports are not fully capitalizing on this potential, as evidenced by a slight weakening in airport communication performance.

This presents an engagement gap that concession brands are starting to bridge. To fully harness the commercial potential of closer relationships with travelers and avoid fragmented messaging, there is scope for airports to have more ownership and direction of this relationship.

Moving forward, airports could leverage better access to data and understanding of key traveler segments to explore and test new propositions such as paid loyalty programs, which have proven successful in both airport and wider consumer markets. By prioritizing engagement and fostering more meaningful connections, airports can position themselves for sustained success in an increasingly competitive landscape.

Actions for Airports

Three potential growth drivers:

1. Encourage and promote the use and adoption of digital tools across the journey to create a single consolidated view of the traveler and to drive a more relevant and contextual dialogue, balancing support, engagement and promotion.

2. Identify areas of fragmentation across the traveler dialogue and look to build meaningful engagement and the right sort of relationship from a single trusted airport brand.

3. Look to develop wider partnership relationships which can be used to promote and drive traffic to airport commerce assets, building new relationships with prospects and driving new spend across the airport.

Case study:
Connecta Airports @ LAX

The Servy powered e-commerce marketplace 'LAX Order Now' was deployed at Los Angeles World Airport (LAX) in 2020, enabling travelers and airport employees to discover F&B offerings and retail outlets within the airport, order and pay with ease, and collect more quickly with express pickup.

Supported by on and offline promotions, LAX Order Now was driving industry-leading traveler performance, however, it was felt that incremental revenue opportunities were being missed based on limitations on driving a more contextual and personalized engagement with travelers.

Under the leadership and sponsorship of Unibail-Rodamco-Westfield (URW) Connecta Airports was deployed in 2023 in conjunction with Servy's Marketplace 2.0 upgrade to establish a single view of the traveler and support new dynamic engagement strategies.

A traveler program was established to drive increased engagement and a dialogue, targeting customers at key points in the journey, setting spend and frequency thresholds to incentivize increased performance.

In addition, recognizing the industry-wide need to engage and better support airport staff, an airport employee loyalty program was created to reward staff purchase frequency. The platform also supports prospect recruitment, 'member get member' initiatives and ad hoc sessional campaigns. Program performance can be tracked in real time via online performance dashboards.

The Connecta Airports platform brings together airport F&B, retail and services under one umbrella. This singular point of engagement enhances the overall traveler experience, offers deeper insights into consumer behaviors, and boosts spending throughout the journey. Future developments include integration across additional concession and spend areas, as well as the introduction of partnership programs to support recruitment and cross selling.

"

We are proud to extend our LAX Order Now digital marketplace to be the first program to introduce and leverage the technology behind the innovative Connecta platform. The digital marketplace we are building upon offers our guests at LAX a more personalized airport experience. In addition to passenger convenience, it also helps drive incremental sales to the concessions program and supports our strategic partners at Unibail-Rodamco-Westfield Airports and Los Angeles World Airports in enhancing the airport experience.

Jeff Livney, Chief Experience Officer, Servy
on behalf of LAX Order Now

Section 4:
Retail Revolution

Experience Takes Center Stage

The traditional model of airport retail is rapidly evolving into a landscape where experience takes center stage. While this shift presents challenges in some areas, it also presents opportunities for airports worldwide.

The global leaders are working with their concession community to develop and explore the potential for new concepts which combine traditional retail with engaging experiences to drive greater enjoyment and spend.

Spending Patterns

There are marked differences in how generational segments spend their money while waiting for their flight, with shopping being the one activity where all generations say they spend about the same amount of time – between 10% and 15%.
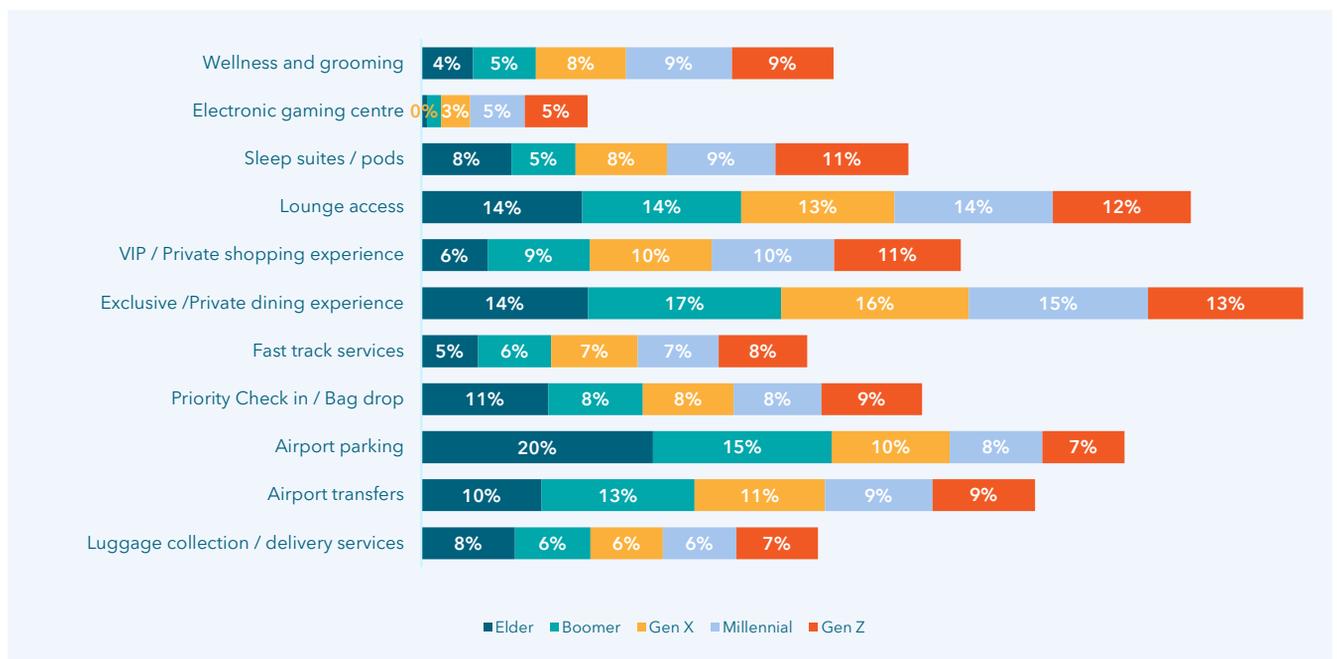
When it comes to the world's most dedicated airport shoppers, Asia and Middle East travelers top the list with people from India, UAE and Indonesia showing a higher inclination towards shopping experiences.

In contrast, travelers from the UK, US and Japan appear to show less enthusiasm for shopping at airports. It's important to consider that these disparities may be influenced by the quality and scale of retail opportunities available at their respective home airports.

However, there has been a notable shift into generational divides in shopping experiences, with Gen Z emerging as the most enthusiastic travelers when it comes to spending on shopping activities, while older generations are the least likely to prioritize these experiences.

	Elder	Boomer	Gen X	Millennial	Gen Z
Wellness and grooming	4%	5%	8%	9%	9%
Electronic gaming centre	0%	3%	3%	5%	5%
Sleep suites / pods	8%	5%	8%	9%	11%
Lounge access	14%	14%	13%	14%	12%
VIP / Private shopping experience	6%	9%	10%	10%	11%
Exclusive /Private dining experience	14%	17%	16%	15%	13%
Fast track services	5%	6%	7%	7%	8%
Priority Check in / Bag drop	11%	8%	8%	8%	9%
Airport parking	20%	15%	10%	8%	7%
Airport transfers	10%	13%	11%	9%	9%
Luggage collection / delivery services	8%	6%	6%	6%	7%

One of the strongest leads in understanding this trend is the perception among customers that retail offerings at airports may not always represent good value for money. This sentiment is particularly prevalent among older generations who are more likely to scrutinize prices, often finding it challenging due to the unique nature of airport retail environments. This perception of poor value for money serves as a crucial factor influencing airport shopping behavior.

