

NEWCASTLE INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT

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PROFILE

Newcastle International Airport (NIAL) is the largest airport in the North East serving a catchment area of the North East, South Scotland, Cumbria, and North Yorkshire. The airport not only offers local people the opportunity to connect nationally and internationally but it also generates jobs, contributing over £1 billion into the regional economy every year. 2016 saw a six per cent increase in passenger numbers from those recorded in 2015. This represents more than 250,000 additional passengers totalling more than 4.8 million people travelling through the airport each year.

GOAL

- Enhance the passenger experience
- Satisfy the requirements of both business and leisure passengers
- Provide a strong and fast connection
- Reduce mobile data costs

“For an international airport such as ours, that sees over 5 million people pass through its gates each year, it is vital that we are able to provide our passengers and employees with a superfast and robust WiFi connection. Our business passengers consider WiFi a time-saving necessity that enables them to maintain productivity, compensating for having to travel on long flights or at the weekend.”

Steve Duchar, IT Manager at Newcastle International Airport

THE CHALLENGE

NIAL wanted to offer a WiFi service that enhanced the passenger experience. The airport hosts both business and leisure passengers so the WiFi provision needed to satisfy the requirements of both demographics.

THE RESULT

WiFi SPARK has revolutionised the WiFi service by offering a comprehensive managed service platform with airport-wide coverage, a private network, and specific SSIDs.

Each network uses the SPARK® platform's API to capture data and directly transfer it into NIAL's CRM system in real-time. These two SSIDs require a one-off registration to create an account before granting free internet access. The email validation also allows NIAL to feel confident that they are issuing marketing materials to legitimate emails, as well as gather usage and network data. NIAL is able to accurately analyse this data that ultimately leads to more insightful decision making. This is achieved through non-invasive methods that provide robust and valuable insights, which can make a real difference to NIAL's passenger experience strategy.

A state-of-the-art User Experience Portal (UEP) displays the latest offers available at the airport and returning users are greeted with a personalised 'welcome back' message. A content filtering system was also deployed, which meets Internet Watch Foundation (IWF) regulations, ensuring family friendly WiFi.

"A strong WiFi connection means that parents can keep children entertained in the departure lounge or keep in touch with relatives ahead of a flight without the associated high costs of 3G/4G.

"The solution that WiFi SPARK is providing is class-leading and we are looking forward to reaping the benefits that the super-fast gigabit WiFi and data analytics will bring, in order to provide our passenger and employees with the best airside experience possible."

Steve Duchar, IT Manager at Newcastle International Airport