

INTELEX

CASE STUDY



virgin atlantic 

Virgin Atlantic Takes Flight:

**‘Safety Underpins
Everything We Do’**



When Virgin Atlantic first started flying in 1984, the world was changing rapidly, but air travel hadn't changed much at all since the early days of commercial flight. It was expensive and customers had few choices and the ones they had couldn't be described as "luxurious," "fun" or "user friendly."

An airline with a parent brand that also owned a record label and record stores shook things up when it entered the market. Founder Richard Branson is known as an adventurer and an enthusiastic promoter of fun. As noted on the Virgin Atlantic website, "The more he got in the news for his adventures, the more Virgin Atlantic became renowned as the airline you flew if you wanted an adventure. His personality became our airline's personality."

When it launched, Virgin Atlantic took the airline industry by storm with an emphasis on exceptional service and fun destinations. The cheeky innovator was over the top, a self-described "tiny airline" up against much bigger and well-established players like American, Eastern and British Airlines (BA).

“We needed to use quite radical language to get attention. We were the airline that loudly proclaimed, ‘BA doesn’t give a shiatsu’ to promote our onboard massages,” notes the airline’s [website](#).

Despite the airline’s cheeky personality, Virgin Atlantic has always taken the safety of its employees and passengers, the management of risk, customer comfort and satisfaction, sustainability and corporate resiliency seriously. It has moved away from attention-seeking gimmicks, and embraced issues that matter:

- The first of its 17 787 Dreamliners joined the fleet in 2014, helping reduce Virgin Atlantic’s CO2 emissions by 18 percent.
- Vivienne Westwood redesigned the airline’s iconic red uniforms, which now are made from 25 percent recycled plastic.
- In 2016, Virgin Atlantic launched a three-year plan to become one of the most inclusive companies in travel, going on to fly the UK’s first ever ‘Pride Flight’ in 2019, sponsoring and attending nationwide Pride events and joining forces with Open For Business in 2020 to campaign for LGBTQ+ equality in the Caribbean.
- In 2021, Virgin Atlantic joined global aviation leaders to form a new aviation climate taskforce, and set ambitious targets for 2026, 2030 and 2040 to achieve significant reductions in CO2 emissions.

Virgin Atlantic promotes its philosophy of “business as a force for good.” The airline has renewed its mission to achieve net zero by 2050, “reinforcing its commitment to embed sustainability through innovation, transparency and accountability to do more for the protection of the planet.” At Intelex Technologies, we’ve embraced the spirit of the words “changing business for good.” With a goal of the elimination of death on the job by 2050, our mission is to empower organisations to meet the challenges of an increasingly complex marketplace while minimising their negative social, environmental and human impacts. Is it any

wonder these two innovative companies found each other?

“We have been a client for over 13 years, and we know what we’re getting with Intelex: great, friendly service and a partnership,” said Danny Miller, Specialist – Safety Systems Development.

“We have been a client for over 13 years, and we know what we’re getting with Intelex: great, friendly service and a partnership,”

Danny Miller

Specialist – Safety Systems Development.



Required: Something Powerful Yet Simple

In 2021, a year of great challenges and opportunities for the airline and transportation and logistics industries, Virgin Atlantic realised it needed a more robust, simple-yet-smart technology that would aid in achieving its safety management goals. Virgin Atlantic had been using Intelix for a number of years, utilising custom-made forms that were no longer able to scale to meet current requirements, including many internal and external reporting requirements. The airline also needed a system that gave it and its leadership teams the right visibility into different parts of the business but wasn't a burden on its users as they entered, analysed and viewed data.

Virgin Atlantic reviewed the regulations it was mandated to meet, such as data sharing with IATA, Mandatory Occurrence Reporting with the UK CAA as well as RIDDOR reporting with the UK Health & Safety Executive. It used Intelix's EHS Incident Management Application to standardise its processes across those three initial forms and used that as a foundation moving forward, utilising regulatory standard taxonomy to make data sharing much easier and more concise.