The prevalence of this perception is only increasing as consumers are becoming more digitally savvy. Amazon deals and high street price comparisons are now just a click away for consumers, so this is an audience no longer operating in a vacuum of price perceptions. If they search online and can find more competitive pricing elsewhere, airport purchase intent is immediately diminished.

Therefore, pivoting towards enhancing the overall shopping experience becomes crucial. By focusing on creating memorable and enjoyable experiences for travelers, airports can shift the emphasis away from direct price comparisons. This approach allows airports to mitigate the challenge posed by the perceived lack of value for money, as customers are more likely to prioritize their overall experience rather than solely focusing on price.
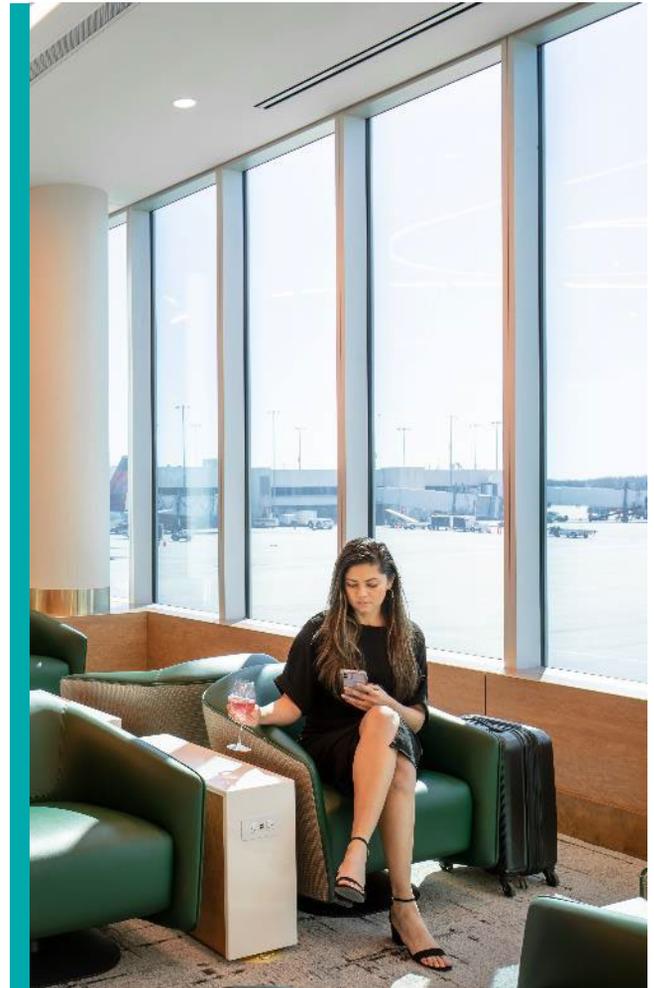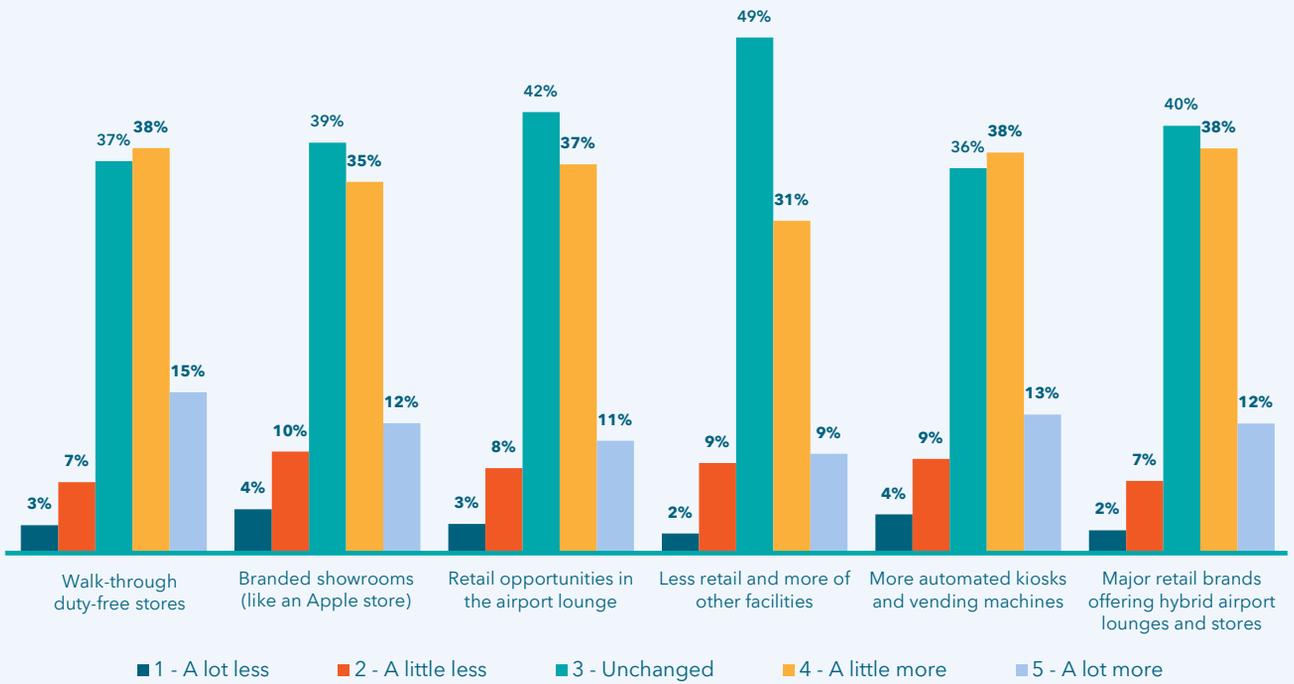
Innovation and Value

The solution here may be that retail needs to follow the pivot to experience to make the future more immersive and hybrid for shoppers. Across the board, travelers tell us they are receptive to new formats and experiences, signaling a demand for different and more unique shopping experience. Concepts such as walk-through duty-free stores, branded showrooms, automated kiosks and vending machines resonate well with travelers.

More than half of travelers expressed an interest in airport shopping online via their mobile device from the comfort of their lounge seat; a location where travelers typically have time to spare and are in more relaxed state of mind.

> **By focusing on creating memorable and enjoyable experiences for travelers, airports can shift the emphasis away from direct price comparisons.**

New Retail Concepts

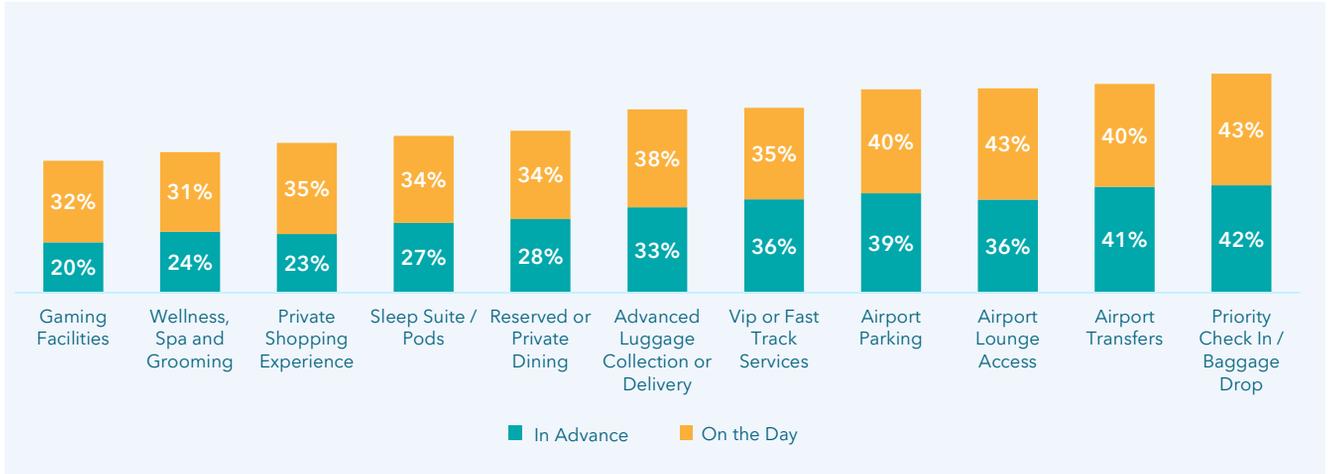|	Walk-through duty-free stores	Branded showrooms (like an Apple store)	Retail opportunities in the airport lounge	Less retail and more of other facilities	More automated kiosks and vending machines	Major retail brands offering hybrid airport lounges and stores
1 - A lot less	3%	4%	3%	2%	4%	2%
2 - A little less	7%	10%	8%	9%	9%	7%
3 - Unchanged	37%	39%	42%	49%	36%	40%
4 - A little more	38%	35%	37%	31%	38%	38%
5 - A lot more	15%	12%	11%	9%	13%	12%

