# The Great LAX Move

13 airlines. 3 nights. 2 terminals. 1 common use solution.

What happens when the 2nd largest carrier in the US moves to a new home in the 2nd busiest airport in the US? The answer: one of the largest and most ambitious airport moves in history.

A key component of the move would be the relocation of 13 airlines to 2 new terminals in just 3 nights. Moving this many carriers, in a US airport this large, in such a short time-frame would be more than a complex task, it would be unprecedented.

To achieve this feat, a trusted airport IT partner and flexible common use solution would be needed. That's why they chose Amadeus.
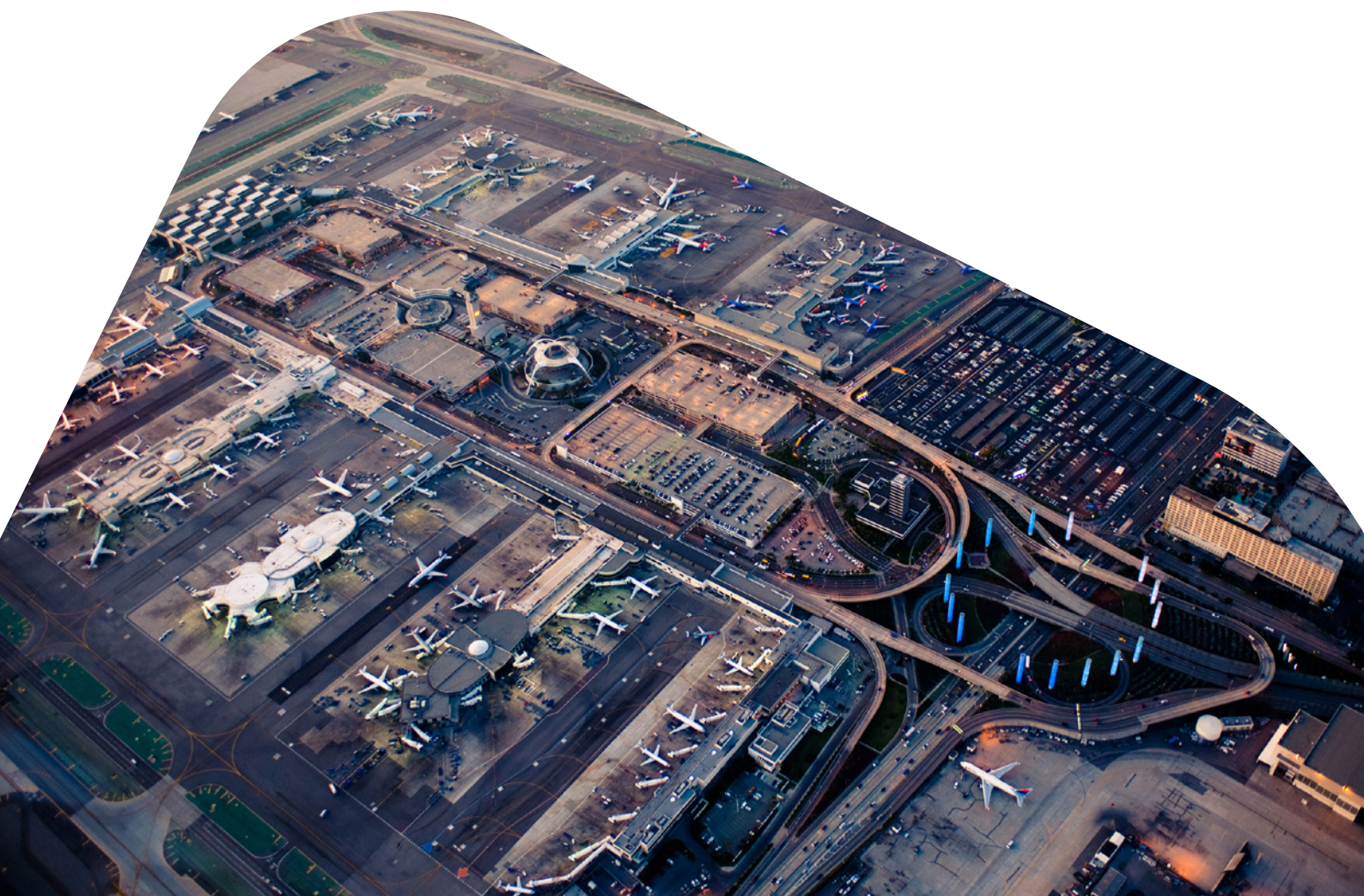
Background

