

## **AIRPORT IT & NEW TECHNOLOGY**

**Norway is progressing toward a tender for biometric automated border control (ABC) gates, with the Police Shared Services issuing a request for information (RFI) following an earlier notice in October.** The contract involves installing 21 electronic gates at Oslo Airport Gardermoen, valued at NOK 50 million (approximately USD 4.6 million), with potential expansion to other locations. Idemia, which previously supplied MorphoFace technology to the airport, is considered a strong contender for the project.

The deadline for additional information requests is January 9, 2025, with the contract notice expected on February 17, 2025. #1233.AIT1

**Copenhagen Airport (Denmark) has reported a notable rise in passenger satisfaction following the deployment of an autonomous infotainment robot in Pier F.** The robot, developed by Autonomous Units, blends entertainment, information, and commercial features, offering activities such as an interactive Ping Pong game. Passengers scan a QR code to play, with 174 games played daily on average, each lasting 53 seconds. The airport notes a 15% increase in satisfaction among passengers engaging with the robot, with 90% of passersby noticing it.

The robot also enhances commercial opportunities, integrating branding, advertising, and personalised interactions. It can direct passengers to websites, surveys, or discount vouchers post-game, contributing to a 22% increase in retail revenue. Plans are underway to introduce two additional robots and expand features to include AI-based photo interactions and other entertainment options.

With an operational capacity of 8–9 hours after a three-hour charge, the 2m-tall, 130kg robot can also announce delays or gate changes. Its success has demonstrated the potential of interactive robotics to boost passenger satisfaction and revenue at airports, and Copenhagen Airport is considering further innovation to enhance the passenger experience. #1233.AIT2

**Glasgow Airport (Scotland, United Kingdom) has launched an AI-powered digital assistant, developed in partnership with Hello Lamp Post, to improve passenger experience, navigation, and accessibility.** Accessible via location-specific QR codes, the assistant provides real-time flight updates, navigation support, and tailored assistance, operating 24/7.

The technology was trialled earlier this year with Connected Places Catapult, resulting in a 50% reduction in staff queries, support for over 12,300 additional passengers annually, and an 86% satisfaction rate. Following the trial's success, the tool has been expanded for all passengers, focusing on inclusivity, particularly for those with disabilities and reduced mobility (PRM).

Glasgow Airport, which served over 110,000 PRM passengers last year, has earned top ratings for accessibility and sees this initiative as part of its ongoing effort to enhance passenger services and streamline operations. #1233.AIT3

**London Stansted Airport (United Kingdom) will implement a barrierless Automatic Number Plate Recognition (ANPR) system in its Express Set Down (ESD) area from late January 2025 as part of its GBP 1.1 billion (approximately USD 1.34 billion) transformation programme.**

The new system aims to streamline the drop-off process, reduce congestion, and enhance traffic flow by eliminating the need for vehicles to stop at barriers.

Drivers will be required to pay the ESD charge online or by phone by midnight the following day, with no on-site payment option. Frequent users, including taxi drivers, can register for an auto-pay account, and

discounts for eligible local residents will remain unchanged. Prominent signage will be installed to inform users of the new system.

Anita Harrison, the airport's customer operations director, emphasised the initiative as part of a broader investment to improve the passenger experience, citing similar systems' success at other locations. Full details will be available on the airport's website in early 2025. #1233.AIT4

**Munich Airport (Germany), the country's second-largest airport, has adopted the AIRHART unified data platform as part of its digital transformation strategy.** Developed by Smarter Airports, a collaboration between Netcompany and Copenhagen Airport, AIRHART integrates real-time data and existing systems into a single solution to enhance passenger experience, reduce carbon emissions, and improve operational efficiency.

The platform, already operational at Copenhagen Airport, optimises management, predicts incidents, minimises disruptions and enables AI-supported decisions in real-time. At Munich Airport, which handles 50 million passengers annually, AIRHART will enhance capacity and efficiency without requiring physical expansion.

As part of a broader framework agreement, Netcompany will modernise hundreds of IT systems at Munich Airport and establish a local office to support implementation. This initiative underscores the airport's commitment to innovation, with IT senior vice-president Florian Lesch highlighting AIRHART's role in transforming Munich Airport into a data-driven hub. Netcompany's involvement builds on its success with similar projects across Europe, strengthening digital foundations in the aviation sector. #1233.AIT5

**SITA, a global air transport technology company, and Cluj Avram Iancu International Airport in Romania have signed a Letter of Intent (LOI) to collaborate on innovative and sustainable airport operations.** This strategic partnership will drive pilot projects and proof-of-concept initiatives aimed at improving operational efficiency, passenger experiences, and environmental sustainability. The collaboration will enable Cluj Airport to trial advanced technologies for passenger flow, baggage handling, and energy efficiency, aligning with its goals for sustainable operations. Research and development efforts will address the airport's specific challenges, supported by joint workshops to explore emerging technologies like biometrics and mobile solutions. Sustainability is a central focus, with plans to develop green aviation technologies and reduce the ecological impact of airport operations. #1233.AIT6

