How BT’s e-ticketing solution, Rialto, helped the British Airways London Eye drive ticket sales in a more efficient and cost effective manner.

Background

Hailed as one of the UK’s most imaginative projects, the British Airways London Eye, located on the banks of the River Thames in central London, is already a symbol for 21st century Britain. Carrying up to 3.5 million people a year, the London Eye has proved immensely popular with visitors from the UK and all over the world.

With British Airways as its project champion, and in keeping with the idea of pre-booked, timed flights, it was decided early in the concept development stage to satisfy expected demand by offering tickets primarily on an advance purchase basis. BT’s e-ticketing solution, Rialto, was the ideal match for this concept.

The challenge

The London Eye was launched with tickets only available “over the counter” at County Hall or via a dedicated Interactive Voice Response (IVR) booking service with collection from automated ticketing machines. The system provided limited functionality, required high levels of manual intervention and was impacting on customer service.

The Tussaud’s Group (TTG), operator of the London Eye, realised that an advanced ticketing system would help avoid the problems of dealing with the expected large number of walk-up sales and in turn cut down on booking errors and improve customer relations. TTG turned to BT for help in implementing an online booking service that could provide more than just a ticket ordering facility. They wanted a system that could also offer online credit card authorisation and integrate with back office systems in order to efficiently fulfil customer requirements.

BT approach

Rialto is a portfolio of e-business services developed in partnership with TTG. TTG and BT identified an opportunity to offer a competitive, multi-channel, managed ticketing service to “pay once visitor attractions”. Rialto’s core strength lies in its ability to provide an end-to-end solution to the e-ticketing process at low cost to the operator.
The Results

Rialto extended the sales and admissions channels to include a secure online web-based booking facility and a new IVR system. Both are fully integrated to the already operational on-site ticketing system and share a common inventory for fulfilment. All advanced channels now deliver a fully automatic process from sales through to ticket fulfilment for the customer. The high availability Rialto service provides British Airways and TTG with a range of benefits, including the ability to manage sales across all channels and geographies from a single inventory, direct payment, no technology investment and a competitive transaction based charging mechanism. Visitors to the London Eye can now enjoy a simple way to book flights, a choice of channels through which to book their tickets and a secure payment processing mechanism.

“In directing everyone towards advance ticket purchase, the company can more easily manage capacity – critical for very popular attractions like the London Eye – and hence improve the quality of visits. Also, with advance ticket sales we can guarantee revenues from tickets that may have been lost as people change their mind at the last minute, or get diverted en route to us.” Lesley Morisetti,

Group Head of Pricing and Revenue Management, The Tussaud’s Group.

About BT

BT Consulting & Systems Integration is part of BT Global Services and specialises in business transformation and change management. Its primary activity is the provision of consulting and systems integration services, including business consultancy, complex programme management and custom systems design, development and management. With major operational centres in UK, Continental Europe and North America, the business employs more than 5000 people.