Los Angeles International Airport (LAX) is the 2nd largest airport in the US and the 5th largest globally. It features 9 terminals and 4 parallel runways. Both spread over 3,500 acres of land. Annually, the airport services in excess of 80 million passengers flying with more than 70 airlines, which operate throughout the US and around the world. LAX is the gateway for travelers journeying across the US and beyond.

In 2016, Delta Airlines had outgrown its home in Terminals 5 and 6. Following impressive growth and as part of significant expansion plans, the US carrier needed more space to operate at LAX. It needed more gates. More service desks. More capacity. In short, Delta needed to move into larger premises.

After extensive discussions with LAX, other carriers at the airport and the City of Los Angeles, it was decided that Delta would leave their current premises at Terminals 5 and 6. And move into a new home in Terminals 2 and 3. This would mean the largest terminal move in the history of LAX. In total, 27 airlines would need to be relocated across 5 terminals.
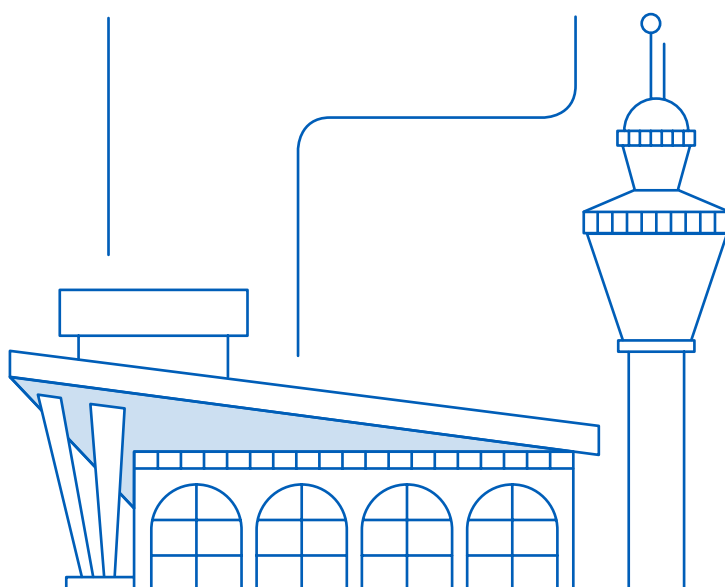
A fundamental part of the move would be the relocation of 13 carriers residing across Terminals 2, 3, 5 and 6.

2nd
largest airport
in the US

5th
largest airport
gobally

80 million
passangers
annually

LAX

The project

For Delta Airlines to move into Terminals 2 and 3, 13 carriers would need to be relocated. Upon discussions, it was decided that the carriers, currently located in Terminals 2 and 3, would move to Terminals 5 and 6, the premises soon to be vacated by Delta Airlines.

Those carriers to be relocated within Terminal 5 were Allegiant Air, American Airlines, Frontier, Hawaiian Air, JetBlue, Spirit, and Sun Country. The carriers to be relocated within Terminal 6 were Air Canada, Alaska Airlines, Boutique Air, Great Lakes Airlines, Mokulele Airlines, and Virgin America.

A priority of the project was to create a smooth transition. The 13 carriers would need to be moved from their current home to their new locations with minimal disruption to services and with minimal impact on travelers. All 13 carriers needed to be back up and running at full capacity, as soon as possible.

The cost of the relocation would be $60 million USD to be paid by Delta Airlines.

The project involved close to a year of planning, with extensive consultation and communication between all stakeholders, LAX, the affected airlines, City of LA, and vendors.

It was decided the move would take place over 3 nights with a 4 – 5 hour window on each night.

