



The Power of Identity to Move People

Synopsis: This whitepaper will explore the security and technology challenges within the travel and transportation industries. It will discuss the different trends within this sector, routes and roadblocks to success and the role of identity in the travel and transportation of goods, services and people.

Introduction

If you are in a leadership position at a travel or transportation company, you are responsible for creating exceptional and convenient experiences, underpinned by speed and security. To do so, you have two options: 1) provide a cost-effective and reliable service that defines your brand and meet your customers' expectations or 2) strive to exceed those expectations by embracing innovation.

For forward-thinking companies in this sector looking to stay ahead of the curve, technology innovation must be a top priority. These companies are continually reassessing how to transport people and objects from one point to another in innovative and unique ways. For example, Amsterdam's Schiphol Airport recently kickstarted its Happy Flow project, where biometrics are used as the key identifier at all airport checkpoints, enabling a smoother passenger experience. In response to consumers' growing demand for near-instant delivery, Amazon launched its newest service Prime Air, which delivers packages by drone to consumers within 30 minutes of placing an order. And while ride-hailing services like Uber and MyTaxi now seem commonplace, it's important to remember that something as simple and innovative as the use of mobile technology to order a car is what seemingly upended the traditional taxi industry overnight.

Companies embracing innovation are using technology to increase operational efficiency, and data to inform

and customise each scenario and process. Underpinning both of these is identity—of people, partners, goods, and services—to build trust and transform experiences.

Part 1: Identity in Action

Routes to success

Nearly 80 million passengers move through Dubai airport each year, but people are only one part of the equation. For the team at Dubai airport, 'through-put' (a term used to define the number of passengers, planes and bags that move through the airport in an hour) is a key metric they're continually looking to optimise for. Michael Ibbitson, EVP Technology & Infrastructure at Dubai Airport discussed the impact of 'through-put' on the airport's operations:

"There are lots of processes in place to speed up getting planes and bags through airports efficiently. And when it comes to passengers, identity has a critical role to play in accelerating this through-put safely and securely."

"For me, the through-put formula is essential to the running of my operation, because when passengers buy a ticket, they are buying a ticket for a flight, not for an airport tour! Subsequently, I need to think about how quickly we can get passengers through the airport safely, because the more people that get through quickly and securely, the more time they have to spend in the airport."

"So, when you look at the customer journey from the point of entering the airport, through to arriving at the final destination, there are different parts of the journey that slow this process down for passengers. Different entities are responsible for verifying different things—be it whether a passenger is checking the right bag,

or if they have the right documentation to leave the country and arrive at their destination. Are they at risk to the plane or to their destination? The verification process overlaps so many times over and has created a big problem for the travel industry. We need to think about building trusted avenues across all these entities, so we can eliminate the overlap in touchpoints to create a truly seamless passenger experience.”

While identity is often thought of through the lens of end users (the travelers, passengers or commuters), it has an equally important role behind the scenes.

Gett, the on-demand mobility company with a global ride sharing app, views convenience and security to be key components to enabling innovation amongst employees.

Gai Hanochi, Global Head of IT at Gett, discusses why securing employee identity is important to driving the business forward:

“Usability and security are essential to getting work done. It’s a formula that underpins the service we offer to our customers, but also the opportunities we offer to our employees.”

“To ensure our employees can do their job efficiently, and at speed, it is our duty to support them appropriately, by providing them with the data they need to access information easily. Ease of use is the single most important component to the running of this service. The integration of cloud-based identity technology into the service we provide has saved time, thereby allowing everybody to do their job better. It provides instant access to real-time information across teams, wherever they are located, and it can help create customised services that sets us apart from our competitors. For me, identity links together everything we need to do.”

Part 2: Roadblocks and Unexpected Diversions

Identity is viewed across the travel and transportation sector as critical to elevating organisations to the next-level. This is most apparent in these organisations’ pursuits to be innovative and disrupt the norm. But with disruption comes unique challenges.

The essence of identity is personal data—the most valuable type of data any company can possess. For organisations in the travel and transportation sector, which work across borders, possessing personal data can become a potential barrier and even threat to the business.

In May 2018, organisations that operate in the EU will have to comply with new regulations that have been designed to protect customers’ personal data, but will also hold organisations accountable if they do not comply. The General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) is just one of many regulations that impacts an organisation across a whole region, alongside other in-country regulations that are in place.

