

CASE STUDY

Delta Air Lines: Taking VR Training to New Heights



“Delta is always trying to push the envelope with new technology. This new experience is a perfect example of our commitment to innovation, and the results have been outstanding.”

Kevin Marcum
Program Manager,
Delta Air Lines

BACKGROUND

Delta Air Lines is one of the largest transportation companies in the world. With over 5,400 flights daily, it's imperative they keep their planes moving around the globe—quickly, safely, and efficiently. To achieve that goal, it takes thousands of employees that work in an important field known as ramp operations.

These are the men and women who work below the wing when a plane is parked at the gate. It's a challenging environment for training new employees. So, how do you train them to get up to speed in a safe manner? And more importantly, what can you do to make sure they retain the information to reduce costly errors? Delta answered these questions with virtual reality (VR) training.

SITUATION

Part of a ramp worker's training program is conducting an aircraft walk around. A walk around is an inspection procedure where ramp workers physically walk-around a plane while it's parked at a terminal. It's an important task, but it's not easy to train new employees. The caveat is that training typically happens in an active airplane parking area that exposes trainees to risk.

That's where VR training comes in. Instead of training employees on an active tarmac, Delta could educate employees in a virtual environment without having to clear up ramp space or tie up valuable airplane operating time for training purposes. They could also do it without risking expensive equipment or employee safety.

SOLUTION

Delta partnered with Foundry 45 to take traditional, on-site training and recreate it in a realistic virtual airport environment. Through the VR training program, trainees are transported onto the ground at one of Delta's arrival gates, where they begin an airplane inspection walk around. Visual instructions and auditory cues guide learners through the experience.

They learn how to do things like recognizing and picking up dangerous debris, identifying and marking damage on the plane, and checking safety cone placement. Just like in the real world environment, learners are working against the clock. They must address problems amidst an array of real-world distractions, like moving vehicles and airport sounds. Performance is measured. After completion, results are recorded and shown on a final scoreboard.

RESULTS

Delta's VR Training Experience is proving to be an efficient and powerful way to train the ramp operations team. Of those surveyed, 95% said VR implementation is "helpful" or "very helpful" for employee training. Participants found the VR training effective and easy to use, and it has generated new excitement around training at Delta, with learners describing the experience as engaging and fun.

Want to learn more? Check out this video to see the solution in action.

[WATCH VIDEO](#)

"This is HUGE! You could do training on different scenarios without putting yourself in a position of danger. Delta is amazing and certainly going in the right direction!"

Employee Review

