



Royal Jordanian Airlines Integrating voice and data in the information age

Following a hugely successful migration to IP with its long-term partner SITA, Royal Jordanian Airlines is now pioneering the use of Voice over IP (VoIP), bringing the Middle Eastern carrier improved communication capabilities, enhanced customer service, greater efficiencies and reduced costs.

Royal Jordanian – at the heart of the world's most dynamic travel market

During 2003, international arrivals in the Middle East grew by an estimated 10.3 per cent, even as arrivals fell worldwide. And growth in the region is expected to continue at an annual average rate of 7.1 per cent through to the year 2020, significantly above the long-term global average rate of 4.1 per cent¹.

Jordan's national carrier, Royal Jordanian Airlines, is well-placed to take advantage of this dynamic growth. At the heart of the region, the airline offers 1.5 million passengers a year same-day connections to around fifty destinations around the world, from New York to Bangkok.

The airline, though principally government owned, is operated on a strictly commercial basis, and saw its seat load factor rise to 72.2 per cent in the first quarter of 2004, up from 61.1 per cent a year earlier.

One of the keys to Royal Jordanian's success has been its readiness to adapt to new technologies. "We're constantly searching for better value and lower unit costs," says Jamal Saudi, Royal Jordanian's Director of IT, "and new technology can be a good way of delivering both – as long as it's business-driven and not just technology for technology's sake."

IP networks – delivering immediate benefits

Royal Jordanian Airlines was one of the first carriers in the region to fully embrace IP (Internet Protocol). Over a three-year period, from the year 2000, SITA created a virtual private network (VPN) for the airline, running on IP, which connected together 50 Royal Jordanian offices worldwide.

In network costs alone the airline has seen huge benefits. At the end of the 1990s Royal Jordanian spent US\$ 3-4 million a year on network costs; today the figure is close to half that.

SITA

ROYAL JORDANIAN
الملكية الأردنية

¹ Global international arrivals for 2003 stood at 694 million, some 10 million fewer than in 2002. Arrival statistics and projections from the WTO's World Tourism Barometer, January 2004, available at www.world-tourism.org.

Royal Jordanian Airlines

Integrating voice and data in the information age



“Moving to IP with SITA brought us a number of immediate advantages”

Royal Jordanian's Jamal Saudi.

With a fully-integrated network in place, staff in any office also have access to all the airline's applications, as well as its four main data centres – which handle cargo in Amman, ticketing in Atlanta, flight-planning in London and departure control at Amman's Queen Alia International Airport, the airline's headquarters.

“We offered Royal Jordanian a complete solution,” says Mustafa Odetallah, SITA's Business Management Head in the region, “and the migration went really smoothly. A lot of the credit for that goes to the work they put into the project – it was a big achievement.”

“Moving to IP with SITA brought us a number of immediate advantages,” says Royal Jordanian's Jamal Saudi. “It allowed our staff to move to a desktop environment where all our applications can be accessed from any PC on the network. It created an environment that's tidy, and therefore easy to maintain and troubleshoot.

And of course it's greatly reduced our overall IT expenses. We were paying a lot more in the past – not just for network connectivity but also in maintaining and accessing legacy applications.”

Another real improvement brought by the transition to IP is that it made it a lot easier to introduce new applications. Royal Jordanian's aim had originally been to use the IP network for data only, but once it was in place it became apparent that using the network for Voice over IP was also an option.

Voice over IP (VoIP) – integrating voice and data

When Voice over IP was first suggested, however, there was one major obstacle: Jordan's telecoms regulatory framework didn't allow voice to be carried over a private managed data network – or even over the Internet.

As a first step, therefore, SITA created a VoIP gateway for Royal Jordanian – in Frankfurt. This acted as the hub between the airline's offices in countries which allowed VoIP, and by the end of 2003 SITA had linked some 14 sites together. Voice traffic to and from Jordan itself was then sent 'off-net', through SITA's gateways with the switched network, to comply with local regulations.

Royal Jordanian's intention is to migrate to VoIP to all its offices as soon as regulatory conditions permit – and SITA says it can have VoIP up and running within four weeks of regulatory changes coming into force.

