What are the main factors that contribute to effective wayfinding in airports?

Wayfinding describes the kind of indoor navigation that occurs in large public buildings. It includes tools such as maps or building directories and signage. But successful and effective wayfinding is not just about signage or maps. It is the result of interaction between human factors such as a person’s cognitive mapping and spatial cognition skills, language, culture, gender and biological factors, and environmental factors such as the complexity of the navigation pathway, visual elements of communication and, in the case of airports, terminal design.

The Airports of the Future Project (AoTF) is developing a Bayesian Network (BN) for wayfinding to determine the main factors that contribute to effective wayfinding in airports.

Who are the main beneficiaries?
All Airports

How does the model benefit you?
By looking at all the factors that impact on effective wayfinding in airports, and understanding and applying the principles and elements of wayfinding, our research will help to negate some of the negative aspects of wayfinding as experienced by passengers.

This will reduce passenger frustration and anxiety around finding their way through the airport and getting to their flights on time, and also allow passengers more time to focus on other aspects of the airport such as retail and other services.

Passenger satisfaction and experience are improved. Passenger flow efficiency is increased with a direct effect on the business bottom line.

Another important benefit is that the model can be used to compare the current wayfinding environment in an airport and use that to compare to a planned change in the airport to find the most effective method.

What next?
The AoTF is designing a wayfinding dashboard which uses the wayfinding BN and presents the results of the model in a non-technical manner, making it easy and accessible to use.

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