These preferences indicate a shift towards retail being not only more seamless and convenient but also a potentially more unique experience, which would help to defend against any downward pressure on price and possibly prove the key to unlocking greater spending potential among travelers.

Pre-booking Services

Pre-booking of services is important for airports because it allows for better planning as to when travelers will be arriving, but more importantly it is almost exclusively done online so it supports a pivot to e-commerce and helps us to understand in advance exactly when the travel will take place and thus present other timely opportunities.

Traveler interest and acceptance of pre-booking continues to grow. This year we have seen a jump in travelers looking to pre-book lounges, which jumps to the third most popular service, for the first time beating traditional services such as parking.

	Gaming Facilities	Wellness, Spa and Grooming	Private Shopping Experience	Sleep Suite / Pods	Reserved or Private Dining	Advanced Luggage Collection or Delivery	Vip or Fast Track Services	Airport Parking	Airport Lounge Access	Airport Transfers	Priority Check In / Baggage Drop
On the Day	32%	31%	35%	34%	34%	38%	35%	40%	43%	40%	43%
In Advance	20%	24%	23%	27%	28%	33%	36%	39%	36%	41%	42%

■ In Advance ■ On the Day

There is a stronger desire to book for health and wellness facilities at airports in emerging markets such as Brazil, India, Indonesia, Mexico, Peru and Vietnam compared with more mature western markets.

Millennials and Gen Z are much more interested in pre-booking gaming, wellness or private shopping experiences than older travelers. Over 70% are interested in booking sleep suites or pods. Airports looking to develop new experiences in these areas will attract the attention of younger travelers and get ahead in opening new revenue growth opportunities.
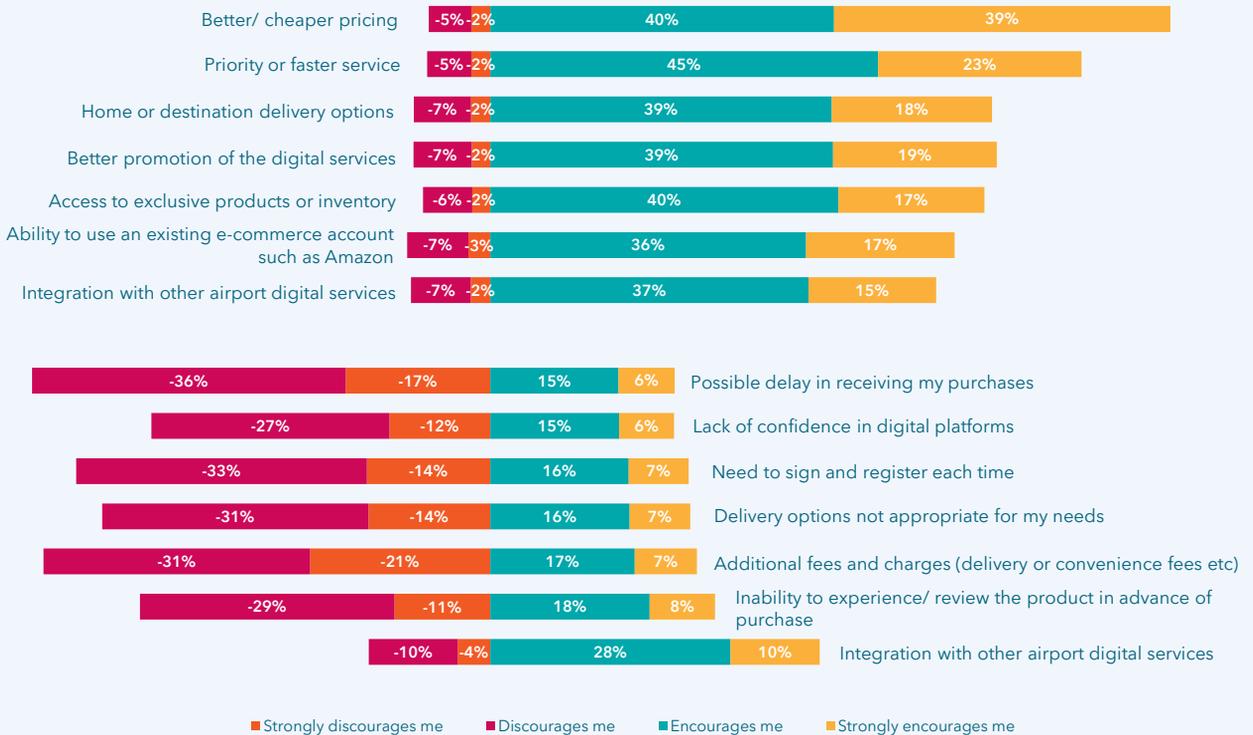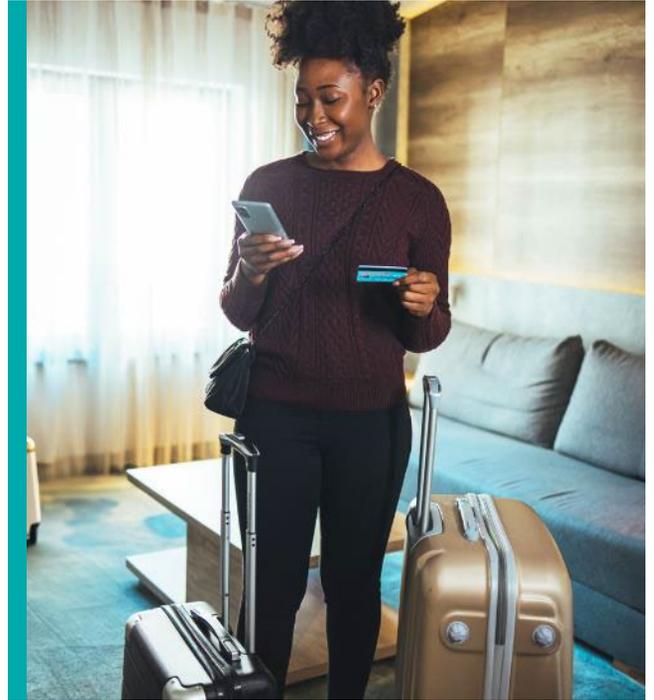
Pre-booked services are a key part of the development of e-commerce capability across the airport. Access to these services is not practically possible without an online marketplace. Once established and travelers are comfortable with the approach, it opens up the additional revenue opportunities that such platforms facilitate.

E-commerce Opportunity

Most airports are starting to invest in e-commerce, but still face challenges with adoption and usage. The AX24 research asked travelers what the barriers to and drivers of e-commerce adoption were. The biggest factor that would encourage travelers to use these options to make more purchases at the airport is better pricing and lower fees. Other key drivers are enhanced service options, such as priority, home or destination delivery, and critically 58% of travelers said they would use e-commerce more if it was better promoted by the airport.

