Bangalore International Airport Ltd (BIAL)

India's Kempegowda International Airport, Bengaluru or the BLR Airport is one of the country's fastest growing airports. It operates close to 500 flights a day and handles over 19 million passengers a year. it is located about 40 kilometres north of the city near the village of Devanahalli. It is owned and operated by Bangalore International Airport Limited (BIAL), a public-private consortium. The airport opened in May 2008 as an alternative to increased congestion at HAL Airport, the original primary commercial airport serving the city. It is named after Kempe Gowda I, the founder of Bangalore. Kempegowda International Airport became Karnataka's first fully solar powered airport developed by CleanMax Solar.

"ThoughtWorks is on top of the competitive dynamics. Their technological strengths make them the right partner to help us achieve our goal of being a Smart Airport. We want our travellers to love and talk about it, when they travel through us."

HARI MARAR
President of Airport
Operations, BIAL

AIRPORT TAKES OFF, DIGITALLY

Solution Requirement

Operator of the BLR Airport or Bangalore International Airport Limited (BIAL) and ThoughtWorks first met on an unremarkable but practical 'redesign my website' kind of query. It gradually turned into a futuristic and innovative journey towards a digitized and seamlessly connected, intuitive airport or the 'Smart Airport.' The collaborative ThoughtWorks and BIAL team saw merit in enhancing customer experience through a 'tech- at-core' digital approach, rather than launching just another app like most others in the aviation industry.

The result? A comprehensive digital strategy of continuous designing, building, validating and refining solutions. A key feature of the strategy is a digital platform that adapts to the airport's evolving digital needs.

Solution Deployment

A first step, as part of this digital transformation was offering passengers everything at a single click on their mobile phone through the BLR Airport app. The airport app includes a number of useful features to help simplify the passenger's airport experience. Customers will find the BLR Airport app easy, engaging and simple to use. The navigation provides an intimate interface with real-time flight information and commercial offerings. Available on iOS and Android platforms, the app is designed to provide customers with the best of airport navigation powered by Google Indoor Maps (the first Indian Airport to use Google Indoor Maps), context-specific operational and commercial notifications powered by beacon technology deployed by leveraging leading industry standards.

In the first phase the unique and exclusive features of the app include:
• Flight information and Flight tracking • One-touch WIFI connect • Navigation with Google Indoor Maps • Must Try (F&B) and Must Buy (Retail) • Contextual notifications, powered by Beacons • Feedback

BIAL also introduced a Twitter hashtag #Flightstatus an automated notification feature that allows passengers to receive flight status on their social channel. The Twitter hashtag was introduced as part of BIAL's ongoing efforts to engage with its audiences on social platforms.

Solution Benefits

ThoughtWorks created a continued set of experiences that has had a sustained and positive influence for BIAL. This translated into the first product from the intended bouquet of digital services – the BLR Airport app. Three assets have gone live, to date – an iOS app, an Android App and a DM service on Twitter, where BIAL's followers find out about flight statuses through the social channel. The digital platform, apart from hosting the app, also hosts capabilities like data, context awareness, multi tenancy, extensibility etc.

The digital platform, apart from hosting the app, also hosts capabilities like data, context awareness, multi tenancy, extensibility etc. For example, BLR Airport is the first airport in India to integrate with Google Indoor maps. The apps, as of today, have seen downloads of up to 7200+ for Android, 2450+ for iOS and enjoy a customer rating of 4.6/5 on both, usability and experience.