Summer is in full swing, but most Brits are taking a ‘staycation’ this year due to travel restrictions and quarantine periods enforced on air and cross-border travel in response to the coronavirus pandemic. But that doesn’t mean that people aren’t dreaming of cocktails on the beach.

According to vacation booking site Travel Supermarket, Britons are filling their vacation diaries for next year, with April and May 2021 becoming the most-booked vacation months. The number one destination on the site is Cyprus, where the government has said it will cover the vacation costs of any tourists who contract the coronavirus while holidaying in the country. It’s not only passengers and holidaymakers who are desperate to fly again.
Prevent non-essential travel

The aviation industry is of huge strategic and economic importance to the UK. As national governments closed international borders to prevent non-essential travel, the sudden shutdown of passenger air travel has had a severe economic impact on airlines, airports and air freight. The International Airport Transport Association (IATA) predicts the UK aviation industry faces a loss of revenue of up to £20.1 billion in 2020.

According to The Independent, up to 124,000 jobs in the UK’s aviation industry and its supply chains are at risk of disappearing in just three months because of the coronavirus. In April, British Airways said that it planned to cut 12,000 of its 42,000-strong workforces. Ryanair is making 3,000 workers redundant, and easyJet is cutting around 30 percent of its staff.

Thermal screening technology

So, what can be done to revive the industry safely?

Real-time alerts are sent to relevant parties to enable interception and help prevent the spread of the virus

Airports are looking to quickly bring in measures to revive the industry and give people the confidence to fly again. One of these possible measures is the use of thermal fever detection technology. In April 2020, Bournemouth Airport became the first UK airport to trial thermal fever detection cameras in response to the coronavirus pandemic. Already being tested in hospitals and restaurants, these systems record body temperature and identify any individual displaying signs of fever.

Real-time alerts are sent to relevant parties to enable interception and help prevent the spread of the virus. Heathrow Airport is also trying out thermal screening technology to monitor people
moving through the airport for signs of coronavirus, and Gatwick Airport has confirmed that it is working on possible screening measures, which may include mass temperature checks.

**Minimizing transmission**

Chief Executive Officer at Heathrow Airport, John Holland-Kaye, told the Commons’ transport committee: "Aviation is the cornerstone of the UK economy, and to restart the economy the government needs to help restart aviation. The UK has the world’s third-largest aviation sector, offering the platform for the government to take a lead in agreeing a common international standard for aviation health with our main trading partners."

"This standard is key to minimizing transmission of COVID-19 across borders, and the technology we are trialling at Heathrow could be part of the solution."

**Detect radiating heat**

Why temperature scanning?

The presence of fever is one of the common symptoms of the coronavirus virus. Thermal cameras use infrared technology to detect radiating heat from the body to estimate an individual’s core body temperature.

How do fever cameras work?

For the solution to be effective, all types of cameras should use facial recognition and report into a database.
Fever detection cameras come in two main forms: smaller, tripod- or wall-mounted cameras that allow people to self-scan upon entry/exit; and larger units around the building that scan crowds. For the solution to be effective, all types of cameras should use facial recognition and report into a database with a user interface, such as the FeverLink dashboard by Smarter Technologies.

The software can then send real-time alerts to the relevant staff when fever is detected, allowing border staff to intercept and isolate affected travellers before they board a plane.

**Thermal fever detection systems**

How effective is thermal camera technology?

It would be overly optimistic to say that temperature testing is a foolproof way of detecting the virus, especially since the coronavirus can have an incubation period of up to 14 days. In addition, a high temperature can be associated with a range of other illnesses and conditions. Thus, temperature testing should be used alongside other screening measures such as antibody tests and a requirement that all passengers carry “health passports” proving that they are medically fit.

As part of a greater solution, thermal fever detection systems will play a vital role in protecting people and enabling safe social distancing. By deploying fever cameras as part of a range of measures, airports can begin to reopen for business safely, protecting passengers and employees so that people feel confident to take to the skies once more.
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