



## AIRPORT SIMPLIFIES IT MANAGEMENT AND KEEPS TRAVELERS INFORMED

### MCCARRAN INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT

/// CASE STUDY



Airport authorities wanted a technology solution to improve data access and sharing throughout the airport. Moreover, the system needed to support future growth and accommodate new and emerging technologies. The airport and EDS, an HP company, teamed up to deliver a model of success.

#### CLIENT PROFILE

[www.mccarran.com](http://www.mccarran.com)

McCarran International Airport has grown considerably since its beginnings as a small county airfield. Now serving more than 45 million passengers each year, McCarran International Airport is one of the largest and busiest airports in the world.

**Industry:** Transportation

**Location:** Paradise, Nevada

**Established:** 1942

**Business Needs Addressed:**

Innovation  
Productivity

*McCarran became the first airport in the United States to successfully integrate its major operating and gate management systems. It now enjoys a seamless flow of operational and passenger data throughout the airport.*

#### Growing airport needed open IT architecture to improve data access

Las Vegas had hit the jackpot. Its gaming, tourism and convention industries were booming. But the ensuing surge of tourists and business travelers placed extreme demands on Clark County's McCarran International Airport, through which about 50 percent of all area visitors arrive. Indeed, passenger traffic jumped 75 percent during the 1990s, quickly making McCarran one of the world's busiest airports.

For a city that relies on tourism, providing a positive first and last impression was crucial. For the Department of Aviation (DOA), that required building a world-class airport and supporting it with the best available technology. But there was a challenge. The airport's patchwork of disparate IT systems, databases and frameworks was exceptionally difficult to maintain. And information flow between the various systems was less than ideal.

DOA officials decided that the airport needed an entirely new technology base. They wanted a standardized solution to improve information access and sharing, as well as accommodate current and emerging technologies. Importantly, installation could not interfere with the hundreds of flights that come in and out of the airport every day. For help, the DOA sought an IT partner with a strong and successful track record in airports: EDS.

#### EDS simplified airport operations and delivered current flight data

EDS worked closely with the client and third-party vendors to implement the Open Airport Information Systems (OAISys) solution. EDS' OAISys is a comprehensive suite of products that simplifies airport operations management and provides travelers with timely and accurate flight and baggage information.

## COMMON USE TAKES OFF

McCarran is the first major U.S. international airport to adopt the European "common use" model for operations. That is, McCarran owns the hardware and software used by its various airlines for ticketing, gate boarding and baggage claim. Rather than installing and maintaining proprietary systems, airlines lease IT from the airport. EDS' OAI Sys is written in JAVA and C++ and is designed to interface with any platform.

The system's heart is an Oracle® airport operational database that runs in a parallel server configuration. The system runs on HP® Alpha Clusters, resulting in high availability and fast response. Expansion can be achieved by adding units to the cluster. OAI Sys components and features include Airport Systems Manager, flight/baggage information display system, baggage carousel assignment system (touch screen), flight schedule roll-over, gate management system integration, system monitoring and maintenance, master clock synchronization, external interface support and reporting.

## Services featured

- Applications Development Services
- Network Management Services

The EDS team began by designing and installing an airportwide common network infrastructure. Next, the team developed a single operational database that provides simultaneous updates to systems across the network, such as the Flight Information Display System (FIDS), which consists of more than 1,000 display monitors airportwide. The central database also feeds McCarran's Web site and an interactive voice response system that lets people get flight data via the telephone.

To avoid disruption to operations, EDS implemented the system in phases over a two-week period. Whenever possible, the team tested it in new construction areas not yet open to the public and during periods of slow traffic. The team implemented vigorous testing, verification and change control measures before completely transitioning to the new system.

## Solution enhanced efficiency and passenger experience

Today, McCarran International Airport has a reliable, open-technology infrastructure that supports future growth and common use. Its patrons can get timely and reliable flight information whether they are in the airport, at home or in-between. Airlines enjoy increased back-office efficiencies, thanks to the system's robust features. And DOA employees can access the data they need for analysis in planning and controlling airport resources. Because the information has the same look and feel regardless of where it is displayed, users do not have to be trained on multiple systems.

EDS added a security messaging component to OAI Sys to support the airport's increased security emphasis post 9/11. This feature enables security staff to quickly "check in" digital photographs of persons of interest. Once these images are entered into the system, they can be instantly displayed on designated monitors throughout the airport.

The EDS team also helps ensure the airport stays on the leading-edge in technology. Implemented and prospective solutions include: touch screen display technology, an application that enables OAI Sys to gather diagnostics and monitor its own health, plasma/LCD display technology and 24-hour assignment of airline baggage carousel preferences.

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