

# The sky is the limit for bmi, thanks to its soaring partnership with Attachmate

Verastream SDK



bmi is one of the UK's major airlines and the second largest flying out of London Heathrow, the world's busiest airport. The company currently serves 10 million passengers a year, and has seen considerable growth in online ticket booking.

Since 2003, Attachmate has provided the technology and expertise to streamline bmi's ticket filtering and distribution mechanism. Attachmate's customer integration solution has dramatically reduced ticketing 'queues', the time taken between booking a flight and processing the tickets. This also significantly lowered the costs incurred to distribute ticketing information to the correct delivery channel.

From a strategic perspective, the partnership with Attachmate has provided a major benefit, as bmi's systems can now automatically generate reports based on hourly, daily, and weekly online bookings. This allows bmi and its e-commerce team to accurately forecast passenger trends based on these reports.

## The Challenges

The airline business is extremely competitive and fast-moving, and to stay ahead, bmi is constantly looking for initiatives to make it easier to respond to customer needs—and meet legislative demands.

Having undertaken a review of its existing flight booking process, bmi decided to implement a single cabin on certain of its short haul routes, meaning there was no separation of economy and premium economy flyers. The new system needed to be significantly more intuitive to provide premium economy fare customers with a superior service. But it also had to provide bmi with a holistic view of bookings, so that different departments within the organisation, such as marketing, could take advantage of the information.

In 2007, airlines faced a new challenge when the UK government doubled the rate of air passenger duty (APD). This charge applied irrespective of whether passengers had already booked their flights. bmi required a solution that could be implemented against a tight timeline, to avoid any fines which were threatened to be imposed.

## QUICK VIEW

### Problem

bmi needed to implement a new booking system, introduce new business processes to accommodate single cabin configurations and allow for new regulatory tax increases, while delivering a holistic view of passenger data for customer service improvements.

### Solution

Verastream SDK for Unisys and Airlines provided:

- High levels of security for accessing valuable legacy data
- Tools for enhancing user productivity
- Seamless integrations with other technologies

### Results

- Ability to streamline booking processes.
- Improved data management.
- Enhanced customer and employee satisfaction.
- Increased employee productivity.

## The solution

To meet these new business demands, bmi turned to Attachmate to provide the technology and expertise. The decision was straightforward, according to Chet Parmar, E-commerce Support Specialist for bmi. "We approached Attachmate to help implement these projects for a number of reasons. The first was its technology, with which we already had experience, and knew would allow the creation of a customised and flexible business process to fulfil our commercial requirements," he said. "The second was the refreshing approach Attachmate always brings to our partnership, and its undoubted pedigree within the airline industry."

After careful evaluation of the current processes, and achieving a clear understanding of what was expected of the new booking process, Attachmate developed the new solution using its Verastream® SDK for Unisys® and Airlines software. Verastream SDK allowed Attachmate to develop a solution called

“Attachmate has provided bmi with a genuine value-add, and is a trusted advisor in a highly competitive industry—a powerful proposition in today’s economy.”

– Chetan Parmar,  
E-commerce Support  
Specialist, bmi

pre-seater, which examines all flight details 24 hours prior to departure, and allocates premium flyers with seats at the front of the cabin.

With the advent of the APD tax, it became a high priority for bmi to quickly implement a solution that would not affect the other business process models already in place. Attachmate’s solution made it possible to examine a list of all the passengers that were flying on dates where bmi needed to make an additional charge, and implemented two processes.

The first process examined if a booking had an email address, and if so, capture the address, enabling bmi to notify customers

via email of the additional tax due. The second process involved bookings with no email addresses. The Attachmate system found these and forwarded them to bmi’s call centre, where agents could locate a telephone number to reach customers. “Ultimately, the solution helped us to mitigate customer dissatisfaction and we reduced costs by not having to employ additional staff,” explained Parmar.

### The result: Improved customer service

Parmar explained, “With the vast number of passengers we deal with comes a vast amount of data, and even the smallest problem can ultimately affect a huge number of people. One of the key aims of our work with Attachmate is that we wanted to provide a better service, and ideally move customers away from contact centres.”

As the project evolved and became integral to bmi’s diamond club accounts, the Attachmate solution also had to implement new features. Members need the ability to credit miles when travelling, which can subsequently be used to buy flights, accommodation, car rental, car parking, or gifts. In providing this service to its customers, it was essential that bmi be able to allow diamond club members to make their bookings online using points that they have accrued.

“This gave us real-time solutions,” stated Parmar. “Ultimately it is our customers who are benefiting from the fact that Attachmate helps make these initiatives happen.”

As in most businesses, good customer service is vital and can be a key differentiator. bmi was able to manage their business challenges successfully, without impacting customer satisfaction—and while improving productivity. “Attachmate has provided bmi with a genuine value-add, and is a trusted advisor in a highly competitive industry—a powerful proposition in today’s economy,” Parmar concluded.



**Corporate Headquarters**  
1500 Dexter Avenue North  
Seattle, Washington 98109  
TEL 206 217 7500  
800 872 2829  
FAX 206 217 7515

**EMEA Headquarters**  
The Netherlands  
TEL +31 71 368 1100  
FAX +31 71 368 1181

**Asia Pacific Headquarters**  
Australia  
TEL +61 3 9825 2300  
FAX +61 3 9825 2399

**Latin America Headquarters**  
Mexico  
TEL +52 55 9178 4970  
FAX +52 55 5540 4886

WEB [attachmate.com](http://attachmate.com)  
E-MAIL [info@attachmate.com](mailto:info@attachmate.com)

For regional office information, visit [www.attachmate.com](http://www.attachmate.com).