

CGI delivers modern API platform for Finnair to drive ancillary product sales

Achieving growth through digitalization using a DevOps model

Founded in 1923, Finnair is one of the longest-operating and safest airlines in the world. Finnair's business model is that of a network carrier, and it specializes in traffic between Asia and Europe. Helsinki's geographical location provides Finnair with a structural competitive advantage, as geographical proximity allows it to offer the fastest and most direct connections to the growing Asian markets.

Finnair's extensive network connects 19 cities in Asia and 7 cities in North America with over 100 destinations in Europe. The airline, a pioneer in sustainable flying, was the first European airline to fly the next-generation, eco-smart Airbus A350 XWB aircraft, and it is the first airline listed in the Leadership Index of the worldwide Carbon Disclosure Project.



Finnair's vision and journey

Finnair's strategic direction is guided by its vision of providing a unique Nordic experience to customers. To achieve this vision, the company is focused on four objectives for 2016-2018:

- 1. Growth:** Accelerate market growth, including the sale of ancillary products
- 2. Customer experience:** Enhance the end-to-end customer experience
- 3. People experience:** Focus on resourcing, leadership, and employee learning and development
- 4. Transformation:** Build assets to support growing business needs, including core capabilities (data, innovation, user-centric thinking), digital people experience and continued IT transformation

To achieve these objectives, Finnair is investing in digitalization to drive new services and products, employee productivity tools, and business opportunities with partners and other companies across its ecosystem. In 2016, Finnair chose CGI as one of its strategic partners in pursuing its transformation agenda.



Delivering end-to-end capabilities and driving agile development

CGI first began working with Finnair in 2006, the year that social media and user-generated content hit mainstream. Finnair wanted to build a next-generation website to connect with its customers, and turned to CGI for help.

Because of its end-to-end capabilities, CGI later began delivering infrastructure services and providing IP solutions, and also built an integration platform, to help Finnair achieve efficiencies, cost savings and other strategic business outcomes. When the need for greater business agility required Finnair to move aggressively toward the cloud, CGI developed early stage cloud proof-of-concepts and provided architecture consulting to help Finnair define its next IT platform.

Notably, CGI's teams at Finnair were early proponents of agile development, public cloud hosting and development tooling, and this helped shape the current DevOps development model at Finnair.

Support for Finnair's **transformation agenda**

With digital projects underway, Finnair sought to achieve the following through its transformation program:

- Move as many services to the cloud as possible
- Perform application development via cross-functional teams
- Prepare the company for increased agility and a faster time to market
- Build an omni-channel sales and service model

To achieve these objectives, Finnair needed a more flexible, agile approach to the development and maintenance of its digital services. With the help of CGI, Finnair adopted a DevOps model and its first mandate was to use the model to build an API platform to drive ancillary product sales.



Building a platform for the future **using APIs and a DevOps model**

Selling ancillary products (e.g., business class upgrades, additional luggage, better meals, etc.) is one of the top trends in today's airline business. Ticket sales usually provide low margins, and ancillary products help to boost revenue. By upselling and cross-selling ancillary products, airlines can make more money and be more competitive.

In the past, ancillary sales typically have been managed by a one-size-fits-all product platform that supports only a single sales channel. Managing related loyalty points, credit card payments and other processes on the back end has been a challenge because different information is managed by different systems. For example, one system manages loyalty points while another handles payments.

CGI's DevOps team delivered a modern API platform for Finnair that hides this back-end complexity, while supporting multiple sales channels. The new platform simplifies the sale and delivery of ancillary products by, for example, managing all of the logic resulting when a passenger enters loyalty card, credit card and flight numbers. The API supports both web and mobile app channels (iOS and Android), and new channels can be easily added.

In building the platform, CGI implemented a new DevOps model to drive strong cross-functional collaboration between Finnair's teams and its vendors. This involved a new way of working, but proved to be highly successful in ensuring the platform and the related APIs delivered by vendors for different products met Finnair's business requirements.

In addition, CGI introduced and implemented a cloud-based toolset for managing the platform's ongoing operation. By combining this modern toolset with a 24x7 on-call service handled by the CGI team, platform incidents have been quickly detected and addressed. Overall, the model has proven to be very efficient, with a relatively small staff handling the large platform's operation.

Achieving **transformation objectives**

With the API platform in place, Finnair's ancillary revenue per passenger has grown by more than 10% per year since 2016. The Finnair mobile app is one of the most downloaded apps in Finland, with around 200,000 active users.

The platform also has delivered a number of other benefits, including:

- **Digital channels for Finnair services:** With the new platform, it's easy to add new digital channels for the sale of ancillary products and other services through the use of standard, easy-to-use APIs.
- **Faster time to market:** The highly automated cloud infrastructure implemented by CGI has enabled Finnair to achieve a faster time to market for the delivery of new products and services.
- **Active monitoring:** With the new cloud architecture, Finnair benefits from active monitoring of production services through comprehensive dashboards and alarms.

Towards a **shared vision**

CGI continues to work with Finnair on projects requiring domain understanding and emerging technology expertise including DevOps. The CGI team remains committed to helping to ensure Finnair achieves its objectives and its future vision.

“ CGI's skilled and committed team has been essential for achieving our goals in DevOps and cloud adoption for Finnair's digital transformation program. ”

Petteri Skaffari, Head of IT, Finnair



CGI's expertise in DevOps, cloud and emerging technologies

As organizations seek to advance their digital transformation agendas, many are turning to DevOps—integrated development, operations and quality assurance—to enable fast, modern and flexible IT that drives innovation and competitive advantage. CGI DevOps experts have a proven track record in helping clients successfully transform into digital organizations using DevOps, while also optimizing and automating their traditional IT.

CGI's DevOps Maturity Model guides transformation roadmaps and prioritizes initiatives. This model, combined with our end-to-end services, support the cultural, process, architectural and technological shifts needed to thrive in the digital economy, as well as efforts to streamline traditional IT to free up resources for transformational work.

The need for greater business agility and the move to DevOps also are contributing to increased adoption of cloud services. As a veteran cloud service provider with 40 years of IT infrastructure and managed services experience, CGI has the know-how to get clients to the cloud with confidence. We assist clients in assessing and implementing any hybrid cloud mix that is a fit for their unique needs.

In addition, as clients rapidly investigate and experiment with digital technologies, CGI has invested in emerging technologies, including automation and artificial intelligence, to deliver all of the capabilities clients need to drive their transformation success.

For more information on our digital transformation capabilities, visit [cgi.com/digital-transformation](https://www.cgi.com/digital-transformation) or contact_info@cgi.com.



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