Heathrow Airport
safeguards passenger experience with Computacenter cabling services

Heathrow

Services
- Borderless Network

Technology
- TE/Krone Cat 5 and Cat 6 cabling and fibre

Customer Agenda
- Growth/Business Change
- Risk Avoidance
- Continuous Improvement/ Innovation

April 2015

Customer challenge

With every critical IT system at Heathrow Airport relying on the organisation's cabling infrastructure, it must have a reliable and flexible environment. As the UK's busiest airport, cabling teams at Heathrow face a unique set of challenges. To improve access to cabling resources, the consortium responsible for Heathrow's IT systems needed a new cabling specialist.

Computacenter solution

Computacenter has provided cabling services at Heathrow Airport since October 2012. The IT services and solutions provider provides a 35-strong onsite team, which has worked on more than 300 projects, and installed more than 110 kilometres of cabling. These projects have included decommissioning the Olympic infrastructure, equipping the Heathrow Snow Base command and control centre and installing 400 wireless access points.

Results

Computacenter's flexible approach and scalability means the airport can action cabling moves and changes quickly to meet evolving business needs, while complying with stringent health and safety regulations. It can also safeguard the airport experience for 190,000 passengers a day.

Computacenter
Enabling Users

Customer profile:

Making every journey better

Heathrow Airport is the UK's busiest airport, with over 76,000 members of staff catering to the 70 million passengers passing through its terminals every year. It is home to 84 airlines visiting 184 destinations across 80 countries worldwide.

Heathrow's vision is to be 'Europe's hub of choice', so ensuring that the airport is a safe and secure environment is a core value in all of its business decisions. Since 2013 it has invested £11 billion into improving the airport, which represents one of the largest private sector investments in UK infrastructure. This is part of its aim of 'making every journey better' while creating jobs and supporting economic growth.

Business challenge:

Preventing disruption to passengers

The passenger experience at Heathrow relies on the airport's IT systems running as smoothly as possible – from booking-in systems and access control to air-side technologies such as runway lighting and radar systems.

All these critical technologies and systems run across on the airport's cabling infrastructure. Andrew Eley, Senior Solution Designer at Atkins, comments: "A reliable and flexible cabling infrastructure is crucial to the airport's operations. We need to be able to make changes quickly, which is particularly complex due to the nature of the environment."

With cabling underpinning everything at the airport, there are hundreds of moves, changes and installations required every year, from small projects to airport-wide initiatives.

As the world's busiest airport, Heathrow faces numerous challenges when it comes to cabling. "Health and safety is a controlling factor at the airport, which means engineers must pass numerous security checks," explains Eley. "Flexibility is also an issue, as working hours are between the last and first flights, and often subject to last minute changes."

A consortium led by Capgemini and including Atkins has been responsible for providing IT services to the airport, including cabling, since 2011.

The consortium was working with a single cabling provider to assist with services, as Eley recalls: "Our incumbent supplier was good, but we wanted to take a multi-supplier approach to enhance competition, improve access to resources and consider different approaches to our cabling challenges."

The consortium needed to find a new cabling partner that was flexible, experienced and able to adhere to the airport's health and safety requirements.

"The team consistently goes above and beyond to deliver what we need so we can have complete confidence in the cabling infrastructure."

Andrew Eley, Senior Solution Designer, Atkins, Heathrow Airport

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Computacenter solution:

A flexible partner for 300 cabling projects a year

Heathrow Airport started working with Computacenter to deliver cabling services in October 2012. "We selected Computacenter due to its previous airport experience, accreditations and relationship with Heathrow's preferred cabling supplier, TE Krone," explains Eley.

Computacenter works on both landside and airside cabling projects. Its core onsite team, which includes five managers and 30 engineers, has completed more than 300 individual projects at Heathrow Airport, and installed in excess of 65 kilometres of fibre and 45 kilometres of copper cabling.

These projects have included the decommissioning of the Olympic operation at the airport in 2012, and deploying 15 kilometres of fibre to equip Healthrow's Snow Base command and control centre. "The centre deals with disruption caused by adverse weather conditions and is critical to safeguarding the customer experience and reducing risk during winter," adds Eley. "Computacenter helped ensure it has the cabling infrastructure it needs to operate effectively."

As well as assisting with traditional cabling infrastructure, Computacenter has also been involved in wireless deployments. In particular, it installed 400 wireless access points throughout the airport as part of an initiative to provide free wi-fi for all passengers. Eley comments: "Computacenter worked under extremely tight timescales to complete the project, with up to 50 engineers onsite at peak periods to ensure we met our deadline."

As with all airport staff, Computacenter's engineers have to be vetted, issued with the appropriate passes and aware of the unique health and safety issues associated with the airport environment.

Results:

Supporting change and the safeguarding the passenger experience

Working with Computacenter, Heathrow Airport can make rapid changes to its cabling infrastructure to meet new business needs.

"Computacenter comes up with new ideas that help us address our cabling challenges, while taking a best practice approach that helps us comply with stringent airport regulations," comments Andrew. "The team consistently goes above and beyond to deliver what we need so we can have complete confidence in the cabling infrastructure."

The relationship with Computacenter enables Heathrow Airport to:

Access cabling skills and resources: Computacenter's scale and skill base means it cannot only deliver projects end-to-end, but it is also able to advise on new technologies that enhance Heathrow's IT capabilities.

Maximise business agility: By calling on Computacenter, the airport can update the cabling infrastructure quickly in line with changing business demands, for example when the hundreds of stores and businesses based at the airport move sites or have new requirements.

Safeguard the passenger experience: With a reliable and flexible cabling infrastructure Heathrow Airport can ensure that its 190,000 daily passengers have the best possible experience.

"Working with Computacenter to provide cabling support helps the airport meet its IT and business goals more efficiently and effectively," summarises Eley.

To find out more about our cabling and physical infrastructure services please visit
www.computacenter.com/physicalinfrastructure

To read more customer Case Studies please visit
www.computacenter.com/case-study

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