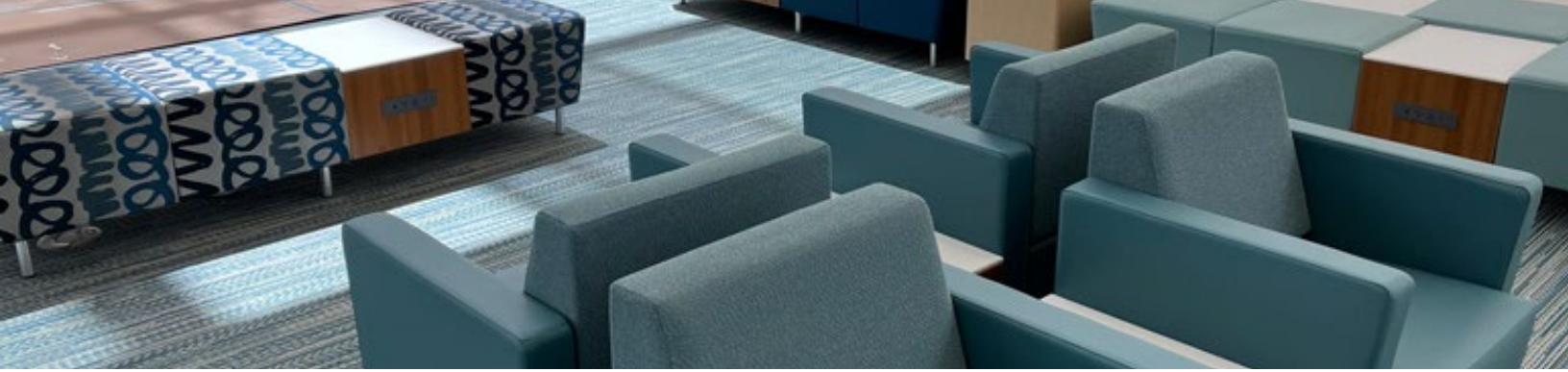


AGATI



GUIDE TO FABRIC, SPACES, AND COSTS

Making or Breaking Customer Experience



YOUR GUIDE TO FABRIC SELECTION FOR HIGH-TRAFFIC SPACES

There are many things to consider when choosing the right furniture for high-traffic spaces like [airports](#). These are spaces where durability gets put to the test.

Agati is devoted to making some of the most innovative and durable furniture for public spaces. This means that everything from the cushion to the back to the feet needs to hold up to the sometimes thousands of users that may pass through your space over the span of a day.

We spend the extra time to craft our pieces to withstand high-traffic wear and tear so you can know that your investment in furnishing your space will last for years to come. We have meticulously tested hundreds of foam and material combinations to strike the perfect balance between comfort and durability.

But let's talk about the most vulnerable part of any furniture—the fabric. This is the most susceptible to wear and tear as it is the most used and the softest material that makes up your seating.

Finding the balance between style and durability can be challenging when it comes to selecting a fabric to match the aesthetic of your space but still hold up to heavy use. Picking the right fabric with durability in mind will keep those instances to a minimum.

When it comes to selecting a fabric for your high-traffic space, here are some things to look out for:

CHECK THE DOUBLE RUB RATING

A double rub is simply a term used for the results of a durability test for fabric. Simply stated, the amount of times something rubs the fabric before it shows wear. Think of it as the number of times someone could sit down and get up from a piece of furniture before any wear.

According to the Association of Contract Textiles 30,000 DR is generally suitable for woven fabrics, 50,000 for coated fabrics and considered suitable for commercial spaces. Fabric that will perform the best in high-wear environments should have close to or exactly a 100,000 DR.

But beware: Many fabrics will boast over a 100,000 DR, but beyond that number, true performance is not actually

predicted. This isn't the only factor that will help you determine if a fabric will withstand years of use.

Summary: A fabric with a double rub rating of 100,000 may be a good candidate for your high-traffic space.

