

Case Study: Enhancing customer experience by harnessing digital technologies for one of the world's fastest growing Airline company.

About the Client

Based in the Middle East, the client is one of the leading and the fastest growing airlines in the world. With a rich history of almost 20 years, the client operates a modern fleet of over 175 aircrafts, flying to more than 150 destinations across six continents.

Experion Technologies partnered with the client to provide technology consulting, software development (web and mobile technologies) and quality assurance services for its IT initiatives for passengers and airline crew.

Business Challenges

While smartphones became a reality for end users and iOS & Android platforms captured the attention of the consumer market, most airlines wrestled with how to harness digital technologies with the goal to enhance customer experiences. Though many airlines started getting into developing native applications for iOS & Android platforms, mobile technologies were still at a very nascent stage when it came to Enterprises rolling it out to their loyal consumer base.

The client was one among the first airlines in the world to leverage digital technologies with the goal to provide their loyal customers a better experience. The first part of the strategy adopted by the client was to launch a mobile version of its website for passenger booking and managing its loyalty/ reward programs. Though the mobile web version was well received by the market, competing airlines that took the native app route was soon having an edge. As mobile technology evolved and better mobile devices were getting launched, the client was looking to revamp its digital strategy.

Operating in a highly competitive market, the client wanted to take a clear lead against competing airlines with its mobility initiatives and offer unmatched service to its customers. As a long term plan, the client also wanted to lead innovation in the airline industry by deploying mobility solutions to its flight crew. To overcome these challenges and to achieve its business goals, the client was looking to partner with a specialist technology partner to drive its mobility initiatives and to fast track its overall IT program.

Engagement Highlights

Being an early adopter in mobility technologies and having delivered a handful of mobile applications to enterprise customers globally, Experion was selected by the client to implement its mobility initiatives. As a specialist provider in mobility technologies, Experion helped the client to define, design, develop and roll out mobile based solutions for use by airline passengers as well as crew.

Some of the key initiatives taken up and successfully delivered by Experion during the engagement are detailed below:

1. Mobility Strategy & Technology Consulting

The engagement with the client started with an extensive technology consulting workshop conducted at the client's IT headquarters in the Middle East. Experion team for the consulting workshop was led by the CTO of Experion and included a Business Analyst and a Technical Architect, senior developers and quality assurance specialists. The focus of the consulting engagement was to take stock of the client's IT infrastructure, assess changes required for embracing mobility technologies and draw up an immediate road map for rolling out a mobile app for Passenger Self Service Management.

As the mobile app was required to interface with the core reservation system and loyalty management system used by the client, the team also identified a set of web services to be developed for accessing the information. Experion also developed wireframes and prototypes of key screens as a proof-of-concept to get an internal buy-in from the client's IT team.

Experion team presented the findings and recommendations to the top management, which formed the basis for further engagement with the client.

2. Passenger Self Service Management

This was the first end-to-end project undertaken by Experion for the client. The project had a staggered, but limited timeline and was completely owned and executed by Experion.

The passenger self service management application allows end users to access critical functions such as flight availability search, booking and check-in using mobile devices. Since the application is integrated with the reservation and loyalty systems of the airline, end users can access their frequent flyers details and privilege club information using the app. The privilege club can be used by end users to access and update their personal profile, view their activities using the membership dashboard, access special offers for members, redeem miles against offers and view status of their requests.

The application is available in iOS, Android, BlackBerry and Windows platforms and can be accessed using the existing account credentials of the passenger with the airline.

The key features offered by the application include:

- Provides an option to access functionality such as search & book flights, check-in flights, check flight status, etc. using the mobile application
- Allows the user to access and manage loyalty program offered by the client
- Access privilege club dashboard and avail special offers for members
- Get alerts and updates in the form of push notifications
- Find information about the airline and various services offered

The application was published on iTunes/ Google Play/ BlackBerry World/ Windows Phone app stores and has currently over 350,000 downloads.



