

# Airport Dimensions talks loyalty management & launch of digital service



Buckingham at Airport Dimensions points out that the ideal end-to-end passenger journey concept is personal and circumstantial



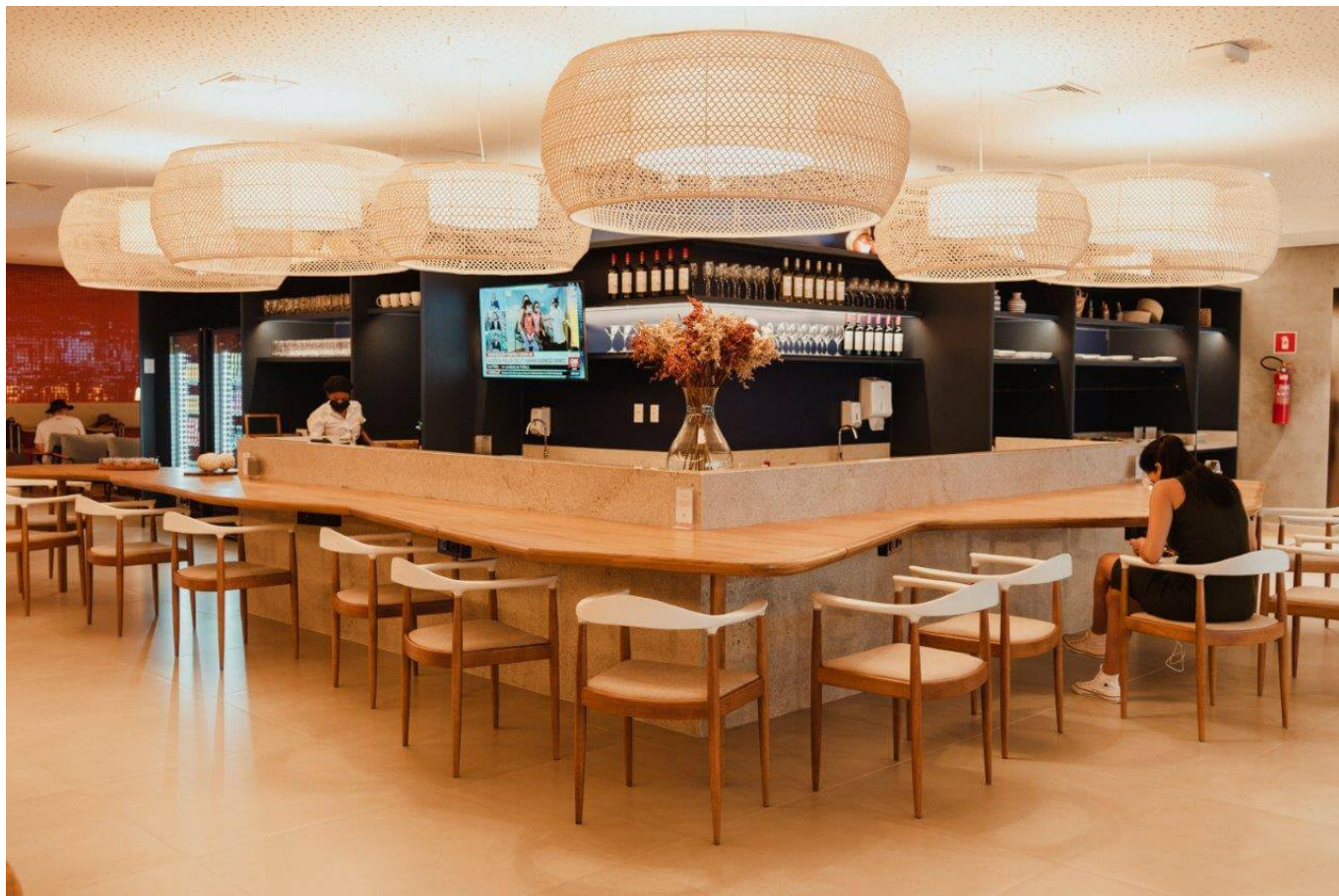
During a productive TFWA AP Live in May, *Global Travel Retail Magazine* had the chance to sit down with Mignon Buckingham, CEO at Airport Dimensions. The info-packed networking event featured a series of workshop-style sessions and the opportunity to meet with delegates both in person and online via TFWA's 365 platform.

