SEAMLESS IDENTIFICATION TECHNOLOGY CAN HELP PREVENT THE TRANSMISSION OF PATHOGENS AT AIRPORTS
Because of the continuous growth of global travel, the risk and facilitation of the quick spread of person-to-person or surface-to-person transmissible pathogens at airports is steadily increasing. The hard and smooth surfaces of clearance touchpoints used by travelers can be a major contributor to pathogen transmission since these surfaces transmit microbes much more efficiently than soft surfaces. Reducing this method of communicable disease transmission represents an important challenge for airports and airlines. Current global travel patterns and increasing passenger numbers capacity demand that the aviation industry play an important role in reducing the transmission of communicable diseases.

A real risk to current airport operational models and passengers is the presence and transmission of communicable pathogens when travelers interact with touchpoints and airport personnel. Identity Management Platforms leveraging touchless biometrics and contactless passage through security, border control and boarding offer airports hygienic advantages that mitigate the risk of pathogen transmission. Additionally, Seamless Flow solutions optimize and speed-up passenger clearance using biometric identification that can increase personal space between passengers and reduce pathogen exposure. This is accomplished by enrolling both travel documents and facial images at airport check-in or remotely using digital mobile ID apps. Subsequent airport touchpoints then automatically recognize and authenticate the traveler’s face and identity in a few seconds, thereby eliminating the need to physically interact with potentially infected surfaces or exchanging documents with an agent or officer. Additionally, identical seamless clearance procedures throughout the passenger journey eliminate time-consuming identification tasks and establish a faster clearance for both inbound and outbound passengers. This means travelers can leave the airport quicker and reduce the number of passengers present inside the premises.
By design and function, seamless and touchless identification systems prevent the introduction, transmission and spread of communicable diseases by eliminating the need to touch potentially infected clearance points or exchange travel documents between airport staff and travelers. By deploying contactless digital identification technology, airports can reduce the transmission of infectious diseases in transport hubs. This is especially important at hotspots throughout the passenger journey. While various factors influence the potential for transmission, hotspots throughout the airport present a higher risk of transmission including check-in, security checkpoint, border control and boarding. These hotspots are instances where passengers are required to physically interact with touchpoints or exchange documents with airport personnel where pathogens may be present. Currently, these points are usually characterized by bottlenecks and long waiting lines, with crowd levels and duration being a key factor in transmission risk. Seamless digital identity mitigates these risks by speeding up the clearance process and reducing both factors, especially important during peak hours. Touchless technology also minimizes contact between passenger and airport personnel, potential exposure to pathogens and the possibility of further contamination inside and outside the airport complex.
PROACTIVE RISK MANAGEMENT

Pathogen risk management also includes the assessment of current disinfecting protocol, procedures and ease of equipment cleaning. By installing Seamless Digital Identity Systems designed with smooth modular lines, both routine cleaning and targeted decontamination procedures vastly improve the elimination of pathogens present on passenger touchpoints. Moreover, systems designed with fluid lines speed up and make the decontamination procedure easier in the case of outbreak scenarios that involve the use of hazardous decontaminants for high-consequence pathogens. The lack of hidden nooks and crannies on seamless touchpoints minimize the pooling of cleaning liquids that can affect the performance of critical components or structural integrity.

The consideration of pathogen risk management goes hand-in-hand with all the other operational and commercial benefits seamless technology and legacy process remodeling can bring together, currently aggregated in the IATA-driven One ID initiative. Vision-Box always considers how to effectively address the human-factor challenge and its unpredictability aspects as critical variables at the inception of every project design and solution delivery. This is a critical consideration when designing both hardware and software platforms whose goal is to deliver sustainable automation of complex processes independently of human singular characteristics. Using biometrics as a foundational element enables the realization of all the value friction-less processes bring by unleashing the power of human-centered technology.
During occasions when society is challenged by unprecedented epidemic and pandemic phenomenon, we are proud of being an industry-leading company that is delivering tangible benefits back to all global citizens, and in the process, making the world a better and safer place. Seamless Flow technology is clearly one of the main pillars of a strong proactive and preventative approach to limiting the spread of pathogens and viruses. By limiting physical contact between humans and interactions with machines in times of an outbreak, it delivers a solution that can contain the spread of viruses. As touchless processes become more widely available to a majority of travelers, it will provide a steady model of business continuity for airports during times of prosperity and in challenging conditions that require physical distancing. As with all Vision-Box solutions, privacy and personal data protections are fundamental rights that remain unchanged during circumstances where personal rights may be curtailed because of public emergencies. It actually becomes a complementary solution value-add that allows the delivery of information security and facilitation at the same time, in a responsible and sustainable manner.
While every airport has planned for incidents such as mass casualties, natural disasters and manmade events, very few have put in place systems to mitigate the risk of communicable disease transmission. Airports can gauge and manage this risk present throughout the passenger journey by deploying Seamless Flow and Identity Management clearance systems. The installation of these systems can be done without adding to or conducting any substantial remodeling of the existing terminals. Since pathogens can have a sustained impact on airport operations, it directly and indirectly affects the benefits they deliver to local communities, nations at large and the world in general. Large airports support thousands of aviation jobs, passenger spending at hotels, restaurants, rental car companies, entertainment venues, tourist attractions, and numerous other local businesses. This underscores the fact that continuity of operations at airports is an essential component of daily life as we currently experience it.