

The eMan™ Solution Case Study

How Virgin Atlantic Airlines reduced soaring costs with The eMan Solution

"I can honestly say that The eMan Solution has revolutionized our deployment, access and use of all technical publications."

Stephen Sayers
Information Systems Manager
Virgin Atlantic Airways

The Challenges Virgin Atlantic Airlines was facing

For some years, Virgin Atlantic Airlines (VAA) had been wrestling with time-consuming and therefore expensive problems in providing maintenance engineers and others, with access to all the essential information they needed for their maintenance and engineering activities.

VAA's existing documentation system was slow and inefficient in providing that information to the end-users; not least because the system lacked a graphical user interface (GUI) and a document search function that operated intuitively. These shortcomings were hampering end-users in finding and accessing the information they needed. At the same time, VAA's IT department was heavily burdened with the extremely laborious but legally-binding regulatory responsibility of keeping the entire documentation system up to date with new information, revisions and updates and of making those revisions accessible to all authorized users.

Some 600 engineering and maintenance manuals (many consisting of more than 1000 pages) were stored in each of VAA's two technical libraries at Heathrow and Gatwick. In each location, the manuals occupied at least five massive roller cabinets, approximately 20'x12'.

"We spent hours shuttling back and forth between locations just relaying updates between these libraries," recalls Stephen Sayers.

Meanwhile VAA was physically delivering CD's that contained technical updates to its 25 engineering outstations around the world. As many as 180 such CDs were being delivered to each outstation in a single year, requiring more than 100 separate shipments. The total cost of those shipments alone amounted to more than \$50,000 per year.

"And then we had the cost of buying about 4500 CDs and the staff time required to make the copies," says Stephen Sayers.

The eMan Solution is developed

VAA called upon AviIT to develop a solution to these problems. The designated solution had to build upon the investment which VAA had already made in its existing documentation system; but it also had to overcome the operational and technical issues which were impeding the company's operations on the ground.

What is The eMan Solution?

*The eMan Solution (eMan) is a revolutionary document and library management system developed by AviIT.

*eMan enables any format of documentation to be accessed and viewed from any location, on practically any computing device that supports a browser, over any type of communications network via a simple to use and consistent graphical user interface (GUI).

* eMan's key attribute is that all electronic content is centrally stored and organized for instant online access by the user (rather than having to be sent out to the user from a central library in the form of a paper document, FAX, email, CD or downloaded over relatively low bandwidth links).

*eMan incorporates a highly-intuitive GUI which enables end-users to locate and access all the aircraft engineering information they need quickly and easily.

* eMan operates equally well regardless of physical end-user location. It can be accessed online from the engineer's PC, laptop, tablet or even tethered to a PDA device, regardless of its format. Thus, any manual or maintenance related application can be accessed quickly and easily over very small internet connections – even today's mobile phone networks.

*eMan's management and administration tools also enable technical librarians the power to control, manage, audit and administer all electronic documentation, whatever their format, from the secure administrative tool.

*Other information sources such as OEM websites, regulatory sources, etc. can be easily linked into the system.

*Technical Librarians can instantly upload new content, remove outdated content, and attach critical AD's, SB's, TR's, and other documentation directly to the related publication, ensuring the end-user has "Read and Accepted" the attached content prior to accessing the desired manual.

* Temporary access can be granted to 3rd. party users via the eMan administrator tool. Access to select content is made simple, and access can be limited by hours or days according to the user name and password.

The eMan Solution implemented at VAA

The eMan Solution was easy to install and to implement, but VAA was naturally cautious in its implementation approach. VAA decided to take a phased approach to the introduction of eMan to make sure that the company had developed full confidence in the system at every stage.

For a period, VAA ran eMan in parallel with the previous system. However, users and management very quickly realized the power of eMan and the ease by which content could be loaded, updated and accessed. As the volume of documentation and applications available via eMan rapidly rose, the earlier system was phased out. Soon, eMan was hosting over

1000 CD equivalents worth of documentation from dozens of OEMs, vendors and regulatory authorities along with every relevant element of VAA's own internal documentation.

Initially eMan was introduced solely within the engineering department at the corporate offices; however, eMan was soon being progressively rolled out to VAA's main UK maintenance bases at London Heathrow and Gatwick. Following its success at those UK locations, eMan was then introduced to the majority of VAA's global outstations where the airline bases its own engineers.

Today, some 500 VAA engineers and operational staff around the world have access to the system from all of the destinations that VAA currently serve. The eMan Solution is now the only source of all engineering information for VAA engineers. Training is also a standard element of the engineer induction process at VAA and, as Stephen Sayers has said,

"Engineers coming to us from other companies frequently tell us how impressed they are with eMan and we often hear them saying, "I wish we'd had this system."

The eMan Solution Benefits

The benefits to VAA have been, as Stephen Sayers himself says, "revolutionary".

*VAA engineers can instantly access the latest information on maintenance and engineering procedures wherever they may be working in the world.

*Considerable time-savings are now realized, as end-users find the information they need, when they need it.

*QA/QC inspectors, engineers, and other authorized users are confident that they can now verify content version and revision currency using the eMan system to ensure that all the latest revisions and updates have been incorporated into engineering and maintenance manuals.

*Labor and Shipping costs for CD/DVD copying and shipping costs have been practically eliminated.

* A significant reduction in IT support requirements has been realized.

"There has been a huge saving in time. On-time-departure for aircraft is a critical business element for VAA. We calculate that delays cost \$65.00 per minute. The eMan Solution has made a very significant contribution in enabling us to meet the very demanding on-time performance benchmarks that the airline strives for. The way we now look at it is to see eMan as being, hopefully, a tool for life."

For more information call 1-866-92-AviIT (922-8448) or visit www.aviit-eman.com

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