



Airports belong  
in the Cloud



Like many industries, airports are being driven to change. Often referred to as the 4<sup>th</sup> industrial revolution, Digital is impacting every sector and industry.

In 2017, SITA<sup>1</sup> reported that 85% of airports planned to invest in Cloud over the next three years, with only 1 in 10 airports expecting spend on IT to decrease through 2018<sup>1</sup>. One key area of the increased expenditure is targeted at developing innovative ways to differentiate passenger experience.

Innovation is now synonymous with Digital and Cloud. There is no longer a question of “if”—rather it is a matter of “when”. With this in mind, how can an airport take full advantage of Digital and Cloud to obtain an advantage and succeed over the competition?

**“Every company is a technology company”**

-Gartner

If the answer was straightforward, you could assume that everyone would know it and likewise every airport (and indeed industry) would already be well underway in executing the “recipe for success”. However, there is no single answer, no silver bullet. To succeed in a Digital/Cloud endeavor, it is important to understand what success will look like. Let’s explore some of the key aspects you need to consider.

## **Data is key**

I’ve come across the phrase “data is the new oil”, which, while somewhat of a hyperbole, does have an element of truth to it.

The value however is not data for data’s sake. It is the insights hidden within the data we already hold or indeed have access to, but have not considered extracting and manipulating for deeper insight.

Consider the following; how does one airport differentiate itself from another? How does an

airport position itself as the go-to choice for millions of passengers each year in a competitive consumer driven landscape? Sure, in some instances geography necessitates an individual’s choice, but put that aside for a moment. If there is genuine choice, how does an airport establish a USP and bring the customer in?

The answer is differentiation through data. While this is a simplistic statement, when we dive down into the complexities, they are vast! How do we capture data? How do we store data? How long do we store it for? How do we remain compliant with local regulations with regard to the data we capture? How do we access the data in a timely (read: valuable) manner? There are a multitude of questions, but answering these questions sets the foundation for moving forward with digital innovation.

Picture the scene—senior management know in real-time how people move through an airport and what makes people choose certain paths. This knowledge drives placement of staff where they are most needed (increased productivity), as well as premium prices for vendors in prime footfall paths (increased revenue). Knowing whether or not a frequent traveler is leveraging premium services such as parking, priority security lanes and whether or not s/he purchased their morning coffee before departure enable insight—both on the individual and on the service/product itself. Data provides these insights and drives effective, profitable—decisions.

## **Achieving scale**

Knowing that data provides key insights is one piece of the puzzle. Achieving the objectives of leveraging data for competitive advantage at scale is another aspect altogether.

Many airports do not have the resources available internally to rapidly adopt the infrastructure, systems and processes needed

to succeed in this endeavor. This is where Cloud comes in to its own.

While the benefits of Cloud are widely known, it is worth reiterating them at this point:

- Consumption based model
- Global scale
- Infrastructure elasticity
- Releases resources to focus on business value, not running IT infrastructure

Cloud enables an airport, regardless of size and profitably, to undertake new projects and explore new services with a few clicks—an over simplification, sure—but the concept is true when compared to what was needed in years gone by. Compared to what was in effect guess work at capacity needs, hundreds of thousands of dollars in infrastructure spend, months wasted on procurement (including delivery lead times), build and setup to minutes or hours—the contrast is indeed stark.

## (People) Safety first

Airports (and the wider aviation industry) has always placed emphasis on safety and security, and rightly so. Each day millions of people pass through airports around the world and in turn take to the skies.

However, in this instance the safety in question is not that of the customers, but rather the people who will be entrusted to handle the Cloud systems and data that will become so integral to the success of the airports of the future.

Having the right skills to embark on a Cloud journey is vital for these Digital initiatives to succeed and people with the necessary skills are in high demand. This is where working with an organization such as Wipro, who deliver end-to-end Cloud services, can help accelerate these key business objectives.


From strategy and architecture advisory to Data and Analytics to DevOps transformation and ultimately operations, Wipro is able to offer a complete suite of offerings to enable your Cloud ambitions.



## References

<sup>1</sup>SITA Air Transport IT Trends Insights 2017

<https://www.sita.aero/resources/type/surveys-reports/it-trends-insights-2017>



## About the author

### **Marc Beder**

Practice Partner | MAS Consulting

A strong advocate of seeing technology enable businesses to succeed, Marc has more than 15 years' experience in the IT industry across

multiple verticals with a strong emphasis on Cloud computing and DevOps methodologies. He can be reached at [\*\*marc.beder@wipro.com\*\*](mailto:marc.beder@wipro.com)



## **Wipro Limited**

Doddakannelli, Sarjapur Road,  
Bangalore-560 035,  
India

Tel: +91 (80) 2844 0011

Fax: +91 (80) 2844 0256

**wipro.com**

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For more information,  
please write to us at  
**info@wipro.com**

