

News

Eurowings is launching customer for cutting-edge AI-powered operations control assistant

- The AI-powered assistant has huge potential to reduce costs for irregularities and increase efficiency in daily operations
- Based on Reinforcement Learning, the AI assistant reacts to existing disruptions, proposing mitigation actions to minimize their impact and suggesting preventive actions to avert disruptions before they happen
- Lufthansa Systems and Eurowings worked closely together in developing and enhancing the smart assistant for operations controllers

Raunheim, 6th June 2024. Lufthansa Systems announced that Eurowings is the launching customer for the cutting-edge AI-powered operations control assistant NetLine/Ops ++ aiOCC. The web-based AI assistant supports airline operations controllers in increasing the stability and efficiency of daily operations. Both companies worked closely together on this project. The smart assistant, which is integrated into NetLine/Ops ++, the next-generation operations control system from Lufthansa Systems, has been in use at the Eurowings operations control center (OCC) in Cologne since 2023.

Operations controllers make numerous complex decisions every day. They react to unforeseen events like weather or strikes to minimize their impact, as such disruptions can cause high costs for the airline. The operations controller has to analyze several information sources within minutes to find the best solution. That becomes more challenging, especially during peak times with a high risk of disruption when humans are reaching their limits.

NetLine/Ops ++ aiOCC analyzes historical data and monitors all events around aircraft, rotation, passengers, and crews simultaneously to identify delay risks ahead of time. Then, it generates concrete recommendations on improving operations in real time, which is critical in this working environment. To enable the user to make an informed decision, the system provides additional information regarding the impact of the proposed solution on the overall resilience, the buffer, and the propagated delay. The smart assistant focuses on recommendations, the decision always remains with the operations controller.

Even if no delay is visible yet, the system can already suggest an improvement. The agent offers the greatest potential in the morning, as there is significantly more room for action. For example, the agent suggests swapping legs EW9212 and EW9213 of AC EXS (aircraft) for legs EW9442 and EW9443 of AC EXW, which will decrease the propagated delay by 20 minutes. This improves overall punctuality and provides more buffer time to further stabilize the schedule. The controller checks this suggestion, implements it, or rejects it with good reason. All user feedback is evaluated in the background to improve the AI agent continuously.

News

“We are so pleased that Eurowings has been involved in this project from the very beginning. The professional input of their ops controllers was crucial for developing the smart assistant. We see a huge potential to reduce irregularity costs when implementing our smart assistant in the OCC. AI and the strengths of humans with their experience and creativity should complement each other to improve operations stability,” said Jan-Peter Gaense, Head of NetLine at Lufthansa Systems.

About Eurowings

Eurowings is the value airline of the Lufthansa Group and thus part of Europe's largest airline group. With its clear positioning as Europe's value carrier for leisure and business travellers, Eurowings clearly distinguishes itself from the ultra-low-cost carrier segment, allowing its customers to fly affordably and flexibly with numerous booking options and extras as well as customer-friendly services. With its value concept, the German airline is responding to the core needs of today's air travellers: even greater flexibility, comfort and sustainability. Eurowings offers direct flights to around 150 destinations within Europe. With 13 international bases – including Mallorca as Europe's number one vacation island – the Lufthansa subsidiary is one of the largest leisure airlines in Europe. It currently has a fleet of around 100 aircraft and employs over 5,000 people.

About Lufthansa Systems

Lufthansa Systems GmbH is a leading airline IT provider determined to shape the future of digital aviation. It draws its unique strengths from its ability to combine profound industry know-how with forward-looking technological expertise and has lived by its slogan “We're into IT” for more than 25 years. A wholly-owned subsidiary of the Lufthansa Group, the company offers its more than 350 customers an extensive range of successful IT products and services for the aviation industry, many of which are market leaders. Lufthansa Systems' pioneering portfolio covers all of an airline's business processes – in the flight deck, in the cabin, and on the ground. As a tech company and airline IT provider, Lufthansa Systems is committed to identifying its own environmental footprint and improving that of its airline customers across the globe. Headquartered in Raunheim near Frankfurt/Main, Germany, Lufthansa Systems employs around 2,800 people at its locations in 16 countries.

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