Royal Caribbean Speeds IT Delivery and Reduces Costs with TIBCO's Integration Platform
Faster, better, and more cost-efficient cruising

ROYAL CARIBBEAN CRUISES LTD.

Royal Caribbean Cruises is the world's second largest cruise company and also offers unique land-tour vacations in Alaska, Asia, Australia/New Zealand, Canada, Dubai, Europe, and South America. The company owns six brands including Royal Caribbean International, Celebrity Cruises, Pullmantur, Azamara Club Cruises, CDF Croisières de France, as well as TUI Cruises through a 50 percent joint venture. It sails to 490 destinations on all seven continents.

"Technology is ingrained in everything we do," says CIO Bill Martin. Royal Caribbean's systems support everything from reservations to onboarding, property management to supply chain, and sales to ship operations. And yet, no surprise, IT was asked to become faster at less cost.

CHALLENGE

Royal Caribbean strives to anticipate guest needs and optimize their experience throughout pre-cruise, cruise, and post-cruise interactions. To accomplish this faster, better, and at lower cost, the IT team realized it needed a higher level integration and a services-oriented architecture that would let them transform legacy applications into reusable and re-combinable software services.

"When we looked at what it would take to implement our vision, we realized we would need a cohesive enterprise (ship and shore) integration services foundation. We also knew we needed the governance to manage the service lifecycle and sharing across the organization," says Associate Vice President of Software Engineering Jose Machado.

SOLUTION

The solution would require a transformation from tightly coupled, monolithic, difficult-to-change applications to a modern integration hub providing loosely coupled flexible software services that can be reused and recombined for new functionality. That capability would deliver software solutions faster, better, and at a lower cost.

"There were several reasons we chose TIBCO," says Machado. "They have a very strong product portfolio and commitment to R&D, and we were very impressed with their strategic roadmap. We felt the right choice for Royal Caribbean, the right investment for years to come, was TIBCO.

"Now, with the new TIBCO-based integration hub, we have two things: First, application integration and the ability to integrate vendor systems in a standard, robust and reliable way. Second, mature management of software services and the ability for large-scale deployment."

BENEFITS

MODERN SERVICE MANAGEMENT AND REUSE

One of its first projects was creating a services layer for one of its websites, which will be reused for all other websites. "We have thousands of trade partners and several websites with millions of visitors," says Machado. "We want Sales & Marketing to be able to choose any vendor and easily integrate their technology with our systems using APIs. These interfaces will be used for many years because the lower layers should not change that much."

TIME- AND COST-SAVING CORE COMPETENCY

Royal Caribbean has been using web services and APIs for years, but did not have the right platform to support the large scale deployment and governance of services across the enterprise. It interfaces with many highly specialized vendors worldwide, each requiring a connection. "With our TIBCO integration hub, we're going from a small scale, non-deliberate approach to a large scale, deliberate approach to managing services and APIs. Now, if a travel agency, large or small, wants to sell our products, we can make it easy for them," says Machado. "We won't have to write a single line of code. Once we have an API working for one partner, it will work for the others."

FASTER DEVELOPMENT

The same principle applies to software development. "With TIBCO, we're working towards a catalog of services that we can leverage for many projects," says Software Engineering Manager James DeFendis. "From this catalog, we can quickly assemble and build—and because the services are already tested—ensure high quality and move forward at lower cost."

HIGH PERFORMING USER EXPERIENCE

"As we continue to break down functional silos across the application portfolio, the TIBCO platform will allow us to abstract key business events, apply real-time rules, and provide more granular control over business process execution to enhance the user experience," said Director of Enterprise Architecture Jose Valverde.

Soon, when a guest boards a cruise and books a massage, that information will flow into the integration hub. Later in the cruise, when systems recognize that this guest didn't disembark at a port, spa availability will be checked, and she may receive a promotion for a second appointment. "The customer experience is the absolute crucial thing," says Martin. "The guest is happy with the service, and we're happy because we filled a slot. On the way to the spa, she may decide to book another trip as she passes the sales desk."

BROAD DATA ACCESS

The TIBCO platform will also provide access to data in packaged applications and legacy platforms like the company's IBM iSeries. "Those core capabilities will help us get data faster and with a standardized view," says DeFendis.