



Scandinavian Airlines uses analytics insights to improve customer experience

Client name: Scandinavian Airlines

Location: Stockholm

Industry: Travel, Transportation & Hospitality

Challenge

- Power digital transformation through analytics
- Identify siloed efforts and formulate one business ambition for analytics
- Plan the future state

Solution

- Conduct an in-depth analytics maturity assessment
- Build a reference architecture for new analytics platform
- Partner with DXC Technology to deploy and scale analytics capabilities

Results

- Created a single ambition for analytics within SAS
- Developed a blueprint for analytics platform
- Established the foundation for better customer experiences and improved operational efficiencies

Scandinavian Airlines (SAS) flies more than 30 million passengers a year to some 120 destinations. In doing so, the airline generates copious amounts of data — data that could have tremendous value for the business. So, when SAS set out on its digital transformation journey, it knew the effort would have to involve a strong analytics platform. It was just a question of how to get there.

“To attract Scandinavia’s frequent travellers, you need to offer a great customer experience,” says Stefan Nilsson, SAS vice president and business chief information officer (BCIO) for corporate functions and analytics. “Analytics is a really important part of knowing the customer.”

SAS had already created a customer data warehouse, which serves as the foundation for the company’s customer relationship management program. By connecting the warehouse to personalisation solutions, the airline could meet the customer digitally at every touch point and every digital channel. And because SAS had worked with DXC Technology on the data warehouse project, it didn’t have to look far for additional analytics help.

“DXC has been supporting our enterprise data warehouse for a long time,” Nilsson says. “We wanted DXC to expand into all parts of analytics. We felt DXC had a thorough understanding of SAS, and that they had expertise and resources we could use on our journey.”

The airline turned to DXC to complete a three-phase program: conduct a maturity assessment of the current state of SAS analytics; build a reference architecture for a new analytics platform (what it should look like, what solutions it should comprise); and step in as a partner to help scale up delivery of new analytics capabilities across SAS.

Turning insights into action

“Digital transformation, for me, is all about being data-driven,” says Mattias Karlsson, head of the Business Intelligence Competency Center (BICC) at SAS. “You need to go digital, you need to collect the data, and you need to start to gain insights for real.”

The company is already focusing on greater service through its SAS app and is exploring greater use of chatbots, Karlsson says. But the advanced analytics the company is pursuing with DXC will enable SAS to optimise its data and take customer support to the next level.

“We have a lot of insights about our customers, but the exciting thing is what we can do next,” says Christina von Euler, head of Analytics & Development in the global sales and marketing organization at SAS. “We’re just starting off with personalised communications, but we know there’s so much more we can do in terms of making

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sure they have the relevant offer in their channel of choice, looking into the future in terms of personalising the actual journey — how you get to the airport, do you want your meal on board, do you travel with a bag, all of that.”

To get to this future state, the company first set up a steering committee to align business and IT on the analytics journey. The group of business owners, analytics leads and IT team members explored how data and analytics could be used throughout the organisation to automate and optimise processes and empower employees to make better decisions.

“SAS is a big company and we all have different needs,” says von Euler. “We’re getting all the different parts of SAS who work with analytics to work together in a group for the first time, so we can formulate one business ambition for analytics.”

DXC helped facilitate the discussions, showing different use cases, pointing out the benefits and challenges, and helping to determine how SAS could make the transformation within the analytics area. The committee was a great help when DXC began the process of ascertaining what data analytics efforts were underway and how advanced those efforts were. In turn, the maturity assessment developed by DXC helped gain the trust of the SAS stakeholders.

Platform taking shape

Nilsson says things are progressing nicely, with DXC earning trust: “We have achieved the maturity assessment, we have the reference architecture for our future state analytics platform, and DXC has started to plan the delivery of the analytics part of different business projects.”

The idea with the latter, he says, is to take the analytics component of those projects and put them into the new analytics platform so the platform takes shape piece by piece.

“I think we’ve started that journey in a very good way,” Nilsson says. “It’s exciting to be a part of. We focus on analytics as an enabler to enhance and improve the customer experience and the operational excellence.”

Mattias Karlsson is also pleased with the direction that SAS is taking. “From here, we want DXC to step up to be a strategic partner that takes responsibility for delivery, leading the projects, bringing in data scientists, bringing in developers,” he says. “DXC has been a great partner to help us see the benefits and the potential within the area of analytics. We are on our journey to create big changes.”

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