jetBlue®

Customer Journey:

JetBlue

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JetBlue rolls out next-gen travel. Okta keeps the data safe and secure.

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Overview

Industry

Airline

Company profile

JetBlue is New York's Hometown Airline, and a leading carrier in Boston, Fort Lauderdale (Hollywood), Los Angeles (Long Beach), Orlando, and San Juan. The company carries more than 40 million customers a year to 102 cities in the U.S., Caribbean, and Latin America, with an average of 1,000 daily flights.

Business situation

JetBlue has always been ahead of the curve when it comes to customer experience. By the year 2020, the company has a goal to deliver the kind of modern, omnichannel experience that has turned companies like Uber, Seamless, and Warby Parker into digital consumer powerhouses. To do that, JetBlue is implementing modern technologies that eliminate extra steps, shorten waiting times, and help crewmembers interact with customers in more personal and meaningful ways.

Identity management is a key element in the unified infrastructure JetBlue is building to manage customer information on a global scale. The company's identity use case is particularly complex, with crewmembers, partners, and customers who need varying levels of access to information and services.

Solution

To support its cutting-edge travel experience, JetBlue runs more than 500 applications behind the scenes for customers and crewmembers. Okta Customer Identity products provide a single point of entry, so that access to different pieces of applications is effortless. At the same time, Okta works as a secure and consistent gatekeeper, sitting between those applications and JetBlue users and enforcing the company's multi-layered access policies.
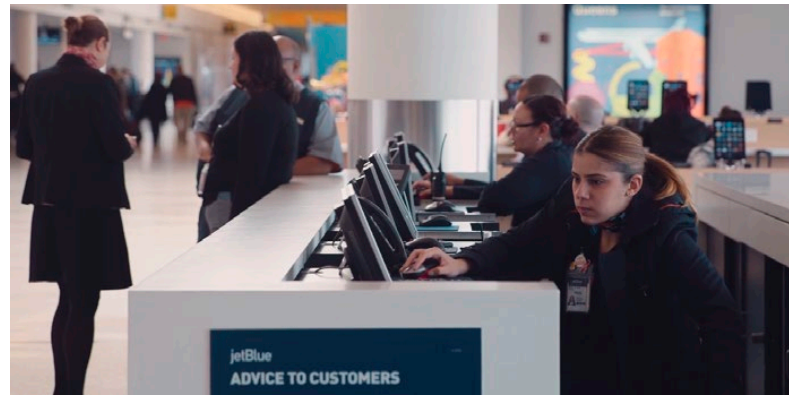
Benefits

- 500 Okta-connected applications supporting a modern, omnichannel customer experience

- An identity partner with experience running digital commerce in a highly regulated industry

- Secure customer and crewmember data, making sure the right people have seamless access to the right information

- Ability to keep up with the pace of change in the Identity and Access Management space

- Behind-the-scenes technology that helps deliver meaningful digital experiences

▶ **Watch the video**
okta.com/customers/jetblue

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Story

An airline with a mission

Imagine if purchasing airfare for your next vacation was as easy as ordering a new outfit, with personalized choices based on your history and preferences. Imagine if before, during, and upon completion of your travel, you had a direct line to customer service with timely and transparent updates about flight status, digital vouchers for tours and excursions.

That's the kind of modern, omnichannel experience that JetBlue is on track to deliver by the year 2020. Eash Sundaram, the company's Chief Digital & Technology Officer, connects the plan directly to the company's mission, "inspire humanity." JetBlue is known for its support of humanitarian causes, such as hurricane relief for Puerto Rico. With its Digital 2020 initiative, Sundaram plans to use technology to transform the already award-winning JetBlue travel experience into a truly inspiring one.

To accomplish that mission, his team is moving away from legacy IT solutions, and toward modern technologies, such as facial recognition, machine learning, and artificial intelligence. The point is to eliminate extra steps, shorten waiting times, reduce frustration, and meet customers wherever they happen to be—on a website, mobile device, airport kiosk, or in flight.

"Frictionless travel is key for this airline," says Sundaram. "Not only does it take cost out of the equation, but it also drives simplicity for our customers.

"People talk about JetBlue's crewmembers as key enablers for strategy," he says, "but behind-the-scenes transactions happen inside and outside the JetBlue ecosystem. We are constantly looking to see where we can simplify those transactions."

At the same time, safety and security remain the company's number-one priority. "Aviation security has expanded from a focus on physical security and into the digital security space," says Sundaram. "With 40 million customers transacting with us at different points during their travel, we have to keep those transactions safe and secure."

40 million

customers per year

1,000

flights per day

500

Okta-connected applications supporting an inspired travel experience

> "
> Frictionless travel is key for this airline. Okta not only keeps customer and crewmember data safe, but it also simplifies the experience as they navigate the digital ecosystem.
>
> **— Eash Sundaram**
> EVP Innovation, Chief Digital & Technology Officer, JetBlue Airways

While JetBlue leaders want to be seen as cutting-edge in their technological approach, they remain fixated on the customer's perspective. Good solutions, they realize, can't just streamline airport check-ins, strengthen security, and enable customers to handle many tasks themselves. They must also help crewmembers interact with customers in more personal and meaningful— more human—ways.

