



BAA invests to slash peak baggage reclaim waiting times

By Cameron Philip, Development Manager, BAA

The Problem

Lanner's business process simulation technology and services enabled BAA management to understand and optimise the end-to-end 'plane to reclaim' passenger experience.



Scotland's busiest international airport has seen dramatic growth over the past decade, with passenger numbers rising 60% since 1996.

With demand for air travel set to grow, passenger numbers at Glasgow Airport could reach up to 15 million by 2015, and as much as 24 million by 2030.

Growth on that scale requires significant investment, and Glasgow's Master Plan, published in October 2006, sets out how BAA intends to develop the airport to meet the growing demand for air travel.

But, putting aside future growth, the current year on year increase in passenger numbers is already placing significant pressure on key areas of the business, including check-in, security search and baggage handling. Built to handle nine million passengers, Glasgow Airport is nearing full capacity.

Capacity issues were being most keenly felt in International Arrivals, where the existing process with three baggage conveyors was coming under pressure from the volume of passengers.

Not only did passengers have to wait, on average, 51 minutes for their baggage during peak periods, they were also being held in queues stretching back through passport control.

As a company committed to the highest level of customer service, BAA Glasgow viewed such delays as unacceptable. It was impacting on the company's high quality customer care targets and, consequently, on BAA's reputation, growth and repeat business. However, there were no easy fixes – the problem was complex, involving people, systems and the daily changing pattern of flight arrivals. The number of potential scenarios and consequential outcomes ran into thousands.

The Simulation

Lanner's business process simulation technology and services enabled BAA management to understand and optimise the end-to-end 'plane to reclaim' passenger experience.



The Solution and Payback

- By understanding every aspect of the end-to-end 'plane to reclaim' experience BAA was able to make significant investment, confident there would be a positive payback.
- By taking a broader view, BAA was also able to expand the available retail space by 50% and achieve an ambition to provide an International Business Lounge.
- Investment in a fourth conveyor and airside presentation space has potential to reduce average maximum time spent waiting for bags by up to 54% - from 46 minutes to 21 minutes, and the average maximum daily dwell time, from 50 minutes to 31 minutes.

BAA International Arrivals baggage facilities are now working at optimum efficiency; the challenge for our handling agents and airlines is to turn those ambitions into reality, giving our passengers the best customer service possible.

But the quest for improvement never stops; the next challenge is to look at the landside operations, and how we deliver the high level of customer service and operational efficiency on which we at BAA built our reputation.