**Nashville International Airport (Tennessee, United States) has launched a major upgrade to its free Wi-Fi service, offering download speeds up to 100 Mbps—20 times faster than the previous system.** Starting 19 December 2024, passengers can enjoy faster, more reliable internet access with a streamlined connection process requiring only a short survey instead of watching a video. The new system also allows passengers to stay connected throughout the airport without needing to reconnect, ensuring a seamless browsing experience. Doug Kreulen, President and CEO of the Metropolitan Nashville Airport Authority, emphasised that this upgrade reflects BNA's commitment to enhancing the passenger experience, enabling travellers to stay connected for work, communication, or planning their journey. BNA, a vital economic asset for Middle Tennessee, contributes over USD 9.9 billion in annual economic impact, supports more than 76,000 jobs, and receives no local tax funding. This Wi-Fi enhancement is part of its ongoing efforts to improve facilities under its New Horizon expansion plan, ensuring a world-class experience for passengers travelling through Music City. #1233.AIT7

**Nine key Ethiopian institutions have signed a Memorandum of Cooperation to advance the country's Airport and Border Management Transformation Program.** This initiative, which aims to improve airport operations, border management, and national security, involves stakeholders such as the Information Network Security Administration (INSA), National Intelligence and Security Service (NISS), Ethiopian Airlines, and the Ethiopian Civil Aviation Authority.

The agreement focuses on leveraging technology, enhancing information exchange, and fostering collaboration among institutions to streamline entry and exit processes at Ethiopian airports. It is expected to boost Ethiopian Airlines' global reputation, improve security measures, and attract more visitors to the country's tourist destinations, thus contributing to economic growth through trade and tourism.

Officials emphasised their commitment to achieving the program's goals, which include bolstering Ethiopia's position as a regional and global hub for air travel while enhancing efficiency and security at border points. #1233.AIT8

**SITA has been selected as a specialised airport systems (SAS) provider for the new Main Terminal Building at Red Sea International Airport (RSI) in northwestern Saudi Arabia.** This collaboration follows SITA's successful deployment of systems at the airport's Air Taxi Terminal. By 2030, RSI is expected to handle one million guests annually, with a peak capacity of 900 passengers per hour, requiring advanced digital systems to ensure smooth operations and enhance passenger experiences. Under the agreement, SITA will implement smart solutions for passenger processing, baggage reconciliation, and airport operations. Key technologies include SITA Flex and Maestro, which automate check-in and departure processes while allowing passengers to use mobile devices for self-service. SITA Bag Manager will provide real-time baggage tracking, improving efficiency and freeing staff for complex tasks. Additional systems, such as airport management tools and real-time information displays, will optimise resource allocation and keep passengers informed.

SITA will leverage existing infrastructure from the Air Taxi Terminal for a swift and cost-effective implementation, ensuring seamless interoperability across systems. This partnership highlights RSI's commitment to creating a digitally powered, efficient, and passenger-focused airport experience as part of its role in The Red Sea destination project. #1233.AIT9

**Saudi Arabia's General Authority of Civil Aviation (GACA) and airport operator Matarat are implementing a nationwide passenger flow management system across the country's 27 airports, marking the world's largest deployment of such technology.** The system, developed by SAMI Advanced Electronics, DTP, and Veovo, uses LiDAR sensors, stereo cameras, and Wi-Fi/BLE infrastructure to provide real-time insights into passenger movement, dwell times, and queue patterns. This advanced solution, powered by Veovo's Queue and Flow Management system and DTP's tNexus smart mobile platform, helps optimise operations by predicting wait times, preventing congestion, and recommending capacity adjustments. Airport staff can access real-time metrics and alerts via the tNexus Airport View mobile app, ensuring efficient management of critical areas like check-in, security, and immigration.

Already installed at Jeddah and Riyadh airports, the system will be rolled out to all Saudi airports over the next 18 months. It aims to enhance the passenger experience by reducing delays and ensuring smooth operations across multiple airports and terminals, aligning with Saudi Arabia's broader aviation development goals. #1233.AIT10

**IDEMIA Public Security (IPS) and the General Directorate of Residency and Foreign Affairs (GDRFA) in Dubai have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to develop advanced**

**technologies for the future Al Maktoum International Airport, which is projected to become the world's largest airport within five to seven years.** This strategic partnership aims to enhance passenger processing, security, and operational efficiency while elevating the travel experience.

IPS will focus on implementing advanced biometric identification solutions for seamless check-in, border control, and boarding, alongside leveraging AI-driven data analytics to monitor passenger flow, improve risk assessments, and provide personalized travel experiences. The collaboration will also utilise artificial intelligence to optimise airport efficiency and decision-making processes.