However, many travelers remain reluctant because they are concerned choosing e-commerce options might mean delays in receiving products, inflexible delivery, or extra charges - or they might miss out on experiencing the product they are interested in prior to purchasing.

	Strongly discourages me	Discourages me	Encourages me	Strongly encourages me
Better/ cheaper pricing	-5%	-2%	40%	39%
Priority or faster service	-5%	-2%	45%	23%
Home or destination delivery options	-7%	-2%	39%	18%
Better promotion of the digital services	-7%	-2%	39%	19%
Access to exclusive products or inventory	-6%	-2%	40%	17%
Ability to use an existing e-commerce account such as Amazon	-7%	-3%	36%	17%
Integration with other airport digital services	-7%	-2%	37%	15%

	Strongly discourages me	Discourages me	Encourages me	Strongly encourages me
Possible delay in receiving my purchases	-36%	-17%	15%	6%
Lack of confidence in digital platforms	-27%	-12%	15%	6%
Need to sign and register each time	-33%	-14%	16%	7%
Delivery options not appropriate for my needs	-31%	-14%	16%	7%
Additional fees and charges (delivery or convenience fees etc)	-31%	-21%	17%	7%
Inability to experience/ review the product in advance of purchase	-29%	-11%	18%	8%
Integration with other airport digital services	-10%	-4%	28%	10%

■ Strongly discourages me ■ Discourages me ■ Encourages me ■ Strongly encourages me

Conclusion

The retail landscape needs to evolve. Airports and concessions should prioritize investment in new retail experiences and the increased convenience of e-commerce if they are to raise the bar and unlock more spend from travelers to help drive revenue growth.

Integrated commerce and engagement should be at the top of the radar to increase value in line with increasing traveler expectations. As airports face constraints in capacity alongside a projected surge in traveler volumes in the years ahead, it becomes key for them to pivot towards experiential offerings and digital solutions. This includes the adoption of strategies like enabling pre-purchase of experiences, ensuring a seamless and positive journey for travelers.

Our research points to the direction in which traveler demands are heading: towards a future that blends physical experiences and digital commerce, bringing a variety of formats, platforms and partners together to drive a better, more personalized shopping experience alongside delivering commercial results for both the airport operator and its concessions partners.

Actions for Airports

Three potential growth drivers:

1. Work with your concession community to develop, test and deploy new hybrid retail / experience concepts that travelers like in order to encourage greater spend.

2. Invest in e-commerce and dialogue technology platforms to engage travelers more effectively so that you can personalize incentives, promote deals and recognize loyalty to create a more rewarding and less price-sensitive retail experience for them.

3. Develop and promote more pre-booked services across the airport, allowing for engagement before travel and intelligent and targeted sales of bundled products or services.

"

There's clear evidence in our research that the retail experience that younger travelers of today will find satisfying - and therefore will encourage them to spend - will look quite different to what we have been used to in terminals.

We're already seeing pioneering brands and retailers change their approach in flagship city center stores to blend physical and digital elements to offer an experience that's more rewarding for the shopper than just purchasing. This will raise the bar in airside retail expectations.

There's a strong opportunity for forward-thinking airports to bring e-commerce options into play both before and during travelers' visits, helping them grow retail revenues when travelers are increasingly looking to spend their time differently. The future of airport retail needs to be just as attractive for a traveler shopping through their smartphone from the lounge as it does for those willing to browse outlets in the terminal.

Nick Redpath, Business Development Director EMEA & APAC, Airport Dimensions

Section 5: Lounge Elevation

Enhancing Airport Experience

In the ever-growing hustle and bustle of airports, the regular travelers we surveyed are finding lounges more appealing than ever before.

More than half of the travelers use airport lounges at some time. Increasingly access is enabled largely through a network program such as Priority Pass, and 30% of our travelers told us they paid for access to lounges online, either in advance or on their day of travel.

It is evident that travelers continue to prioritize and value lounge access as part of their enhanced airport experiences. In fact, 70% say more options to access lounges would improve their time at the airport.
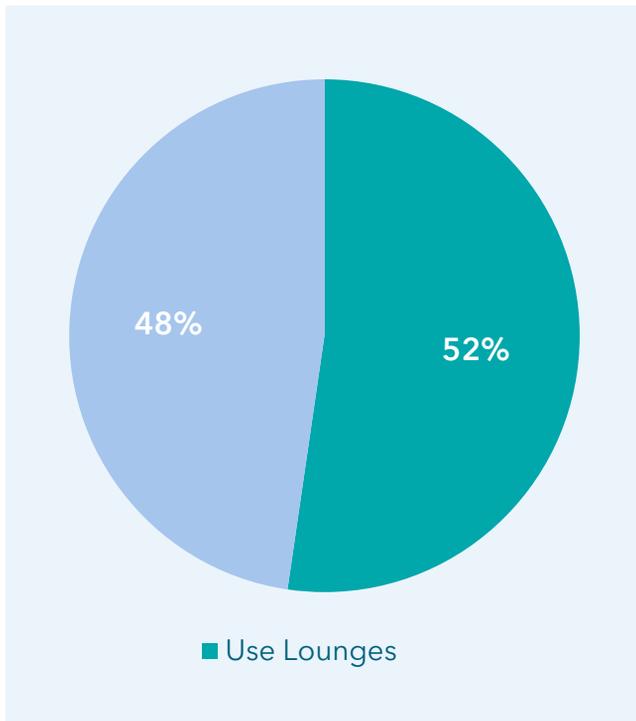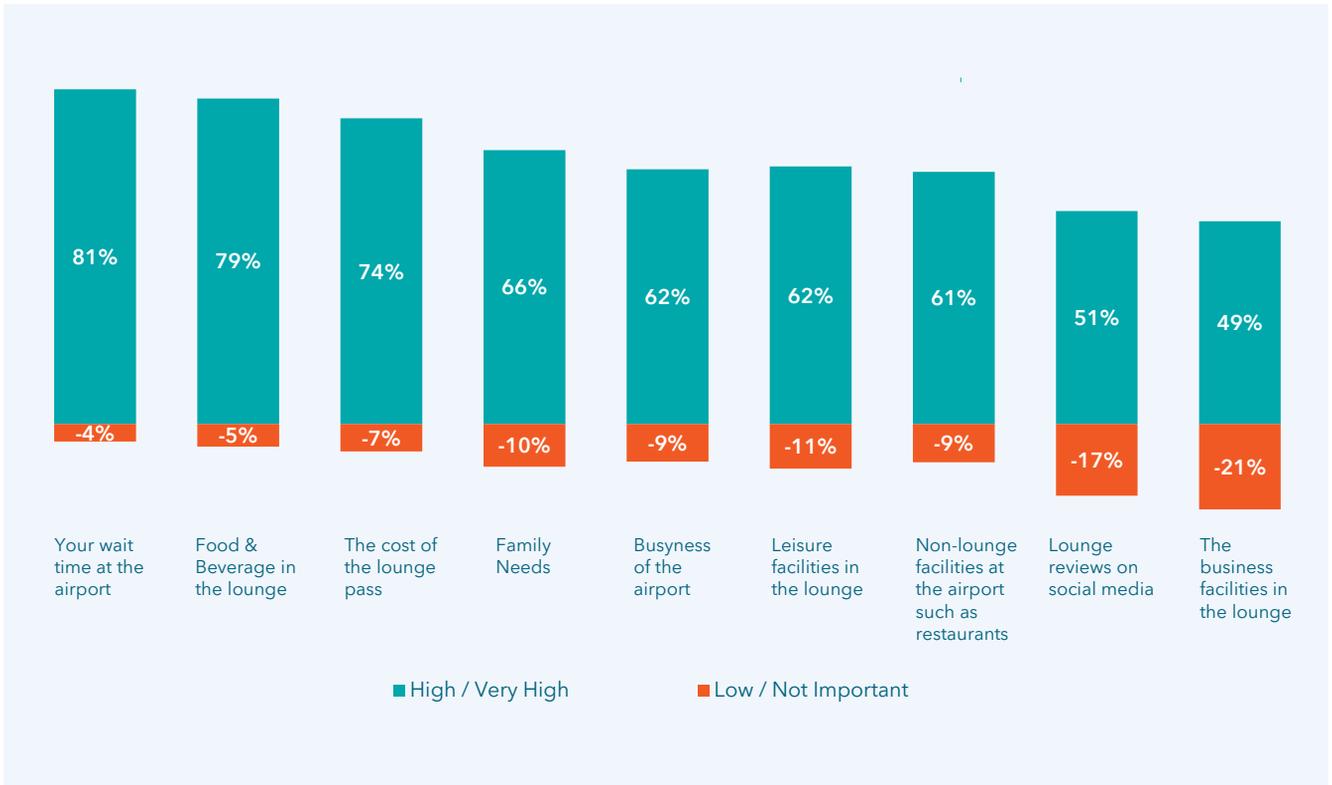
Traveler discretionary spending patterns are changing, with lounges now claiming the second spot in their discretionary spend priorities, overtaking airport shopping for the first time.

