Trans States Airlines, GoJet Airlines, Compass Airlines

Planning safer, stress-free routes to boost passenger comfort

The Weather Company
An IBM Business

Business Challenge
Safe, reliable, on-time flights are central to airline customer service goals. How can airlines deliver first-class customer service when turbulence and thunderstorms begin to brew?

Transformation
By using live data from WSI® Fusion to track weather systems before they affect flightpaths, carriers can plan safer, more efficient routes and adjust to conditions in near real time.

Results
Advanced warning of weather hazards helps improve passenger safety and comfort

Helps keep flights on schedule, even when competitors are grounded

Reduces costs by optimizing routes and reducing fuel requirements

Turbulence and storms can make flights stressful for passengers, or even cause cancellations and delays. Weather insight from The Weather Company®, an IBM Business, helps three leading airlines plan flightpaths to bypass weather hazards and re-route flights when conditions change—keeping flights on-time and giving customers a smoother journey.

Business challenge story
Seeking a safer path through turbulent skies
Trans States Airlines, GoJet Airlines, and Compass Airlines each fly millions of passengers every year to destinations across the United States, and as far as Canada and Mexico. All make safety and comfort the cornerstones of a longstanding commitment to great customer service.

Elizabeth Bevenour, Manager of Systems Operation Control (SOC) at Trans States Airlines, explains: "We are dedicated to providing a first-class customer experience whenever people fly with us. That means keeping our passengers safe and relaxed, and getting them to their destinations on time.

"Our customers include everyone from passengers flying for an hour or so for family reunions, to business travelers who need to reach another airport to catch an important international flight. So, it's imperative that we limit cancellations and keep flights on time wherever possible."

Adverse weather is a major threat to passenger and crew safety, and can also wreak havoc on flight times. Thunderstorms, high wind-speeds and turbulence can all contribute to a bumpy ride, raising stress-levels for even the most experienced flyers. Moreover, according to the FAA, in-flight turbulence is the leading cause of non-fatal injuries to passengers and flight attendants in the USA.

Terry Basham, Chief Operating Officer at GoJet Airlines elaborates: "Weather conditions are a central part of our flight planning. We need to know the location of storms, weather fronts, and areas of convection, and establish how they will impact on our flightpaths. Weather data helps us determine the fastest and most fuel-efficient alternative routes if we need to change our flight plans or re-route an aircraft that is already in flight. And if a flight is delayed, we can look for jet streams that could help us make up lost time and get things back on schedule."

"Thanks to The Weather Company we are delivering on our promise to provide passengers with a safe, smooth experience—every time they fly with us."
—Terry Basham, Chief Operating Officer, GoJet Airlines

Solution components

Software
WSI® Fusion

"Working with The Weather Company has been a fantastic experience. We have nothing but praise for the technology and the people. The customer support is superb."

—Elizabeth Bevenour, Manager of Systems Operation Control (SOC) at Trans States Airlines

Previously, the flight dispatch teams at Trans States Airlines, GoJet Airlines and Compass Airlines relied on weather data from the government meteorological services, along with flight tracking tools from a third-party vendor. However, when these tools began to reach their limits, the airlines knew they had to upgrade to smarter weather data systems.

Transformation story

Planning smoother journeys

After a thorough assessment of the weather data and flight tracking solutions available on the market, Trans States Airlines, GoJet Airlines and Compass Airlines decided to implement WSI Fusion from The Weather Company, an IBM Business.

Elizabeth Bevenour picks up the story: "When we met with the team from The Weather Company we were instantly impressed. They quickly understood our problem, and offered technology that we knew would help our flight dispatch team. WSI Fusion delivers by far the most extensive set of capabilities of all the weather data solutions that we evaluated, and the level of service we received from The Weather Company team made it an easy decision."

WSI Fusion combines near-real-time weather, airspace and flight tracking data, and provides the dispatch teams at the three airlines with a highly accurate picture of changing conditions. Armed with this data, dispatchers can predict and react to weather events when planning routes, and alert airborne flights of the need to change course or divert to an alternative location to maintain passenger safety.

Elizabeth Bevenour continues: "Implementing the solution was a very smooth process. WSI Fusion integrates with our other CCFP planning tools, and the system is so intuitive that our teams required very little training. Our dispatchers love exploring the features in Fusion and sharing knowledge amongst themselves about the new tools and capabilities that they find.

"The ability to customize the user interface and overlay data onto the map is especially useful for tracking minimum visual flight rules and other important information. Also, when we first saw the feature that allows you to zoom in and monitor the actual ground movement at an airport in near real time, we knew it could be a real game-changer.

"For example, there are strict Department of Transportation rules governing how long passengers can be kept waiting on an aircraft before takeoff. If we are held up due to weather and can't take off in time, we need to know so that we can keep our passengers safe and comfortable. Better visibility of ground movement helps us monitor the situation closely so that we can maintain compliance with these requirements."

