Airport Dimensions: Travellers ‘disenfranchised’ with airports

A report from lounge operator Airport Dimensions has found that travellers have become “somewhat disenfranchised” with their airport relationships, with 12% saying they didn’t want one at all.

Airport Dimensions operates airport experiences including the Ambaar Club concept in Brazil. It says passengers are becoming increasingly disenfranchised with airports. Image: Airport Dimensions

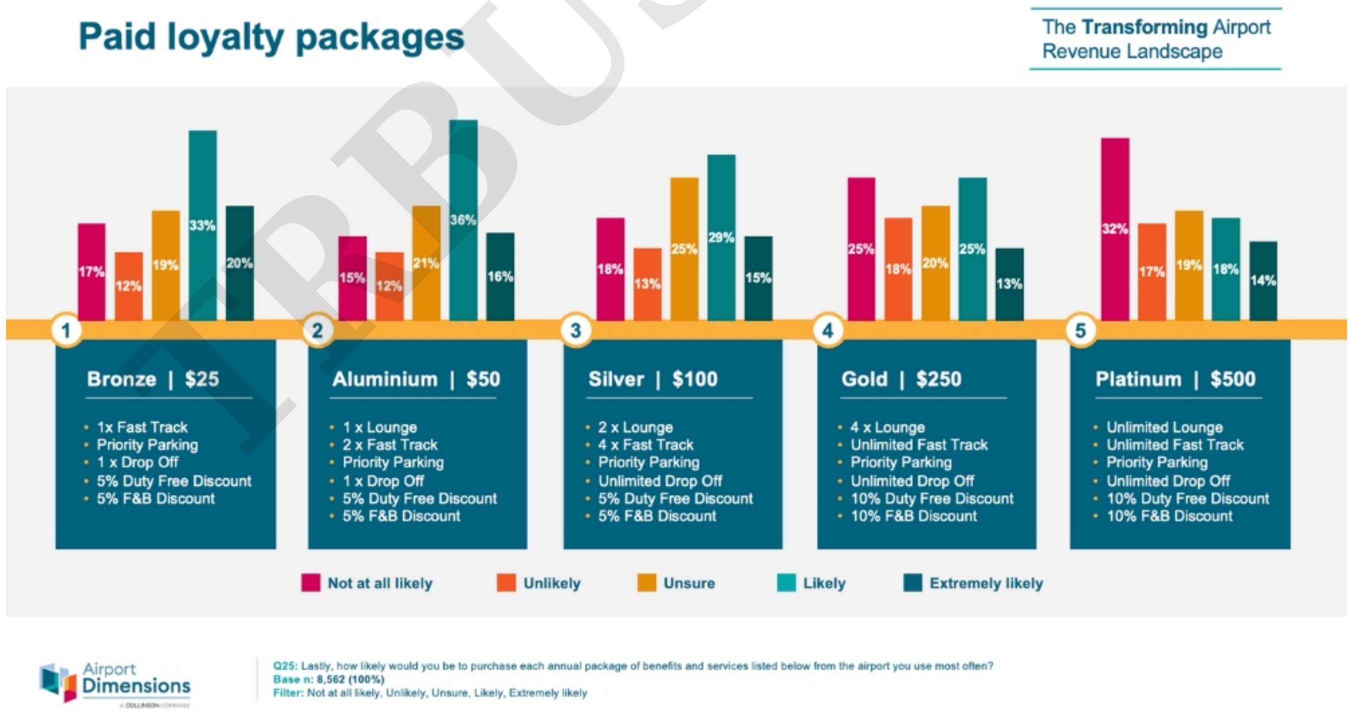
The report, called ‘The Transforming Airport Revenue Landscape’, saw Airport Dimensions partner with market research agency Dynata to survey 8,500 air travellers from a cross-section of demographics.

While the poor feedback shows a worsening in sentiment (in 2021, just 7% of those surveyed said they didn’t want a relationship with their airport at all), there has been an increase in loyalty programme uptake.

The number of travellers joining loyalty programmes climbed by 2% to 18%, while those opting in to airport communications increased 5% to 19%.

Paid-for airport loyalty programmes are also experiencing increased interest. Over half (53%) said they’d be open to entry-level offerings around US$25 that include one fast-track pass, priority parking, and one drop off, with a 5% discounts across the airport.

Just under one third (32%) said they would be willing to pay $500 for a product that included lounge access, fast-track services, and 10% discounts.



