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Headline: Pre-flight experiences influence quality perceptions: Survey

# Pre-flight experiences influence quality perceptions: Survey

Airlines' ground staff and agents contribute significantly to perceived quality for both local and tourist passengers, and to a greater degree than the inflight crew, according to the 2015 Q2 Customer Satisfaction Index of Singapore (CSISG).

Conducted by the Institute of Service Excellence at the Singapore Management University (ISES), the study found that customers' perceptions of quality are strongly influenced by interactions with touchpoints prior to the core service of the airlines, which is transporting passengers to their destination.

The customer satisfaction score for airlines was 73.2 points, 0.1 per cent

AIR TRANSPORT SUB-SECTOR	2015	YEAR-ON-YEAR % CHANGE
Airlines	73.2	↓ 0.1%
Budget Airlines	68.3	0.0%
Airport	75.1	↓ 0.4%

SOURCE: ISES

lower than last year. Budget airlines scored 68.3 points, unchanged from the year before.

Budget carrier AirAsia, whose CSISG score was up 1.6 per cent to 68.0, attributes the growth in its customer satisfaction level partly to its focus on pre-flight experiences, CEO Logan Velaitham said.

For example, its Go-to-Gate feature enables passengers to go directly to their boarding gate as long as they have conducted web check-in, hold a valid printed boarding pass, only have carry-on baggage and do not have any other entry requirements.

## COMMUNICATION WOES

Mr S Yong, 37, an executive in the finance sector, felt that flight delays and changes in flight schedules can be communicated more effectively. "Decision making to alleviate the situation can be bureaucratic and slow and this increases frustration for travellers and frontline staff alike," he said.

Tiger Airways, whose CSISG score rose to 65.8 this year compared to last year's 65.2, acknowledged the growing importance of social media and said it seeks to provide updates of its services and responses to passengers in a timely manner through Facebook and Twitter.

"These efforts increase the number of feedback channels available and allow two-way communication," said Mr Teh Yik Chuan, Tigerair's sales and marketing director. **KAREN NG**

**The reports are a collaboration between TODAY and the Institute of Service Excellence at the Singapore Management University (ISES).**