

# PASSENGER PROCESSING REVOLUTION

OPEN ARCHITECTURE AIRPORT SOFTWARE PLATFORMS FUEL THE DEVELOPMENT OF MORE EFFICIENT AND COST-EFFECTIVE PASSENGER PROCESSING TECHNOLOGIES



The unique requirements of the airport environment have, for the past 20 years, dictated the use of expensive dedicated printing technology for passenger processing applications. However with the recent implementation of 2D barcodes, which replaced the magnetic stripe on boarding cards, the shift to a new generation of low-cost, open architecture peripherals could finally begin.

The rapid expansion of the airline industry in the past decade was made possible by modernisation of airports and the evolution of operations to become more flexible and cost efficient. One of the main drivers of change was a necessary reduction in ground handling costs, a large part of which is represented by passenger processing.

Check-in counters were traditionally the property of a single airline; they are now shared by multiple airlines to increase airports' efficiency and cut costs. This has been enabled by new airport software platforms, which enable sharing of airport equipment and peripherals.

Following the recent switch from costly magnetic stripes to 2D barcodes on boarding cards, and the growing use of self-service check-in kiosks, off-the-shelf boarding pass and luggage tag printers using the new airport software platforms are set to replace some of the expensive specialist equipment of the past.

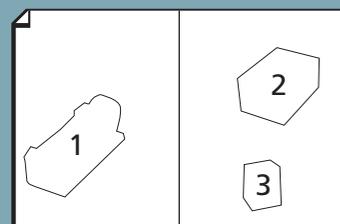
**OPEN ARCHITECTURE** Over the past few years, airlines, airports and hardware vendors have been working together to develop

Efficiency at the check-in desk is set to receive a major boost with the TM-L500A's fast printing speed

1. Epson's new TM-L500A baggage tag and boarding pass printer has a compact footprint

2. The printer is available in different configurations, for example, without LCD and a control panel

3. Epson's TM-L90 ultra-compact boarding pass printer delivers speed, reliability and cost savings



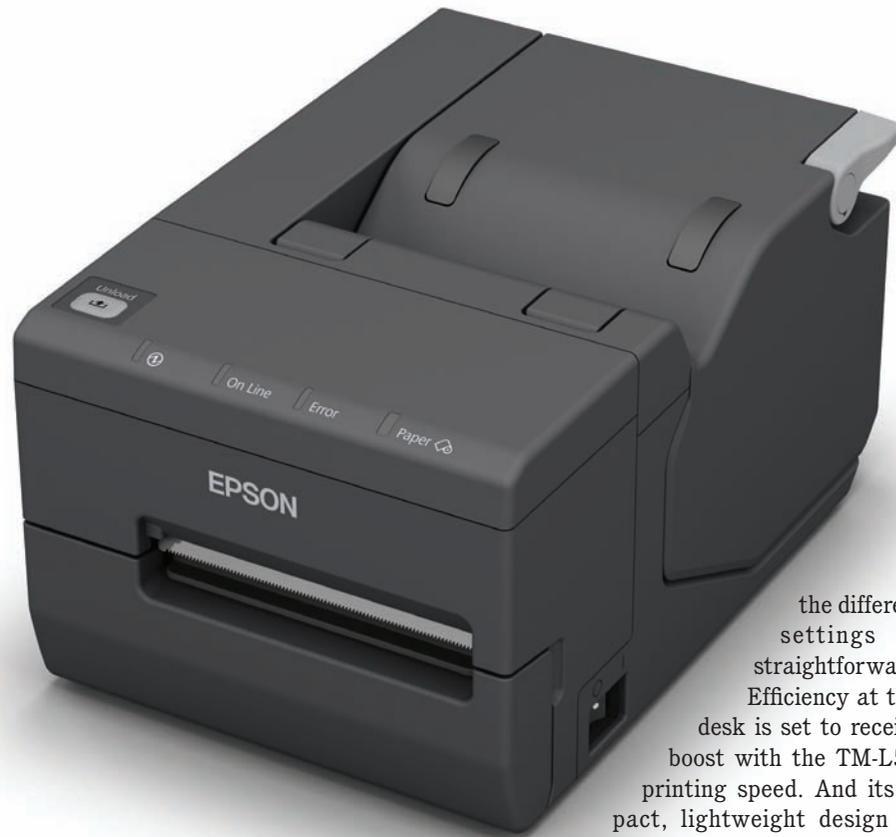
a new airport standard to incorporate modern printing technology and reduce passenger processing costs. Out of this collaboration the Common Use Passenger Processing System (CUPPS) was born – an open architecture airport software platform to be used in both dedicated and common-use environments.

In the process of defining this new standard, similar situations and examples were studied, including UnifiedPOS, the point-of-sale technology standard that enables retailers to easily change from one manufacturer’s device to another. As a member of the board of the Association for Retail Technology Standards, which founded the UnifiedPOS standard, printer manufacturer Epson is drawing on its expertise in defining industry standards to help set new passenger processing standards.

**CHECK-IN EFFICIENCY** Decades of experience in printing, combined with its position as Europe’s number-one supplier of POS printers [source: Interconnection Consulting, 2010] and its well-established relationships with the airline industry, make Epson ideally placed to fulfil the new passenger processing requirements. The company is soon to launch the Epson TM-L500A, a new boarding-pass and baggage-tag printer at the forefront of CUPPS-compatible peripherals, to suit just this need.

Protecting the future of airlines’ investments and ensuring fuss-free integration, the TM-L500A fully supports not only CUPPS, but also all airline communication protocols and IATA standards for printing boarding passes and baggage tags. The printer builds on the demand for simpler passenger processing technology, incorporating a Windows driver for easy printing from any Windows application.

In addition the TM-L500A supports the new trend of equipment sharing by multiple airlines, allowing the creation and storage of profiles to make switching between



the different airlines’ settings fast and straightforward.

Efficiency at the check-in desk is set to receive a major boost with the TM-L500A’s fast printing speed. And its ultra-compact, lightweight design also gives more placement flexibility, allowing the airports to reclaim valuable check-in counterspace.

To meet the individual needs of each airport, the TM-L500A can be customised with an optional LCD screen and control board, RFID reader/writer and external paper roll holder. Reflecting the growing popularity of check-in kiosks, the TM-L500A has a modular construction and removable casing, making it easy to adapt for kiosk use.

The new open architecture allows the TM-L500A to be easily installed in any airport with CUPPS; as an off-the-shelf solution, the printer is helping to make expensive dedicated airport equipment a thing of the past.

Open architecture has given manufacturers the freedom to be more creative in developing cost-effective, efficient check-in technology, and Epson is leading the way. The Epson TM-L500A will not only fulfil the demands of today, but will also open up a new world of opportunities.

