

Moving its voice infrastructure to the cloud allowed ANA to establish a working style that was not limited by location, and achieve large cost reductions



A STAR ALLIANCE MEMBER 

“ International routes are highly variable and susceptible to the effects of changes in the environment. As a result, it is necessary to establish a strong, solid business foundation through cost structural reforms. From the perspective of improving productivity as we work to streamline our business resources, the creation of an environment where our employees can work anytime, anywhere was essential. ”

Takeshi Hayashi, Manager, Workstyle Innovation, Crew Mobile Innovation & IT Strategy, ANA



Background

All Nippon Airways (ANA) is the eighth largest airline in the world by revenues (2013) and the largest in Japan by passenger numbers and cargo tonnage (2013). Founded in 1952, ANA flies to 36 international and 51 domestic destinations with a fleet of 242 aircraft that serves a network of 187 routes.

ANA is planning to expand its sales in the growth business of international routes, and plans for international route sales on the same level as domestic routes for the first time in 2016. This means that more than ever before, ANA will be providing services to customers from all parts of the world.

Objectives

As a means of improving the productivity of every employee, ANA is actively working to establish a new working style that uses IT. It has created an environment where mail and other functions are not limited to fixed personal devices, and where mail, document creation, and other office work is possible anytime, anywhere, and from any device.

The reasons for adopting this new working style were the changes in customer needs. Mr. Hayashi explained. “At present, customer-centric services are becoming the mainstream. In order to provide the optimal services which meet the individual needs of each customer, it is important that we understand the customer’s needs and behavior, and we must ourselves innovate by constructing a new business environment which incorporates the consumer IT that is used by the customers.”

Mr. Hayashi added that in order to improve the value of customer experiences and ensure satisfaction, it is necessary to provide seamless services at all points of contact with the customers and to provide human services that support the circumstances of each individual; consequently, another

“We want to construct a unified environment that incorporates new functions which will allow employees to switch to a more dynamic and creative working style, and which will stimulate communication and collaboration among our employees. We always take the position of a challenger, quickly adopting whatever we find that is good, using it ourselves, and then expanding its use throughout the company. Eventually we want to provide strong IT support not only for communication between employees and organizations, but also communication with outside customers and stakeholders.”

**Takeshi Hayashi, Manager,
Workstyle Innovation, Crew
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important factor is for the company to shift from vertically divided communication to a system of cross-cutting information links that transcend organization and division boundaries in order to create consistent service among different personnel and to develop innovative services.

Challenges

Although the introduction of various services had steadily advanced the shift to a new working style for ANA, there were still large issues that needed to be resolved in order to create a new business infrastructure. These were the “work which could only be done at the desk because of the need to use a land-line telephone and the expensive voice infrastructure which used the company’s own PBX”. In order to establish a new working style where employees were not tied to their desks, ANA faced an urgent need for a review of its existing voice tools.

The time for review of existing voice infrastructure arrived when ANA started to update the aging PBX that was installed at large ANA Group facilities. The company took this opportunity to create a voice infrastructure (platform) for its existing PBX, and also to shift its mobile terminal and domestic/overseas PBX system to the cloud.

Norihiko Hamamoto of ANA Systems reflected on the conditions at that time. “It was the requirements for the communication infrastructure that were the most difficult, as we aimed to construct an advanced voice infrastructure that was the first of its kind in the world. The FMC (Fixed Mobile Convergence) for utilizing consumer IT to support the new working style was of particular importance. Because smartphones and other mobile terminals are becoming more advanced by the day, we focused on being able to adapt flexibly to future changes in this environment.” At its offices in Japan and overseas, the ANA group was operating, managing, and maintaining an existing voice infrastructure composed of approximately 22,000 telephones and approximately 100 PBX. Mr. Hamamoto added, “We hoped for a proposal which would not only allow governance at local offices which management could not reach before, but also make it possible to reduce the international calling charges that were expected to increase as our business globalized, and to reduce the cost of telephone services that we were using at major airports.”

