

SUCCESS STORY

BRITISH AIRPORT AUTHORITIES

Real-time bag tracking



Sopra Steria worked with BAA to improve the airport experience for their passengers.

British Airport Authorities (BAA) own and operate seven airports in the UK, the largest being London Heathrow. Heathrow is the world's busiest international airport regarded as the hub of the aviation world with around 90 airlines making Heathrow their base. The airport now has four terminals, with Terminal 5 due to open in 2008, serving over 180 destinations in more than 90 countries.

BAA have involvement in almost every aspect of the day to day running of Heathrow, including looking after security; property management; retail facilities; fire services and cargo, with the responsibility of making sure these all run smoothly.

In order to continue to provide a world-class service to its airlines and the 67.7 million passengers who pass through Heathrow in a year, BAA has committed to a £6,398 million programme of improvements at Heathrow.

Feedback shows that one of the most important elements of the airport experience for passengers is the safe transferral of their luggage. Both BAA and its airlines have strict service level targets to maintain a high quality of service for baggage handling.

To increase efficiency and allow the effective targeting of areas most in need of improvement BAA engaged Sopra Steria to help develop an intelligent baggage handling system.

With an ever increasing volume of passengers and flights, BAA required a system which could be accessed by multiple teams across multiple organisations (including airlines, baggage handlers and check-in staff), more accurately track and report on baggage location, as well as providing a longer term consolidated view of performance at a global level.

BAA's previous system had the capability to track baggage, but performance reporting was arduous through manual input spreadsheets and it did not provide the real-time accuracy required.

Solution

The new system builds up a real-time picture of the status of bags which can be summarised in various ways, for example, according to flight, airline, terminal and handler so the various members of the airport and airline staff can easily access and use the data most relevant to them.

The new system is significantly more accurate than the previous system, is web based so the cost of ownership is low and is scalable to support expansion. The web interface allows the data provided to be presented in an extremely usable format that is intuitive in design.

There is also a Track & Trace element that allows users to see where all the bags are for a particular flight at a particular time.

For example at a departure desk you could see that of the 30 bags checked in for a flight 26 are at the right place, reconciled with passengers and ready for departure. The user could also see at what risk the 4 missing bags are of safely making the flight or indeed not making the flight (this is categorized by low, medium and high risk).

This is significantly more data than they had previously; it gives people in the 'front line' more information allowing them to make informed decisions for the benefit of the airlines and the passengers.

Benefits

The benefits of the system are numerous but some key examples include:

- **Improved management information** through a series of tailored reports. This allows problem areas to be highlighted quickly and action taken to rectify any issues. Much of the management information is also fed back into the system processes. There is complete report coverage from static operational performance to ad hoc querying.
- **Increased visibility of performance** and a consistent means of measurement of both BAA and airlines, helping to measure against their targets and improve services to customers. BAA have a contractual obligation to airlines to deliver bags, this system helps them measure where they are against SLA's.
- **Reduced costs** through increased efficiency, less delayed flights and because fewer bags are lost (it costs on average £170 per lost bag).

Future plans

The system has currently been deployed at Heathrow and will be available in the new Terminal 5 when it opens in 2008. The introduction of the system is already in hand for Gatwick airport and BAA plan to roll the system out to other airports within their portfolio. A key element of the design was that the system was easily scalable to gain the most benefit from the investment.

Why did BAA choose Sopra Steria?

- Experienced in design, deployment and support of large scale SI solutions
- End to end service inclusive of BI, Testing & Security through dedicated internal practices
- Scalable future proof solution
- Best solution design at proposal stage
- Value for money solution, including the option to use our offshore facility
- In depth sector knowledge, other clients within this sector include easyJet and Virgin Atlantic Airways
- Support team to manage 7 year contract to support the application
- Vendor independent recommendation of technologies proposed.



Sopra Steria, European leader in digital transformation, provides one of the most comprehensive portfolios of end to end service offerings in the market: Consulting, Systems Integration, Software Development and Business Process Services. Sopra Steria is trusted by leading private and public organisations to deliver successful transformation programmes that address their most complex and critical business challenges.

