



GLOBAL PRINTING...ENABLED.

Virgin Atlantic | Virgin Atlantic Soars to New Heights with Printronix SL5000r RFID Enabled Printers

Profile

Virgin Atlantic, Great Britain's second largest airline, has a fleet of more than 30 aircraft that transports travelers from the United Kingdom to destinations in Asia, Africa and Australia and the Americas.

Situation

Accuracy, efficiency and accountability in an airline's logistics, maintenance and engineering departments are critical to success in the highly competitive air travel market. Virgin Atlantic's central logistics operations, based at London's Heathrow Airport, play a critical role in the company's success by ensuring that regular maintenance checks take place, and that any aircraft defects are promptly repaired. Feeling the pinch of increasing operational costs and competitiveness within the airline industry, Virgin Atlantic chose to implement an RFID spare parts tracking system at its Heathrow facility. To increase efficiency and reduce risk within its spare parts supply chain, Virgin Atlantic partnered with Tata Consulting Services (TCS), a firm with expertise in system integration and RFID, to evaluate various RFID hardware and software solutions.

Goals

- § To implement an RFID system that would give the company a more competitive edge by accurately tagging spare parts, for increased visibility within the supply chain and maintenance environments
- § To become compliant with forthcoming European Aviation Safety Agency (EASA) guidelines concerning the traceability and authenticity of aircraft components

Results

Virgin Atlantic selected the Printronix EPCglobal Gen2 SL5000r printer with PXML (Printronix extensible Markup Language) connectivity. Developed using open XML standards, PXML delivers a single software solution that monitors, manages and controls a single SL5000r, or a group of different printers, and their print jobs. The SL5000r printer also features intelligent RFID tag management, enabling the airline to ensure 100 percent readability of the RFID smart labels entering the supply chain, and supporting compliance with EASA. With the new RFID tagging system, Virgin Atlantic was able to cut the time needed to locate inbound spare parts in half.

Reaction

"The technology and support offered by Printronix was unparalleled in terms of reliability and professionalism. In addition, the company was able to work to an aggressive timeframe of under five months from initial meeting to full trial rollout."

Graham Holford
Senior Systems Analyst