



27-01-2009

Transport from and to airport offers new potential for airlines

In addition to offering flights, airline companies should also offer the possibility to book (public) transport from and to the airport. A travel and cancellation insurance is more popular in Belgium than the Netherlands. Fresh air in the plane and play areas for children are just some of the ideas provided by travellers when asked how flights could be improved and what the airport of the future should look like. This is apparent from research conducted by InSites Consulting in Belgium and the Netherlands in co-operation with Living Tomorrow.

Transport from and to the airport offers new potential

In addition to offering flights, the ideal airline company should also offer the possibility to book (public) transport from and to the airport. 7 out of 10 travellers think this would be useful. More than half of travellers indicates they would also find it useful if they were able to obtain information via the airline about the destination or were able to book their rental car, accommodation or parking space at the airport. 7 out of 10 Belgians also want to take out their travel and cancellation insurance with their airline company. This is not as important for Dutch travellers where only 39% deems this useful. "This corresponds with the fact that Belgians look for more security in their holiday behaviour when they go on holiday. They want to avoid anything going wrong and like to arrange as much as possible beforehand. We don't see this as much with Dutch travellers", says Annelies Verhaeghe, R&D consultant at InSites Consulting.

In the current market situation a number of these extra services are already provided by other providers. For airline companies there is a lot of potential in offering transport from and to the airport. This is a service to which travellers attach great value and which has still not been sufficiently met by providers.

Fresh air in the plane, play areas for children in the airport

Travellers were asked to take part in a 'user generated brainstorm'. This is a new online research method in which each participant first suggests their own ideas and in a next step is able to evaluate other people's ideas. All ideas can then be classified as a function of their potential. During this brainstorming session respondents were asked to reflect on the future of aviation and airports. What innovations do they expect? What is indispensable on a flight or at an airport of the future without having to take into account any technological or other limitations?

Examples of more 'predictable' ideas about the flight of the future include more legroom, shorter waiting periods, cheaper prices. A series of other ideas: fresh air, separate areas for families with children, beds to sleep during long flights, a power supply for e.g. laptops and mobile use, a restaurant on the plane... .

For the airport of the future the following ideas came up: quicker luggage handling, more information in case of delays, comfortable chairs, more co-ordination with public transport from and to the airport, environmentally-friendly flights. Slightly more 'eccentric', and in need of further study, were the following ideas: offer of fair trade products during the flight, texting service to notify travellers when a flight is delayed, a big shopping centre at the airport, play areas and meeting points in case children get lost.

The user generated brainstorm belongs to a whole series of innovative research techniques known as Connected Research. Online web 2.0 techniques such as blogs, chat rooms, communities, etc. are applied in a market research set-up. This results in online conversations between consumers where unfiltered opinions about products or services are expressed. The consumer evolves from a respondent to a participant and interacts with the researcher. These new techniques were developed within the R&D team of InSites Consulting and can be used in both traditional quantitative and qualitative research projects. For more information, please go to www.insites.eu/connectedresearch.

Press release - 27-01-2009

This research data is the result of market research conducted by InSites Consulting in August/September 2008 in co-operation with Living Tomorrow. The aim of this study is that consumers actively reflect on the flight and the airport of the future. In all, 811 people took part in this online survey in Belgium (404) and the Netherlands (407). The figures are representative for the Internet population of each country in terms of sex and age (18-65).



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InSites Consulting

InSites Consulting is a leading marketing research company in the field of online market research with a strong international position. It was established as a spin-off of the Vlerick Leuven Gent Management School. Via an online panel comprising more than 2,000,000 panel members spread over 25 European countries, both quantitative and qualitative online marketing research is carried out. The head office in Ghent has 75 highly-skilled and experienced employees. InSites Consulting stands for: expertise and consulting, driven by innovation, excellent customer service and quality-oriented . . More information on www.insites.eu.

Living Tomorrow

Living Tomorrow is a meeting place for innovative companies to introduce visitors to products and services that can improve the quality of living, life and work in the near future. Social, economic and technological developments are observed and translated into realistic and recognisable products and services in the innovation complex. Living Tomorrow is a Research organisation on strategic level. More information is available on www.livingtomorrow.be.