WOVEN VS. COATED FABRIC

There are many pros and cons to these fabric types, which is why it's important to know the benefits and the risks before choosing between them. One of the key differences is the ability to keep these fabrics clean. Woven is more prone to collecting dust and crumbs that require a vacuum or stain removers to get out, though you can add stain blockers like Crypton or Nanotex to a woven to help resist the staining elements the fabric might encounter.

Coated fabrics are much easier to wipe clean. Use caution when using hard cleaners on coated fabrics, however, as they can cause the fabric to delaminate, break down, or feel sticky.

Another key difference is their ability to resist punctures and tears. Coated fabrics are prone to puncturing and they are impossible to repair without replacing the entire piece of fabric. Woven fabrics are more resistant to puncturing and even tears can often be repaired when they occur.

Different types of coated fabrics have certain drawbacks and benefits as well:

POLYURETHANES

Pro: These are environmentally-friendly and a good alternative to vinyl.

Con: They can delaminate when too hard of a cleaning solution is used.

SILICON

Pro: Resistant to marker and pen ink. More environmentally friendly than vinyl.

Con: Can break down and get sticky when harsh cleaning solutions are used.

VINYL

Pro: Holds up to cleaning solutions better than other coated fabrics.

Con: Not an environmentally-friendly fabric.

When it comes to choosing between woven or coated fabrics, there is no magic fabric that does it all. It is important to consider which features most benefit your space. When considering what material should be used in a government building, museum, or library where food may be prohibited, staining will take a lower priority than punctures and tears. But for airports and universities, stain resistance will need to be given equal consideration when choosing between fabrics.

Summary: Woven fabrics hold up well when used for screens, panels, and accents. Woven fabrics resist punctures, but not stains. A stain blocker may need to be added.

Summary: Coated fabrics are great for seats and chair backs and are highly resistant to stains from food or drinks. Downsides include delamination when harsh cleaners are used, not always an environmentally-friendly material, and prone to punctures.



CONSIDER CLEANING

Different fabrics require different cleaning methods. Some fabrics will degrade faster if the wrong chemicals are used to clean them. Always take into account the cleaning instructions before you decide on a fabric, as incorrect cleaning products or methods is one of the quickest ways to make a piece of furniture less durable.

When it comes to cleaning ,you should also consider your cleaning staff. Do you have enough staff and machines to handle a fabric that requires vacuuming and stain removal? If you use a cleaning service, have you communicated the cleaning instructions clearly? You will want to coordinate closely with your staff to ensure the appropriate cleaning method is used.

5 WAYS TO USE FURNITURE TO IMPROVE CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE IN AIRPORTS

How do you view the purpose of your airport furniture?

From the eyes of pure utility, your priority may be to make sure there are simply enough seats to handle the thousands of travelers that come through the space each and every day.

We've all experienced waiting for a flight where there were not enough seats, and we see people have to lean on walls, sit on floors, and even block walkways. That experience can sometimes be enough to ruin an entire trip.

In many ways, this is why beam seating has dominated aviation spaces for so long. What it lacks in comfort, it makes up for in capacity.

However, while meeting your seating quota is certainly a factor in your furniture decision-making, it shouldn't be the only factor when considering what furniture would support travelers best in your airport.

If you've ever had a long layover, you know how hard it can be to find a place for a quick rest. Beam seating, while great for providing places to sit for large groups of travelers, lacks intentional comfort and the feeling of security to rest, work, charge your devices, or relax before your flight.

In recent years especially, the focus for airports has rightfully shifted towards customer experience.

Navigating the COVID-19 pandemic was a prime example of how we had to incorporate intentional design to adapt and provide feelings of comfort and safety through [airport seating options](#). We had to consider how we could meet socially-distanced guidelines and ultimately help our travelers feel comfortable traveling again.

