

ACI-NA 2024:

AviaVox enables compliance with international guidelines for PA calls for disabled passengers, including those with hearing loss and neurodevelopment disorders.

Amsterdam, 01 August 2024 – At ACI North America’s Annual Conference and Exhibition in Grand Rapids (MI), 07-10 September 2024, AviaVox will be demonstrating PAstream, a technology which delivers passenger announcements as text or audio messages directly to passengers’ mobile devices – in their own language. This allows airports and airlines to communicate more inclusively and effectively with passengers who have disabilities and health conditions.

PAstream provides universal and equal access to key information for the hearing- and visually impaired, as well as those with less obvious disabilities including neurodevelopment disorders and certain mental and physical health conditions. This allows such passengers to reduce the stress of their airport experience and to arrive at the correct gate on time.

The audio option within PAstream allows passengers with a wide range of disabilities to play and repeat messages using either earbuds/headphones or a Bluetooth-enabled hearing aid paired to their mobile phone. For other travellers, a text-based option may be preferable.

PAstream benefits for passengers

Passengers can receive announcements in real time in both text and audio format, and they can also retrieve and replay past messages.

Audio messages can be made available in AviaVox’s full list of over 35 supported languages and dialects, and text messages can be translated using built-in functionality.

- There is no need for any special software, user registration, or personal details.
- For the **hearing-impaired**, PAstream provides a flexible, cost-effective alternative to traditional loop systems (also known as AFILS, or audio frequency induction loop systems). Loop systems have limited effectiveness because they rarely cover the entire airport; they necessitate special hearing aids; and they require the passenger to have good residual hearing – all of which means that loop systems cannot assist all hearing-impaired travellers.
- For passengers with **neurodevelopment disorders** (such as autism and ADHD) or mental-health conditions (such as OCD, anxiety or PTSD), or with **traumatic brain injuries** resulting in cognitive impairment, the sensory over-stimulation of an airport environment can be distressing. When individuals therefore seek out quiet areas away from the bombardment of PA calls, that can result in missed messages, increased staff workload in calling late passengers, and potential delays. Instead, PAstream allows passengers to monitor announcements quietly in a suitable location.

Passengers with **physical health conditions** may need to spend time away from general concourse and departure areas; for example, those with chronic pain, respiratory conditions, diabetes, urinary

and gastrointestinal conditions (including the use of stomas and catheters), and heart disease. Being able to receive messages in bathrooms and quiet areas means they needn't miss announcements such as gate changes and boarding calls.

Benefits for airports and airlines

PAstream improves the passenger experience; reduces the risk of late arrivals at departure gates (along with related penalties); cuts down on agent workload; helps to deliver 'silent airport' policies; and improves reputation management when it comes to successfully supporting passengers with disabilities. PAstream can also enhance the functionality and value of airports' and airlines' own apps.

Additionally, PAstream can improve the efficiency of airports and airlines by supporting compliance with aviation regulations designed to empower people with disabilities. These include, for example:

- **In Europe**, Regulation 1107/2006, the Interpretative Guidelines on the application of Regulation 1107/2006, ECAC DOC 30, and the European Accessibility Act
- **In Australia**, the Disability (Access to Premises) Standard (DAPS) in Australia and the National Construction Code (NCC)
- **In the USA**, 14 CFR, Part 382, Non-discrimination on the Basis of Disability in Air Travel.

How PAstream works

PAstream can be cloud-based, or it can be hosted locally within the AviaVox/airport network. Announcements are delivered in real time, based on information taken directly from the airport operational database (AODB). Thus, the system can be deployed rapidly and inexpensively, without the need for significant capital infrastructure investment.

An API enables the PAstream service to be added to existing airport and airline apps. However, it can also load instantly from a QR code or URL, negating the need for a downloaded app.

PAstream will cover 100% of PA zones. However, the selection of certain zones, and the filtering of messages, enable users to restrict the messages they receive to those most relevant to them – based on location, flight details, carriers, etc. This reduces listener fatigue (and therefore diminishes missed boarding and gate-change calls) and meets the requirements for silent airports.

PAstream at ACI North America's Annual Conference and Exhibition

PAstream can be seen at the AviaVox booth (number 418). AviaVox will also be showing other products in its software suite for airlines and airports, including ATeC (airport Terminal Client); and AGC (Airline Gate Client).

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Information for editors

Netherlands-based AviaVox is the leading global provider of intelligent artificial voice systems for airports and airlines, and PA stream forms part of a wider suite of PA-based announcement software for terminals, gates and off-airport environments. Using digital fragments of real voices, AviaVox technology generates synthetic speech of such high quality and intelligibility that it is indistinguishable from the human voice.

PAstream is a collaboration between AviaVox and Australia-based CNG.

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