Boeing Expert Discusses Factors in Passenger Satisfaction

What role does the type of airplane play in overall passenger satisfaction on a flight? Airplane type plays an important role, according to Klaus Brauer, project director of Passenger Revenue Development, Boeing Commercial Airplanes.

"Depending on the length of the flight, the on-time performance of the airplane and the design of the passenger cabin, the type of airplane could make a big difference in how a passenger feels about the trip," Brauer said.

Speaking at the ITB Berlin 2001 travel and tourism trade show today, Brauer said that in a recent survey, "11 percent of passengers traveling tourist class on flights of more than five hours cited the airplane as the most important factor to them. By comparison, only 5 percent of business travelers on flights of less than two hours named the type of airplane as an important factor."

Brauer shared data that shows the Boeing 737, 757 and 767 have a better on-time performance rate than their competitors. He also said delays have a dramatic impact on virtually all measures of passenger satisfaction.

"The new interiors on the Boeing 737, 757 and 767 provide passengers a greater sense of spaciousness and more space for luggage," Brauer said. "Personal space is important, especially on longer flights, and makes the Boeing 767, with its news interior, the preferred mid-size airplane."

Brauer is considered the industry's leading authority on airplane cabin configuration and the perception of passenger comfort. In the early 1990s, Brauer conducted research that identified for the first time the elements that shape a passenger's perception of comfort.

Brauer's findings, which explain more than 90 percent of passenger preference for particular airplane models, led to the development of the Boeing Personal Space Model. This new tool, widely regarded as the "e=mc2" of passenger comfort, was found so unique and valuable that authorities in the United States, Europe and other regions of the world granted Brauer and Boeing patents on the tool.

Boeing makes a version of the model freely available to airlines, which use it to deliver a consistent level of comfort across fleets that include a mix of different models.

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