

A MAGAZINE FOR AIRLINE EXECUTIVES

OCTOBER 2002

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The “Qik,” Uncomplicated Solution

■ By Barb Ryan | Ascend Contributor

Today more than ever, airlines are seeking to simplify operations in order to reduce costs and remain competitive, yet they are still pressured to maintain high-quality customer service. One of the key

based release includes a completely re-written developer tool that allows travel companies to more cost-effectively integrate data and systems, while providing information to travelers, all via an open technical platform and an advanced tool set.

The *Qik* solutions’ powerful Developer Tool helps airlines tailor their solutions to their unique business environment. Additionally, the new edition supports two scripting languages,

more advanced graphical elements, a variety of graphics formats, a fully graphical screen painter, as well as the creation of both modal and non-modal windows. The result is a much more flexible and powerful tool that allows developers to create graphically rich applications more quickly than ever before.

The Developer Tool, combined with the power and flexibility of engineering services provides a solution with rapid returns rather than a simple technology solution. Incorporating business processing knowledge of industrial

engineers allows solutions to be designed to meet the unique needs of many diverse customers. Plus, the technical skill of the architects and Java developers that support the *Qik* solutions and their tremendous experience in that capacity ensures it meets the needs of the travel industry.

The *Qik* solutions have a proven history of improving productivity and reducing costs. Quantifiable improvements have been measured in every environment studied, including:

■ **Reduced headcount**

The *Qik* solutions simplify complex procedures, eliminate the need for end-users to consult job aids, reduce error frequencies and automate multi-step processes. As a result, the *Qik* solutions can yield a 4 percent to 12 percent improvement in end-user productivity, allowing clients to reduce agent headcount. Also, the same agents can handle more calls and provide improved customer service.

■ **Reduced new-hire training costs**

The GUI front-ends created using the Developer Tool are much easier to use

than traditional host systems. In addition, when data from multiple systems is required, the *Qik* solutions integrate the data seamlessly, eliminating the need for the end-user to switch between systems and remember multiple access methods. New-hire training costs can be reduced by 15 percent to 30 percent.

■ **Reduced facility requirements**

The *Qik* solutions productivity improvements and automation opportunities also translate into reduced facilities requirements. The same number of personnel can handle an increased volume of calls. In addition, repetitive tasks can be easily automated. This eliminates the cost of extra agents. Carriers achieve between 4 percent and 8 percent reductions in facility costs.

■ **Improved flight sector conversion rate**

The *Qik* solutions enhance sales personnel effectiveness by improving information accessibility, reducing average call times and providing sales prompts. Between 1 percent and 3 percent improvements

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methods of simplifying operations is through the use of advanced tools designed to streamline business processes. The *Sabre® Qik™* business processing solutions aid airlines in effectively reducing costs while increasing productivity and the bottom line.

The *Qik* solutions are widely considered the industry pacesetter for graphical user interfaces and developer tools and are used by more than 300 airlines, travel agencies, tour companies and Web companies around the world. The latest Java-



in flight conversion rates can be expected as a result of implementing the *Qik* solutions, money that often goes straight to the bottom line.

■ **Increased sales solicitations**

The solutions provide easy access to data and present the data at the appropriate time during the agents' workflow. In addition, sales prompts are used to assist the agent in closing the sale. Finally, the applications eliminate the need to memorize or search for seldom-used transactions, such as those required for car hire and hotel booking.

Clients have improved solicitation compliance by 15 percent to 75 percent.

■ **Reduced telephone charges**

The *Qik* solutions' productivity improvements also translate into shorter calls, reducing the cost of incoming calls by 4 percent and 8 percent.

■ **Reduced host communication costs**

An application written using the *Qik* solutions performs local error checking, retains host information and combines host transactions, significantly reducing host communication costs. Between

7 percent and 23 percent reductions in host communications are considered normal.

■ **Host programming fees**

The *Qik* solutions place a powerful and easy-to-use tool in the hands of airlines allowing them to develop rich business logic and creatively solve business problems without the need for expensive and time consuming host system enhancements.

The solutions also provide many other less tangible improvements. Some of these benefits are difficult to quantify, but this does not diminish their importance.

These benefits include:

■ **Increased job satisfaction**

By eliminating the monotony of long formats, streamlining job functions and reducing dependence on technical knowledge, sales agents are free to serve the customer, improving their job satisfaction.

