



The face of air travel in Asia has changed. Since 2004, liberalisation of airline regulations has brought about dramatic growth in the budget sector in South East Asia and the region. Cost-conscious Asian travelers are flocking to the budget airlines, resulting in a fiercely competitive sector, with new market entrants from all over Asia entering the fray. Even established full-service airlines are offering promotional pricing on certain flights which match or better those typical of budget airlines.

Challenging Environment

This was the challenging environment facing start-up airline JetStar Asia. Jointly owned by Australia's Qantas Airways and Singapore interests, JetStar Asia operates out of Singapore's award-winning Changi Airport and serves a growing list of popular destinations in Southeast Asia. It started service on December 13, 2004, and plans are well under way for operations in 12 locations.

JetStar Asia's Head of Information Technology is Singaporean Rupert Yeo. Yeo has specific responsibility for the efficient and cost-effective running of all the company's data communications networks.

As JetStar Asia's launch date loomed, Yeo's challenge was to implement systems that would link together some 100 staff members as well as business partners. The

company planned to use proprietary software to deliver timely data on ticketing, reservations and internal configurations with absolute reliability and, importantly, at a cost level that fit JetStar Asia's cost-effective business model. A further challenge was the extremely tight deadline faced by Yeo and his team. The data network had to be up and running within just a few weeks from the date the RFP was issued.

Keen Competition

BT Infonet Singapore was up against keen competition, including major vendors of specialised data network systems for the airline industry. The evaluation process included several metrics, including cost, service levels, technical offering, the vendors' track records and, critically, the time line to provide connectivity to the first few network locations. However, it quickly became apparent that while the other vendors' solutions may have been appropriate for traditional carriers, they were not suitable for the flexible operating model of a low-cost budget airline. The specifications were therefore altered to a simpler, less rigid model. The traditional vendors were unable to respond. BT Infonet was able to offer an MPLS IP VPN solution with classes of service that met JetStar Asia's requirements of performance, cost and time frame. Most importantly, Yeo found the BT Infonet Singapore account team responsive and flexible, ideally suited to JetStar's non-traditional operating model. Unlike traditional network carriers that are rigid in their structure, BT Infonet Singapore demonstrated flexibility and adaptability in meeting JetStar's requirements. BT Infonet delivered the initial network system on time and on budget.

According to Yeo, "MPLS was the natural choice in terms of its any-to-any connectivity, short latency and cost benefits. Security is another important consideration in the airline industry, and BT Infonet's topology, running over The World Network[®], met that need. We are also using Perspexion[®] for reporting, to monitor traffic patterns and utilisation."

Looking to the Future

JetStar Asia has ambitious expansion plans, and sees BT Infonet as the ideal partner. "We appreciate BT Infonet's responsiveness and high levels of service. We believe BT Infonet is a company that can grow with us," says Yeo. JetStar Asia is already discussing its next requirements with BT Infonet. Since mobility is an important aspect of JetStar Asia's non-traditional business model – there is no need for costly investment in banks of check-in desks – these requirements could include MobileXpress[™] mobility solutions.

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JetStar Asia is pleased with their choice of BT Infonet. "Despite having a tight time scale to respond to the revised RFP, BT Infonet delivered on their promise. Their network meets our needs, and more importantly we find their flexibility and responsiveness ideal for our cost-sensitive and fast-moving environment," Yeo concluded.

About BT Infonet

Infonet Services Corporation, a member of the BT Group plc group of companies, known for its quality of service, is a leading provider of managed network communications services for multinational entities.

Employing a unique consultative approach, BT Infonet offers integrated solutions optimising the complex relationship between enterprise applications and the global network. Extensive project management capabilities are the foundation for the services and solution offerings (broadband, Internet, intranet, multimedia, videoconferencing, wireless/remote access, local provisioning, application and consulting services) positioning BT Infonet as a single-source partner for multinational entities. In particular, BT Infonet IP VPN solutions offer multinationals a unique combination of Private and Public IP services as well as a full set of Managed Security and Mobility Services.

Rated "Best in Class" overall in Telemark's survey of Global Managed Data Network Services, Infonet Services Corporation has also won "Best Customer Care" and "Best Carrier" at the World Communication Awards. Founded in 1970, Infonet Services Corporation owns and operates The World Network, accessible from more than 180 countries, and provides local service support in over 70 countries and territories.

Additional information about Infonet Services Corporation is available at www.bt.infonet.com.

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