The solution

As part of the relocation to the new premises, the 13 carriers would need a new common use solution to be installed within Terminals 5 and 6. This would allow them to share gates and desks as per the common use model. After a careful review of vendors, Amadeus was chosen to provide the solution.

The solution to be provided was Amadeus Extended Airline System Environment (EASE™).

Amadeus EASE™ was chosen because of its flexibility and simplicity of use. Using application virtualization, Amadeus EASE™ allows airlines to run their own check-in and boarding software while retaining all the benefits of a common use system.

I had to make a decision on who was to be the preferred vendor. This decision was critical to the project. I chose Amadeus based on its ease of implementation, its flexibility and the modular capabilities of the software."

Sudhir Patel,

IT Program Manager, PM Technologies representing Delta Airlines

This means airline staff can simply log in and access their own environment. The 'look and feel' will be the same as if they were using their own proprietary systems. Their application is virtualized in the shared use system. In the back-end, however, all the benefits of common use apply.

The choice of common use solution was an important decision for the relocation and future success of the new terminals. The ability for carriers to share gates and service desks based on demand is essential to ensuring efficient and uninterrupted service. The 13 carriers would need to swap between these resources quickly and easily, on a daily basis.
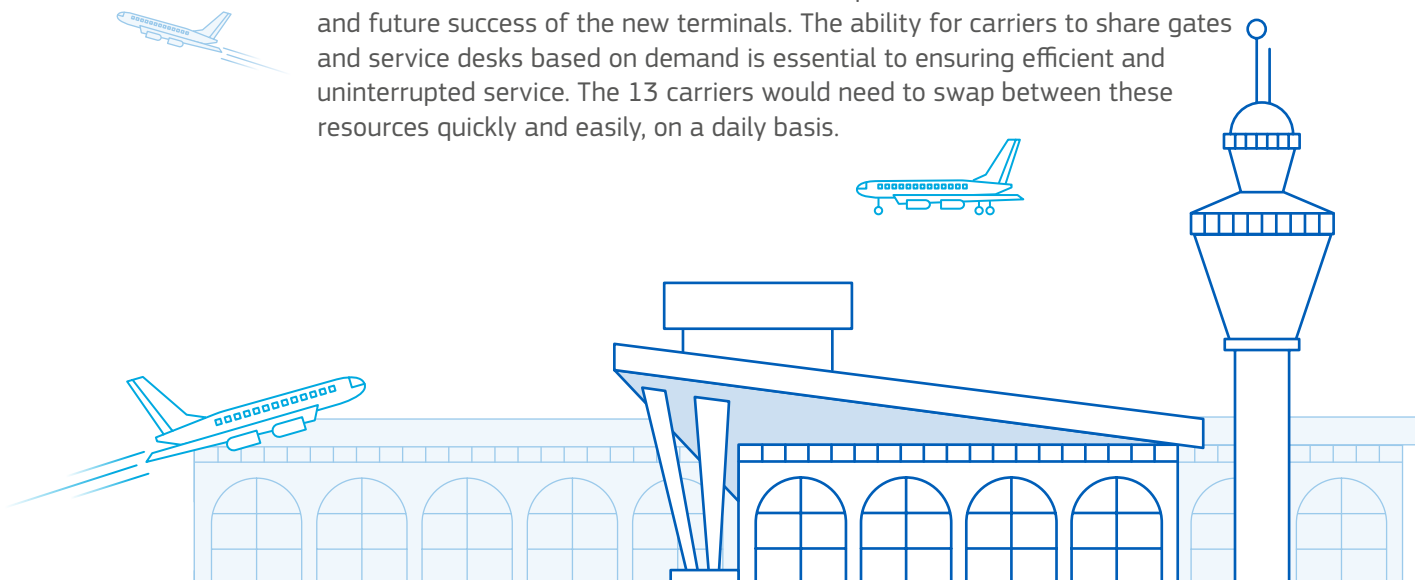
Implementation

Amadeus began work on the project in August of 2016.

9 months were allocated for the design and construction of new Terminal 5 and 6 facilities. The deployment of the new common use system was to be completed during this time. Work would need to conclude by mid-May, prior to the summer flight season.

