

Heathrow Airport

improves passenger experience with digital signage solution from Computacenter



Customer challenge

Heathrow needs to ensure it remains a preferred airport for passengers and airlines. With an average of around 200,000 passengers arriving and departing every day, the airport must ensure every customer is kept informed about their flights. Ageing public flight information and digital media screens were impacting customer satisfaction, which can result in financial penalties for the airport.

Computacenter solution

The airport partnered with Computacenter to upgrade more than 1,000 public flight information and 300 digital media screens across Terminals 3, 4 and 5. As well sourcing the NEC large format displays, Computacenter also assisted with imaging, asset tagging and installation. Imaging the screens in advance helped prevent deployment delays and disruption to passenger services.

Results

The new screens help Heathrow provide a consistent passenger experience across its terminals. Customer satisfaction ratings have increased, which means it no longer has to pay compensation to the airlines. The displays are also more energy efficient and reliable, which improves cost control and reduces the risk of passenger disruption.

Services

- Supply Chain Services
- Lifecycle Management

Technologies

- NEC large format displays

Customer Agenda

- Cost Reduction
- Continuous Improvement/
Innovation

Customer profile:

The UK's premier international airport

Millions of passengers pass through Heathrow Airport every year on their way to more than 180 destinations across the globe. With two runways and four terminals serving 80 airlines, Heathrow is one of Europe's hub airports. It is also the third largest airport in the world based on passenger numbers.

Heathrow is the UK's most important port, carrying more than 25 per cent of the country's exports in value terms. The airport's holding company also operates the Heathrow Express rail link and is involved in airport-related property development.

Business challenge:

Providing flight information to 200,000 passengers every day

To ensure it remains a preferred airport for passengers and airlines, Heathrow is continuously working at improving service standards. As Bhupinder Kahlon, Infrastructure Architect for the IT Service Delivery team at Heathrow Airport Holdings, explains: "We are investing in modern airport facilities and systems to ensure we provide the best passenger experience."

With an average of around 200,000 passengers arriving and departing every day, the airport needs to ensure people are kept informed about their flights.

"Public flight information screens are a key element of the passenger experience," comments Bhupinder. "If customer satisfaction with these screens dips below a certain threshold, we have to pay compensation to the airlines."

With the screens in Terminals 3, 4 and 5 approaching end of life, issues with quality were becoming more frequent. As Bhupinder confirms: "Clarity and brightness differed between the screens. We needed to ensure a consistent standard across the entire estate."

In addition to the public flight information screens, Heathrow needed to upgrade a number of digital media screens. "The digital media screens help to bring in revenue from advertisers. If the quality isn't up to scratch, then they won't advertise," adds Bhupinder.

With only a small window each day to perform the upgrades, the airport needed to reduce the risk and complexity associated with the project.

Computacenter solution:

Seamless upgrade to large format displays

Heathrow partnered with Computacenter to procure, image and deploy the public flight information and digital media screens for Terminals 3, 4 and 5.

"Computacenter had already worked on previous upgrade projects," explains Bhupinder. "It understands how the airport works and delivers on expectations."

Computacenter helped Heathrow benchmark screens from two suppliers to ensure they met technical and environmental specifications. "As part of our commitment to reducing environmental impacts, we wanted to install screens with a lower carbon and energy footprint," says Bhupinder.

"We are investing in modern airport facilities and systems to ensure we provide the best passenger experience."

Bhupinder Kahlon,
Infrastructure Architect,
Heathrow Airport

A display 'shoot-out' resulted in the selection of NEC for both the public flight information and digital media screens. Heathrow sourced a range of NEC screens via Computacenter, including 32-inch, 46-inch, 55-inch and 70-inch displays. Each screen is imaged and asset tagged by Computacenter before being shipped to the relevant terminal.

"Imaging the devices in advance helps to streamline the deployment process and ensures the screens are functioning correctly before they are delivered on site," adds Bhupinder.

The NEC large format displays have an embedded PC and feature a more recent Windows operating system than the previous devices, which simplifies ongoing support.

The new screens were installed with help from a Computacenter partner during 2015 and 2016, with Terminal 5 completed ahead of schedule in July 2015. "The screens have to be deployed during a very short overnight window to minimise disruption to airport operations," explains Bhupinder. "Computacenter's industrialised processes and experienced staff help ensure timelines are met."

A number of old screens were also removed and recycled by a Computacenter partner as part of the project.

"By working with Computacenter, we were able to maximise our investment in the new displays and minimise the risks to airport operations"

Bhupinder Kahlon,
Infrastructure Architect,
Heathrow Airport

Results:

Higher customer satisfaction rates

The new screens help Heathrow provide a consistent passenger experience across Terminals 3,4 and 5. As Bhupinder confirms: "The clarity of the information and the quality of the displays is now the same, which means passengers are always informed about their journey as well as the shopping opportunities at the airport."

Modernising its public flight information and digital media screens has also helped Heathrow:

Increase customer satisfaction: The new screens have resulted in higher quality scores in passenger surveys, which means the airport is now above the airline compensation threshold.

Make financial savings: The new screens consume less power, which will help reduce operational expenditure, and have a longer life expectancy. Procuring the screens through Computacenter also meant Heathrow could take advantage of competitive commercials.

Safeguard availability: The new displays are robust and reliable, which reduces the risk of IT failures and passenger disruption.

"The new screens are viewed by more than 200,000 people every day. By working with Computacenter, we were able to maximise our investment in the new displays and minimise the risks to airport operations," concludes Bhupinder.