

Case Study Gatwick Airport

“We have an ambition to become London’s airport of choice ... we’re using innovation and technology to get there.”

Michael Ibbitson, CIO, Gatwick Airport



The customer

Country: UK
Industry: Transport
Founded: 1934
Employees: 23,000
Website: www.gatwick.com



The challenge

Gatwick is the most efficient single runway airport in the world. As part of its ongoing transformation and desire to be the airport of choice in Europe, it was faced with an aging telephony infrastructure, and needed an agile, scalable and future proof system to enable its employees to work and collaborate, anytime, anyplace, anywhere, using any device.

The solution

The Cloud Connect Collaborate (CCC) solution provided Gatwick with a cloud based Cisco solution delivered by Fujitsu via Gatwick’s Telephony services provider Xchanging. The new system provides collaboration services across the airport campus, using multiple channels such as Instant Messaging, Voice, Video and Web conferencing that didn’t exist before.

The customer

Gatwick is the most efficient single-runway airport in the world, welcoming 34.2 million passengers every year. It serves more than 180 destinations in 90 countries and generates around 23,000 on-airport jobs, plus a further 13,000 through related activities.

Gatwick airport is on a journey to move its core internal and customer-facing IT systems to a more cloud based approach, with a goal to make them more responsive, efficient, and accessible to enable future growth, cope with every increasing passenger numbers and their bid for a second runway.

“Gatwick is focused on the passenger experience – from the way we design the facilities to our IT systems. We felt it was time for a real step change in the technology we use,” says Michael Ibbitson, CIO, Gatwick Airport.

The challenge

Gatwick needed a telephony and communications system that supported their aspirations. With many of their systems unchanged since the 1950s, a fresh, innovative approach was called for – one that would boost performance levels, mobilise their workforce and enhance the passenger experience.

As Michael Ibbitson explains, “Our telephone system wasn’t resilient and wouldn’t give us the flexibility we needed to operate a modern airport like we have today.”

Michael continues, “Gatwick’s vision of the future is to create a far more seamless travel experience. You move through the airport far more quickly, with much more automation, but with a greater degree of service.”

The solution

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The benefit

The new system provides collaboration services across the airport campus, using multiple channels such as Instant Messaging, Voice, Video and Web conferencing, that didn’t exist before.

The benefit

- Mobility: Gatwick's workforce can now work anywhere, connecting through any device
- Collaboration: employees can easily connect via smart phones and video conferencing
- Resilience: the move to an off-site, cloud-based service has removed previous disaster recovery issues where the previous core infrastructure was at risk of on-site flooding
- Agility: services can flex up and down to reflect demand, cutting operating costs
- Integration: employees are able to share data more effectively, improving the passenger experience
- Cost efficiency: a more dynamic, accessible system helps to increase productivity and reduce waste

The service was made available through physical phones, laptops with soft-client, as well as iOS and Android smartphones and tablets. The service seamlessly connects over the corporate wireless networks as well as via the Internet without the need for a separate VPN client (Virtual Private Network) but still meets all of Gatwick's stringent security policies.

CCC is a hosted voice and Unified Communications service running from the Fujitsu Cloud, operated out of dual data centres in the UK. This provides a platform which offers extremely high levels of resilience and availability, a low capital expense model leveraging pre-existing Fujitsu Cloud infrastructure, the ability to flexibly and rapidly scale the service up and down on a commodity basis and the ability to meet regulatory requirements for UK data retention. In addition, the CCC platform can be scaled-out to incorporate on-client-site telephony elements and form a hybrid solution to support above-critical requirements such as Gatwick's Fire Service.

Being a highly scalable and highly resilient system to enable agility and protection, target SLAs of 99.99% have been achieved to date.

Michael Ibbitson explains, "We were looking for a total end-to-end unified telecommunications solution that could meet not only the needs of our staff, but of our complex operation and our partners who operate here. Fujitsu ... came up with the right solution." Gatwick Airport now have the ability to collaborate using any device, any channel, from any location, – all with the same end-user experience, Gatwick Airport employees can collaborate more effectively, making airport services as efficient as possible.

Products and services

- Based on Fujitsu's Cloud Connect Collaborate solution (CCC)
- Using Cisco's Hosted Collaboration Solution (HCS)
- Hosted and managed in the Fujitsu Cloud and operated from two Fujitsu data centres in the UK

Increased employee satisfaction and productivity is also a key benefit as the service delivers the same experience wherever the employee is located, be it in the office, working from a distant hanger or at home. The ultimate goal is to provide a better passenger service for all that travel through Gatwick.

As well as simplifying the scalability of services, the move to an off-site, cloud-based service has removed previous disaster recovery issues where the previous core infrastructure was at risk of on-site flooding.

In summary, Gatwick have seen benefits realisation around improved productivity, better reliability of the infrastructure and the aligned business processes which rely on it, and a reduction in the amount of service disruption.

Conclusion

Gatwick is one of the first airports to implement a cloud-based system. The rollout began in September 2013, using Fujitsu's Cloud Connect Collaborate solution (CCC), and the airport is now reaping the rewards of greater mobility, flexibility and continuity. This, in turn, is giving passengers a better service.

"The system we've worked on and implemented through Fujitsu, in partnership with Cisco, has given us the flexibility we need. It helps us connect front line staff ... with the people in the back office who have to make strategic decisions or make things happen.

"By adopting this new approach, we'll be transforming the way our staff operate. Video conferencing with each other for instance and working from home effectively during snow days. This slicker operation will have a significant impact on passenger experience – which is what we're always striving to improve."

Michael Ibbitson, CIO, Gatwick Airport

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