elasticpath

ΛIMIΛ   aeroplan

Elastic Path Software Case Study

High flying commerce for a company with global ambitions

Company at a glance:

Name: Aimia Inc.

Industry: Loyalty Management

Year Founded: 1984

Headquarters: Montreal, QC, Canada

URL: http://www.aeroplan.com

Employees: 4300

Customers: Approx. 4.6-million active members

Enterprise Client

Beginning as a frequent flyer program under the Air Canada banner more than 20 years ago, Aeroplan has grown into a comprehensive loyalty marketing company. Owned by Aimia Inc., a global leader in loyalty management, Aeroplan's more than 4-million members can earn Aeroplan Miles with more than 75 partners, representing 150 brands in the financial, retail, and travel sectors. In 2013, approximately 2.3 million rewards were issued to members including more than 1.5 million flights on Air Canada and Star Alliance carriers.

Business Problem

Canada's national airline, Air Canada, is renowned for its expansive service and aircrafts adorned with the iconic red maple leaf. Equally well known is its loyalty program, Aeroplan. Created in 1984 by Air Canada as an incentive program for its frequent flyer customers, there are now more than 4.6 million active members in the program.

With its popularity soaring, Aeroplan — now owned by Aimia — sought to diversify into a comprehensive customer loyalty program with hundreds of participating retailers offering its members non-air rewards such as hotel discounts, car rentals, vacation packages, groceries, credit cards and other rewards. This diversification allowed members to use mileage credits beyond the limited number of flights available from just Air Canada. There was simply too many miles chasing too few seats — a common complaint about frequent-flier programs.

In addition, a stronger online experience would help shift members towards a self-service model in order to improve customer service. Customers would have the convenience to redeem their Aeroplan Miles online at any time. This would alleviate traffic and cost for the Aeroplan customer service division.

Solution:

As a large enterprise, Aimia had dozens of legacy systems to contend with. The proposed architecture called for the adoption of an approach based on Web Services, allowing it to integrate with systems in a modular way.

This required an ecommerce platform that would fit into their existing IT infrastructure, be flexible enough to take on unique requirements such as amalgamating hundreds of partner products into a single catalog, and provide multi-lingual capabilities to serve their members in both French and English.

Aimia completed a comprehensive search and review of 30 ecommerce vendors before selecting Elastic Path Commerce. The flexibility and scalability of the platform set it apart from the others. The IT team at Aimia wanted to retain as much control of the system in-house as possible, and sought to avoid proprietary technology and vendor lock-in that would limit their ability to upgrade future components. As a best-of-breed solution, Elastic Path Commerce fit this requirement.

Elastic Path Commerce provided the software to manage the catalog of merchandise Aeroplan would be offering as an alternative to flight rewards. Aimia's leadership was attracted to Elastic Path because of its emphasis on flexibility and evidenced by its use of open-source technologies. Aeroplan also took advantage of Elastic Path's support for the open source MySQL database, whereas many competing systems require Oracle as a data store.

Aimia also wanted to partner with Elastic Path because of its experience with professional services and large-scale commerce implementations. Together, Aimia and the Elastic Path Professional Services team worked closely through the integration to link up multiple systems and data sources. The Elastic Path team had to coordinate with several parties spanning multiple time zones and completed the project ahead of schedule.

Results:

In 2013, approximately 2.3 million rewards were issued to members including more than 1.5 million flights on Air Canada and Star Alliance carriers.

Elastic Path Commerce was able to handle the complexity of the Aeroplan rewards catalog and gave Aimia the ability to publish its catalog in multiple languages.

Key benefits:

- Amalgamated hundreds of partner products into a single catalog powered by Elastic Path Commerce.
- One ecommerce platform to seamless handle non-air rewards from hundreds of partners.
- Works with Aimia's existing transactional data.
- Ability to service customers in multiple languages from the same software instance, offering true multi-lingual commerce capability.
- Extreme flexibility due largely to Elastic Path Commerce to use almost any type of database engine.
- High availability deployment and stable tech stack of the industry's best open source software projects.

Unconditional spectacular success. Everybody from top to bottom on the business-side is ecstatic."

— Sean Burke-Gaffney, Web Development Manager, Aeroplan

After implementing Elastic Path Commerce, redemption of Aeroplan Miles for non-flight gifts and indulgences has increased without Aimia having to change internal business procedures. Elastic Path Commerce has proved its reliability and with the improved processes has helped to eliminate IT from the critical path of managing business-related change.

About Elastic Path™

Elastic Path helps the world's biggest brands generate billions in revenue using its ecommerce technologies. The company's software also seamlessly brings omnichannel ecommerce, subscriptions, and enhanced connectivity right into Adobe Experience Manager, the leading content management platform – enabling companies to deliver a complete customer experience that maximizes engagement and conversion. Elastic Path has more than 200 customers, including Time Inc., Virgin Media, LVMH, Western Union, TeliaSonera, Kiabi, and Motability. For more information, visit www.elasticpath.com

Elastic Path Software Inc.
North America:
300-455 Granville St., Vancouver, BC Canada V6C 1T1
TEL: +1.604.408.8078 | FAX: +1.604.408.8079

Europe:
Atlantic House, Imperial Way, Reading, RG2 0TD United Kingdom
Tel: +44 1189 485 400

 Website: elasticpath.com | Blog: getelastic.com