

# Heathrow Airport Turns to Dapresy to Help It Achieve Goal of Best Airport Service in the World



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**George Efkolidis**

Head of Passenger Experience & Airport Insights,  
Heathrow Airport

## ABOUT HEATHROW AIRPORT

Heathrow is Europe’s largest airport and one of the world’s top international aviation hubs. As the UK’s global gateway, Heathrow welcomes almost 80 million passengers every year. The airport is home to more than 80 airlines and is Britain’s largest cargo port, helping to drive British trade growth by connecting the nation to more than 200 destinations around the world. Heathrow is currently ranked by passengers as the ‘Best Airport in Western Europe’ for the fourth year running and the ‘Best Airport for Shopping’ for 9 years in a row.

## THE CHALLENGE

Heathrow Airport is an enormous ecosystem with a myriad of complex operations that must ensure that all passengers traveling to, from and through the airport have a reliable and memorable journey. The challenge is exacerbated by the fact that the world’s second busiest international airport has only two runways. To track and ensure a solid performance across all

service attributes in the passenger journey such as check-in, security, immigration & baggage reclaim wait times as well as helpfulness of staff and overall airport satisfaction to name a few, Heathrow’s Passenger Experience & Airport Insight team interviews more than 500,000 passengers per year. Based upon these surveys it must effectively measure and then report on factors that range across the entire travel journey, from arrivals to departures and connections to identify areas of improvement.

Formerly, the reporting from these programs was fragmented and delivered as interactive Excel reports and PowerPoint decks, showing scores against benchmarks. While the team received the data it sought, the report preparation time and the static format of PowerPoint decks meant that the airport was too reactive to trends, it couldn’t break out custom comparisons easily for stakeholders, and only a handful of staff had immediate access to the core data.



## THE CHALLENGE CONT.

*"It could take several members in my team a week to create and ensure the accuracy of monthly reports," said George Efkolides, Head of Passenger Experience & Airport Insights for Heathrow. "Then if a stakeholder wanted to know, for instance, what the perception of immigration was last month in a specific terminal, we had to create a custom report, which took additional time. Each time someone wanted to filter the results or analyze other comparisons that weren't contained in the initial report, our colleagues were losing additional time needed to perform other critical functions of their jobs. We knew we needed something better."*

## THE SOLUTION

The Heathrow team sought a solution that would provide more effective and timely reporting of all key metrics. Beyond the monthly reporting noted above, the airport also compares itself to 300 of the world's largest airports for several service attributes on a quarterly basis. The team wanted to automate the production of both monthly and quarterly reporting in order to free up time to generate new insights and add more value to the business. Their reporting customers are the 300 stakeholders who influence the performance of the airport from all levels of the organization, including the executive team, commercial, customer relations & service, security, baggage, HR and many other functions – all of which have unique needs and priorities.

The Heathrow team researched the market to find a dashboard reporting solution to satisfy this requirement. They reviewed many business intelligence offerings but none hit the mark in terms of handling market research data. One of the most fundamental requirements was design. The chosen solution had to be able to offer a striking and engaging interface while dealing with the vast quantities of data from a variety of sources.

Dapresy perfectly fit the bill and was commissioned to build an all-encompassing reporting portal that would act as the central hub for several of these research programs, which became known as Heathrow Discovery.


The online portal uses imagery and iconography from the airline industry together with Heathrow's own

branding to provide an intuitive, data-rich environment. For example, users looking for immigration data can easily spot the blue and white signs (seen on the ground) on associated data in the dashboard. This improves the user experience and provides a higher level of comfort to senior management and others who may not be as familiar with navigating a dashboard.

Users can select the research program of interest and immediately see the latest scores on several key metrics. They can drill down into specific business areas to review the relevant metrics, look at performance over time, or slice and dice by several filter variables. For example, if overall satisfaction with baggage claims isn't sufficient, they can compare statistics by specific terminals during specified months. Or when comparing cleanliness vs. other leading airports, they can quickly discover how each terminal stacks up.

According to Efkolides, *"Our vision is to give passengers the best airport service in world. Through the timely and flexible reporting of key satisfaction metrics, Dapresy is giving us the information required to achieve this. Now, instead of just 'what,' we can discover 'how' and 'why.'"*

The portal is used to download the equivalent of the static monthly and quarterly reports that users were accustomed to receiving. These are automatically created when each new wave of data is uploaded. There is also a cross-tabulation tool in the portal which enables users to perform their own analysis on the data from each program and export results to Excel and PowerPoint.



*"It's no longer a challenge to view or create presentations; some 300 users can do so straight from the dashboard. This increase in insights has led to far more intelligent questions and conversations that lead to service improvements,"* Efkolides noted.

In addition, the Heathrow Team can easily customize data access and functions rights by each user. For example, certain stakeholders may only require a subset of the research programs (security, baggage, cleanliness, etc.) focused on their area.

Today, rather than taking up to a week to create monthly and quarterly reports, information is readily available to the 300 stakeholders within about a day.

*"We recognize that if we are to deliver the best service in the industry, we must focus more on our customers and quickly respond to their experiences. With our wealth of information, we can now advise the business to focus on specific pain points that will have the most impact,"* Efkolides said.

## FUTURE PLANS

Efkolides noted that this is a journey with lots of cultural changes involved. *"Over time, we expect to take baby steps from monthly, to twice monthly, weekly and then daily reporting,"* he concluded.

## OUTCOMES ACHIEVED BY DAPRESY

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- Prior to the Dapresy solution, it typically took up to 7 working days for the Heathrow Team to deliver results to the business after each wave of studies. Today, with the Heathrow Discovery portal, this has been reduced to just one day.
- In the past, if stakeholders wanted to see trends not represented on PowerPoint slides, staff had to rerun and create new reports. Now they can use filters to see new comparisons instantly.
- Because stakeholders can see custom comparisons and trends instantly, better and more timely decisions can be made to improve areas of concern to Heathrow.