



Tempelhof airport

"Turning history into future"



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Tempelhof airport “Turning history into future”

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Introduction

Olaf van Tol

'Tempelhof is the mother of all airports'
Lord Norman Foster, Architect.

Tempelhof airport (THF) is one of the few inner-city airports that is left in the world. THF was built in 1923 and was not more than a wooden terminal building. In the late 30' architect Ernst Sagebiel receives orders from Albert Speer to design a colossal airport that fitted in the Berlin masterplan.

After the Second World War, THF fell into Americans hands, which completed the building of the airport. During the Cold War, the Soviets closed the city and stopped all food transports. The allied forces started the airlift campaign in 1948 until 1949 to save the people of Berlin from starvation. During the airlift campaign every 90 seconds an allied aircraft landed, to supply the Berlin people with food.

After the Cold War, the airport was the mainport of Berlin with great numbers of travelers and a variety of destinations. In the last decade, there is a decrease of passenger numbers and destinations.

The Berlin city council and the Berlin Brandenburg Flughafen Holding (BBF) want to close the airport, in order to relocate and centralize the air traffic to the new airport, the Berlin Brandenburg International (BBI), outside the city boundaries. The closure was planned for October 2004, but until the BBI becomes operational in 2011, it is likely that THF will stay open.

An international and interdisciplinary team from the Amsterdam school of technology and the University of Applied Sciences Bremen has been asked to investigate if there is a possibility that THF can again become a profitable part of the Berlin airport system. The investigation will consist of three main parts. First, the past will be documented, then the present situation will be described, and finally some future ideas will be investigated. The objective is to present economical achievable plans to make THF a profitable airport.

The outcome of this investigation will be presented at three German Aviation Research Society (GARS) seminars in Bremen and Amsterdam.



Problem definition

Falko Weiser

The agreement decision from 1996 to close the business of the Airport Tempelhof, which has been made by the German Federation and Brandenburg, should get effective at 31 October 2004. The reason for this decision can be seen in the high losses, which accrued from the operation of THF (between 13 – 15 MEUR p.a.) on the one hand and in political considerations on the other hand. The party in charge, the SPD, and Klaus Wowereit (SPD) as burgomaster of Berlin, head of government, chair of the supervisory board BBF and supreme airport coordinator of Berlin, considered that the closure of THF would lead to the generation of demand needed to warrant the upgrading of the new Berlin Brandenburg International Airport in Berlin Schönefeld. For these reasons, the SPD wanted to close THF at all costs. Not all market participants have approved of this decision and have even attempted to change it. For instance the companies Deutsche BA and Germania even considered transferring their business location to THF. However, the party knew to prevent this change.

Nevertheless, the closure of THF is an important step, especially for the business travelers, for the THF connected airlines, for around 350 (direct) employees and for the sustainable development of Berlin as a connected European metropolis at all.

Concrete defiances accrued because Tegel and Schönefeld Airports operate on their capacity boarder in daily peak times and cannot cope with the surplus of demand in these times the same way THF would be able to do. Therefore, the existing airlines have to fly with larger airplanes at the expense of the number of flights and the customers have to deal with less flexible offers. Therefore, smaller airlines, located in THF, get problems receiving slots at Tegel and in Schönefeld Airports, especially in these peak times and so will lose passengers there. This fact can potentially lead to negative consequences for the site Berlin. In Addition, the government still has to pay the building occupancy expenses as well as the holding costs independent from having the airport operating.

For these reason, the question arises if it is possible, useful and enforceable by the government to revitalize the THF business so that it could bear the variable costs or even the fix costs until the opening of the BBI in 2011 or further on? In order to answer this question, it is necessary to analyze the possibilities for THF to earn revenues by managing the aviation and the non-aviation businesses at



best. Furthermore, it is required to find co-operation with institutions that render the found solution practicable.



Assignment formulation

Karsten Fröhlich

In order to make THF a profitable airport, proper aviation and non-aviation concepts have to be developed. In the context of this project the past, present and a concept for the future of THF will be documented.