The agreement highlights IPS's global expertise, with its biometric solutions already deployed in over 250 airports and processing more than 700 million travelers annually. Both parties view the partnership as a transformative step towards creating a state-of-the-art airport that prioritises innovation, security, and traveller satisfaction. #1233.AIT11

**Rajiv Gandhi International Airport (Hyderabad, India) has introduced an AI-powered digital twin platform, aiming to modernise airport operations and enhance the passenger experience.** GMR Airports, which operates the facility, also announced plans for a new terminal and an additional runway to accommodate the expected increase in annual passenger traffic from 34 million in 2024 to 45 million by 2030.

The digital twin platform enables virtual simulations to improve airside and landside operations. Its Smart Traffic Monitoring feature reduces congestion, enhances parking efficiency, and improves road safety. Real-time analytics optimise passenger flow, security, and terminal throughput, reducing wait times and missed flights. The platform also integrates behaviour analytics to strengthen security and provide a smoother travel experience.

The system supports collaborative decision-making by connecting airlines, ground handlers, and air traffic control through the NextGen Airport Predictive Operation Centre (APOC). This integration allows real-time data sharing across airside, landside, and terminal operations, ensuring seamless and efficient responses to operational challenges.

The platform will be implemented in phases across all GMR-operated airports, positioning the group as a leader in aviation technology and passenger satisfaction. The expansion and adoption of such innovative systems highlight the airport's commitment to addressing growing passenger demands while enhancing operational efficiency and safety. #1233.AIT12

**India's Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology, in collaboration with Three D Integrated Solutions (Three DiS), has announced the creation of a Centre of Excellence (CoE) to advance airport security, navigation, and communication systems.** This initiative, formalised through a memorandum of understanding on 12 December 2024, involves a partnership with the Society for Applied Microwave Electronics Engineering & Research (SAMEER) to develop Indigenous technologies that meet international standards.

Part of the government's Manthan initiative, launched in 2022 to promote science, technology, and innovation collaborations, the CoE aims to address critical challenges in airport systems while fostering locally developed solutions for the aviation sector. #1233.AIT13

**IDEMIA, a global provider of biometric solutions, has secured a 10-year extension of its contract with Australia's Department of Home Affairs to upgrade biometric systems at Australian airports.** Building on its partnership with Australian border authorities since 2004, IDEMIA will implement advanced smart gates and kiosks equipped with upgraded biometric verification systems, streamlining passenger processing while ensuring robust security measures. The upgrades align with Australia's modernisation initiatives, preparing for increased international travel by integrating automated

identity verification across multiple airport touchpoints. These systems aim to reduce wait times, improve operational efficiency, and enhance security through accurate biometric matching. IDEMIA's global expertise includes partnerships with over 600 government organisations and collaboration with SITA to improve air travel identity systems.

The project reinforces IDEMIA's commitment to leveraging technology for societal impact while upholding ethical standards and protecting human rights. The enhanced systems mirror cutting-edge technologies seen in other major airports, such as facial recognition systems deployed by the TSA in the United States. #1233.AIT14

## **Apps & Websites**

**Finavia is piloting a digital service at Helsinki Airport (Finland) that predicts security control queue times up to 12 hours in advance to enhance passenger convenience.** Available on Finavia's website since October 2024, the service provides real-time updates and includes the number of departing passengers at 30-minute intervals. The data-driven initiative has already been viewed nearly 100,000 times, highlighting passenger demand. Peak traffic times are typically between 6 a.m. and 9 a.m. and 2 p.m. to 6 p.m.

Finavia is collecting feedback during the pilot, which will run until the end of 2024, to refine the service further. #1233.AIT15

## **Awards & Recognition**

**Groupe ADP has expanded its Innovation Hub initiative globally with the Airport Innovation Days competition, targeting startups in Turkey, Jordan, and France to address shared challenges across its airport network.** The event focused on improving passenger experience, digitising operations, and advancing decarbonisation. Nearly 150 startups applied, with finalists presenting their solutions in Ankara, Amman, and Paris. Nine winners were selected, receiving prizes including Proof of Concept (POC) funding of up to EUR 50,000, mentoring, and international media exposure. Key winning innovations included:

- Paris: Unboarded's gaming solution for passengers; Jabu's AI-based meal optimisation; HyLight's emission-free aerial inspection balloon.
- Turkey: Sensemore's predictive maintenance system; Assistbox's video assistants for customer experience; Waste Log's waste management app.
- Jordan: ADADK's water leak detection system; LYNEports' software for eVTOL integration; Salam's self-service postcard kiosks.

Groupe ADP plans to test these innovations at Paris, Ankara, and Amman airports. The event reflects the group's commitment to fostering local ecosystems and addressing global aviation needs. Alongside the competition, a report titled "Above the Clouds, the Future of Flying" highlights airport innovations, AI, and sustainable technologies shaping the future of air travel. #1233.AIT16

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