■ **Improved customer service**

Given the improved job satisfaction and the agents' ability to more easily complete their jobs, they can focus on customers rather than
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News Briefs from Around the Globe

THE HIGH • LEVEL VIEW

News from Asia

Korean Air is upgrading its systems to the latest version of the *Sabre*® *Aircrews*™ crew management system, which will provide an integrated solution to support the crew management needs of the airline.


The contract upgrades Korean Air to version 6.0 of the *AirCrews* system, a full suite of integrated crew solution products providing crew management needs for the airline æ from long-term planning to the actual day of flight.

According Jin Soo Kim, general manager for training administration at Korean Air, version 6.0 of the *AirCrews* system will enable the airline to develop and implement a wide range of crew operation needs.

"This upgrade of the *AirCrews* system gives Korean Air the ability to continue utilizing crew in the most sensible and resourceful way," said Kim. "Sabre

understood what our airline was aiming to achieve and provided this most suitable product."

Some of the major enhancements of version 6.0 of the *AirCrews* system include:

- The Crew Resource Management module — Allows the crew planner to plan future crew availability versus planned crew requirements.
- The Roster Optimization module — Generates an optimized set of crew rosters for a specified date range. The optimization algorithm supports equitable work assignments based on fairness criteria, crew preferences and "desirable" roster profile attributes.
- The Crew Internet Access module — Provides crew with easy, global access to real-time information via the Internet. It enables crew management personnel to also receive crew input during the roster planning and generation process. 

on the system and interact professionally and pleasantly with them.

■ **Greater adaptability to changing business needs**

The simple-to-use Developer Tool allows agents to modify and develop new functionality to rapidly respond to changing market conditions. Special offers, promotions and prompts can be created and displayed based on certain qualifying events.

■ **Removal of technological barriers**

The latest version of the *Qik* solutions, the Java edi-

tion, supports integration with: Internet content, databases, e-mail, peripheral devices, and services such as CORBA or enterprise Java beans.

Integration with fax and telephone servers is also a simple integration process. Incorporating open architecture, the *Qik* solutions will continue to evolve with the changing technology needs of the industry.


The *Qik* solutions also provide valuable customer relationship management capabilities, which helps simplify the process of

retaining customers. After all, it is cheaper and easier to retain a customer than it is to attract a new one.

"Airlines want to equip their agents with invaluable data emerging from their CRM initiatives," said Chris Serafin, vice president of Sabre Airline Solutions. "The Java edition of the *Qik* solutions put that capability firmly in their hands by placing customer data at the agents' fingertips via the same interface they use to help the traveler optimize their travel plans."

Airlines will also be able

to integrate the *Qik* solutions with the underlying technologies that are used across an ever-widening span of customer touch-points, including the Internet, wireless devices and reservations.

Given the need to simplify operations, airlines can leverage tools and technology to make their processes more efficient and user friendly. The *Qik* solutions provide an ideal method of accomplishing these goals. 

Barb Ryan is director of the Qik business processing solutions at Sabre.

News Briefs from Around the Globe

THE HIGH • LEVEL VIEW

News from Europe

British Airways has chosen industry-leading software to help it more effectively manage its personnel operations.

British Airways will implement the *Sabre® StaffAdmin™* employee tracking and assignment system to manage the difficult task of employee staffing and administrative work processing. The *StaffAdmin* system gives the airline access to a database that contains a wide range of information including shift schedules, and it creates a work environment for monitoring and updating employee schedules. The release of the *StaffAdmin* system that British Airways will implement adds Web-based access to allow employees to perform work-related shift bidding, schedule checks, overtime and vacation requests from home, on the Web or at a self-service kiosk.

British Airways selected the system to ensure that it has the right people scheduled for the right activities and can meet ever more stringent

European Work Time limitations.

"Providing excellent customer service whilst realizing effective utilization of resources is critical in today's environment," says Andy Garner, general manager of business development for British Airways. "With this system, British Airways will be able to efficiently administer the 8,000 ground staff who work at London's Heathrow and Gatwick airports while providing employees a means to manage their work schedules from kiosks."

Through deployment of the *StaffAdmin* system, airlines have been able to achieve up to a 20 percent improvement in administrative staff utilization through paperwork reduction and increased employee involvement in data entry. They have also decreased costs by up to 15 percent for mistakes in the reconciliation and processing of manually compiled time and attendance data and delivered up to 5 percent staff utilization improvement through improved rostering. 