Concerning the past of THF it will be formulated what the reasons for building the airport were and who the architect was. Describing its situation before and during World War 2 and in the Cold War will be part of this project in order to answer the question why THF was so modern for its time. Furthermore, the developments up to the 1990s could be considered. As for the present of THF focus should be laid on capacity (like passengers and slots), the recent development of passengers, movement figures and of course why there are plans aiming at closing THF. The question will be raised how well co-operation between the three airports, Schönefeld, Tegel and Tempelhof has been so far.

For the future of THF there are two possible scenarios. A co-operation approach and a non-co-operation approach. For the first, on co-operation based, approach it is required to estimate the future demand for the Berlin region and to allocate that demand according to capacity for Schönefeld, Tegel and Tempelhof. Based on the future capacity utilization at Tempelhof it is possible to develop an aviation and a suited non-aviation concept. For the second, on competition based, approach it is required to find customers. That could be for example one or more Low-cost-carrier (LCC) and/or business-jet enterprises like NetJets Inc. or others. For that purpose, special infrastructure has to be built or adjusted. The business/VIP segment possibly needs conference rooms, first class hotels and restaurant and so on. The LCC segment needs fast and cheap ground handling, shopping sites etc. Both segments could be realized parallel at THF, since there is enough space at hand.

Whatever scenario will be selected, it is essential to forecast demands in the Berlin region and for Tempelhof. Data has to be gathered according to short- and long-haul, LCC, aircraft size, and freight. In addition, the present capacity at all airports, in slots, passengers and aircraft size, has to be collected. It could be useful to check whether there are other airports in the Berlin region that could possibly compete with THF or the two other Berlin Airports. Furthermore, it is indispensable to analyze whether there is a potential demand for VIP and business related infrastructures in THF and the Berlin region. In addition, the shareholder structure of Berlin's airports will be examined.



Final results

Karsten Fröhlich

This chapter deals with the question what the final results will look like. This is one of the most essential questions, since it will determine the whole planning process and the realization of the project.

At the end of this project we will present a profitable concept and check whether this concept can be executed in the political and socio-economic background in Berlin. This is an important point in our work, because we do not want just to present a workable concept that will eventually not come to execution due to political restraints. During the course of the project we will have analyzed the remarkable history of THF and the difficult situation it faces in today's aviation industry and political environment. Regarding the future, it will be stressed out what can be done until BBI is finished and afterwards, means we will show that THF is a useful addition to BBI. Our visions of aviation industry and THF will be part of the last chapter.

In the end we will have turned history into future.



Terms and conditions

Bart Steverink

Like in every project there are terms and condition or guidelines, which have to be followed by the team members. These consist of final delivery times, required topics, maximum length of the paper and the layout style it has to be written in. The guidelines can be obtained via the publisher and the constituent. It is important to understand these guidelines in an early stage of the project. It will result in a solid plan of approach, which ultimately leads to a solid final paper.

With the possibility in mind of publishing the paper the team members have agreed to follow the Ashgate guidelines for Camera-Ready Copy (CRC). These guidelines will speed up the publishing process and will provide a uniform looking paper.

Since the process as well as the outcome of the project will be presented at GARS seminars in Bremen and Amsterdam, there are several deadlines coming up. The first presentation will be in Bremen on 9 June 2005. A solid plan of approach has to be finished by then in order to give the public a clear idea of the project and what they can expect from it. The second presentation will be nearly halfway the project in November. The final presentation of the outcome of the project will be around June 2006 in Amsterdam. At this presentation there has to be a clear concept for the future of THF.



Group agreements

Olaf van Tol

Because our team consists of students from different countries, some detailed group agreements have to be made. These agreements are a guide for the team members to create a uniform report. The communication between the team members happens on a regular basis via email.

To discuss the progress of the report a monthly meeting must be arranged. These meetings should be used for brainstorm sessions. These meetings will take place at the Amsterdam school of technology and the University of Applied Sciences Bremen these visits will be regulated to reduce the travel costs.

The other agreements are:

- Every piece that has been made must be sent by email to all the team members, so they can give feedback
- Every finished piece should be made according to the Ashgate guidelines for Camera-Ready Copy (CRC).
- Every finished piece must be published after the corrections, on the website www.project-tempelhof.tk and at BSCW.
- All the pieces must be made before the deadline ends.



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