

Dubai Airports Takes Security and Productivity to New Heights with Okta



4,000

Employees and stakeholders using Okta's Workforce Identity Products

20,000

Airport workers and partners accessing the airport's community app

50%

shorter passenger line-ups

A proactive approach to growth

Dubai Airports predicts an influx of more passengers over the course of a few years. To modernise the passenger experience, and get passengers through the airport more efficiently and securely, the airport transitioned into a technology company.

Hello hybrid

The company relies on a number of on-prem solutions, but it wanted the flexibility and security that new cloud-based solutions provide. It needed a long-term identity partner that could support a hybrid environment, so Dubai Airports selected Okta's Workforce Identity products to enhance security and access an extensive integration network.

Delightful deployment

Dubai Airports partners with the Okta Customer First team to speed up the rollout. Soon, employees gain consolidated access to on-prem and cloud-based solutions. The Okta Integration Network helped by expediting the process of adopting new SaaS apps, and now 4,000 airport workers including employees, control authorities and other airport stakeholders have been provisioned with 60+ new solutions.

Security boost

The company wanted to provide shared services to its employees, as well as other workers and stakeholders in the airport, but security was an obvious concern. The company established a Zero Trust approach that allowed it to protect data at the individual level, while also providing employees with the flexibility to use whatever devices they wanted.

A happier workforce

Dubai Airports has eased employees' transition to this new workflow with Okta's Customer First training and support. The IT staff is delighted, too—by reducing mundane tasks like manual provisioning and helpdesk calls, the company has been able to divert more resources towards exciting initiatives like software development.



Okta makes productivity soar for Dubai Airports' workforce

Airport workers and Over the next few years, Dubai Airports predicts traffic to continue to grow with millions of additional passengers each year. However, as one of the largest airports in the world, Dubai International (DXB) has limited physical room to grow--so it turned to technology.

Now, with a modern hybrid infrastructure, increased security, and shareable services and data, the company is ready for the rush. Find out how Okta helped make it all possible. d partners accessing the airport's community app

There are over 70 airlines, plus more than 100 other companies on the airport campus, and we want them all to provide an amazing experience for our passengers. To do that, they need data and an understanding of what's happening in the airport. The Okta dashboard, which provides them with easy access to apps on any web browser, tablet, or smartphone, has proven to be extremely useful.

Michael Ibbitson, Executive Vice President of Technology and Infrastructure at Dubai Airports

Benefits

- Reduced maintenance costs
- Decreased provisioning workload for IT team
- Increased visibility into airport activity for all stakeholders
- Enhanced, adaptive security measures
- Secure shared services access
- Improved customer experience



Building great experiences

For **Dubai Airports**, staying on schedule, serving customers quickly and efficiently and maintaining high security standards is critical. Dubai Airports operates Dubai International (DXB), which spans more than 3,100 acres and serves approximately 90 million passengers every year, as well as Dubai World Central (DWC), a smaller airport primarily handling cargo and point-to-point flights.

Passengers flying through DXB come from all over the world, which means the airport has a global reputation to protect—and a lot of trust to maintain.

“Many of our passengers have traveled halfway around the world to get to our airport, and they could be here for two to six hours between flights,” says Michael Ibbitson, executive vice president of technology and infrastructure for Dubai Airports. “So we're putting a lot of time and effort into great restaurants, great retail, and great experiences they can enjoy while they're here.”

Dubai expects millions of more travellers with no room left to expand Dubai International's infrastructure, Dubai Airports knows that unless it increased its focus on technology, it won't be able to successfully accommodate future growth.

“The only way to provide the same great experience to that many more people is by simplifying processes, eliminating queues, turning the planes around faster, and processing more bags,” says Ibbitson. “And technology will help us do that.”

Maintaining an incredibly high level of security was also a priority. In addition to millions of travellers, Dubai Airports needed to secure its workforce of 3,000 staff and over 100,000 employees working for other companies. Dubai Airports needed a way to protect sensitive data, while also making the right information easily accessible to third parties, like law enforcement.

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Building a hybrid solution

Before Dubai Airports began transforming its IT infrastructure, it relied on an on-prem environment with a traditional Active Directory setup. Originally, it was poised to roll out a new HR platform along with its on-prem identity solution. Dubai Airports realised this identity solution wouldn't provide the flexibility it needed to be a future-proof solution.

“As we bring in new tools, we want to be able to onboard them quickly and, if the tools are successful, keep them,” says Ibbitson. “If they're not successful, we want to be able to remove them easily and quickly. We wanted an identity platform that would give all our stakeholders and staff access to their systems really easily, and really quickly. We wanted them to be able to use one username and password for everything and give them access to one, consolidated set of applications. To do that, we needed our identity solution to be very flexible.”