Gai Hanochi says regulations played an important part in how they set up and scaled the company:

“With so many regulation nuances within each country, scaling up and expanding basically means starting from scratch. That is why we are focused on four cities and it is a decision that has served us well. When it comes to data, each country has its policies and standards that aim to protect data against the increasing risk of cyber threats but also to uphold and respect the privacy of customers that use our service.”

The ramifications, both financially and reputationally, in exposing personal data to vulnerabilities are well-known amongst leaders in the travel and transportation sector. A cyber-attack on travel trade association ABTA put the data records of around 43,000 people at risk of being accessed by criminals. The organisation reported around 1,000 of these files could include “personal identity information” of consumers that had complained about a holiday.

Threats like these require quick and preventative measures to safeguard identities of customers and uphold the values of the industry, and the services it offers. In response, the EU has also strengthened policies that aim to tackle large-scale cyber-attacks.

The EU plans to invest nearly €80 billion of funding available between 2014-2020 under the Horizon 2020 Research and Innovation Framework Programme (H2020) to promote cybersecurity research and innovation projects across different sectors, citing travel and transport as one of the key focus areas.

But it is not just external threats that can impact an organisation. The Global Cyber Alliance has declared its commitment to educating travel firms and its employees across the sector about cyber threats and avoidable human errors that can lead to destructive consequences.

As Michael Ibbitson illustrates, utilising identity technologies can diminish these concerns:

“When you consider the identities that are verified across the different entities within an airport, from check-in to customs, the risk for human error can be detrimental to the entire process and frustrating for customers. Here again, the opportunity to integrate technologies like biometrics can eliminate that error, while streamlining the passenger journey.”

“Biometrics would enable us to identify people as they move through the airport and once recorded, that data becomes someone’s identity throughout their journey. It also creates an opportunity to offer bespoke experiences to passengers while they wait for their flight. But the obstacle to overcome here, is getting customer buy-in to ensure these new technologies, that are designed to safeguard users and save them time, are actually adopted.”

At Dubai Airport, Ibbitson’s team has focused on encouraging the adoption of services that some customers may hesitate to use. His team tests and markets new digital technologies and services to forward-thinking customers who have the appetite to try new things, while at the same time building a sense of exclusivity by making the services available to frequent flyers, who see the benefit of speedy check-ins. Not only do these efforts generate a sense of intrigue and curiosity, but they also provide use cases to convince a wider customer base that these services are safe and save time.

Part 3: The Journey Ahead

The future of the travel and transportation industry will no doubt be accelerated by customer appetite for new services. Organisations that are hungry enough to respond to new technology trends and capitalise on growing consumer interests will be successful.

Three immediate trends that stand to transform the industry include:

- Automation:** “From an IT perspective, the focus is on automation. Finding out how to accelerate processes and shorten current cycles internally, to recruit and onboard drivers faster, register users quickly and securely and expand our portfolio by using that time saved to create new services. There is currently no single tool that can help with automation. As a company that was born in the cloud, we need to be able to connect to different cloud services to create tools to address this trend. And we depend heavily on managing the identities of all our stakeholders. This is why I believe that on-premise solutions, particularly when it comes to identity management, will eventually disappear. They will be irrelevant. They will cease to exist.”
Gai Hanochi, Global Head of IT, Gett
- Blockchain:** “By creating a ledger that different entities within the airport journey can refer to, all of the identities needed would be in one place and trusted all the way through the chain. Creating this series of verifiable and auditable information packets allows for a secure platform from check-in all the way through to customs. Implemented in the travel and transportation arena, this technology could foster more seamless and transparent communications and interactivity between all parties, cutting out unnecessary queues and processes for passengers.” Michael Ibbitson, EVP, Technology Infrastructure, Dubai Airport
- Driverless vehicles:** “Vehicles are the second biggest expense for consumers after their home. People will move to view public transportation as a way to remove this expense. Driverless vehicles will have a major impact on what we know and how we continue to deliver our service. But the key to moving with the tide is to manage customers’ preferences and identities to create driverless journeys that become known for their personalisation.” Gai Hanochi, Global Head of IT, Gett

Transportation leaders from taxi hailing services to international airports are embracing the power of technology innovation to provide more immersive, engaging consumer experiences. Driverless vehicles, automation and biometrics are just some of the sweeping trends set to take the transport sector by storm, but central to the success of these endeavors is identity—and its value should not be overlooked. Sweeping new legislation such as GDPR will bring severe penalties for any breaches to personal data, and as such, organisations in every sector must carefully secure the identity for both its employees and customers. This is particularly true for those in transportation, where the challenges match the opportunities: if managed in the right way, identity can be used to completely transform the movement of passengers, goods and services.