A complex identity use case

From its inception, the company has run circles around competitors on the customer experience front, rolling its first planes out of the hangar with live televisions in the seat backs, and installing satellite-based in-flight broadband Wi-Fi.

To stay at the technology forefront, says Sundaram, the company takes a collaborative approach. "Our partners are integral to JetBlue's success," he says. "When you think about the pace at which innovation happens today, we can't do it ourselves." The company's Silicon Valley subsidiary, JetBlue Technology Ventures, exists to partner with innovative startups, to bring new thinking into the company and in some cases to get first dibs on the latest big ideas.

For Sundaram, identity management is a key element in the "next-generation toolkit" required to manage customer information on a global scale. "Everything in the aviation industry starts with who you are and what you do," he says. "Identity is key to keeping customers safe and secure."

At JetBlue, with its intense focus on personalized customer service, the identity use case is particularly complex. To achieve a unified infrastructure where customers, partners, and JetBlue crewmembers can interact seamlessly and securely, the identity solution must be able to recognize many different levels of access and user type, and manage the policies that apply to them.

For example, some JetBlue customers are involved in the TrueBlue loyalty program or pay for certain premium services. Different partners and crewmembers have varied access needs and authorizations, as well.
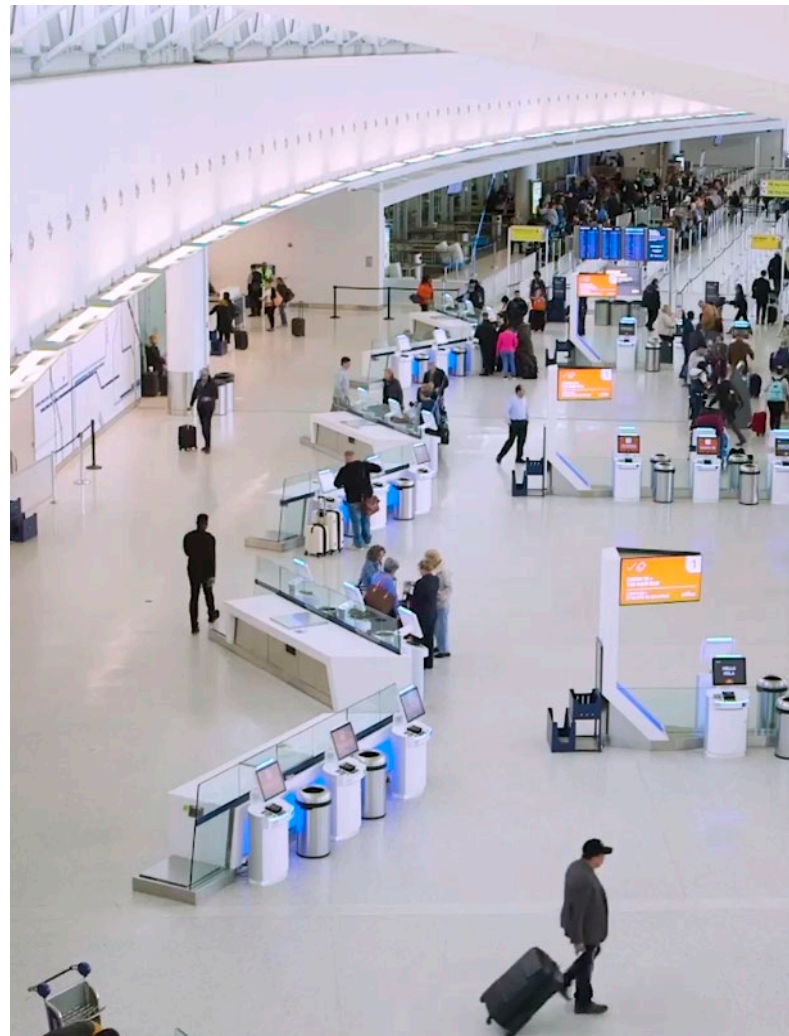
To complicate matters, those access rights are constantly evolving: new customers join the loyalty program; crewmembers get promotions or leave; partners expand their offerings. While a seamless experience is paramount, so is making sure the right people always have access to the right information.

Compatible cultures. Spot-on technology.

"We started working with Okta about a year ago, looking at their tools and technology to protect our valuable information," says Sundaram. "Things in the identity space change almost by the hour, and we need a technology partner that can keep up with that pace of change on a daily basis."

When evaluating partners, Sundaram begins with the culture. "At the end of the day, it's people who make up companies," he says.

He was impressed by the talent and technical expertise that the Okta team brought to the table, but he also saw a familiar passion for the customer experience—and a commitment to humanitarian causes. "The Okta for Good program absolutely matches with JetBlue's mission to inspire humanity," he says.

