

Airport *report*

Improving Services at MSY

By Iftikhar Ahmad
Director of Aviation

We are constantly looking for ways to improve our airport environment with the hope of offering more diverse services to our traveling public. One of the areas that we are taking a serious look at is our concessions program at Louis Armstrong New Orleans International Airport. Recently, we posted an online concessions survey on our website, www.flymsy.com requesting input from the general public, as well as our passengers, about the types of concessions and services they would like to have at MSY. I am happy to report strong participation with respondents numbering in the thousands, in fact 6,616 to be exact. The survey questions included the general information sought on most surveys such as age group, gender, and residence along with particular questions concerning the types of food, specialty shops, and services that would be preferred at Armstrong International.

Here are some of the survey results in summary form. The bulk of the respondents were between the ages of 22 and 54. The gender split was 57% male and 43% female. The residence breakout was as follows: another U.S. State – 49%, New Orleans – 32%, International – 9%, Louisiana other than New Orleans – 8%, followed by Mississippi or Alabama at 2%. The frequency of airport use ranged from “Never to More than 12 times” with the majority of responses noted as never, once and 2 to 3 times. The optional choices of arrival times at the airport indicate that most of the respondents arrive in the suggested check-in window of 1 ½ to 2 hours with only 4% tempting fate by arriving less than 45 minutes before their departure. The top 3 choices for the types of food preferred from a selection of 21 categories indicated a preference for American, Cajun and sandwiches. Full service restaurants (all choices) favored regional/local high end and regional/local casual followed by local neighborhood. Fast food restaurants (all choices) desired were the three categories of regional/local brand, national brand and health fast food. When asked about that morning eye opener – coffee, respondents prefer a regional brand over a national brand at the airport. On the topic of specialty shops, the top five choices were books, New Orleans themed merchandise, mobile electronics, fashion/apparel, and non-prescription pharmacy respectively. Services (all choices) selected were

electronic device charging station, business service center, bank, massage therapy, post office, shoe shine, nail/hair salon and meeting/conference rooms in that order. Finally, when asked if they use wireless internet when they travel, 71% of the respondents answered yes but when asked if they would pay for the wireless service if it were faster, only 11% answered in the affirmative. I was pleased to see that some services requested are among those that already exist at the airport, such as a bank, post office, free WiFi and shoe shine. The detail summary of the survey will soon be available for viewing on the airport website.

As I noted in previous articles, we are underway with millions of dollars of construction at the airport that provides thousands of jobs. These projects are now in various stages of development from design to actual demolition and remodeling. In fact, construction barriers are now erected both inside and outside the terminal. As we plan the next step in modernization, the feedback from the survey will highlight what is important to the public we serve.

On behalf of the New Orleans Aviation Board, I would like to thank everyone who participated in the online survey. Your comments and wishes are appreciated. It is your comments and recommendations that will help shape our projects that will transform the airport and enhance the customer experience. ✈



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Check your local listings for the air time of the Armstrong International Airport 30 minute television program, “Airport Alive,” or view it on the airport website, www.flymsy.com by clicking on the “Airport Alive” link in News & Stats. You may also follow us on Twitter and Facebook.

