

Use of electronic documents

saves millions for MyTravel

“We want to distribute as many documents as possible electronically.”

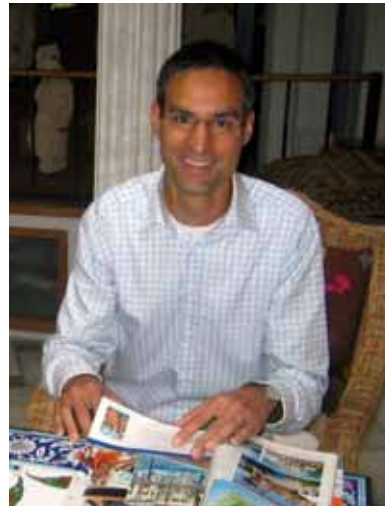
MyTravel Group, with leading charter tour operators such as Ving, Spies and Tjæreborg, uses StreamServe Enterprise Document Presentment (EDP) to facilitate the transition to electronic customer communication. The company has been able to save money and improve customer service.

- In the Nordic region we have already come a long way towards electronic customer communication; we are working to further increase its share and StreamServe EDP is definitely a valuable tool in accomplishing this task, says Fredrik Jormin at MyTravel.

StreamServe is used in the Nordic countries in connection with all charter travel, which constitutes over 95% of total bookings and amounts to approximately 1.5 million travellers yearly. The actual reservations are administered in VITS, a homegrown, mainframe system. When a customer wants to make a reservation, it can be done over the Internet, by visiting a travel agency, or directly in a MyTravel store. Either way the booking will result in a confirmation, a ticket, and other travel documents, which means millions of documents in all Nordic languages are created each year. Data is taken from VITS, and StreamServe EDP produces and distributes the documents with the right format and layout.

- We want to distribute as many documents as possible electronically, says Fredrik Jormin at MyTravel. For reservations made on the Internet electronic documents are already used 100% of the time. For bookings made in MyTravel stores or at travel agents' the customers sometimes want paper documents. StreamServe then makes sure that print ready files are sent to the local printer in the store, or to the central printer for further distribution by post. For central printing StreamServe also includes OMR codes in the print files, for automatic handling of enclosures. Fredrik Jormin explains that a fee is charged to customers who want paper documents. Nowadays, customers are used to this as it is common practice, e.g. among airlines and travel agencies.

With customer behavior changing rapidly towards using the Internet and communicating electronically it is important for MyTravel to stay at the forefront. With StreamServe the company has the means and the flexibility to handle all the different communication channels and make the most of them in terms of strong customer communication and cross-selling opportunities.



Fredrik Jormin

MY TRAVEL

- When it comes to electronic communication we have come very far in the Nordic market and we have already achieved cost savings of millions of Swedish crowns from fewer paper documents, says Fredrik Jormin.

Fredrik Jormin points out that one of the strengths of StreamServe is that it enables MyTravel to produce documents that look the same, irrespective of which distribution channel is used. The practical implication is that the work to create documents is done just once for each document. Furthermore, this is of major importance when it comes to branding. Customers recognize communication from MyTravel regardless of whether they receive e-mails, visit the web site or get a ticket by post. The use of graphics gives a more visual and therefore clearer and more appealing communication. The whole process from information gathering and booking to departure must be handled impeccably and in this process customer communication and especially travel documents are crucial factors.

The e-mail containing the ticket is used as a marketing tool. The HTML-mail has graphical elements and pictures, and is personalized in the sense that it contains web links that are dependent on which add-on services can be offered, and relevant payment information depending on the payment mode and status of that customer; how close to the date of departure the mail is sent out is also taken into account. The fact that add-on services are promoted in the e-mail is important for add-on sales at the same time as it is beneficial to the customer, making information easily accessible and booking simple. In addition to the main travel documents, StreamServe is also used to send out e.g. payment reminders and information on timetable or route changes, via e-mail.

Another aspect of working with electronic documents is their synergy with the web. MyTravel has created a much appreciated web site where the customer, on his "My Pages" section, has access to his ticket in PDF format – the same document that he has received as an e-mail attachment or in the post.

StreamServe's archive is used to store all travel documents and the latest version is shown to the customer on his "My Pages".

- This is a feature that gives the customer a high level of service and added security, as the ticket is always accessible on the web, says Fredrik Jormin.

Furthermore, the archiving functionality of StreamServe allows customer service personnel to retrieve the full history of a certain booking. If there are uncertainties about the reservation, or whether additional services such as insurance have been included, this can easily be sorted out by accessing the different versions of the confirmation and ticket.

Fredrik Jormin points out flexibility and strong functionality as some of the main features of StreamServe.

- If you have the data, you can do just about anything with it, he says. This might be one of the reasons StreamServe's and MyTravel's relationship now spans ten years, and has been able to evolve along with changes in the business.

Looking ahead, it is certain that paper documents and electronic documents will co-exist for some time yet. It is thus important to have the possibilities for multiple-channel distribution. To improve customer communication across all channels is a continuous task, but the emphasis going forward is naturally on e-mail and web.

Furthermore, it is clear that the travel industry has really started to utilize electronic communication to promote and sell not only the actual travel products but also add-on services. Since a lot of revenue is actually generated from these add-on sales this is a focus area for further development of customer communication.



Facts

- MyTravel is a leading player in the Nordic market, with well-known tour operators such as Ving, Spies and Tjæreborg.
- MyTravel Northern Europe has operations in Sweden, Norway, Denmark and Finland, and is part of London stock exchange listed MyTravel Group plc.
- There are 3 000 employees in MyTravel Northern Europe, and 14 000 in total, all over the world.
- The tour operators within MyTravel Northern Europe have a total of 1.5 million passengers a year.
- The Swedish part of the business generated a record profit of 107 MSEK for this year's first half.