The Amadeus EASE™ installation was to be completed by May 7 as the airlines were staggered to move in over three nights, May 12 – 16. Not meeting this deadline was not an option. Any delay would affect the timeline of the entire relocation project. The project scope required the deployment of Amadeus EASE™ at:

_62 ticket counter positions, 45 gate positions, and 12 curbside positions in Terminal 5

_44 ticket counter positions, 12 gate positions and 2 curbside positions in Terminal 6

To ensure success, the entire strength of Amadeus was put behind the project. People from all levels of the company worked together to meet the deadline. This included Amadeus Airport IT Americas President Betros Wakim personally attending the site and overseeing operations.

Installation was finished on schedule, while testing was completed without a single failure. This meant the Amadeus EASE™ system was ready to go as planned when the first of the 13 carriers moved in on May 12.

I think the difference with Amadeus is that they are not regimented in how they do business. There is a high level of flexibility in processes to cater to the airlines. We found it very easy working with Amadeus. They listened. They had engineers on site.

When things got tough, we had the President on-site, managing expectations. When a company has a leadership, which takes the time to be on-site, to help us to foster the challenges, it speaks a lot about the company, the commitment to excellence. It was all hands on deck, they did what they had to do.

It was a privilege to work with Amadeus on such a complex task."

Mervyn Carrabon,
IT Business Consultant, Lead Technical Resource in regards to Common Use Technologies

Outcome

By May 7, all Amadeus hardware and software had been installed, airline network connectivity was established, testing with airline IT and agents was finalized, and Amadeus EASE™ was available at all PODs and gates. As per the scheduled timeline, systems were prepped and ready for the 13 carriers, which began arriving on May 12.

This meant the carriers could begin using their new common use system immediately, upon arrival.

> " *The single largest role that Amadeus played in this project was the support we got from the executives at Amadeus. Having direct access to Betros Wakim and his resources really help drive us to success."*

Sudhir Patel,

IT Program Manager, PM Technologies representing Delta Airlines

> *Coordination in a project of this magnitude can be very challenging, but working with professionals from the IT teams within Delta, LAWA and the other Airlines resolved issues quickly and seamlessly."*

Nader Almaaitah,

Project Manager, Airport IT, Amadeus

Airline staff quickly became confident in operating the new Amadeus EASE™ system. Thanks to the application virtualization, staff could operate in their own environment. So, very little training was required to get operators up to speed.

Additionally, many operators were familiar with Amadeus systems, having used them at other airports. This helped to dispel any hesitation they may have had about migrating to a new system.

> *We are looking forward to working with Amadeus again."*

Mervyn Carrabon,

IT Business Consultant, Lead Technical Resource in regards to Common Use Technologies

Combined, the on-schedule delivery and ease-of-use of the Amadeus EASE™ system allowed the 13 carriers to be up and running, straight away, upon their arrival in Terminals 5 and 6. They could continue to service their customers as per normal while minimizing any disruptions that could have resulted from the relocation.

Moving forward, the airlines will benefit from the simplicity of using Amadeus EASE™ as their common use solution. They will be able to easily and quickly switch between gates and service desks, based on demand, as per the common use model.

Additional solutions to be implemented included Amadeus AODB, RMS, ESB, and FIDS.

Conclusions

Agility

With 9 months of planning, and just 3 nights to migrate, Amadeus helped LAX to carry out one of their most significant moves to date, the relocation of 13 airlines to 2 terminals.

Efficiency

Amadeus Extended Airline System Environment (EASE™) was installed on schedule, with minimal disruption to services at 108 counter positions across 57 gates.

Collaboration

Key project leaders attributed the installation's success to Amadeus' flexibility, leadership and commitment to excellence.

Flexibility

Going forward, Amadeus EASE™ common use solution will make demand-based switching between gates and service desks quick and easy.

aMaDEUS

Visit our website for more information

amadeus.com/airports

Special thanks to

Nader Almaaitah,
Project Manager, Airport IT, Amadeus

Mervyn Carrabon,
IT Business Consultant,
Lead Technical Resource in regards
to Common Use Technologies

Sudhir Patel,
IT Program Manager, PM Technologies
representing Delta Airlines