



# Enhancing passenger airports experience using biometrics for a contactless journey

As the Air Transport industry continues to struggle due to the impact of the COVID-19, Collins Aerospace is working on contactless technology to improve safety and efficiency at the airports.

“Technology is playing a significant role in the recovery and biometrics is going to be the key enabler by providing a contactless journey through the airport,” explains Rakan Khaled, the Director of Global Business Operation at Collins Aerospace. “The good news is that biometrics had a business case before COVID-19 to improve the passenger experience using

facial recognition with a single-token journey and getting the passenger from curb-to-gate. Now we have the added benefit of minimising contact to reduce the transmission of the virus,” he added.

Collins looked at every touch point at the airport for passengers and considered how to convert them into contactless solutions. Starting with the existing Collins ARINCTM SelfPass biometric solution, which enables a passenger to register his/her biometrics and link to their boarding pass. This allows a more contactless – and seamless – travel experience for

the passenger. By integrating the full process with the airline, a traveller can pass through self-service kiosks, or the bag drop unit or a biometric-enabled security gate to go through the entire process, minimising touch points to reduce congestion and improve flow. Global aviation associations including ICAO, IATA, and ACI have recently acknowledged support for the recommendation of using biometrics and Collins predicts that it is going to be the number one building block for developing solutions to boost passenger confidence along the journey. Additional technologies will incorporate

biometrics with mobile device technologies to avoid contact with devices for payment as well as potentially using artificial intelligence to map out congestion points within an airport and alerting systems. AI will also likely play a role in maximising airport systems and leveraging data trends to improve efficiencies.

This helps enable social distance, reduce anxiety and improve the passenger experience, avoiding bottlenecks around the airport throughout the entire process.

Biometrics, while not a new technology, has seen more interest in the past few years at airports across the globe and particularly in Africa, where Collins has been engaged in discussions with several airports. “We’re actually implementing self bag drop solutions in a couple of airports in Africa at the moment, and we’re having more and more interest every day” shared Rakan Khaled. “This offers an airport resilience and flexibility in how passengers are using the airport, distributing demand while also harnessing increasingly familiar technologies.”

The key factor to developing contactless technology in Africa is scalability to meet demand. Collins expects the contactless solution to emerge and grow because it improves the passenger experience in many different ways. But despite that, there’s a couple of countries in Africa that are leading the way.

“As a company, we understand what the African markets need, so we are able to recommend a system that’s built specifically for this whether it be for an airport like JFK or Dubai or smaller scale regional airports. We have to make sure that the solution is customisable and scalable to fit in the small airport as well as the big or large airports.” said Khaled.

Collins always keeps in mind the idea of scalability to make sure that if an airport wants, for example, to add a terminal, or to remotely host another airport somewhere else in the country, it can use existing infrastructure that the main hub airport has invested in rather than trying to build everything from scratch again.

The future of the post-COVID airport will need to include many solutions to ensure a seamless, safe journey – not just for passengers but for airport staff, ground teams, and airline crews as well. Biometrics will continue to fuel these innovations from accelerating immigration processing, to moving passengers through the system from before arrival to the gate with their mobile device or facial recognition, to identifying crew members.

“Working together, we can drive these ideas forward and continue to provide technology that lowers costs, engages the passengers and improves efficiency,” Khaled concluded. [👉](#)

Technology is playing a significant role in the recovery and biometrics is going to be the key enabler by providing a contactless journey through the airport.

