



Free tourist shuttles provide convenience to visitors and encourage them to visit more attractions. Photo by Cathy Hsu

Airports

We can't leave our discussion of transportation without taking a look at **terminals**. Passengers pass through many different types of terminals during their journeys: whether rail, bus, car rental, ferry, cruise, or air. In fact, the number of travelers passing through terminals is staggering. For an idea of how big these volumes are, just think about the fact that over 255 million people passed through the world's three busiest airports; Atlanta, GA, Beijing, China and London, United Kingdom in 2014.²⁹

At times, providing services to these potential customers may seem like an afterthought. Basic necessities such as restrooms and water fountains can be found in smaller terminals, and added amenities such as vending machines may be added as passenger volumes increase. With more traffic comes more services and **concessions**; limited service food options, news-stands and gift shops, then bars, restaurants, food courts, expanded shopping, airline clubs, and duty free. Then, as volumes grow into the millions, services found in many destinations appear such as spas, hotels, and children's playgrounds appear in airports.

One key service provider in the transportation industry, airports, has now realized that passengers using their terminals hold the potential of substantially increased revenues. However, it has only been since the 2000s that airport operators have shifted their attention from simply providing facilities and services to meet basic needs to enhancing the airport experience with a broad array of design and operational amenities focused on increasing revenues.³⁰

According to industry research findings, satisfied passengers spend more time and money in airports than less satisfied passengers leading to increased economic benefits and profitability.³¹ With money to be made on not only departing and arriving passengers who are passing through their facilities, but also passengers who are passing through on connecting flights and passengers who are enjoying the time-saving convenience of using airports as primary destinations for business meetings.