The demand for lounge access in the markets we surveyed is strongest in the Asian markets of India, Vietnam, Hong Kong, China and Indonesia. Air travel is growing strongly in these markets, so airports are getting busier and travelers are increasingly seeking the space and comfort that lounges offer.

The research also found a correlation between household income and preference for lounge access, which means that visitors are likely to have greater interest in additional spending to enhance their experience.

48% 52%

■ Use Lounges

Shift to Leisure

Lounge users show a growing emphasis on a leisure-oriented experience rather than business productivity. Indeed, business facilities being available in lounge now rank as the lowest motivator for purchase intent. The food and beverage proposition has emerged as a decisive factor for travelers opting for lounge access, surpassing cost in their consideration of purchase.

81%	79%	74%	66%	62%	62%	61%	51%	49%
-4%	-5%	-7%	-10%	-9%	-11%	-9%	-17%	-21%
Your wait time at the airport	Food & Beverage in the lounge	The cost of the lounge pass	Family Needs	Busyness of the airport	Leisure facilities in the lounge	Non-lounge facilities at the airport such as restaurants	Lounge reviews on social media	The business facilities in the lounge

■ High / Very High　　■ Low / Not Important

Family needs are a strong consideration in some markets, such as India, China and Peru, with business facilities now of minimal importance in most markets. This shift emphasizes the scope for airport lounges to adapt not only to the preferences of current guests, but also the evolving needs of an increasingly diverse range of travelers likely to be attracted in the future.
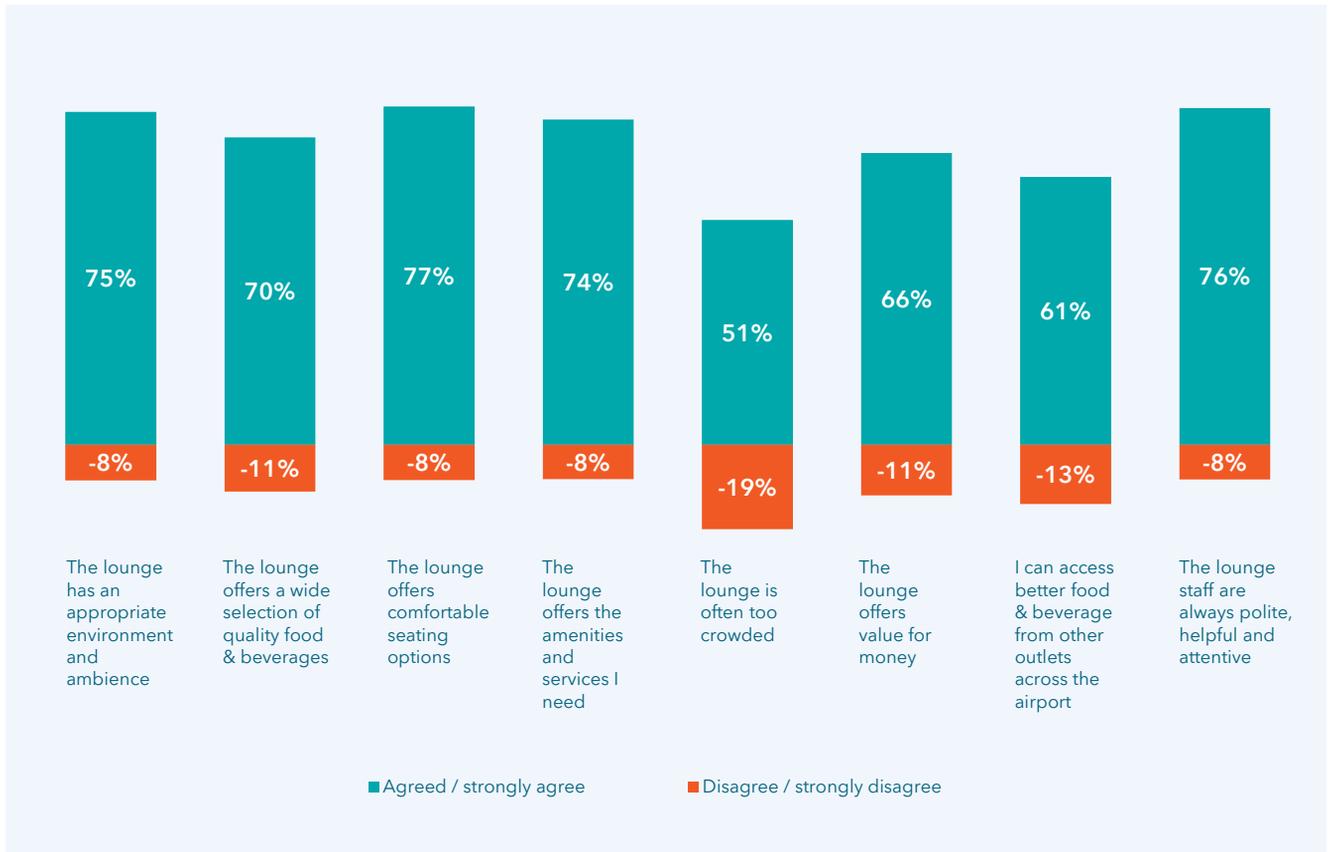
Satisfaction Levels

Lounge users are broadly happy with their experience, reporting a good level of satisfaction with their ambience, amenities, comfort, food and beverage offering and the service they receive from staff.

