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Adelaide Airport

Adelaide Airport improves the management of the taxi pick-up zone to reduce operating costs and handle a 10% increase in taxi traffic



Introduction

Adelaide Airport Limited (AAL) is the principal airport for South Australia, it is the fourth largest domestic airport and sixth largest international airport within Australia. Since the development of the new terminal in 2005, Adelaide Airport has continued to expand, including the introduction of new international airline carriers, growth of passenger numbers and the associated requirement for infrastructure development.

Adelaide Airport handles millions of passengers each year and with numbers increasing by around 5% each year, the challenge of enabling passengers and visitors to easily travel to and from the airport is ongoing.

Managing Ground Transport to ensure a smooth customer journey

The role of the Ground Transport team at AAL is to manage the passenger experience relating to all ground transport modes as they arrive at and depart from the Airport.

This incorporates the management of car park capacity, road networks to manage traffic flow, plus the location and management of external services such as taxis and limousines. With a continual increase in passenger numbers, solutions need to be scalable to support future growth.

Dennis Killeen, Ground Transport Manager, AAL comments, "With the continual growth in passenger numbers it is vital that we continue to expand the supporting infrastructure, including car park capacity, layout of the road networks and access to additional services such as taxis and limousines. For any improvement that we make, it is essential that we look ahead and that our plans are able to scale for an even further increase in passenger numbers".

With 19%¹ of passengers travelling by taxi, this is one area that can have a large impact on the traffic flow around the airport and the ease at which passengers can travel to and from the airport.

Dennis Killeen continues, “A large proportion of our customers travel via taxi, therefore it is important that we make sure we can handle these services in an efficient manner. We manage the taxi traffic by creating a holding area before they pass through for passenger pick-up. This helps to maintain a continual flow of taxi availability and reduces congestion on our roads. However, we were using a manual process and we needed to drive efficiency to make this less of a resource burden on AAL staff”.

For a long time taxis have been managed by providing a holding area where taxis would wait to go in to the passenger pick-up zone. This enabled taxis to be filtered through the pick-up zone, managing an effective queue and making sure that passengers could easily be picked up and travel from the airport via taxi.

Taxis pay a nominal fee in order to pass through the holding zone and on to passenger pick-up. The collection of the fee was a relatively manual process and at times was open to errors. A machine was in place in order to collect payment and issue tickets, however due to a range of issues including impact from adverse weather conditions or user error, there were sometimes problems with the process. This would result in taxis not being able to pass through the zone, creating a back log of taxis, causing congestion along roads and passengers waiting longer than necessary for taxis.

“The holding zone works well to manage taxi traffic flow, but unfortunately we would sometimes have problems with the process for collecting payment. This caused a chain reaction of issues, including traffic congestion and unhappy passengers that were waiting too long to be able to get a taxi. Eventually, we had to put a person in place to interact with the machine, turning an automated process to a manual one. We needed to find another solution”. Dennis Killeen



Selecting a solution to support future growth

In 2012 AAL started to look for a solution that would help to improve the flow of taxi traffic. The required solution needed to be able to integrate with the existing access control equipment, remove the manual burden from AAL and make it easy for taxi drivers to pay the nominal fee in order to pass through the holding zone to passenger pick-up.

ADVAM was selected as the service provider, working with the access control system to deliver a fully automated solution.

The Adelaide Airport taxi system consists of two areas – the initial holding area and the passenger pickup area. The entry to and exit from both areas is controlled by the parking access equipment. Access to these areas is controlled by a proximity tag which is also linked to the ADVAM GroundTransport system. On approach to the holding area the tag is read and ADVAM GroundTransport determines whether the driver’s account has sufficient funds. If yes, a green light signals that the taxi may join the waiting taxi queue. If there are insufficient funds then a red light advises the driver that his account needs attention.

As demand at the pickup area requires, taxis are released through the holding exit and proceed to the pickup entry. Taxis that have not been through the holding area in the previous ten minutes are not allowed access to the pickup

¹ Source: Murray F Young and Associates, 2014. Taken from Draft Master Plan 2014, Chapter 9, Ground Transport Plan.

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area. This is to ensure that account balances have been verified and to prevent taxis jumping the queue.

