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New concessions, new service at Hartsfield-Jackson

Hartsfield-Jackson Atlanta International Airport is welcoming three new additions.



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Hartsfield-Jackson Atlanta International Airport is welcoming three new additions.

A new videophone service and two new concessions are currently available at the world's busiest airport, said Katena Carvajales, spokeswoman for Hartsfield-Jackson. The airport now has public-access videophones (PAV) for the hearing impaired. It also has a U*tique Shop and MiMuzicBox kiosk, operated by concessionaire Business Traveler Services, she said.

"We are very excited to offer these options for our passengers and keep Hartsfield-Jackson on the cutting edge of technology and customer service," said Paul Brown, director of concessions at the airport. "We are especially pleased to improve our level of service to the deaf and hard of hearing."

Public-access videophones

The airport's six concourses, the north and south baggage claim areas and the rental car center will each have one public-access videophone, said Carvajales. The videophones will be a permanent feature at the airport and will be installed throughout the summer, she said.

"We want the deaf and hard of hearing to be able to [easily] maneuver around the world's busiest airport," said Carvajales.

According to the Communication Service for the Deaf web site, www.c-s-d.org, the public-access videophone is a multipurpose, Internet-based communications device that provides a standard payphone, videophone, keyboard and a camera. It was developed by Communication Service for the Deaf, Inc.

U*tique Shop

U*tique, an automated luxury retail outlet, is currently located on Concourse A, said the spokeswoman.

Mara Segal, founder and CEO of U*tique, Inc., said the outlet is a boutique that serves style-conscious customers on a personal level. The passengers that use U*tique are on-the-go and don't have time to enter actual retail outlets at an airport, she explained.

The kiosk offers 56 different products, she added.

"We feature the product like a luxury boutique would," Segal said.

The outlet showcases items such as Hanky Panky women's underwear, Jessica Simpson sunglasses, Vosges Haut-Chocolat, a Swarovski encrusted pen, a men's shaving kit and Lady Gaga headphones from Beats by Dr. Dre, said Segal.

The products are "assorted to appeal to both men and women," she said.

Passengers can choose the items on a touch screen, which also offers information about the product, such as its ingredients, what it's used for and the price. Once the product is chosen, customers can swipe their credit card to pay. A patent-pending robot developed for the retail outlet handles the product of choice and carefully places it in a container. Once it is placed inside the container, it is made accessible to the customer to retrieve, she said.

Segal said prices range from \$5 to \$200. "We really strive to find items that have real value to consumers," she said.

According to Segal, U*tique, which made its debut on June 17, is doing well at Hartsfield-Jackson.

"It is like window shopping," she said.

MiMuzicBox

Due to the increased use of technology among travelers, a MiMuzicBox kiosk is available on Concourse T, at Hartsfield-Jackson, said Bill Swift, president of Business Travel Services.

For the last five years, said Swift, Business Travel Services has tried to obtain a device that could download anything in five minutes. Almost any download can occur in under two minutes with the MiMuzicBox kiosk, he said.

For example, a song can be downloaded in seconds, and a music album in under a minute, he said.

The kiosk can download media such as music, movies and audio books to laptops, smartphones or any electronic device, he said.

The concessionaire found a need for this kiosk, by asking passengers what they most desired at the airport. Passengers expressed wanting an area where they could download entertainment onto their electronic devices, he said.

"It's price competitive," added Swift.

He said passengers can download a song for 99 cents. Movie prices range from \$4.99, to \$18.99, he added.

Swift explained that MiMuzicBox provides updated, downloadable entertainment almost daily. The kiosk has more than 10,000 items for customers to choose from.

The kiosk cannot import anything from other devices, so customers needn't worry about viruses.

"The only interaction is from our company [MiMuzicBox] to the device," Swift said.

He said the kiosk went online two weeks ago.

"We would like to put in a dozen at Atlanta's airport," said Swift.