The two areas of concern highlighted by the research relate to how crowded lounges can get and the perception that there may be better food and beverage choices on offer from other outlets across the airport.
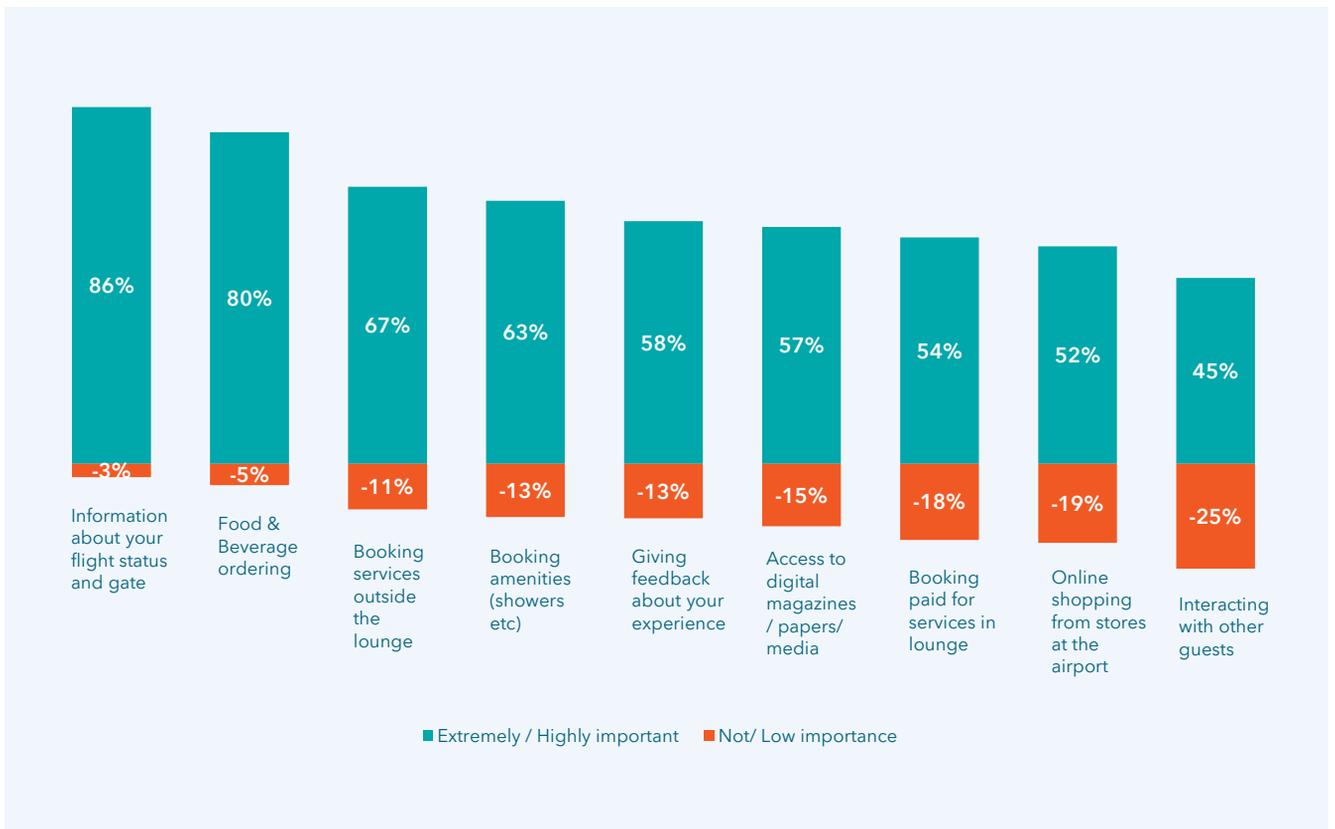
Connectivity is an increasingly important feature of the lounge experience. There is a growing expectation among guests that they will have seamless digital access to services to provide feedback, check-in, book amenities and provide convenient access to retailers across the airport.

75%	70%	77%	74%	51%	66%	61%	76%
-8%	-11%	-8%	-8%	-19%	-11%	-13%	-8%
The lounge has an appropriate environment and ambience	The lounge offers a wide selection of quality food & beverages	The lounge offers comfortable seating options	The lounge offers the amenities and services I need	The lounge is often too crowded	The lounge offers value for money	I can access better food & beverage from other outlets across the airport	The lounge staff are always polite, helpful and attentive

■ Agreed / strongly agree   ■ Disagree / strongly disagree

Valued Digital Services

With digital and mobile an intrinsic part of everyone's life it is perhaps not surprising to see this demand emerging in-lounge. Travelers see a digital tool in lounge as critical for accessing information and their ability to access or personalize in-lounge services.

When it comes to digital engagement of travelers within the lounge, there is strong demand for access to flight information and services. Drawing on their experiences and preferences beyond the airport, travelers are looking to harness the power of their handheld device to save time and hassle so they can focus on maximizing the value of their time in the lounge.

Service	Extremely / Highly important	Not / Low importance
Information about your flight status and gate	86%	-3%
Food & Beverage ordering	80%	-5%
Booking services outside the lounge	67%	-11%
Booking amenities (showers etc)	63%	-13%
Giving feedback about your experience	58%	-13%
Access to digital magazines / papers / media	57%	-15%
Booking paid for services in lounge	54%	-18%
Online shopping from stores at the airport	52%	-19%
Interacting with other guests	45%	-25%

■ Extremely / Highly important   ■ Not/ Low importance

Whether it is ordering food and beverages (80%), booking services beyond the lounge (67%), or online shopping from stores at the airport (52%), travelers increasingly value the availability of digital services, so they present quick and cost-efficient opportunities for airports to open up new streams of revenue or maximize the utilization of existing amenities or services. Digital services have the added benefit of enabling airports to serve travelers with promotions and rewards, as well as capture valuable data on traveler behavior.

In-lounge Revenue Opportunities

Historically, some airports have considered lounges commercial blackspots that prevent travelers from spending at the airport. Notwithstanding that lounge access comes with a direct or indirect access fee, the research tells us that travelers are actually very willing to continue to spend once in the lounge.

Having already paid for access, around 60% of guests say they are willing to pay more for premium F&B and enhanced dining experiences, like full table service. 50% are willing to consider paying for private suites within the lounge and 46% interested in spending on wellness and grooming.

52% of guests would welcome the ability to use their mobile phone to make online purchases from concessions and stores across the airport. This desire and willingness to spend more supports the wider pivot to lounges becoming more leisure and lifestyle destinations, demonstrating the untapped potential value from lounge guests.

