

Near Real-time Air Cargo Tracking Elevates Customer Service

CATHAY PACIFIC CARGO

Cathay Pacific Cargo deployed the Descartes CORE Tracking Bluetooth Low Energy (BLE)™ readers, tags, and network to 29 ports worldwide as part of its Ultra Track cargo tracking service. With near real-time visibility into shipment status and location for airport-to-airport moves of high-value goods, Cathay Pacific transformed the customer experience while reducing operational costs.

“The Descartes CORE BLE tags, readers, and network at the heart of our Ultra Track service enable real-time, multi-dimensional cargo visibility. If disruption occurs, such as a temperature excursion, our team can investigate and take corrective action; Ultra Track is both a damage-prevention and service-recovery process in one.”

Frosti Lau

General Manager Cargo Service Delivery, Cathay Pacific

Company Profile

Cathay Pacific Cargo
International Airline and Combination
Cargo Carrier

Descartes Solution

Descartes CORE Tracking
Bluetooth Low Energy (BLE)™

About the Client

Cathay Pacific is the home airline of Hong Kong, offering scheduled passenger and cargo services to destinations in Asia, North America, Australia, Europe and Africa. The state-of-the-art Cathay Pacific Cargo Terminal at Hong Kong International Airport offers a broad spectrum of logistical solutions for the airfreight industry.

Quick Overview**Challenge**

Lack of Shipment Visibility

Solution

Near Real-time Visibility Key to
Customer Satisfaction

Results

- Elevated Customer Service
- Digital Leadership
- Reduced Operational Costs
- Greater Control

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Challenge: Lack of Shipment Visibility

Driven by a customer-centric vision of exemplary service, Cathay Pacific Cargo could not rely on resource-intensive manual track-and-trace efforts that depend on accurate data entry to deliver the advanced level of freight tracking visibility that its customers demand today. Customers with temperature-controlled, time-sensitive, and other specialized cargo (e.g., perishables, pharmaceuticals, live animals, valuables, dangerous goods) expect to be kept informed of the location, condition, and chain of custody of their shipment throughout its journey. To better serve its customers, Cathay Pacific introduced a near real-time end-to-end shipment visibility solution to ensure more secure, efficient, and responsive air cargo logistics operations while keeping costs under control.

Solution: Near Real-time Visibility Key to Customer Satisfaction

Operational excellence is a core pillar of Cathay Pacific's vision to be the most customer-centric air cargo service provider in the world. With this goal in mind, Cathay Pacific implemented Descartes CORE BLE readers, tags, and network as part of its Ultra Track multi-dimensional cargo tracking service.

"With Ultra Track, we're providing our forwarder and shipper customers with the most advanced tracking of the location—and condition—of their shipments in near real-time," said Frosti Lau, Cathay Pacific General Manager Cargo Service Delivery. "We want to take the lead on the industry's technological development, using the best technologies to keep abreast of customer needs so we can serve them better."

With a phased introduction at 29 ports across the globe, Descartes CORE BLE readers were deployed to capture location and status data, such as temperature, movement, shock, light, and humidity, from Descartes CORE BLE tags placed on individual shipments. A dedicated team of cargo professionals in Cathay Pacific's Operations Control Centre (OCC) monitors shipments 24/7 and instructs ramp and cargo terminal staff to take proactive steps and corrective actions if issues arise. Customers can monitor their shipments independently and communicate with the OCC team directly using live chat.

Near real-time visibility is especially valuable for high-value and pharmaceutical cold chain shipments, such as the temperature-sensitive COVID-19 vaccine. "If we see temperatures rising at the departure terminal, we can instruct our team to add more dry ice to the cooltainer or recharge the cooltainer batteries to ensure vaccine shipments are always safe," noted Lau.

"With Ultra Track and the OCC, we're setting the standard for digitization and transparency, ensuring that the customer experience is enhanced through the greater use of digital technology and industry engagement with IATA and Cargo IQ," added Lau.

Results:



Elevated Customer Service

With automated near real-time shipment visibility, Cathay Pacific can provide customers with accurate and timely updates on the location and condition of their cargo while proactively intervening to address any disruptions.



Digital Leadership

With near real-time cargo tracking, Cathay Pacific is setting the standard for industry-wide adoption of digital technology and shipment transparency in alignment with IATA's Cargo IQ digital master operating plan.



Reduced Operational Costs

With a multi-dimensional air shipment tracking solution, Cathay Pacific can proactively intervene as required to mitigate the potential financial impact of lost shipment, temperature excursions, delays, equipment malfunction, or damage.



Greater Control

With increased transparency into the movement of shipments across its cargo operations, Cathay Pacific can monitor its cargo network, interrogate the status of individual cooltainers, or examine shipments at the piece level—all in near real-time.