VoIP has also allowed Royal Jordanian to implement a simplified, consistent numbering plan between its offices, with the area code built into the first half of the number as an aid to staff. Furthermore, calls can be completed outside of the VoIP network (using SITA's VoIP 'off-net') at highly competitive per-minute prices.

"VoIP helps us to reduce costs and expand reachability," says Saudi. "We no longer need two backbones, one for data and one for voice. This means our staff can enjoy more frequent communications with each other at a much lower cost. As the regulatory framework evolves we also hope VoIP will be able to bring transparent access to 24-hour help desks to our customers, without them needing to know where we are – or us knowing where they are."

SITA's VoIP – improved quality, lower costs

SITA's VoIP is a fully owned and managed international service, available in major markets worldwide, with industry-leading service level agreements. Its integrated, feature-rich platform allows the efficient introduction of new services, while from day one it extends the network's reach, realizes optimum performance and enables valuable cost savings.

VoIP also saves Royal Jordanian time and money in network management and administration, since it's dealing with a single supplier, SITA.

"By using SITA's privately managed network, rather than the public Internet, Royal Jordanian gets greater reliability, higher security for data and better voice quality," says SITA's Odetallah. "Most importantly, it gets all this and yet still benefits from direct communications costs for voice which are between 20 and 30 per cent lower, depending on the country."



**"VoIP helps us
reduce costs and
expand our
reachability"**



Royal Jordanian Airlines

Royal Jordanian Airlines' mission is 'Meeting the Challenges of a New Millennium'. Two of its main goals are to:

- Perform at increasing levels of productivity and efficiency that will generate rates of profitability to sustain its growth and allow for reinvestment in the development, improvement and well-being of its human resources.
- Represent the best of Jordan, its people, culture, products and services, guided, as always, by its pioneering spirit of innovation and imagination to reach for higher skies.

For more information on Royal Jordanian Airlines please visit www.rja.com.jo.



For further information, please contact SITA:

Americas

3100 Cumberland Boulevard,
Suite 200, Atlanta, GA 30339,
USA
tel: +1 770 850 4500
fax: +1 770 612 2265
e-mail: info.americas@sita.aero

Asia Pacific

11 Loyang Way, Singapore
508723, Republic of Singapore
tel: +65 6545 3711
fax: +65 6548 2635
e-mail: info.asiapacific@sita.aero

Europe

Capital Place, 120 Bath Road,
Hayes, Middlesex UB3 5AN,
United Kingdom
tel: +44 (0)20 8476 4500
fax: +44 (0)20 8730 1337
e-mail: info.eumea@sita.aero

Middle East and Africa

Bachoura, Khandak El-Ghamik,
Daoud Ammoun Street, SITA
building, P.O. Box 11-6524,
Beirut, Lebanon
tel: +961 (1) 657200
fax: +961 (1) 655951
e-mail: info.mea@sita.aero

www.sita.aero

VoIP benefits

Once an IP-based network is in place, migrating voice traffic to SITA's VoIP brings a number of key benefits:

- Unrivalled quality: SITA gives VoIP commitments on call completion and post-dial delay in addition to traditional packet-based service level agreements on transit delay, packet loss and jitter.
- Improved performance: SITA brings improved performance by defining classes of service, prioritizing traffic and controlling how bandwidth is used.
- Reduced costs: SITA helps save money by integrating all traffic types on the same network, using forced 'on-net' calling to avoid expensive toll calls.
- Business continuity: On SITA's global network, employees can send and retrieve e-mail, fax, voice and video messages.
- Global support: SITA provides round-the-clock network monitoring and management, with local language support in over 145 countries.

SITA

SITA is the recognized leader in the provision of data and IP services to the global air transport industry. For more than 50 years, we have been working with our customers to solve complex business communication problems, providing network integration and managed services that connect air transport companies operations around the world.

SITA's VoIP provides high quality data connectivity between sites, and 'on-net' or 'off-net' termination of voice services – offering intra enterprise calling from 60 countries and calls to any public telephone number in 220 countries, together with private numbering for consistency and convenience.

For more information please visit www.sita.aero/solutions/network or e-mail network@sita.aero.