Whilst brand-sponsored demonstrations, promotions and displays are common across most airports and important drivers of retail spend, extra care needs to be taken with deployment in lounge. It is important for operators to ensure that this activity does not detract from the overall lounge ambience and can be managed within operational constraints. However, lounge guests tell us that they are very receptive to the idea of brand sponsored activities which in many cases can be complementary to the overall mission of the lounge.
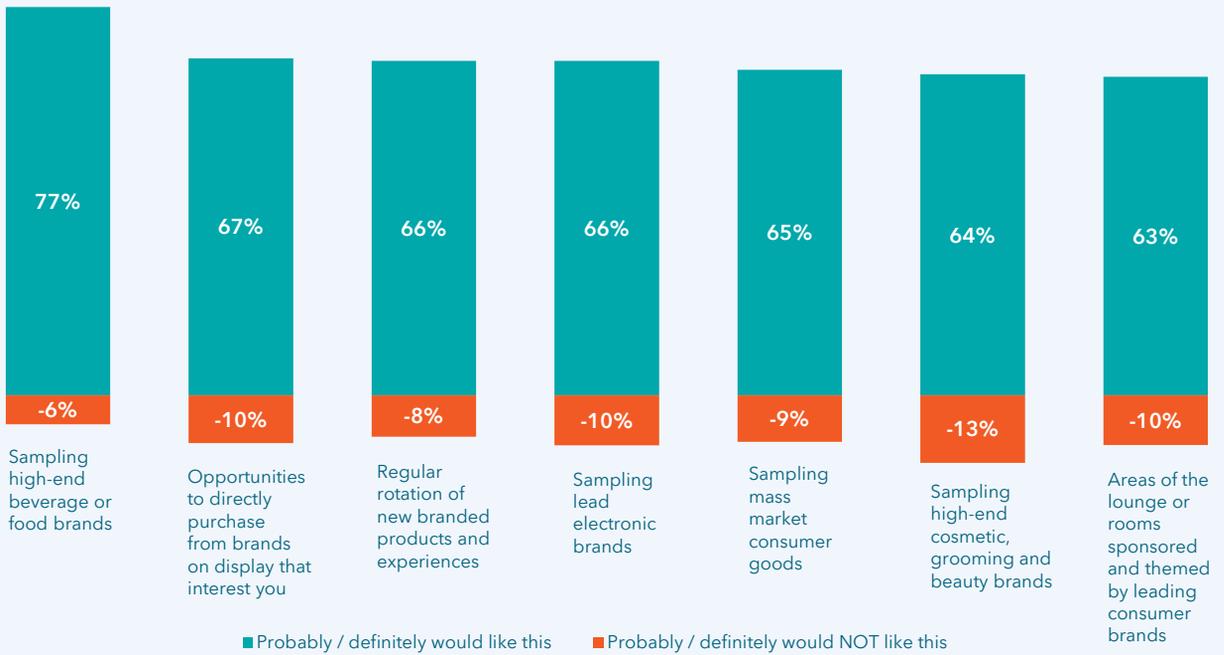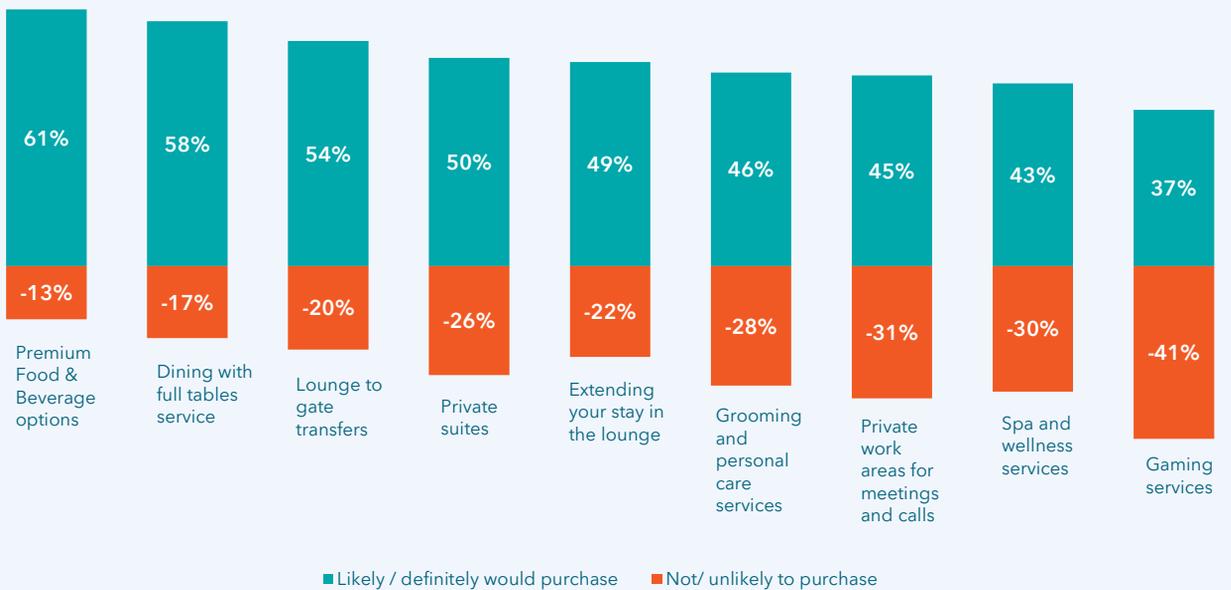
67% of guests would welcome the opportunity to directly purchase the products that interest them, generating both sponsorship revenue and increased sales revenue for the airport.

77% of travelers would like to sample brand-sponsored food and beverage, for example cocktail or wine tasting. There is also strong interest in trying cosmetic and personal care products (64%) and trialing leading electronic brands (66%).

67% of guests would welcome the opportunity to directly purchase the products that interest them, generating both sponsorship revenue and increased sales revenue for the airport.

Interest In-Lounge Sponsorship Activities

Activity	Probably / definitely would like this	Probably / definitely would NOT like this
Sampling high-end beverage or food brands	77%	-6%
Opportunities to directly purchase from brands on display that interest you	67%	-10%
Regular rotation of new branded products and experiences	66%	-8%
Sampling lead electronic brands	66%	-10%
Sampling mass market consumer goods	65%	-9%
Sampling high-end cosmetic, grooming and beauty brands	64%	-13%
Areas of the lounge or rooms sponsored and themed by leading consumer brands	63%	-10%

■ Probably / definitely would like this　　■ Probably / definitely would NOT like this

In-Lounge Paid Service Areas

Service Area	Likely / definitely would purchase	Not/ unlikely to purchase
Premium Food & Beverage options	61%	-13%
Dining with full tables service	58%	-17%
Lounge to gate transfers	54%	-20%
Private suites	50%	-26%
Extending your stay in the lounge	49%	-22%
Grooming and personal care services	46%	-28%
Private work areas for meetings and calls	45%	-31%
Spa and wellness services	43%	-30%
Gaming services	37%	-41%

■ Likely / definitely would purchase　　■ Not/ unlikely to purchase

Conclusion

Across the world, travelers are seeing the lounge as more appealing than ever, and something they are prepared to pay to enhance their airport experience.

In the lounge, passengers are increasingly open to treating themselves by paying extra for premium food and beverage choices or access to premium lounge amenities. These premium services can be further enhanced with sponsorship initiatives. Younger travelers in particular are open to new experiences in entertainment, health and wellness, presenting significant upsell opportunities for operators and airports.

Across the generations, there is a growing demand for digital access to in-lounge services that make time spent more enjoyable and rewarding. This presents real opportunities for connecting travelers to the full range of additional in-lounge paid or and other amenities, from retail to airport services, without them having to leave the comfort of their lounge seats.

Actions for Airports

Three potential growth drivers:

1. Reconcile demand growth and capacity limitations by exploring secondary and underutilized spaces to develop innovative lounge models and new propositions, such as gaming and wellness.

2. Encourage collaboration, innovation and common standards across the airport commercial community to develop more innovative in-lounge experiences that drive new revenue.

3. Work to ensure that growing interest in lounge digital and sponsorship experiences can extend into wider airport commerce and other activities, making it easier for lounge guests to spend and enjoy.

Case study:
The Chase Sapphire Lounges Elevating Traveler Experiences

JPMorgan Chase is committed to providing elevated experiences throughout its customers' travel journeys. Over the past two years, it has developed and brought to life the Chase Sapphire Lounge by The Club network in airports across the US and beyond.

The first Chase Sapphire Lounge by The Club was unveiled at Hong Kong International Airport in October 2022, followed shortly by the first location in the United States at Boston Logan International Airport in 2023. In January 2024, the Chase Sapphire Lounge by The Club was opened at LaGuardia Airport (LGA), the largest yet, and raises the bar in tailored lounge experiences that reflect the sprit and values of a brand.

Dana Pouwels, Head of Airport Lounge Benefits and Strategic Partnerships at Chase, explains how their lounge experiences are being curated for customers:

" Chase Sapphire is leading the charge when it comes to creating one-of-a-kind opportunities for its travelers. Our latest lounge in LaGuardia paves the way for Sapphire's benefits to enhance our members' airport experience. Sapphire Reserve cardmembers are travelers by nature, so we're upgrading their journey with elevated airport lounges that unlock inspiring new dining, wellness and cultural experiences."

From wellness rooms to a retro-inspired games room, the design of the Sapphire Lounge at LGA draws inspiration from some of the world's best designers, creating a space that transports guests away from the airport experience into a modern private hideaway.

The lounge showcases work by artists that champion the diversity, vibrancy and imagination present in New York City. It offers a dedicated wellness area with spa-grade facial treatments, as well as a kids' play area and nursing room, intended to make life easier for cardmembers traveling with children.

As the centerpiece of the lounge, the cocktail bar features a "Sapphire Signature Cocktail" designed exclusively in partnership with renowned cocktail bar, Apotheke. Guests can also enjoy a variety of made-to-order and ready-to-eat food options by Joseph Leonard. Playing on New York's strong coffee culture, Sapphire Lounge travelers can refuel with coffee from Joe Coffee Company, including made-to-order beverages from the on-site barista.

There is an in-lounge digital experience where customers scan a QR to order food and beverages to their seat, book a facial treatment, view digital media like newspapers and podcasts, read about lounge partners and provide feedback in a survey about their experience.