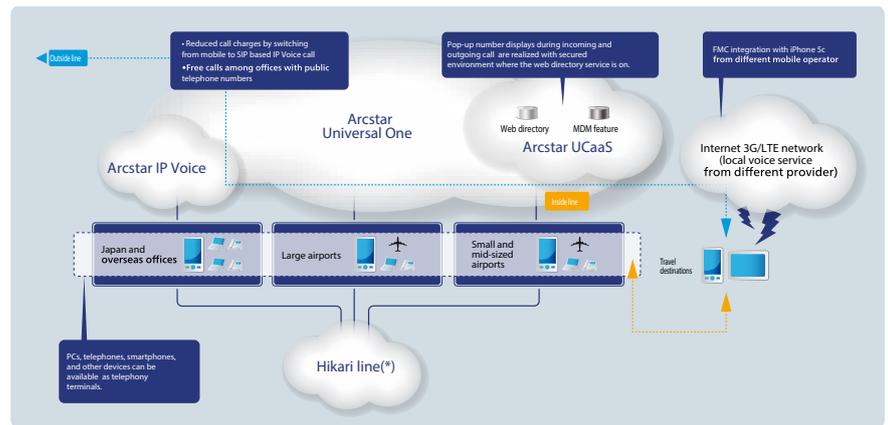
“ In the future, because a calls will be routed directly to an individual’s own device, we will avoid the trouble of forwarding calls. Also, by using the web directory service, we can launch an application and with one tap place calls that we used to have to input by hand. The MDM function allows remote lock of smartphones and complete application of our security policy, ensuring sufficient security so that we can use this service in our work without security worries.”

Norihiko Hamamoto,
Senior Expert, IT Solutions,
ANA Systems

Solution

As a next-generation voice infrastructure which satisfied the high level of requirements, the company selected Arcstar UCaaS from NTT Communications. Multiple functions including IP telephones and web directories are integrated in the cloud, and this service allows the same functions to be used from anywhere in the world. Another large advantage is that because the PBX that is used at each office can also be collected in the cloud, it is possible to outsource the management resulting from elimination of the PBX. The key to our choosing this service was the “cloud-based commercial service” explained Mr. Hamamoto.

“There were also proposals for constructing an original voice infrastructure from scratch, but the proposal for a voice infrastructure using the Arcstar UCaaS commercial service was rated most highly. An original voice infrastructure becomes rigid once it is constructed, however a commercial service can be expected to continue adding new functions and services. In addition, this proposal would also serve as a vessel for BYOD service that is a future focus. This was another point which motivated our decision.”



(*) Hikari line: Direct access service to NTT Com's exchange.

Benefit

At present, development of the next-generation voice infrastructure of Arcstar UCaaS to meet ANA specifications has been completed, and next the project will shift to the implementation phase, planning to complete the changeover at Haneda Airport by the end of September. When the transition is complete at all offices, including at large airports, the expected cost reduction will reach 400 million yen per year.

“With the creation of services for the voice infrastructure at large-scale airports and the change in calling charges due to the NTT Communications “Hikari Line” IP telephone service, we are expecting an extremely large reduction in costs.”

Norihiko Hamamoto,
Senior Expert, IT Solutions,
ANA Systems



The next-generation voice service platform enables multi-carrier, multi-device solution enable to support FMC feature . By integrating fixed and mobile phones, it achieves a borderless environment. “In the future, because a calls will be routed directly to an individual’s own device, we will avoid the trouble of forwarding calls. Also, by using the web directory service, we can launch an application and with one tap place calls that we used to have to input by hand. The MDM function allows remote lock of smartphones and complete application of our security policy, ensuring sufficient security so that we can use this service in our work without security worries.” As Mr. Hamamoto explained, the new voice service infrastructure will also produce a dramatic leap forward in the new working style for ANA.

The introduction of new telephony system has also begun to change employee thinking. Mr. Hayashi says that the effects are clear. “With the introduction of the new voice infrastructure, we will reach a new stage in the creation of an environment where employees can do office work anywhere and anytime, and no more to be tied up with their desks. Changing the way employees think about their working style is an issue for the future, but the fact that we are starting to see cases of individual employees acting with greater independence and initiative in their work, for example by installing applications onto their devices themselves in order to streamline or manage their own work, is a large accomplishment.”

“When devices change, the way of using them also changes. I believe that providing services that the users will like is the key to changing the working style, for example by creating a communication tool similar to the consumer IT LINE application which employees are already familiar with, or by using devices in a secure work environment which is robust enough for company use. Of course, we have asked NTT Communications for proposals regarding innovative ways of working and using devices,” said Mr. Hamamoto.

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ANACS092014-2