



Traveler Service Point Marketplace - Airports By: Elite Services Group (EA Scheik)

Airports are the entrance to the city they represent. The larger city at whole. Take New York for example, JFK, Laguardia, and Newark all are Sub-Cities to in retrospect with their association to the city of New York and all of the surrounding communities. Their association should represent the kind of spirit and environment that creates fashionable, warm, and friendly business like taste formed by the kinetic relationship between the local environment and the people surrounding the community. They should be a Marketplace for the local economy.

A Traveler Service Point (TSP) is any location that a traveler passes through on his or her journey whether it be for business or pleasure. The *Marketplace* is the electronic sharing of information that enables tenants, concessionaires and other organizations to create a seamless and enjoyable experience.

The airport, the city, the experience or the feeling a traveler gets when walking off the plane. What do they feel? Do they think about how complicated it is to get from the plane to baggage, or how crowded the walkways are? Do they think about how long it will be before he can get on-line to solve a complicated sales issue or get on-line with his broker to make a trade? Are they thinking about how to spend a few moments with their children or mother while waiting for the next flight or are they thinking about that horrible line to wait for a taxi. These are all things that the airport of tomorrow must consider as some of the most important aspects of the City they are associated and what they must manage and develop to create the Marketplace ” that makes Business and Leisure Traveler alike want to come back to your city or Airport again and again.

As a Business Traveler, or company decision maker, many decisions are made on where a company will hold it's next Sales Conference, Hardware Trade Show, or Medical Seminar. Regardless of the event, decision makers from Corporate Travel Planning, individual group parties, or Seminar/Trade Show Planning Companies develop and create their ideas for their next show, seminar, or training based on the amenities and more importantly, the overall experience while passing through the airport.

Increasingly, airports are looking into ways of creating new retail and comfort areas for travelers while passing through their Sub-City. Airports like Philadelphia, Las Vegas, Houston and many others have focused on the ever

increasing need for creating new ways for travelers to spend money and relax while in their Marketplace. The leisure traveler is being taken care of in immense proportions and rightly so. They are in fact the ones that Cities seek to bring through the Airport for distribution into the spending lore of tourism paradise.

In a book called Alliance Advantage by Yves L. Doz and Gary Hamel, a quote on the globalization movement says that;

“The globalization movement is paralleled by a new industrial revolution: an information and communications age driven by technological breakthroughs that have spawned entirely new industries, **such as mobile communications and interactive multi-media.**

As this new age takes form, it is dramatically altering existing markets and reconfiguring existing established industries, triggering a race for the future among the world’s fleetest competitors”.

However, the source for a high percentage of dollars through the Airport, and the airlines associated with it, are from the Business Travelers. The Business Traveler and the business being supported are concerned about Business Continuance. What is Business Continuance you ask: Business Continuance is the ability for a Business Traveler to maintain business communications, and the ability to be connected at each and every possible point along his Business Journey. If he is at home, he should have access to his email, network files, internal internet, directories, newsgroups, and each and every tool needed for daily input into the corporate intellectual think tank. Many of these things are easily accomplished today by the use of VPN’s (Virtual Private Networks) which is the acronym coined for a method of encrypting data from a device such as a laptop or PDA, back to the company intranet.

VPN’s give the Business traveler or Mobile Worker the ability to have Business Continuance while away from work; and most importantly where time is misused the most, on the road. While on the road, traveling through airports in taxis, on buses, trains, in hotels, or convention centers, the Business traveler must have the ability to maintain Business Continuance. He can only do this through new wireless networks, laptops, PDA’s, and some of the other new technologies that allow him to roam freely and be constantly connected. They need to have Business Continuance and a VPN is mandatory to ride the public internet highway through wired and wireless public unencrypted networks. Such as Cable or DSL broadband, WiFi (802.11b/g) and GSM & CDMA networks from wireless carriers.

Statistic:

2000	15% of all Business Travelers had VPN access back to their company.
2001	Over 60% by year end will have VPN access.
2002	It is expected that over 80% of all Business Travelers had it by the end of year 2002.

As a decision maker for cities and associated airports, networking capabilities should be addressed for the local economy more often than for the tenants as well. Take Phoenix International Airport for example; This airport has little to no consideration for the Business Traveler as it relates to Business Continuance. The local economy is very interested in attracting new businesses to the area and has a tremendous focus on bringing business men and women into it's city and surrounding areas for meetings and retreats, however the airport has little to no consideration for business continuance and yet an extremely high percentage of laptops and PDA's have the capability to access their business through the use of WiFi technology but have limited capabilities while waiting in the Airport.

Many airports across the country take business continuance very seriously and recognize the importance of WiFi networks and other networking technologies such as IP Telephony, and RFID to name a few, to better serve the travelers. Dallas/Ft. Worth, Portland, Denver, San Jose have taken the proactive stance to serve the leisure and business traveler alike while understand the importance of business continuance for travelers. Airports and cities associated should have an established plan to serve the Business and Leisure Traveler alike through newer advanced technologies.

In addition, it's time for airports and associated cities to start thinking from a global perspective. As the new economy moves toward globalization, airports that don't consider the international and national travelers alike will be left behind. Companies like Intel, Dell, Cisco and MicroSoft have embedded Business Continuance enabling software and hardware in businesses all over the world to enable their employees business continuance where they can be served and companies like Starbucks and Borders as well as city downtown areas and homes are being enabled at astounding rates.

Cities where there are more than one competing airport should consider this: If you can begin to think about your airport as a Las Vegas Casino, with it's sophisticated technological solutions behind the scenes and a Disney World presentation to cater to all aspects of your leisure and business travelers needs and desires, you can begin to develop the type of demandingly chaotic "warm fuzzy" needed for business and leisure travelers from around the globe.

The question to you as an airport manager is where do you want to be in the quest for keeping and drawing Business and Leisure Travelers to the city you represent. Are you going to be known as a follower or a leader. Do you want the

people that pass through your airport to have a “warm fuzzy” or will they make hasty decisions about their next event at another sub-city that provides that “warm fuzzy”.