



A Modular Solution

USM Airportsystems at Miami International Airport

Case Study 2022



ARCONAS

Introduction

Miami International Airport (MIA), located near downtown Miami, is America's busiest airport for international passengers and international freight, offering more flights to Latin America and the Caribbean than any other U.S. airport, with service from more than 90 air carriers.

MIA is the leading economic engine for Miami-Dade County and the state of Florida, generating a business revenue of \$31.9 billion annually and approximately 60 percent of all international visitors to Florida. MIA's vision is to grow from a recognized hemispheric hub to a global airport of choice that offers customers a world-class experience and an expanded route network with direct passenger and cargo access to all world regions.



The Ask

In 2019, MIA was looking to update their gate counters. Their existing counters were a collection of mismatched wooden desks that had been pieced together over the years. They also had more counters in place than were necessary.

“We traditionally had three and four positions at each gate, which we really didn’t need anymore,” said Dan D’Agostino (retired), former Assistant Director of Operations at Miami International Airport. “We only need two positions to check people in.”

Since they were so large and bulky, there wasn’t much they could do in terms of reconfiguring the space.

In addition to being outdated in both form and function, issues caused by the natural environment and geographical location, such as heat, humidity, and moisture, posed constant problems.

They came to Arconas looking for a solution.

“We had worked with Arconas in the past and thought they would be a valuable resource to help us modernize the concourse,” said Dan. “Our team worked with the Arconas team to select the right options that work for us for Concourse F.”

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The Solution

Arconas presented the option of USM Airport systems modular counters. USM counters made perfect sense as they addressed all the issues MIA identified.

“USM was a smart choice because it was a solution to many of our issues,” Dan said. “Because it’s metal, we didn’t have to worry about the moisture or any other issues that come with wood in a humid environment.”



USM’s construction of a chrome-plated brass ball joint, chromed steel tubes and powder coated metal panels would eliminate the issues the airport had with its old wooden desks due to the heat, humidity and other environmental factors. Getting rid of the bulky wood structures would also free up space to allow for better passenger flow. The new counters’ sleek and streamlined design would provide a more modern aesthetic and instantly update the look of the terminal concourse.

The modularity and sustainability USM provides were also game-changing factors that made them a standout. “After a meeting with the manufacturer and a short explanation on the concept and modularity of USM and their core beliefs, it became clear that USM was able to provide exactly what we were looking for,” Dan said.

While it was clear that USM was the right solution in theory, there was more work to be done to make sure it would be the right decision in practice.

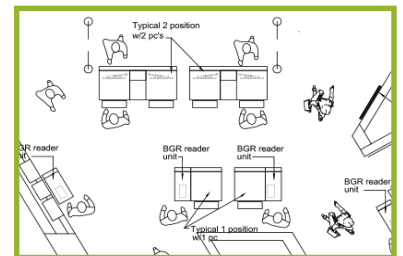
Coming up with the right customizations was a collaborative effort between MIA, Arconas and USM to ensure the counters could satisfy all their needs.

The Process

“We worked really closely with Dan and the MIA design team for several months, reviewing their unique requirements,” said Krista Tapley, Director of Sales at Arconas. “We decided to try out some sample units for two test gates, so that they could test them out and provide feedback. From there, we were able to make some adjustments for the final units.”

After the trials proved to be successful, 37 units were ordered to replace the old counters in Concourse F: single and double gate counters, as well as small podiums for the scanner at all gate locations.

The rollout process occurred in phases. Since a big portion of the project took place during the COVID-19 pandemic, delays were expected. Both Arconas and USM were agile and flexible while working with the airport’s changing timelines due to these delays. When all was said and done, the installation of the new counters took close to a year and was completed in September 2022.



Multiple rounds of layouts were explored to determine the best configuration for the airport’s needs

The Result



The response to the new counters has been overwhelmingly positive.

“The airlines love them,” Dan said. “And our IT provider likes how quickly they can adapt if there’s a change in their specs or equipment.”

“It was a great collaboration between the airport and Arconas and the end result is a great installation that works well for them,” Krista said.

Passengers have also given great feedback because the counters are less intimidating, which is better suited for the customer experience. They’ve opened up the space and have modernized the overall look and feel of the concourse.

“I can safely say the decision to use USM has been the right one.”

USM modular systems provide flexibility and versatility for an easy and functional user experience





Small podium for the scanner

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“The real remarkable thing is the functionality and flexibility it offers,” Dan said. “When we upgrade our systems over the next two years, and we’ll be in a good position to accommodate that.”

With all the positive response to the Terminal F upgrade, it’s safe to say that USM modular counters were the right option for MIA.

“The great thing about USM Airportsystems is that it really is a timeless option,” Krista said. “They can be easily modified and reconfigured as needs change – that level of versatility is invaluable to a client.”

Arconas is proud to have worked closely with MIA and USM to make this project come to life.