

FlightWorks Takes to the Skies with a Comprehensive Mobile Enterprise Suite

The Challenge

The introduction of tablet-based Electronic Flight Bags (EFB), a digital alternative to the cumbersome printed flight manuals used for decades in the aviation industry, has provided beneficial effects in terms of cost savings and operational efficiencies. Global carriers, such as United Airlines, estimate the use of mobile devices in their cockpits produce annual fuel consumption savings of 326,000 gallons through eliminating excess weight from pages of printed manuals. With real-time connectivity, pilots also optimize flight plans – taking into account weather conditions, flight paths and runway conditions to deliver passengers as quickly and smoothly as possible.

With the migration to digital, however, comes the inevitable need for stringent compliance and security measures in the post-9/11 skies. The Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) allows tablet EFB's but only under strict supervision to ensure passenger safety and restrict sensitive data falling into the wrong hands.

To meet these mandates, while enjoying the cost-saving measures tablets can deliver, many aviation firms are turning to the proven mobile device management platform of AirWatch®. Kennesaw, GA based FlightWorks, the largest provider of private air charter, aircraft management, government services, and aviation consulting in the Southeast, is one such operator. According to FlightWorks Vice President of Business and Information Systems, Johan Segring, AirWatch and its patented Secure Content Locker™ feature take his company to new heights.

The Client

"Our pilots had been asking for a tablet solution, and we made the decision to explore the concept," Segring said. "We needed a mechanism to distribute both critical and proprietary manuals required to be on-board the aircraft but with enhanced security features given the nature of the data."

Before using tablets in their cockpits, FlightWorks essentially had an "in-house printing shop" to keep flight manuals up-to-date with current flight information and charts used for navigation.



Solution Overview

- Customer: FlightWorks
- Industry: Aviation
- Geography: Georgia, USA
- Challenge: Acquire a mechanism to securely and efficiently distribute digital flight manuals
- Solution: Tablets for pilots using AirWatch MDM solutions and the Secure Content Locker



Not only time consuming, the continual printing and re-printing of materials was a costly measure.

"The print method was inefficient to say the least. At any given time, any flight can be line checked by an FAA inspector who will ensure you are carrying the proper version of a host of manuals that are subject for monthly revision," Segring said. "With the tablet, everything is done instantly now. That improves efficiency and it's ultimately more accurate."

The Solution

To ensure FAA compliance while delivering data securely to pilots, FlightWorks is implementing an AirWatch-exclusive content management system called the Secure Content Locker (SCL). Downloaded to the device as a mobile application, the SCL is a data repository where sensitive data can be housed in a secure environment for mobile access anywhere in the world. Once installed, pilots are required to enter their log in credentials through a directory-based authentication layer. Should unwarranted access be attempted or even achieved, the SCL can remotely disable access or even delete downloaded documents by the administrator.

"The Secure Content Locker enables our Flight Operations management team to distribute manuals and revisions with a few clicks and monitor compliance, regardless of where in the world the aircraft happens to be at the time of release," Segring said. "We demonstrated the SCL system and process to our FAA POI (Principal Operations Inspector), who was extremely impressed. This demonstration was actually how we got him to sign-off on starting our initial six month proof of concept period without hesitation."

As for the pilots themselves, the adoption of tablets in the cockpit is a major upgrade that simplifies their jobs, and ultimately improves their ability to fly the aircraft. FlightWorks assistant chief pilot Chad Noblit, who uses the tablets daily for his flights, says the real-time information and ease-of-use produces immeasurable results.

"It's absolutely huge to have these devices in the cockpit. The tablets save space by eliminating printed charts and manuals which gives us more room to play with weight on the aircraft. We've been able to shed about 60 pounds per aircraft by replacing the printed charts and manuals with the tablets. The ease-of-access to the information and the availability at a glance – you can't put a price on that," Noblit said.

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