"We were able to leverage the flexibility of the Intelix system and have a 'single source of truth' that fits many needs," said Miller, who has been with Virgin Atlantic for approximately 15 years. "As a robust application, Intelix provides us with off-the-shelf functionality [as well as] customisation capabilities that meet our specific needs within the aviation industry."

For example, Virgin Atlantic teams created an 'Aircraft Damage' report, which asks specific questions around the event type and includes built-in business rule thresholds. Those thresholds allow the system to automatically close reports deemed "low priority" with a risk rating and a classification and provide feedback to the person making the report. Higher priority reports, however, are tagged for a more detailed review.

"This flexibility and ability to customise the system been a great first step for Virgin Atlantic to truly optimise the application," said Miller, adding, "We're looking forward to creating more smart forms for other specific event types in the future."

Virgin Atlantic also wanted to improve visibility for its business and leadership teams on the data collected within the system. Previously, reports and dashboards could be provided on a form-by-form basis, but any type of comparative data had to be extracted in Excel and manually built into reports.

Miller observed, "Using Intelix Incident Management Software, we were able to identify which data points – especially for its SPIs and KPIs – were used in multiple forms and used at an incident level, allowing the EHS team to compare different types of events, giving us a much wider range of data to analyse to be more pro-active."



Intelex EHS Management System is Helping to Break Down Silos

The flexibility and customisation capabilities of Intelex have helped Virgin Atlantic teams have better management of data input/output, thanks to the automation of many of the processes that capture, monitor and analyse meaningful EHS data. Further, the safety management system has aided in not only providing better visibility for Virgin Atlantic's leadership teams, but also allows for a better regulatory process and standardisations.

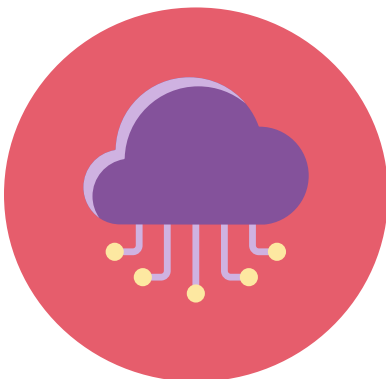
The integration of some of the company's current systems into the Intelex Safety Management System is also helping break down some siloes, said Miller. "We integrated Intelex with our employee and core databases to allow automated update of employee info as well as accurate flight information. We found that having these functions has been phenomenal, as they have allowed automation of processes."

Not only has this reduced the manual need for importing, updating and maintenance, he added, it supports Virgin Atlantic's goal to foster a less-siloed workforce where everyone works from the same starting point with the same knowledge across the team. "This has started to create a more co-operative way of thinking," he said. "Embedding the Intelex platform and EHS Incident Management Software is an integral part of Virgin Atlantic's safety management system."



"We integrated Intelex with our employee and core databases to allow automated update of employee info as well as accurate flight information. We found that having these functions has been phenomenal, as they have allowed automation of processes."

Danny Miller



Employee Engagement and Adoption Quickly Surpassed Goals

Since optimising the Intelex system to fit its needs, Miller said Virgin Atlantic has noticed the following improvements:

- User adoption for both Intelex and Intelex Mobile has increased. When the airline launched Intelex Mobile in 2019, it had a goal of 50 percent uptake, and it managed to meet and surpass that by reaching an average of 62 percent of users logging in to Intelex Mobile. “Now, in 2022, using EHS Incident Management Software and the new, simplistic reporting forms, the uptake is sitting at around 70 percent, which is a huge success,” said Miller.
- More business awareness of the system. “Previously, the configuration was much more focused on the ‘investigator’ side of things, making the end user forms complex and sometimes daunting for other users,” Miller remembers. “As part of the project, we made the new application about the end user and how they would use it.” The company launched a communication project to make the rest of the business more aware of the system, what it currently does and what it will do when launching the new application. As a result, there are more users logging in to look or simply ask the Health, Safety & Security Department what the SMS is for and what it can do.
- More managerial involvement around HSE due to new processes. Previously, there was a minimal number of line managers getting involved with the system, generally when investigators tasked them with something, and the process was far from perfect. Now, said Miller, there’s a specific workflow structure that notifies the line manager when an injury or illness report has been submitted for a member of their team. They also have a responsibility to review and provide any information before it’s sent off to Virgin Atlantic’s HSE team. This, in turn, has given line managers more involvement and ownership in the process.



