

Airtrade

Reducing time to market; increasing functionality and lowering costs for the Travel Industry.

The Travel, Leisure and Tourism Industry faces increasing pressure to deliver competitive, functionally rich and cost effective services to their customers if they are to remain successful. The majority of organisations operating in the air transport industry use a combination of in house and outsourced IT to support their business.

Airtrade, a leading provider of travel technology and international consolidation and tour operator fulfilment services, are using PROIV to replace all third party logistic systems in house. With PROIV, Airtrade are able to make savings by developing new, high functionality software that can be easily updated in the future, starting with their logistics system: AirMessenger. These systems are fast to market, robust, and with their short investment cycle, present a valuable software asset.

Frank Wester, CFO, says

“We know that our application, AirMessenger, from both a functional and commercial perspective, is one of the best in the market. This is because of the high process capacity, ease of maintenance and the low price point that we can offer based on our short investment cycle.”

Challenge

Battling high cost and low functionality

With a history as a market leading online travel agent (OTA) and ticket consolidator, Airtrade, like most organisations in the Travel, Leisure and Tourism Industry, relied on a blend of in-house IT systems and external technology offerings.

However, the third party software Airtrade were using had become a risk for business continuity due to low and lengthy support of functional changes.

When Airtrade were given notice that the price per transaction of their reservation management system would quadruple, or go offline in 3 months, Airtrade took the opportunity to begin replacing the software in house. The 3 month time period between making this decision and launching their own system was crucial. If missed, the only alternative would be to allocate 100% of the work to call centre staff, almost doubling their workload.

The Application

Airline Messages Logistic Management

When a ticket has been generated, any new flight information, such as schedule changes or confirmations on dietary needs, must be collected and updated to the system.

The system Airtrade were previously using only automated 40% of these updates, leaving 60% of their messages to be handled manually. Not only was this a costly process, but the service would also miss some important messages resulting in penalty fees charged to Airtrade because they could not react to airline instructions on time.

Solution

PROIV Application Platform delivers swift time to market

Airtrade have developer teams working in both PROIV and .NET. For this tight deadline they chose PROIV to deliver the ease of modification and high process capacity demanded of the software.

Wim Soutendjik, Software Architect Booking Management Systems at Airtrade explains that; each airline has a unique system and format to generate their messages. With the third party system these changes would take months at a high cost, but with PROIV:

“We could rapidly react and make adjustments. Changes that once took months, at high extra cost, to pass the development server / user test server / live server sequence, have been passed with PROIV in the same day.”

“The development of our application, AirMessenger, only took 2 months.

Since the completion of this project was so rapid and successful, another PROIV application has been scheduled for development beginning in September, to go live before the end of the year.”

Wim Soutendiik,
Software Architect
Booking Management Systems

Results

Twice the functionality in 2 months

The PROIV application Airtrade now use, AirMessenger, is over twice as functional as the previous system, Wim says “because we could optimize the software so rapidly, functionality improved as well.” While the external system left 60% of all airline messages to be handled by human operators, with AirMessenger this been reduced to 17%.

Huge cost savings

On the financial benefits, Frank Wester, co-CEO says that, without including the time and cost savings in swift updates to the software, the lack of penalty fee expenses and reduced call centre costs, Airtrade “had reclaimed the investment in 4-5 months.” Wim Soutendijk adds to this that “the costs benefits in time and call centre staff are higher than the total investment in programming time.”

The short investment cycle that PROIV offers allows Airtrade to be highly competitive in their market.

Software as a Service

Airtrade now offer AirMessenger as part of their SaaS to organisations who either have no automation in place, or are still using the same low functionality service that Airtrade rejected. As each travel

agent has individual and specific requests, Wim comments that “changing the system rapidly is a big advantage in convincing customers to start using AirMessenger. Questions asked during a demo can be implemented on the test server within days.”

Further PROIV Applications scheduled this year

Following the success of AirMessenger, Airtrade plan to continue to replacing remaining third party ticketing software with applications built with PROIV. By the end of 2015 phase 1 of the in-house PROIV ticketing application will be planned and launched for use by Airtrade and as a SaaS offering to their customers.

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Wim Soutendijk
Software Architect
Booking Management Systems

“Excluding additional efficiencies and reduced call centre costs, we had reclaimed our investment in 4-5 months”

Frank Wester
CFO

