



All-inclusive vacation package portal fuels a sharp rise in business

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>> Transforming the oldest North American airline into a next-generation agile enterprise

Mexicana Airlines

With a long history of innovation, Mexicana Airlines wanted to use leading-edge technologies to increase revenue and build its share of the vacation package market. So EDS delivered a best-in-class, automated portal to link agencies and customers with the airline's all-inclusive travel offerings.

Our enhanced vacation package portal achieves multiple missions at once. We have a flexible new outlet for doing business. We have stronger relationships with travel agents. And we have built stronger relationships with our customers who will soon be able to purchase flights, hotel rooms and services, transfers, and entertainment options in one transaction.

The business issue

When 9/11 devastated the tourism and travel industry, many doubted that the airline industry would ever recover. In actuality, the tragic events provided more of a catalyst than a deterrent to airlines, as they now work harder to ensure optimum security and maximum efficiency, while providing across-the-board price cuts for flyers. Today, improved service and accountability are helping strong, savvy airlines regain momentum in a rapidly recovering industry. The resurgence is in part due to the rise of the managed online travel sector, especially the online vacation package market, which is quickly becoming the ticket to success in air travel. Determined to turn this sales potential into profit, Mexicana Airlines rose to the opportunity as it had done many times before.

As the fourth-longest-standing airline in the world, Mexicana Airlines has been operating successfully for 84 years. It has survived and surpassed the industry's changes and setbacks because of one core value: a focus on continued innovation. Now the company envisioned being among the first to launch a next-generation portal for selling customized all-inclusive vacation packages that include everything from hotel upgrades and car rentals to tours and hotel services. Who better to bring its vision to fruition than Mexicana's IT partner, EDS.

Our approach

Now in its fourth generation, Mexicana's Web presence integrates streamlined, automated business processes within a customizable, consumer-centric interface. Over the years, EDS has not only helped Mexicana ensure a robust, scalable Web infrastructure, it has also ensured that Mexicana's customers benefit from best-of-breed technologies for content management, e-mail services and reservations. As it looked for ways to further enhance customer functionality, Mexicana realized that it could extend similar functionality to its travel agent partners as well and create a direct, potentially profitable channel for growing sales and revenue at the same time.



Methodology and technology

EDS' leading-edge solution enables Mexicana to access hotel room availability with preferred business partners automatically and efficiently, defining room rates according to VTP's specific quality standards. It also configures rules, taxes and charges for room rates and airfares according to individual suppliers and markets, making travel planning much easier for consumers and travel agents alike. EDS is currently enhancing the Automate Package Quotation System with a new infrastructure capable of supporting a service-oriented architecture.

Services featured

- Applications Development
- Composite Application and Portal

We strongly believe in Web-based applications that give better, more flexible and straightforward services to our customers, while allowing us to integrate the products we offer with a cost-cutting vision.

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The driving force behind Mexicana's strategy was to sell its all-inclusive travel packages, a core service entitled Vacation Travel Plus (VTP), which Mexicana had been providing through call centers, sales offices and travel agencies. So EDS built a centralized management application for VTP and integrated it within the primary portal interface, allowing travel agencies, business partners and the public to access Mexicana's travel packages on a secure server from the main Web site.

Travel agents can create their own agent profiles and settings to obtain quick, secure access to agency sales data. Customers and travel agents come away with a single ticket from a single online transaction, combining hotel reservations, airfare, even airport transfers, all in one place. What's more, EDS is working to expand this solution to include car rentals, tours and hotel services, creating a true one-stop shop for vacation planning.

Mexicana and EDS are also working together to transform the airline into an agile enterprise. As part of this vision, the team built in a flexible pricing model that ensures Mexicana only pays for services it uses on a per transaction basis. The airline's IT environment can now scale to meet the demands of business quickly and cost-effectively.

The results

Just one month after Mexicana launched its VTP portal, international sales had grown by 250 percent and by a whopping 350 percent in the second month. By the end of the year, Mexicana had sold 120,132 packages, 44 percent more than in 2004. Achieving two critical missions, Mexicana created a flexible new outlet for doing business and substantially enhanced its service to travel agents and customers at the same time. Now, coordinating end-to-end all-inclusive travel packages is no longer a labor-intensive, complicated process. That user-friendliness and convenience help determine which airlines customers and agents use when planning vacations. And in fact, it already has, since Mexicana's passenger list doubled in the first month of rollout. And that figure is projected to double again to 700,000 passengers with the introduction of the enhanced VTP portal in July 2006.

As part of an integral VTP suite, the solution also provides enhanced functionality to sales offices across Mexico. That means Mexicana's business relationships with key suppliers and distributors are stronger than ever, ensuring that this leader of the airline industry continues innovating, growing and making travel milestones.