

CASE STUDY: DIGITISING AIR TRAVEL IN FLIGHT

A major transatlantic airline needed to digitise services being used by customers, call centre and check-in agents; from flight booking, check-in, seat reservations, to complaint handling. Arrk Group, alongside strategic partner KCOM, worked collaboratively with the airline to deliver a digital shared services architecture and to develop key additional reusable service components.

Key Benefits



Technology included Microsoft Biztalk, SQLServer, Oracle, XML and HP



An Agile/Kanban working practices ensured the right tasks were worked on at the right time



Project delivered against an aggressive timeline



Collaborative and efficient working procedures



Platform enables customers to self-serve reducing reliance on call centre



High performing solution capable of coping with increased demand

Situation

- Airline operating in a highly competitive environment
- Existing digital systems struggling to cope with increasing demand
- System expensive to maintain and new functionality problematic to roll out

The airline has enjoyed strong growth which has meant that its existing digital platforms have been evolved to meet this increasing demand, instead of being designed and built strategically to cater for its current business operations. As a result, the airline has digital systems which are complex to maintain and integrate, while implementing change is expensive and time consuming.

In the face of an increasingly competitive business landscape and the increasing costs to support and maintain its existing digital platforms, the airline made the decision to develop the Shared Service Platform (SSP) which was an enabler for rapid digital transformation across the organisation.

Challenge

- Shared Service Platform (SSP) part of business-wide strategic initiative
- Existing legacy systems highly complex and supporting huge volumes of transactions
- SSP needed to be rolled out with loss of existing functionality

The Shared Service Platform (SSP) programme was not only a significant financial investment, it was also a critical strategic initiative for the business as a whole. The existing organisational and technical context was very complex with multiple legacy digital platforms and the requirement to support the massive volumes of transactions to ensure consistency with the integration standards from the Open Travel Alliance a critical success factor.

The systems that the Shared Service Platform needed to integrate with were integral to the smooth day-to-day operation and success of the organisation, any failure would mean dissatisfied customers and complex operational challenges to resolve. In addition, these changes would need to be made and rolled out with no loss of functionality and availability of existing services.



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The changes were key to improving customer satisfaction and reducing costs and had to be rolled out against an aggressive time-line.

In order to deliver the new Shared Service Platform, the airline required a partner with the skills and expertise to manage such a business critical engagement.

Key to the successful delivery of the digitisation project was the partner's ability to deliver an extremely high quality technical solution with the capability of meeting the enterprise demands of Shared Service Platform.

The partner would also need to work collaboratively with the airline to support any changing demands on the programme.

Solution

- Built on service-oriented architecture
- Integration with multiple legacy systems
- 24-month project with major milestones achieved

Built on brand new service-oriented architecture, the Shared Service Platform provides a consistent integration point across multiple diverse legacy systems as well as seamlessly interacting with the organisation's trading partners.

The level of abstraction that the new platform brings to the airline has enabled it to significantly reduce the time to market for change and greatly simplify any change to core legacy platforms, something that previously would have been time and cost prohibitive.

The transatlantic airline chose the strategic partnership of Arrk Group and KCOM to deliver the platform who, working closely and collaboratively with the airline, over a 24 month period developed and deployed a well designed shared service platform for use across the organisation's digital landscape; enabling its customers to receive the exemplary experience expected from one of the world's leading airlines. The solution was also able to deal effectively with the increase in traffic volumes, as demand for the airline's services increased.

The shared service platform was delivered using Agile/Kanban software development frameworks and built using enterprise technologies such as Microsoft Biztalk,

SQLServer, Oracle, XML and HP.

Outcomes

- Agile and Kanban methodologies and working practices introduced to customer
- Effective three-way collaboration between Arrk Group, KCOM and airline
- Airline customers now able to self-serve seating arrangements, meal preferences and more

A key factor for the success of the project was the collaborative manner in which Arrk Group worked to rapidly understand what was required to deliver the programme and to quickly put a brand new team in place working effectively and efficiently with strategic partner KCOM and the customer almost from day one.

An Agile/Kanban-style 'just in time' working practice helped to ensure that the right tasks were worked on at the right time.

The new platform enabled airline customers to self-serve for the first time, using the website to allocate seats, book meal preferences and other services which historically had been only available through calling the airline's call centre.

Arrk Group delivers award-winning digital systems through collaborative partnering and high performing software engineering.

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