Dubai Airports was also facing significant provisioning challenges. With such a large, complex on-prem infrastructure, it took a long time to provide users with access to the apps they needed to do their jobs efficiently. This was a productivity drain for IT, and an inconvenience for users. The company decided its future was in the

cloud. Like most major corporations, it had a significant amount of legacy infrastructure, including some critical security and video traffic apps that couldn't move to the cloud. Going forward, the company decided on a cloud-first approach to all new applications. It also wanted to save costs and increase security, which meant its best identity option was a flexible SaaS solution that could support a hybrid infrastructure.

After assessing its options, Dubai Airports purchased Okta Single Sign-On (SSO), Universal Directory, Adaptive Multi-Factor Authentication (MFA), and Lifecycle Management, but it was the strength of the Okta Integration Network that clinched their decision.

“The solutions offered by the other providers weren't as slick and easy to use as Okta,” says Ibbitson. “They didn't have all the integrations we wanted out-of-the-box; we were going to have to build all of that, and it was going to be too costly. By buying into the Okta environment, we got everything we wanted, straight out of the box.” With over 6,500 pre-built integrations through the Okta Integration Network,

With over 6,500 pre-built integrations through the Okta Integration Network, Dubai Airports would be able to choose from a wide variety of best-of-breed solutions. The network would also make

it easy for staff to access a complete range of different applications through any desktop or tablet, making Okta an ideal long-term partner.

Deployment magic

The company wanted to build the rest of its cloud-based infrastructure around Okta, so it invested in Okta's Customer First solutions that would help them make the most of Okta. "One of the first things we did was send a group of people from our cybersecurity messaging and directory services and applications teams to Okta, so they could learn what it was all about," says Ibbitson.

Dubai Airports had a dedicated Okta Customer Success Manager and participated in ongoing Okta training. Over time, Dubai Airports has built an in-house team of Okta experts dedicated to deepening their understanding of the Okta Identity Cloud, adding new integrations, finding new ways to improve the airport experience with Okta, and of course, easing the deployment process in general.

After finishing the initial Okta training, the company deployed SSO and Universal Directory, which gave staff and other stakeholders a way to easily access the apps

they needed through a single dashboard, using a single username and password. "Deploying Okta first set the standard for us moving forward," says Ibbitson.

Dubai Airports now requires all new solutions and platforms to integrate with Okta. Okta Lifecycle Management enabled the IT team to provision users with new cloud-based solutions quickly. If the new solution didn't work out, de-provisioning was a quick process as well.

"Okta really eased the path of rolling out these applications as we move forward," says Ibbitson "now SAML integration is a standard requirement of any RFP that we release."

Dubai Airports provisioned 4,000 employees with 60 cloud-based apps, including ServiceNow, Box, Office 365 and airport operations apps.



Productivity boost

To meet its goal of providing useful data to partners--and increasing productivity across the entire airport campus--Dubai Airports rolled out Splunk, which allows them to monitor airport activity in real-time. “We used Okta’s identity platform and gave login credentials to different people around the airport, like the ground handling company, police, and immigration, so they could access Splunk through Okta as well.”

Splunk allows third parties to access secure dashboards and an alert system, including a customised “community app” dashboard that restricts unnecessary data, while providing access to a wealth of valuable information drawn from a number of different systems.

“We can track the length of every line in the airport, how many people are in it, how long they're waiting,” says Ibbitson. “We have real-time prediction on the app that alerts people to send more staff to fix problems around the airport, resolve queues, or move the bottlenecks along. We've tried to make it as dynamic as possible and as easy as possible

for people to access. At Dubai Airports, we want our technology team to drive the experience for our staff and of our passengers.”

This is all part of the company’s initiative to streamline operations, so that as traffic increases, the airport is able to handle the influx. Currently, the community app is used by over 20,000 people across the campus, and already, the amount of time passengers spend in line has been reduced by 50%.

The user experience is delightfully simple. “If you asked a random airport staff member, I'm sure they wouldn't be able to tell you where their IT services actually are coming from, and I think that's the point,” says Ibbitson. “They don't need to know—they just need to know it works, and that they've got a single access point. And that's it.”

IT levels up

Dubai Airports’ IT team members enjoy more streamlined workdays too. Now that the provisioning process has been automated, 30 IT employees can focus on more exciting projects rather than basic tasks like data entry and helpdesk calls.

“This has really contributed to the success of our overall team,” says Ibbitson. “Okta has significantly lowered day-to-day effort so IT can focus on finding the next exciting tool to

implement. It’s been amazing for me, personally, watching the team go through that exciting transformation, and seeing how much more excited they are to come to work every day.”

Okta has grown to be a trusted partner of ours,” says Ibbitson. “Why? Because it's highly reliable, and always available when we need it.”

About Dubai Airports

Dubai Airports owns and manages the operation of both of Dubai’s airports: Dubai International (DXB), the world’s number one airport for international passengers and second for international freight, and Dubai World Central (DWC).