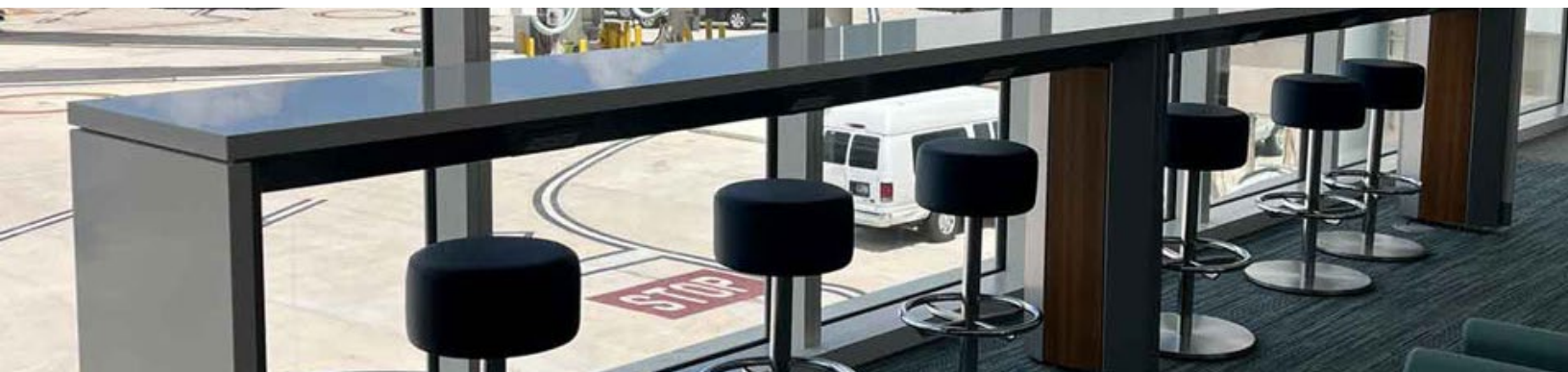
Even though COVID-19 restrictions have lessened, we got a glimpse into how customer experience in airports could have a positive effect on their overall trip. By providing better seating options and taking into account travelers' needs, we can greatly improve their experience through our furniture options.



01. RECOMPOSURE SPACES

One of the prime opportunities to improve travelers' experience is the space available immediately after TSA. Travelers are rushing to grab their shoes, their belongings, and get everything back together. In a situation where they are already feeling rushed and overwhelmed, it's important to provide a space where they can recompose themselves. (We cover this concept in more depth in our [podcast episode with John Groves](#).)

Agati's [bench seating](#) is a great option to provide travelers a place to put their laptops back in their bags, their shoes back on, and feel calm and ready to continue on through the space.



02. POWER ACCESS

Everyone has devices today, not just business travelers. Parents are bringing devices to keep their children occupied while adults stream music or pre-download the latest episode of their favorite show. Power access has become a

necessity both on the flight and in the airport.

As we shared in [this recent article](#), this isn't just about convenience anymore. With the digital world we live in, this is now a core piece of providing a feeling of safety and calm to everyone who travels through the airport.

The Power Bar not only provides access to charging for all traveler's devices, it also helps provide a sense of safety. It is now available in Table Height and the Skinny Bar versions as well. [Learn how the Power Bar supports users here.](#)



03. INDIVIDUAL SPACE

In a post-pandemic world, individual space is still longed for by travelers. As a whole, [innate human behavior](#) leads us to desire a sense of refuge and safety, which often involves a covering for an individual's back. These seating options allow travelers to lower their anxiety, settling in for a while, relaxing before their next flight, or even getting some focused work done.



04. CLEAR PROSPECT

In addition to the feeling of security, as humans we also value the ability to find seating where we can “perch” and survey our environment as needed. We want to be aware of what's going on around us at some level, no matter if we're reading a book, having a meeting, or getting some work done.

Part of our comfort in busy public spaces comes from knowing we are able to survey the space we're in. This is a

large part of the popularity behind our [Power Bar](#).

If you observe your beam seating, you'll find that there will be empty seats between individuals or groups. This is the "lost seat factor" commonly seen in public environments, a challenge that prospect-oriented seating actually helps circumvent.



05. SEPARATE HIGH-TRAFFIC AND LOW-TRAFFIC SPACES

We've all seen it before. As flights begin to board, people start overflowing into the lanes of foot traffic. It can create quite a traffic jam!

