Category **Young Project Professional of the Year 2014**

Winner **Luke Streeter,** Atkins

Sponsor **DOOSAN**

Overview

Speeding up the process of getting passengers onto aircraft by installing self-boarding solutions forms one of the six elements of the International Air Transport Association's (IATA) fast travel programme.

Automatic gates allow a single airline agent to board up to three passengers at a time instead of one, increasing the potential for fewer penalty fees through reduced delays and improving the travel experience for passengers.

European airports are investing heavily to deliver the IATA programme and in September 2013, Heathrow Airport embarked on a project to install 29 automatic gates across eight departure stands in its brand new Terminal 2 – the Queen's Terminal – before opening day on 4 June 2014.

Working alongside Heathrow and other key suppliers, Luke Streeter was appointed the Atkins project manager for one of the world's first common use self-boarding solutions. It was his job to manage, coordinate and engage with people from 16 different companies in a large and complex stakeholder environment in order to deliver this high profile project.

It was also his first experience of being a project manager.

Objectives

Luke's key objective was to deliver a working solution by the project deadline of the opening of the terminal. There was no tolerance for late delivery.

It was extremely important that the gates were fully functional with the involved airlines by Day One to avoid any negative media attention.

Challenges

Heathrow is an extremely challenging environment in which to deliver a project. For self-boarding there was an immediate stakeholder base of nearly 100 people and the work in the terminal needed to take place without any disruption to an operational environment that runs at 95 per cent capacity every day.

The airlines needed to be kept up to date with information and progress to make sure that the self-boarding solution was going to provide value to them and that their boarding applications and processes were enhanced to maximise the benefits.

A number of specialist suppliers were involved in building and deploying the solution, so a coordinated approach was crucial.

Luke needed all his key skills and attributes to navigate these challenges and to work alongside the many other Heathrow teams responsible for commissioning the new terminal.

Resources

Luke's first task was to build a strong team around him. He held brainstorming sessions with other Heathrow project managers in order to identify all of the different roles required to deliver the project. Once identified, he worked with the resource manager to agree who the most appropriate people would be to fill each role, ensuring he had a team with the right experience and technical expertise.

In order to build relationships early on he met every one individually to introduce them to the project and to discuss expectations. This helped to build a level of mutual respect and foster teamwork that paid dividends throughout the project lifecycle.

Lessons

Before the project even began the lessons learned from previous Heathrow projects were reviewed and at the start of each phase were used to optimise plans to ensure that similar issues didn't arise on this project.

Being one of the first common use self-boarding systems in the world and the first of its kind at Heathrow, there were plenty of lessons that needed to be documented for future reference. Again, Luke ensured there were frequent opportunities for lessons to be captured (and in some cases adopted) throughout the project.

Results

The £2 million-plus project was successfully delivered on time and budget. The gates were accompanied by a fully tested IT solution that was developed as part of the project to meet the specific needs of not just Heathrow but five of Terminal 2's new airlines.

The team under Luke's leadership delivered a world class solution which supports Heathrow's overall strategy of 'Becoming Europe's hub of choice by making every journey better'.

Heathrow rewarded the hard work of the team by including their names, alongside the many other Heathrow and Supplier names involved in building and commissioning the terminal, on a thank you monument located on the front wall of the terminal.

> **"** Luke's performance has been outstanding."
>
> **Heathrow Airport**

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