Okta was a great fit on the technology front, as well. "There aren't many companies that have experience running digital commerce in a highly regulated industry, such as aviation," he says. "When we looked at Okta, they absolutely brought those two pieces together in a unified way, so we could address physical and electronic security."

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Driving next-gen travel experiences from behind the scenes

"JetBlue is a data-rich company," says Sundaram. "Our drive to create a personal, helpful, simple customer experience is enabled through data insights. We deliver meaningful experiences through those digital channels."

The challenge, then, is to gather the data required to personalize the customer experience, make it available seamlessly so that crewmembers can be as helpful as possible, and protect all that data with *simple*—unobtrusive but powerfully effective—technology.

Okta helps the company meet that challenge, while working entirely behind the scenes. "The success of an Okta implementation is our customers don't even see the technology," says Sundaram, "yet it provides them with a seamless experience when they travel."

JetBlue continues its tradition of disrupting the airline industry by continually introducing new ways of delighting travelers. Soon, its leaders hope to build on that reputation and grow the brand into adjacent hospitality spaces. As they plan for that inspired future, they rely on Okta to help take them there.
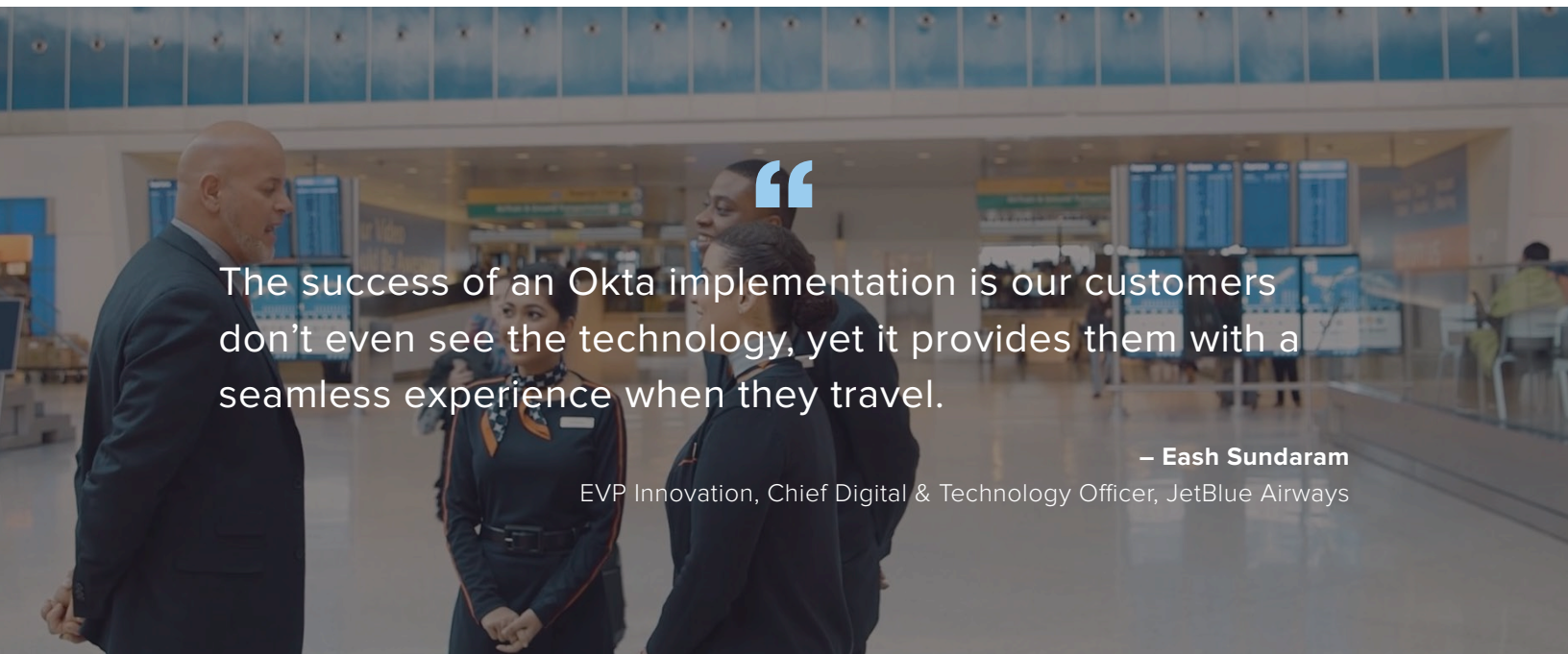
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Okta

The foundation for secure connections between people and technology.

Okta is the leading independent provider of identity for the enterprise. The Okta Identity Cloud enables organizations to both secure and manage their extended enterprise, and transform their customers' experiences. With over 5,500 pre-built integrations to applications and infrastructure providers, Okta customers can easily and securely adopt the technologies they need to fulfill their missions. Over 5,600 organizations, including 20th Century Fox, JetBlue, Nordstrom, Slack, Teach for America and Twilio, trust Okta to securely connect their people and technology.

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