



Ronnie Garrett,
Editor

Tweet: 'You're Out of Toilet Paper in Terminal A'

an airport director recently shared an amusing story. He said the airport's social media policy worked so well that when they received a Tweet about a lack of toilet paper in one of their restrooms, they were able to remedy the problem in less than 60 seconds.

While his story put a smile on my face, the situation he describes might have been no laughing matter if this Tweet had gone viral and cast the airport in a negative light. Instead the airport's responsiveness generated a second Tweet complimenting them on how quickly they resolved the problem.

Now that's customer service!

My father owned a grocery store for many years and as a teenager, I often tired of his responses to my complaints about this or that customer. He would tell me "the customer is always right" and that I needed to do "whatever it takes to give them the best possible

experience when they shop at our store."

In the aviation industry, his words ring especially true. As airports across the United States prepare for further cuts in flights and seats, Michael Boyd, chairman of Boyd Group International, a leader in aviation consulting, research and forecasting, warns of the negative impact these measures may have on airport revenue streams. The reality is: Today's airport environment is highly competitive and passengers, airlines and retail/concessionaires can (and do) pick one airport over another. Because of this, airports need to be attractive, effective, and offer a customer experience that is heads and shoulders above the rest.

Savvy airport directors are making hay by developing and leasing airport lands; adding technology to improve parking structures and increase parking revenue; revamping tired retail spaces to attract luxury retail/concessionaires; undertaking initiatives to attract new

airlines; and developing new branding, marketing, and yes, social media strategies, all in the name of building revenue.

Airport Business stands uniquely poised to help readers as they position their airports for future growth. As the magazine's new editor, I plan to draw upon my own background as an aviation, security and business writer, and as a business owner, to provide you with editorial that helps you ensure your airport is the best it can be; even as federal financial support dwindles and competition for passengers grows.

To that end, I'm interested in hearing what you're doing in the name of customer service, revenue building and future growth. If you have a story you would like to share or a project you'd like to see featured in the pages of the magazine, send emails to ronnie@aviationpros.com. I too take customer service very seriously — my father made sure of that!

industry news

FAA Forecast Predicts Continued Growth

The FAA recently forecasted air traffic growth over the next 20 years—just at a much slower pace than predicted in its annual report last year.

The FAA Annual Aerospace Forecast report, which provides a comprehensive examination of current and future trends in air transportation for the next 20 years, predicts:

- A 2.8 percent average annual increase in U.S. airlines' collective traffic over the next 20 years to reach 1.46 trillion RPMs by 2033. The projected rate of growth is 12.5 percent less than forecasted in 2012 and 26.3 percent less the agency's 2011 forecast.
- A growth in U.S. mainline and regional airline passengers from 736.7 million in 2012 to 1.15 billion in 2033.
- An increase in the passenger jet fleet from 3,782 in 2012 to 4,907 in 2033. The FAA projects the fleet will shrink 1 percent in 2013 and attributes the loss of 38 aircraft to "grounding less fuel efficient aircraft."
- A 4.6 percent annual growth in cargo TRMs over the next 20 years, from 36.4 billion in 2012 to 89 billion in 2033.

As a side note, the FAA reports this forecast does not take into account the impact of U.S. government budget cuts that recently went into effect.



ASCE Releases Infrastructure Report Card

Every four years the American Society of Civil Engineers (ASCE) issues a report card on the state of America's infrastructure.

The 2013 Report Card for America's infrastructure gave America an overall grade of D+, while Aviation fared slightly worse with a D.

"It is unfortunate that aviation again received a failing grade," says ACI-NA Chairman David N. Edwards Jr. "This report underscores the need for significant changes in the way that airport infrastructure is funded to accelerate efforts to modernize aging infrastructure and improve the nation's air traffic control system with NextGen. Both are needed to position U.S. airports to better compete in a global marketplace."

An Advisory Council of leading civil engineers appointed by ASCE assigns the grades according to the following eight criteria: capacity, condition, funding, future need, operation and maintenance, public safety, resilience, and innovation.

To view the 2013 Report Card for America's Infrastructure, visit www.infrastructurereportcard.org.



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