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Trans States Airlines, GoJet Airlines and Compass Airlines are also taking full advantage of the Fusion Replay function for post-flight event analysis. Terry Basham explains: "On many occasions, our dispatchers or flight crews will log a particular weather event and ask for further analysis—for example, if they experience unexpected turbulence. With Fusion Replay, we can pull up historical flight and weather data and perform investigations to gain deeper insight into those events."

Elizabeth Bevenour continues: "Working with The Weather Company has been a fantastic experience. We have nothing but praise for the technology and the people. The customer support is superb—whenever we experience an issue or need assistance, we send an email and receive a response within minutes.

"And despite being a smaller carrier, we never feel sidelined. The Weather Company always welcomes our feedback and asks us to participate in their user groups and events, so we feel like we have as much of a voice as the largest international airlines.

"It is always exciting to see the new features that The Weather Company develops—they often come up with ideas that as soon as you start using them, you can't imagine how you ever lived without them. In some cases, it's hard to keep up with their pace of innovation: for example, we're keen to use the Flight Plan Guidance feature, but we just haven't had time to integrate it into our workflow yet."

Results story

Keeping flights stress-free and on schedule
With WSI Fusion at the center of their flight planning operations, Trans States Airlines, GoJet Airlines and Compass Airlines can fly safer, smarter routes.

Elizabeth Bevenour explains: "WSI Fusion gives us more accuracy and greater detail than we ever had before. It enables our dispatch team to track weather fronts before they cross our planned flightpaths, so we can take pre-emptive action to avoid them.

"We can see thunderstorms brewing, for example, and predict their course four or even six hours before they reach the area we plan to fly through. And in hurricane season—a major source of disruption to flights in the Deep South and on the East Coast—we have early warning of where a storm is likely to strike next."

This early, deep insight into weather events means the airlines can plan routes to be as free of disruption as possible, and provide on-time, low-stress journeys for passengers.

Even when adverse conditions arise suddenly or key airports are put out of action, WSI Fusion gives the carriers the data they need to make tough decisions on when to delay or cancel flights.

Terry Basham notes: "Sometimes it is the safest option to cancel, and Fusion lets us know when this is the case. But thanks to the detailed data we receive, we have an extra level of insight—for example, we're in a better position to predict when bad weather may be about to clear. At times, this means that we can keep flights running on time for our customers, while our competitors' schedules are disrupted."

WSI Fusion also helps airlines to keep passenger comfort levels high when adverse conditions emerge on a flightpath during a journey. In one recent example, Fusion picked up six separate turbulence events affecting the path of a flight coming in to land in Chicago. In an instant, the operations team on the ground sent messages to the crew warning of the turbulence, and the need for passengers and attendants to put their safety belts on.

Elizabeth Bevenour elaborates: "Thanks to Fusion, we can see problems coming, and advise our pilots on how best to avoid them."

Advanced weather data is also helping the carriers make valuable fuel savings and cut their impact on the environment. The route planning enabled by WSI Fusion reduces the need for aircraft to carry excess contingency fuel reserves—as flights set off with the conditions ahead already factored into the route.

Terry Basham concludes: "Thanks to The Weather Company, we are delivering on our promise to provide passengers with a safe, smooth experience—every time they fly with us. We are already hugely excited to see what our future working relationship brings."

About Trans States Airlines, GoJet Airlines, Compass Airlines

Compass Airlines operates on behalf of American Airlines and Delta Air Lines. Serving over six million customers annually, Compass averages over 280 departures per day to over 40 destinations.

Operating on behalf of Delta Air Lines and United Airlines, GoJet Airlines serves over 4.5 million passengers annually, with more than 290 daily flights providing service to over 80 destinations.

Trans States Airlines flies on behalf of United Airlines and American Airlines, providing service to over 80 cities in North America with over 240 daily flights.

For more, visit theweathercompany.com
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Take the next step

The Weather Company, an IBM Business, helps people make informed decisions and take action in the face of weather. The company offers the most accurate forecasts globally with personalized and actionable weather data and insights to millions of consumers, as well as thousands of marketers and businesses via Weather's API, its business solutions division, and its own digital products from The Weather Channel (weather.com) and Weather Underground (wunderground.com).

The company delivers around 25 billion forecasts daily. It's products include the world's most downloaded weather app, a network of 250,000 personal weather stations, a top-20 U.S. website, one of the world's largest IoT data platforms, and industry-leading business solutions.

Weather Means Business™. The world's biggest brands in aviation, energy, insurance, media, and government rely on The Weather Company for data, technology platforms and services to help improve decision-making and respond to weather's impact on business.

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