While the new system completed implementation in Dec 2021, Virgin Atlantic is looking forward to many more positive outcomes. This is not surprising, given the airline's emphasis on continuous improvement. The safety team has helped identify FAQs, provided Miller with content for guides about utilising the software and consulted on training for various groups of employees (office workers, flight crews, maintenance teams, etc.) to ensure they know how to enter data and log reports of incidents. These are just a few of the ways the company ensures employees in general and the safety team in particular are engaged and invested in the success of the safety management system.

"It was a really, really great team effort to ensure we had that support for our users," said Miller. "There's been a huge increase in reports we're getting. One of the big things we've noticed is that people are reporting near misses, which is something we've never had before. Our health and safety investigators have been able to use that information to do a better and more efficient job of making sure we don't have injuries because of those."

"One of the big things we've noticed is that people are reporting near misses, which is something we've never had before. Our health and safety investigators have been able to use that information to do a better and more efficient job of making sure we don't have injuries because of those."

- Miller



Taking Care of Business and People

“Keeping our people and our customers safe and secure is at the heart of all we do.” Chief executive Shai Weiss recently commented, “We know that our people are our secret sauce.”

Miller said he is pleased with the adoption of Intelex and the results Virgin Atlantic is achieving.

“There is more engagement in Health, Safety & Security than there has ever been before and employees are more comfortable with ascertaining what an actual near miss event is,” said Miller.

Reporting rates have increased significantly with the introduction of Incident Management over the last year compared to their previous custom application within Intelex. Miller said the sub incidents are more streamlined and easier for employees to complete, both on desktop and mobile.

“We’ve used our new configuration to focus on multiple areas such as near miss events. We’re concentrating on increasing the reporting of these via education (about what constitutes a near miss) – and failure to follow procedures. We’re concentrating on reducing the amount of these types of events with specific dashboards/post holder involvement and education pieces for employees,” said Miller. “Incident Management allows us to do this, where we weren’t able to so before.”

Virgin Atlantic’s aim is to have more near miss events reported, an indication that more employees are being proactive when it comes to Health, Safety & Security. This “will obviously take time to embed, but the direction we’re going is very promising,” Miller added.

Word of mouth has spread around the airline about the Intelex app, said Miller, and employees are using it and telling others about it and more and more employees have become engaged and want to use it. “All line managers are now part of the workflow process for employee injury/illness events – they weren’t before – so it’s taken some time to engage with them and manage expectations. But as of September 2022, we can definitely see a rise in more engagement, especially in some areas where remote workers rarely see their managers, such as cabin and flight crew members,” he added.

“We have a slogan: ‘Safety underpins everything we do.’ A lot more people are reporting things they’ve never reported before because they feel empowered to do it,” said Miller.



Virgin Atlantic has always taken the safety of its employees and passengers, the management of risk, customer comfort and satisfaction, sustainability and corporate resiliency seriously. It has moved away from attention-seeing gimmicks, and embraced issues that matter



INTELEX

www.intellex.com

For over 30 years, Intellex has been making a difference in the world by helping our 1,400 customers achieve safer, more sustainable operations. Our web and mobile solutions streamline and simplify environmental, safety, quality and risk management, empowering organisations to meet the challenges of an increasingly complex marketplace while minimising negative social, environmental and human impacts. Intellex is proud to be an operating company of Fortive Corporation, which provides strength in numbers, strength in skills and perspectives and strength in our shared conviction to make an impact.