

Air Canada Becomes First Canadian Airline to Offer Optional Biometric Boarding for Flights Departing the US to Canada

- ***Streamlines gate experience by automating identification verification process***
- ***Follows successful pilot undertaken at San Francisco International Airport***
- ***Future expansion to other US airports planned***

MONTREAL, Dec. 09, 2020 /CNW Telbec/ - Air Canada said today it is the first Canadian airline to offer its customers the safety and convenience of a new boarding option utilizing facial biometrics. The technology is now available for customers departing San Francisco International Airport (SFO) with plans to progressively roll it out for customers at other US airports where the airline operates.

"Air Canada has introduced numerous touchless processes throughout the customer journey, and we are pleased to now offer an optional, innovative biometric boarding choice for customers departing SFO that is seamless, time-saving and convenient while reducing contact and processing time," said Andrew Yiu, Vice President, Product at Air Canada. "Customers have told us they value streamlined processes and we continue to evaluate and assess additional touchless initiatives to further advance safe and secure travel while enhancing the overall travel experience."

Biometric boarding enables customers to present themselves at the boarding gate, have their photo taken which is then validated and confirmed to their passport document details and photo which are already captured via the U.S. Customs and Border Protection's (CBP) Traveler Verification Service. In a matter of seconds, CBP's biometric facial comparison service will automatically compare the new photo of the traveller to images that the traveller has already provided to the government, such as passport and visa photos. Overall, the use of facial biometrics provides travellers with a secure, touchless process that streamlines air travel.

"CBP is excited to partner with Air Canada to provide travelers with a secure, touchless process for identity verification as they depart the United States at SFO," said Diane J. Sabatino, Deputy Executive Assistant Commissioner, Office of Field Operations, U.S. Customs and Border Protection. "Along with CBP's enhanced Simplified Arrival process upon entry at SFO, we are transforming the air travel journey by expanding the use of facial biometrics through public-private partnerships to further secure and enhance the customer experience."

Customers who do not wish to utilize biometric boarding may simply advise the gate agent, and they will board as they always have by presenting their boarding pass and passport for manual ID check and boarding processing.

Since the beginning of the year, Air Canada has introduced numerous touchless processes throughout the customer journey, including: TouchFree Bag Check for flights departing Canadian airports, the ability to order food directly in Maple Leaf Lounges from smartphones and tablets, touchless self-entry to the Air Canada Café for when it reopens, and provisioning of all newspapers and magazines in digital format via PressReader, among other initiatives.

Air Canada plans to expand biometric boarding options to other US airports in the near future and is currently exploring options which could be viable at Canadian airports.

About Air Canada

Air Canada is Canada's largest domestic and international airline. Canada's flag carrier is among the 20 largest airlines in the world and in 2019 served over 51 million customers. Air Canada is a founding member of Star Alliance, the world's most comprehensive air transportation network. Air Canada is the only international network carrier in North America to receive a Four-Star ranking according to independent U.K. research firm Skytrax, which also named Air Canada the 2019 Best Airline in North America. For more information, please visit: aircanada.com/media, follow Air Canada on [Twitter](#) and [LinkedIn](#), and join Air Canada on [Facebook](#).

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For further information: media@aircanada.ca

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