After picking up their passengers the taxi approaches the pickup exit where the tag is read again and the nominal fee is deducted from their account balance.

In order to make the payment process easy for the taxi driver, each individual can top up using the web based online portal using either their smart phone or a computer, have their balance top-up automatically or top up directly via the Taxi Council of SA. This enables the taxi drivers to pay using a method that suits them best. There is also a Top up Kiosk located in the taxi facility building adjacent to the taxi holding area.

In addition, the solution provides a comprehensive administration tool, allowing the South Australian Taxi Council to register new taxi drivers on to the system and manage any expired accounts. AAL are able to use the management reporting tool to monitor transactions processed and taxi traffic flow through the airport.

Through the use of the new automated solution, AAL have been able to effectively manage a 10% increase in the flow of taxi traffic, without causing a disruption to other traffic around the airport or passenger experience.

“The introduction of the ADVAM GroundTransport solution has enabled us to not only streamline the taxi passenger pick-up service, but successfully handle the increase in taxi traffic which has occurred to support the growth in passenger numbers. The management reporting available enables us to not only measure transactions but to also monitor taxi traffic flow and volumes which assists us with future planning. With the automated service, we have reduced the manual burden and associated operating costs, but more importantly it enables us to focus on other areas of business – continuing to improve traffic flow around the airport”.

Dennis Killeen

Continue to plan for future developments

Due to the consistent growth of passenger numbers at AAL, the airport has to continually plan ahead.

Following the introduction of the ADVAM GroundTransport solution, AAL has worked with ADVAM to deliver an online car park reservation system.

“We already have the ADVAM UnattendedPayments Solution, a credit card payment system in our car parks, but we wanted to improve the parking experience even further and offer a reservation service for customers. After completing a full review of the market and evaluation of other operators, we selected the ADVAM AltitudeReservation solution. ADVAM was selected due to its technical capabilities and as we’ve always received exceptional service from ADVAM, we were confident this solution would meet our requirements”, Dennis Killeen comments.

The ADVAM AltitudeReservation solution enables passengers to book and pay for their car park space in advance. Providing an easier parking experience at the airport, and assisting AAL Ground Transport to manage car park capacity more effectively.

Dennis Killeen continues, “In addition to offering a service to those customers who want the reassurance of booking their parking in advance, the ADVAM AltitudeReservation solution also helps us to manage parking capacity more effectively. This benefits all passengers and visitors to the airport, making sure we have enough capacity for people that haven’t booked parking in advance and by improving the flow of traffic around the airport.”

For longer term projects, the AAL team are currently working on the Adelaide Airport Limited Master Plan, looking at required developments for the next twenty years. Working alongside Airside teams and State Government, AAL has to make sure the airport and surrounding infrastructure will be equipped to manage future passenger demand.

Dennis Killeen explains “We have to continually plan ahead as the airport and passenger demand is always changing. We release a new Master Plan every five years, but we need to plan for at least twenty years in advance, planning to make sure infrastructure will be in place to suit future demand. We see solutions such as those provided by ADVAM integral to our developments, helping us to automate previously manual processes and to improve the customers experience at the airport”.

About Adelaide Airport

Adelaide Airport Limited was awarded the operating leases for Adelaide and Parafield Airports in May 1998, to operate both airports for the next 50 years with an option for a further 49 years.

Adelaide Airport is currently the fourth-largest domestic airport and sixth-largest international airport in Australia. It is the aviation gateway to South Australia and processes more than seven million passengers annually.

Parafield Airport is South Australia's premier general aviation airport and is a major world standard international training airport.

About ADVAM

ADVAM delivers world leading payment solutions, providing the expertise to make processing payments easier for its clients. ADVAM's reservation platform, parking and transport solutions enable clients to engage with their customers online, via mobile or at self-service terminals.

From its offices in Australia and UK, ADVAM's services a client base that spans a range of sectors including some of the leading airports, parking operators, retailers and local government organisations.

Each client benefits from ADVAM's depth of experience and industry knowledge. By working with its clients and alongside industry partners, ADVAM's solutions integrate with clients existing infrastructure and business processes.

ADVAM is the trusted business partner for payment solutions. Managing the complete end to end integration and enabling clients to focus on improving their customers' experience.

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