Recognized for offering a blend of physical experiences and digital services that seek to open new dimensions in customer engagement across the globe, Airport Dimensions encourages the passenger to take control of their travel journey. Established in 2006 and owned by Collinson, the company specializes in designing, building and operating shared-use lounges and airport experiences. The winning combination for meeting evolving consumer expectations and creating a value-added space: form and function.

When asked her opinion on what needs to be offered in order to achieve the ideal end-to-end passenger journey, Buckingham points out that the concept is personal and circumstantial. Along with varying from person to person, the makings of the most ideal passenger journey can also vary per individual according to purpose of travel, direction of travel and/or rate of travel. With this in mind, the lounge operator has adapted its range of experiences and services to better suit today's traveler.

For example, Airport Dimensions collaborated with its established partner and the self-service hospitality platform, Servy, to introduce digital food ordering to its lounges as a safety precaution to reduce touchpoints and wait times while improving customer experience. Based on consumer segment and airline offering, the team works to curate experiences, services and menus.





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## Global standards & local designs

While on a mission to achieve global consistency across the brand in terms of quality service and effective sustainability models, each Airport Dimensions location also delivers the best of its region – themes, ingredients, materials, resources and more – in order to reflect the local community. For example, in collaboration with VIP lounge operator, Ambaar Lounge, Airport Dimensions has opened multiple Ambaar Club concept-lounges at airports across Brazil, which provide “a comfortable and contemporary environment that celebrates the heritage of the local area.”

Described as managing a rapidly growing network of locations at the world’s leading airports across the United States, United Kingdom and the Middle East, the launch of the Ambaar Club brand in 2021 marked the company’s entrance into the South American lounge market.

## Welcome to Connecta

Cited by Buckingham, research shows that 71% of consumers would prefer to use a single interface across the airport. The combining of touchpoints, offerings, experiences and services would allow airports to form in-depth, branded relationships with travelers. Described as a one-stop e-commerce and passenger loyalty program, with the release of Connecta, its first digital service, Airport Dimensions has continued to invest in driving revenue growth and increasing traveler satisfaction.

The new relationship management platform brings together an “integrated airport-branded relationship, loyalty and frictionless e-commerce capability across the airport.” Connecta allows users to book a lounge visit, order food, shop duty free, pre-order car parking and navigate the airport, all from the convenience of their own smart phone. Encouraging traveler engagement and higher spending, the platform enables airports to offer status benefits and reward points. As a plus, Connecta can be seamlessly linked to other Collinson brand offers such as global lounge access or assistance services.

Speaking about the development and launch of the digital service, Buckingham draws on her three decades of loyal management experience in the travel and hospitality industry. Referring to different types of loyalty-specific programs including point-based, paid, value and tiered, she says no single platform is one size fits all. When it comes to offers such as giveaways, discounts, savings, preferred seating and premium parking, consumer segment and travel circumstance need to be considered. Whilst traditional frequent flyer programs continue to play an important role, the Airport Dimensions research suggests these are less important for commercially important Millennials and Generation Z – the CEO states that opportunities exist for airports to better engage and capture the loyalty of these key segments.

Airport Dimensions’ practice of personalization, aims to stop pigeon-holing travelers and drive a better experience based on their existing reality, schedule or circumstance. According to the airport lounge and experience operator, Connecta strengthens the process of capturing consumer data and provides performance insights that enable airports to deploy programs that offer a more customized experience. Regardless of budget or stage of development, the digital service is available to airports around the world.

“It is undeniable that the global pandemic has forced change in the industry, but the fact is non-aeronautical revenue per passenger had already fallen by 10% globally in the five years before COVID-19 hit.

“Industry leading airports and innovators already understand the importance of this changing traveler behavior and were looking to tap into its relationship earlier and provide a frictionless, digitally



connected experience. The impact of the pandemic means the imperative to accelerate progress has never been more compelling.

“We at Airport Dimensions, supported by the many years of experience of Collinson, understand the commercial and operational needs of the airport, and we’re in a unique position to support recovery plans and a return to sustained growth. Connecta will go a long way toward helping airports link the physical and digital traveler experience and rebuild revenue in a radically changed world,” explains Buckingham.