

## Seeking cash in plastic bins

**Plastic bins that hold passengers' stuff now a platform for ads.**

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HOUSTON — In addition to collecting your shoes, belts and watches, those plastic bins at airport security now are trying to catch your eye.

The Houston Airport System is selling space on the bottom of the trays to advertisers. Officials hope to get a little extra revenue, and the Transportation Security Administration will get free replacement trays as part of the deal.

Passengers began seeing the new bins at Hobby and Bush Intercontinental airports in mid-June. So far, online shoe and clothing retailer Zappos is the only advertiser.

Advertising agency JCDecaux sold the space, and the Airport System collects a percentage of the ad revenue. The advertisements are expected to generate \$356,000 a year, with the airport's share about \$53,400.

“We believe in being innovative when it comes to enhancing customer service and finding new sources of revenue,” said Randy Goodman, concessions manager for the Airport System. “With our new airport bin advertising program, we won't tap into our passengers' or airlines' pockets, and we'll have clean, new bins every 90 days.”

St. Petersburg, Fla.-based Security Point Media makes the clear plastic bins and replaces them when they are damaged.

At many airports, the TSA is responsible for providing and maintaining the bins, which can add thousands of dollars to the agency's operating costs, according to the Airport System.

Nearly two dozen U.S. airports now use the advertising bins, according to the website for Security Point Media, which could not be reached for comment. No other Texas airports were listed.

Advertisements also will appear on the tables located near screening machines and new carts used to transport the bins at Houston's airports.

The idea could appeal to advertisers because it delivers a captive audience, said Betsy Gelb, a marketing professor at the University of Houston's Bauer College of Business.

“From the point of view of the advertiser, you are trapped. You aren't going anywhere except forward slowly with that bin,” Gelb said.

And despite criticism of security delays, body scans and pat-downs, Gelb doesn't believe passengers will associate bin advertising with their general dislike of security check-ins.

“I don't think people associate a plastic container with any negative or anything positive,” she said. “It's one of the more neutral objects.”

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