> **Chase Sapphire Reserve cardmembers also have the opportunity to book The Reserve Suites by Chase, which include a dedicated host, signature caviar service, exclusive menus by Jeffrey's Grocery and a specially curated wine list by Parcelle.**

Section 6:
Dining Demand

Prioritizing Dining

Dining is perhaps the single activity that unites almost all travelers. Only 2% say they never eat or drink at the airport. Over the years we have seen investment in better and wider ranges of dining options and the introduction of new technology to make the experience more convenient.

With the broader pivot to experience, dining looks set become one of the greater differentiators of the airport experience and thus one of the most important future revenue drivers.

Our research underscores this shift, revealing that

64% of travelers prioritize dining as part of their airport experience.

41% prefer to sit down in a restaurant or bar at the airport.

22% choose to eat in an airport lounge.

the popularly of full-service dining and bars has grown slightly year on year. 41% say they prefer a sit-down dining option, and the option to dine in lounge has grown by three points to 22%, demonstrating a shift towards a desire for better, higher end dining experiences.

The desire to spend on dining experiences is consistent across all generations, but it is particularly popular amongst older travelers, Boomers (19%) and Gen X (16%). Travelers from the UK (22%) allocate the highest percentage of their pre-flight time to dining of all the nationalities surveyed.

As travelers increasingly expect a better mix of choice, quality and convenience, airports are stepping up to the plate. In many countries, the eating options in terminals have expanded and improved in quality significantly, with popular brands often rubbing shoulders with more aspirational destinations carrying the names of renowned chefs.

Upgrading Eating Experiences

When asked about additional paid for services in-lounge, travelers consistently express a heightened interest in dining experiences. Topping the list was Premium F&B options (61%), followed by the desire for a full table service dining experience (58%).

This inclination toward premium F&B experiences underscores the evolving landscape of airport lounges. As airports seek to optimize revenue streams, enhancing the in-lounge dining experience presents a new opportunity. By collaborating with high-end F&B brands and curating immersive dining experiences, lounges can not only cater to travelers' growing expectations but also drive additional spend and sponsorship opportunities.

Digital Ordering

A significant number of airports have deployed digital dining marketplaces and technology which makes dining more convenient for travelers and offers flexibility for airports and concessions; enabling experiences ranging from the ability to order and collect a coffee on the run to the gate to pre-booking and ordering a five-star sit down dining experience.

However, take up of digital ordering at airports lags wider adoption outside the airport. This research suggests that better pricing (79%), better promotion (58%) and better service (68%) are important drivers of digital adoption, with additional service fees being a barrier (52%).

Experience in airport lounges highlights the importance of digital dining options for travelers. 80% of lounge guests say digital ordering is important for them and 61% of guests suggest that they are willing to pay for additional premium food and beverage, reflecting the advantages that digital platforms offer when it comes to upselling.

It is also likely that digital commerce capability will become more important as airports, constrained by space and the need to better cater to key demographic, look to virtualize elements of the current physical dining. Critical to digital dining will be success at integrating it across a wider airport marketplace and ensuring that it is supported with the right promotional dialogue.

> **Experience in airport lounges highlights the importance of digital dining options for travelers.**

Conclusion

In essence, elevating the airport dining experience transcends merely the food on offer. It represents a broader shift towards travelers prioritizing and seeking out better experiences. By harnessing this pivotal approach, airports are undergoing a redefinition, evolving from simply transit points; expectations of F&B are increasing, particularly within lounges.

With so many travelers choosing to dine while awaiting their flights, it's crucial for airports to accelerate developing dining experiences for their travelers.

Looking beyond traditional dining, there is a substantial interest in additional paid services and sponsored sampling experiences in the F&B spaces. This signals a persistent requirement for airports to elevate their lounges, keeping pace with the evolving landscape of experiences.

Actions for Airports

Three potential growth drivers:

1. Make airports dining super-hubs, where travelers arrive early and come hungry to enjoy some of the best, most social media worthy and talked about dining experiences in town.

2. Give travelers choice and control with digital dining platforms integrated into wider airport e-commerce and relationships that allow them to access their preferred options when and how they want.

3. As demand for airport lounges along with higher expectations for dining grows, work with operators to offer enhanced, more flexible and personalized F&B options that meet these new demands.

"

Globally, dining is an essential part of the experience for travelers, regardless of age or background. It's a major revenue driver for airports and partners such as ourselves working with them to invest in improving dining options and introducing technology to make the experience more convenient.

At SSP we've recently been partnering with celebrity chefs and industry legends across the full scope of our operating territories, from the likes of Gary Mehigan and Ray Capaldi in Australia to Gordon Ramsay in Hong Kong. This is part of our ambition to continually improve what travelers can expect from airport dining, helping them to maximize and elevate their airport experience and enjoy the journey almost as much as the destination.

"I'm particularly excited about the growth opportunities that I see in the Asia-Pacific region as we innovate and enhance the dining experience - it's a truly exciting territory. We work in close collaboration with our airport partners across this region to create sustainable offers that excite and delight customers.

Jonathan Robinson, Chief Executive Officer, SSP Asia Pacific

Research Methodology

In our Airport Experience 2024 research, we surveyed 9,306 global travelers to get a better understanding of their changing demands and the experiences they look for on their airport journey.

The study took an in depth look at the views of travelers from 16 major countries to provide the most accurate picture of what the modern traveler looks like and determine their needs when moving through the airport. All of those involved were regular travelers who had taken two or more trips through an airport in the previous 12 months.

The average age of travelers surveyed was 42 years old. The sample was spread across five main generational groups - Elders (1%), Boomers (17%), Gen X (27%), Millennials (36%) and Gen Z (18%). They had a median household income of $52,000.

The survey was conducted in October and November 2023 by independent market research agency, Dynata.

Respondents from the following countries contributed:

Country	%	Country	%
USA	**11%**	Japan	**5%**
Brazil	**8%**	Indonesia	**5%**
China	**8%**	Peru	**5%**
UK	**8%**	UAE	**5%**
India	**8%**	Vietnam	**5%**
Germany	**5%**	Hong Kong	**4%**
Italy	**5%**	Singapore	**4%**
Mexico	**5%**		
Australia	**5%**		

About Airport Dimensions

Airport Dimensions believes that journeys should be better for the traveler and more profitable to the airport. That's why the company continuously seeks ways to open new aspects of customer engagement - using a mix of enriching physical experiences and innovative digital services. Airport Dimensions aims to improve the traveler experience at each turn - from comfortable lounges to restful sleep pods, and convenient food ordering to contactless collection of duty free - all while helping airports maximize non-aeronautical revenue opportunities, retain airlines, and become more competitive.

Airport Dimensions operate 65 airport lounges and experiences, including those in development, located across North America, South America, Asia Pacific, the United Kingdom and the Middle East.

Across the network, Airport Dimensions work with over 40 airports and multiple airline partners to deliver award-winning hospitality experiences to millions of travelers.

Most recently, it's Chase Sapphire Lounge by The Club at BOS was awarded Best Lounge Experience 2024 by Airport Experience News, Chase Sapphire Lounge by The Club at HKG earned the title of Priority Pass APAC Lounge of the Year 2024, and Club Aspire at LHR recognized as Europe's Leading Airport Lounge 2024 at the World Travel Awards.

About Connecta

Connecta is an airport wide e-commerce and passenger loyalty platform from Airport Dimensions, driving revenue growth for airports and increasing traveler control over satisfaction with their journey.

Connecta combines technology, relationship and commerce platforms with commercial best practice to support both travelers and airports, all accessible to the traveler from their mobile phone. It brings together best in class e-commerce connectivity, facilitating single source access to services across the airport, while also tapping into 25 years of loyalty management experience to offer the right incentives to motivate and shape behavior.

Connecta also creates a single view of the travelers and their behavior across the travel journey, enabling custom propositions and targeting as well as deep insights into traveler and airport performance.

Contact us: **connecta@airportdimensions.com**

To discover more about Airport Dimensions, **click here.**
To contact us, **click here.**