However, when you use furniture strategically, you can improve customer experience by separating high-traffic and low-traffic spaces. This could be in a scenario similar to what's mentioned above. Another example could be to separate your cafeteria from travelers rushing to their flight. You might even use furniture strategically to create lounge environments that give travelers a sense of relaxation and focus.

You can create a variety of functional environments for travelers by utilizing a privacy wall or high backing to create separation. Our favorite pieces to help do this are the [Skinny Power Bar](#) with a modesty panel or the [Gee Aviation Collection](#) with walls. For even more fluid spaces, check out the [Gee Curve](#)!

TOTAL COST OF OWNERSHIP

We recently were talking with a top airport in the U.S. that we've had the opportunity to partner with on multiple projects over the years. They shared a document with us that was a perfect example of the importance of considering [Total Cost of Ownership \(TCO\)](#) when it comes to furnishing a public space.

While we can't disclose the airport or exact products being compared, we received permission to share the numbers themselves.

Take a look at the chart below, which shows a comparison between [soft seating](#) products available in a newer section of the airport. Most importantly, take a look at the "Vinyl Failure Percentage by Year" section, and how the two rows marked with the Agati logo compare to the rest.



AIRPORT SOFT SEATING INVESTMENT COMPARISON

Units Purchased	Total Purchase Cost	Unit Reupholstery Cost	Vinyl Failure Percentage by Year				Notes
			2	3	3.5	5	
46	\$89,000	\$1,100-\$1,300	N/A	48%	85%	98%	
213	Unknown	\$1,100-\$1,300	31%	62%	62%	62%	
211	\$472,000	\$1,865-\$2,750	55%	70%	100%	100%	
19 (2 remain)	\$118,000	\$685 cover \$375 labor	5%	42%	89%	N/A	
18 (8 remain)	\$79,000	\$1,380 cover \$250 labor	16%	56%	66%	N/A	
38	\$196,000	Unknown	0%+	0%+	0%+	0%+	+Significant Base & Mounting Failures replaced under warranty
AGATI → 210	\$403k* some include attached tables	Varies	0%	0%	0%	N/A	150 Lounge
AGATI → 20	\$112k* includes attached tables, footrest and shelves	TBD	5%**	N/A	N/A	N/A	***Intentional Damage w/in 2 wks of install
28	\$55,383	Unknown	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	
18	\$16k SSAT	Unknown	13%	N/A	N/A	N/A	

DURABILITY CONSIDERATIONS FOR PUBLIC SPACES

Furnishing a public space like an airport is unique. With a space that needs to support hundreds or thousands of people every day, everyday furniture simply won't cut it. The furniture featured needs to be able to support the large amount of traffic without issue.

Beyond the large amount of people who will utilize the furniture, some people are less concerned with how they treat furniture in public spaces in comparison to how they may treat their own furniture. In the same report that the chart above comes from, the airport highlights durability challenges like graffiti, intentional damage, intentional furniture relocation by travelers, luggage snags, etc.

While some of those realities are inevitable, furniture for public spaces must be sufficiently designed to survive the significant wear and tear it's bound to endure in a constantly-used public space.

UPFRONT COST VS. TOTAL COST OF OWNERSHIP

The reality is that budgets for furniture are often tight for projects in a variety of public spaces. As a result, what can

happen is that teams lean towards the solution with the lowest upfront cost.

However, if that low-cost furniture is not able to withstand the environment effectively, those same teams end up having to invest more and more money into those solutions to reupholster, repair, or replace the furniture.

This is what the chart above represents for the airport being discussed. You can clearly see the correlation between other solutions, which in some cases had a lower upfront cost, and the higher failure rate that airport has seen in 1-4 years after installation. **What about you? How well does your current furniture hold up to the needs and patterns of use of your patrons?**



AGATI

YOU DON'T HAVE TO SACRIFICE DESIGN FOR DURABILITY.

At Agati, we've been using our anthropological approach to furniture design since the 1970s to deliver some of the most acclaimed industrial design plans in libraries, universities, airports, and more. If you're searching for help in rethinking and reshaping your space, we're here to help guide you through the design process.

Want to see our designs in action? [Click here to see our installation gallery!](#)