

Baggage Check Weighing Machines



Service Overview



‘Prepare for Check In’



Introduction

The business model for air travel is continually evolving. In recent years a number of budget airlines have cut airfares significantly but increased the level of management of, and charges for, overweight baggage. Air passengers are becoming very sensitive to these charges and are keen to understand the weight of their bags prior to check in, to be sure that they are not exceeding their allowances and to enable them to adjust weights across bags to minimise extra charges. Airports are feeling the pressure as airlines seek to cut costs and from the downturn in passenger numbers resulting from the prevailing economic climate.

Tourists and other occasional passengers are most likely to arrive at the airport with little idea of how much their baggage weighs and how it relates to their allowances. With frequent queues to check in, these passengers can suffer significant anxiety and, if their bags are overweight, can tie up check in staff while arguing over the need for excess baggage charges or moving belongings out of their bags.

Baggage Check Limited has developed a weighing machine that provides information on baggage allowances and excess baggage charges. The allowance information is available free to any passenger, a charge of 50p is made for each bag weighed.

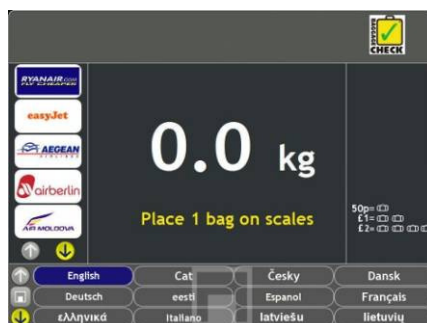
This business overview outlines the business for Baggage Check Weighing Machines in Birmingham Airport.

Weighing Machine Overview

The Baggage Check Weighing Machine is specifically designed for the airport environment. At 2m tall, with a footprint of less than 1m² and a touch screen control, it is styled to fit well into an airport and to attract passengers.

The front of the machine is used to display simple instructions as well as providing security information on hand baggage regulations. The touch screen display is customised for each airport terminal to display the airline selection buttons in priority order and passengers can choose from over 20 languages. The weight of the bag is displayed in the centre of the screen. This is displayed as "0.0kg" before the bag is weighed to communicate to passengers as they approach that this is a weighing machine. As soon as the passenger puts their bag on the scale and inserts 50p (€1 in Euro zone countries) the bag weight is displayed.

The coin receptor is programmed to accept 10p, 20p, 50p, £1 or £2 coins (50c, €1, €2 in Euro zone countries). No change is given but multiple bag weighs are permitted up to the value of coins inserted .



An overview of the machine and it's key components is attached in Appendix one.

Using the Machine

Passengers arriving at the machine are invited to put their bag on the scales and then choose their airline to find out their baggage allowances. Passengers can also use the machine as a straightforward set of weighing scales, putting their bag on the scales, they simply insert 50p (€1 in Eurozone) and the weight of the bag is immediately displayed on the screen. At any point the passenger can select their language.



If the passenger inserts £1 or £2 (€2 in Eurozone), multiple bag weighs are offered. After the first bag is weighed the weight is recorded in the right hand side of the screen and the passenger is invited to put the next bag on the scales. The machine detects the second bag and displays its weight, recording it on the right of the screen just below the first bag's weight. Further bags can be weighed in this way until the full value of the coins has been used up.



Development

Over a year of work has been invested into developing the machines. Initial concept trials were conducted in Germany with a basic machine and, based on the trial results, a production model was developed. Five production model machines were installed in London Stansted Airport on 17th March 2009, three were placed in the Security Repack Area with the remainder in the check in zones. The machines worked well, with passengers using the machines intuitively. Over the first two months approximately one bag was weighed for every 25 outgoing passengers. The number of machines was increased to nine within the first three months with the extra machines all located close to the check in counters.



Stansted machines on night of installation



The same machines on their first morning



Stansted Security Repack Area

Machines are now being deployed in other UK airports and the service is also operating successfully in three German airports (Frankfurt Hahn, Berlin Schönefeld and Lubeck).



Baggage Check Machines in Berlin Schönefeld Airport



Machine Supply and Support

The machines are supplied and supported by Baggage Check Limited at no cost to the airport. The machine locations are determined through discussion with the airport, to maximise revenue and to ensure they fit with the flow of passengers through the airport. The machines have proved highly reliable and are monitored remotely through a 3G mobile broadband connection, most maintenance can be performed remotely. The support team is committed to a 24 hour response for on-site maintenance. The airport would be responsible for providing a suitable electrical supply (the machines require a standard 240 volt supply, draw less than 6 amps on start up, and less than 1 amp during normal use).

The weigh scales are supplied and calibrated by Avery Weigh-Tronix, a leading international supplier to the aviation industry, to match the calibration of international standard check in counter scales. The machine carries the statement that it is for guidance purpose only to avoid any confusion with check in counter scales.

Conclusion

The weighing machines are ideally suited to the airport environment and provide a valued service to passengers. The machines reduce check in counter delays for passengers and airlines while generating extra revenues for the airport. Baggage Check is well positioned to provide and support the machines and is ready to work with airports in the UK and across Europe to arrange their provision as soon as possible.

Appendix One: Baggage Check Weighing Machine Specifications

