# Virgin Atlantic

"Our vision was to create a virtual contact centre network that delivered consistent, efficient, effective and transparent service to customers globally. We also needed to establish a global view of business operations with the ability to control where calls are delivered, and create a flexible workforce, scheduling people around skills and fluctuating work demands. Aspect's broad range of contact centre solutions has helped us achieve those aims and build for the future."

**John Stanwell**

*Resource Planning and Development Manager, Virgin Atlantic Airways*

**Products:**

- Aspect® CallCenter® ACD
- Uniphi Connect
- Aspect eWorkforce Management™

**Results:**

- Reduced costs by leveraging SIP-based VoIP, eliminating PSTN toll charges and lowering network costs
- Increased customer satisfaction by automating routine calls
- Increased agent retention
- Maximised agent productivity

## The Company

Virgin Atlantic Airways (VAA) operates long-haul routes between the United Kingdom and North America, the Caribbean, Africa, the Middle East, Asia, and Australia. The company services customers via four contact centres in the United Kingdom and the United States, as well as via two service providers in India and the United States. Together they handle more than 2 million sales and service calls each year.

These contact centres have been leveraging Aspect Software solutions since 1994 when VAA first implemented Aspect® CallCenter® ACD to route customer calls to VAA agents based on the priorities set by management. Other VAA departments also use the product. If an employee calls to speak to a human resource or staff travel representative, for example, their call is directed to the first available agent within those departments. In addition, the company's cargo department at Heathrow Airport uses one of the VAA Aspect CallCenter ACDs for telephony services.

In 1995, VAA implemented Aspect® eWorkforce Management™ to enable the contact centre to meet its resource planning, forecasting and scheduling goals.

## The Business Challenge

Massive growth in air travel has enabled Virgin Atlantic to rapidly expand its operations. Yet competition for passengers has never been greater - putting intense pressure on VAA to not only maintain service quality levels, but to continue to improve them. This created a number of challenges that the VAA contact centres needed to address. For example, the cost of transporting voice traffic between centres was increasing, as was the cost of deploying new centres. Also, managers were struggling to analyse the data from a mountain of call reports, and turning it into useable information they could act upon to improve operations was becoming increasingly difficult. Additionally, managers needed to manage schedule changes and holiday requests for a growing agent population.

> "Uniphi Connect fully supports our 'right resource around the company' approach. We selected the product on the grounds of simplicity, cost, speed and flexibility."
>
> **John Stanwell**
> *Resource Planning and Development Manager, Virgin Atlantic Airways*

## The Solution

To address the high costs of network operations and of deploying new centres, VAA decided to transition to a Voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP) infrastructure and upgrade its contact centre solutions to help manage its extensive growth. VAA selected Uniphi Connect, an optional module for the Aspect® CallCenter® ACD to take advantage of the cost savings of SIP based VoIP networks by connecting both public switch telephone network (PSTN) and IP agents to the Aspect CallCenter ACD and create an easy migration path to VoIP for future contact centre and remote agent deployments. Uniphi Connect consists of an agent phone for remote and onsite agents which connects to the ACD via an IP interface card and provides a consistent interface for all agents, regardless of transport method.

The company also upgraded to a newer version of Aspect® eWorkforce Management™ and its Empower enhancement package. The solution combines comprehensive forecasting, scheduling and adherence capabilities with performance and quality management to optimise performance for more than 700 agents in four contact centres. The Empower enhancement enables agents to request shift and schedule changes and provides a response directly to individual desktops, automating the scheduling approval process.

## The Results

Uniphi Connect now centralises management of all of VAA's contact centres and remote agents to its operations in the UK. VAA retains time-division multiplexing (TDM) phones at its contact centres while enabling 140 home-based agents to move to an IP infrastructure. It is also reducing network traffic costs when routing calls between contact centres, especially when call volumes are high. By leveraging the existing Aspect CallCenter ACD using Uniphi Connect, the company can now deploy new centres faster and more cost effectively without installing new hardware.

Aspect eWorkforce Management is also improving the company's operations by enabling agents to clearly view their intraday schedules and helping managers plan and schedule training sessions more easily. With the Empower enhancement, agents have more control over their schedules and can easily request shift changes via the web or telephony, which has led to increased agent retention and maximised productivity.

VAA plans to expand its use of Uniphi Connect in its UK Cargo operations and is currently putting a training plan in place to get more value from Aspect eWorkforce Management – upgrading its strategic significance from an administration tool to an application that helps meet business objectives. The company will also be implementing Aspect® Customer Self Service™, a voice portal product, to create a new speech-enabled Automated Flight Information System, replacing the touch tone-based system that was not user-friendly and was cumbersome to update.

## About Aspect Software

Aspect Software, Inc., founder of the contact center industry, is the world's largest company solely focused on providing proven, innovative solutions to enable customer service, collections, and sales and telemarketing processes for in-house and outsourced contact centers. For more information, visit **www.aspect.com.**

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