

Chronology of events:

Denver International Airport (DIA) Baggage System Development Timeline [1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6]

Nov 1989	Work starts on the construction of the airport
Oct 1990	City of Denver engages Breier Neidle Patrone Associates to analyse feasibility of building an integrated baggage system. Reports advises that complexity makes the proposition unfeasible
Feb 1991	Continental Airlines signs on and plans on using Denver as a hub
Jun 1991	United Airlines signs on and plans on using Concourse A as a hub
Jun 1991	United Airlines engages BAE Systems to build an automated baggage system for Concourse A. BAE was a world leader in the supply, installation and operation of baggage handling equipment
Summer 1991	Airport's Project Management team recognizes that a baggage handling solution for the complete airport was required. Bids for an airport wide solution are requested
Fall 1991	Of the 16 companies included in the bidding process only 3 respond and review of proposals indicate none could be ready in time for the Oct 1993 opening. The 3 bids are all rejected
Early 1992	Denver Airport Project Management team approach BAE directly requesting a bid for the project
Apr 1992	Denver Airport contracts with BAE to expand the United Airlines baggage handling system into an integrated system handling all 3 concourses, all airlines, departing as well as arriving flights. In addition system is to handle transfer baggage automatically. Contract is hammered out in 3 intense working sessions
Aug 1992	United Airlines changes their plans and cuts out plans for the system to transfer bags between aircraft. Resulting changes save \$20m, but result in a major redesign of the United Airlines portion of the system. Change requests are raised to add automated handling of oversized baggage and for the creation of a dedicated ski equipment handling area
Sep 1992	Continental requests ski equipment handling facilities be added to their concourse as well
Oct 1992	Chief Airport Engineer, Walter Singer dies. Mr Singer had been one of the driving forces behind the creation of the automated baggage system
Jan 1993	Change orders raised altering size of ski equipment claim area and adding maintenance tracks so carts could be serviced without having to be removed from the rails
Feb 1993	Target opening date shifted from 31 Oct 93 to 19 Dec 93 and soon thereafter to 9 Mar 94
Sep 1993	Target opening date is shifted again, new target date is 15 May 1994
31 Oct 1993	Original target for opening
19 Dec 1993	Second target for opening
Jan 1994	United Airlines requests further changes to the oversize baggage input area
9 Mar 1994	Third target for opening
Mar 1994	Problems establishing a clean electrical supply results in continual power outages that disrupt testing and development. Solution requires installation of industrial filters into the electrical system. Ordering and installation of the filters takes several months
Apr 1994	Airport authorities arrange a demonstration for the system for the media (without first informing BAE). Demonstration is a disaster as clothes are disgorged from crushed bags
Apr 1994	Denver Mayor cancels 15 May target date and announces an indefinite delay in opening
May 1994	Logplan Consulting engaged to evaluate the project
15 May 1994	Fourth target for opening
May 1994	BAE Systems denies system is malfunctioning. Instead they say many of the issues reported to date had been caused by the airport staff using the system incorrectly
Aug 1994	System testing continues to flounder. Scope of work is radically trimmed back and based on Logplan's recommendation airport builds a manual tug and trolley system instead
Aug 1994	City of Denver starts fining BAE \$12K per day for further delays
28 Feb 1995	Actual opening
Aug 2005	In order to save costs the system is scrapped in favour of a fully manual system. Maintenance costs were running at \$1M per month at the time.