Figure 1: Passenger Self Service Management Application

3. Pilot Mobility Solution

Experion was also instrumental in developing an iPad based solution “Electronic Flight Bag (EFB)” for airline pilots. This tablet based solution allows Pilots to view flight information including departure time, cabin crew, etc. and to do location stamped check-in using GPS in the device. Currently used by 2500 pilots globally, the application facilitates the following:

- Pilot briefing is done through the iPad application thereby eliminating existing manual processes
- Easy accessibility of all documents and manuals electronically – hard copies of manuals not required, contributing to reduced payload and fuel savings
- Entire spectrum of day to day activities can be managed using the mobile application
- Pilots can access the published roster details directly from the iPad application
- Capability to broadcast Cabin Crew Controller messages directly to pilots
- Capability to access all internal enterprise applications authorized for Pilots using single sign-on (SSO)

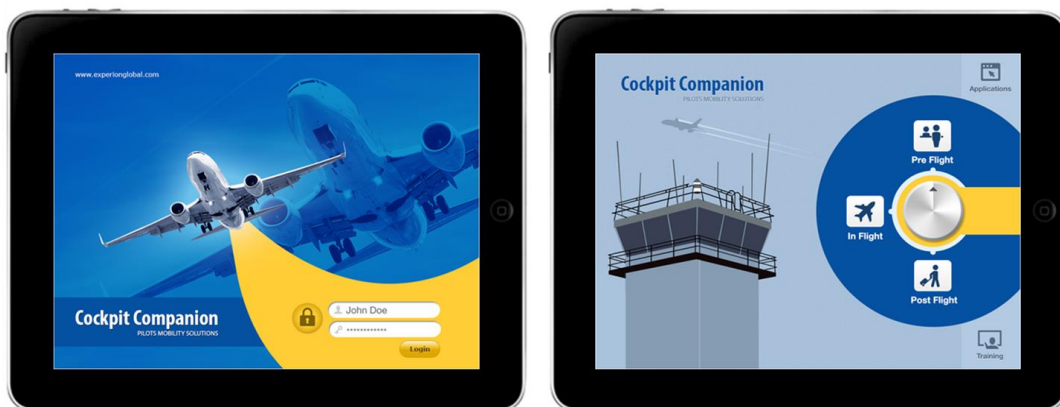


Figure 2: Pilot Mobility Application

4. Ongoing Development and Testing Support Services

Experion continues to offer ongoing software development and quality assurance services for the client. A team of web/ mobile developers and QA specialists works closely with the client in software development, enhancements, new product initiatives, research & development and mobile app device testing work for the client.

Business Benefits

Experion was instrumental in helping the client launch its first digital initiative. Experion was able to work closely with the client's Business and IT team and transform its vision for the mobile focused future to a reality. The engagement was not only instrumental in keeping the client ahead of competition in rolling out mobility solutions for passengers, but it has also helped them launch pioneering initiatives in enterprise mobility targeted at pilot/ crew.

- The consulting engagement done by Experion provided a clear understanding to the client on scope of work to be completed and timelines & costs associated with their mobility initiatives. The detailed report and prototypes created by Experion were well appreciated by the client's management team and resulted in getting an early buy-in from all the stakeholders.
- The mobile application for passengers has helped the client retain and improve its loyal customer base. Over the past 3 years, the number of registered customers using the application has grown from under 10% to over 60%.
- The number of availability searches from the mobile channel now constitutes over 20% of the total searches, as originally targeted by the airline.
- Enables registered users quickly access privilege club information and air miles' balance, making redemption process easier.
- Based on feedback collected by the client based on a survey, the mobile application is considered as one of the key touch points for loyal customers of the airline. Accordingly, the client has made available more end user features available on the mobile app.
- The mobile application for passengers has currently over 350,000 downloads, making it one of the most downloaded and rated application amongst its peers.
- The EFB solution delivered additional revenue by increasing the cargo capacity (by reducing the weight of hard copy manuals) and saving resources significantly.