Some air travellers say theyd be willing to pay for a package of benefits to enhance their airport experience.

Effective communication was generally highly valued. One third say they visit airport websites for flight updates, with 31% looking for other information relevant to their journeys.

One quarter visit airport sites to purchase services including parking and travel insurance.

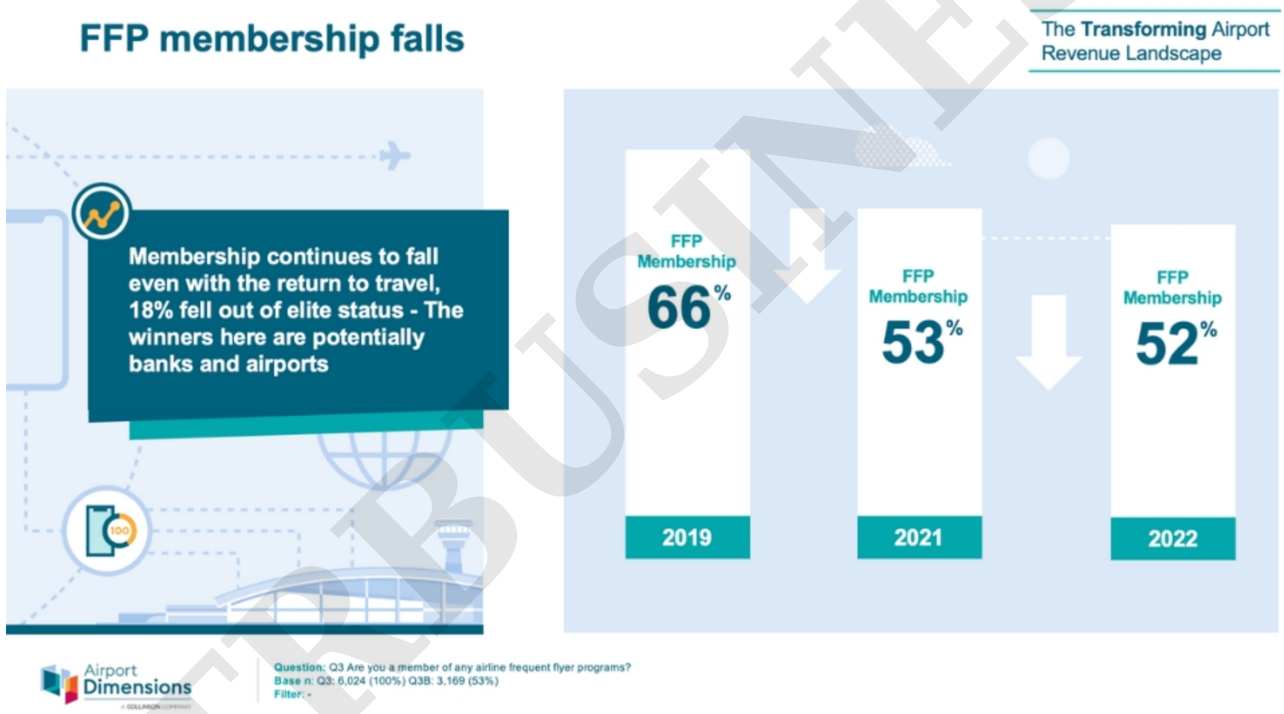
Frequent flyer programmes see ‘steady decline’

Despite the growth in airport loyalty programmes, airline frequent flyer membership has continued to see a “steady decline”.

In 2019, 66% of travellers were part of an airline loyalty programme. In 2022 this dropped to 52%.

Younger passengers are the least likely to be part of a frequent flyer programme. Only 40% of Gen Z and 52% of Millennials compared with 60% of Boomers and 75% of elders are members.

Regardless of age, 18% of elite frequent flyer programme members have lost their elevated status.



Fewer travellers than ever are part of airline frequent flyer programmes

“In their day-to-day lives, consumers are no longer loyal in the same way to brands, products, and services,” said Stephen Hay, Global Strategy Director of Airport Dimensions.

“This shift in attitude can also be seen at the airport, which presents both a challenge and an opportunity.

“Passengers do want a relationship with the airport but that relationship needs to bring real benefit to them from the moment they begin planning their journey. Getting the proposition right at the lounge, and indeed the wider airport, as our classic passenger mix evolves will be key to success.”

In late 2022, **Hong Kong International Airport (HKIA) tapped into the demand for loyalty programmes with the launch of its HKairport Rewards scheme**.