



# EY <> FullStory Success Case

## IATA Innovation Hub

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Etihad Airways and FullStory embarked on a 1-month pilot after participating in Accelerate@IATA's Segment 4 on Improved User Experiences from March to May of 2023.

### Why is it important for airlines to work with startups?

[According to recent studies](#), only 8% of IATA member airlines globally have worked with a startup in any capacity. There is often a disconnect between airlines and the startup industry on the value that airlines can leverage from the startups in implementing new solutions to various industry challenges.

For Francisco J. Malpica, Innovation Lead at Etihad Airways, working with startups is integral to the success of his operations – he points out how open innovation gives his team an edge. “Startups can ‘plug and play’ their solutions within the existing airline infrastructure reducing time to market and resources spent.” While ad-hoc solutions can be a lengthy, resource-intensive process to develop in-house, open innovation can be tested quickly for market fit with faster turnaround times.

Etihad applauds Accelerate@IATA's initiative of having startups vetted by industry Subject Matter Experts (SMEs), and in short order having access to the high potential startups for each respective 3-month segment theme. Accelerate@IATA provides its members with a new avenue of innovation, which complements IATA's standards-setting activities to further advance the Modern Airline Retailing program. Moreover, the Accelerate@IATA team and the SMEs train and mentor the startups to familiarize themselves with the airline industry, thus saving airlines additional resources and reducing time to implementation when working with startups.

### About FullStory

[FullStory](#) is a Digital Experience Intelligence (DXI) platform which enables businesses to enhance digital experiences on their websites and apps. Founded in 2014, the company is headquartered in Atlanta, Georgia, with regional offices in London, Sydney, Hamburg, and Singapore. They have raised \$192.7 million USD over the course of 7 funding rounds, the latest taking place in 2022. Having had the opportunity to collaborate with carriers such as JetBlue and PLAY Airlines, and gaining exposure through the pilots acquired in the Accelerate@IATA program, the team is now prepared to expand their presence in the aviation industry.

### FullStory and Etihad Pilot

The FullStory and Etihad Pilot comprised of three main components in which FullStory leveraged their solution: optimizing UX/UI design, reducing persistent error pages, and reducing time to insight. These components were analyzed at three key points of the customer journey: (1) booking, (2) check-in and (3) post-sell flows. The Pilot was mostly centered on the performance of the Etihad website.

Throughout the course of the pilot, various data points were collected over 28-days and 7.7 million sessions to better analyze where customers struggled in the search and booking flows.



The two main outcomes which FullStory targeted with this pilot were: ***to increase conversion rates during browsing*** and ***decreasing clicks to book***.

In optimizing the UX and UI design, FullStory found opportunities to increase value creation. The main benefit is for traveling customers to be able to better tailor the flight to their preferences (e.g., through upsells).

Users expect flight details contained within the entire tab, and not solely when hovering over the price.

FullStory also assisted in identifying error pages on the Etihad booking page. For an airline, this is something that is difficult to identify when it is not functioning well on the website, especially when working in the back end. Etihad's Malpica notes that FullStory's solution aggregates each error and provided leads to create a more seamless website flow for the airline's customers.

Additionally, FullStory's solution helps Etihad reduce their time to insight. This allows developers at Etihad to get ahead of the problem and proactively create web solutions to prevent increasing customer dissatisfaction. Thanks to the team's insights, FullStory was able to decrease time to insight by 50%.

## Next Steps and Lessons Learned

Thanks to the successful identification of opportunities for improving UX/UI design, aggregating locations of persistent error pages, and decreasing time to insight on web issue, both Etihad and FullStory consider the pilot a success. As Etihad looks forward to the next steps in their implementation phase, they plan to keep FullStory in consideration in their future web improvement plans.

Kofi Ankomah, Enterprise Account Executive at FullStory highlights lessons learned and ways the startup can improve their operations when working with airlines.

Firstly, Ankomah acknowledges there are a lot of security concerns regarding data capture when working with airlines. That means legal and security reviews on both sides need to be robust, which can sometimes delay projects. Such delays are oftentimes a harsh reality to startups, who mostly have the experience of working in a fast-paced environment.

With respect to the Etihad pilot, one of the biggest challenges the FullStory team faced was the consideration of other third parties who manage parts of the digital landscape. This can further overlay the quantity of review necessary before project commencement, and lead to inconsistencies with transactional datasets, thus inhibiting a comprehensive list of results for the project pre-implementation.

## Advice for Future Airline & Startup Collaborations

With the lessons learned from this project, there are three important factors that both Ankomah and Malpica share as advice to airlines and startups who plan to work together in the future.

Malpica asserts that it is often important to work with startups who have been previously vetted by an independent third party, like Accelerate@IATA. This reassures airlines that the startups they work with are aligned with the ideals for the future creation of industry standards. Thus, the scoping and negotiation process is easier for the airline.

To Ankomah, startups who wish to work with airlines in the future must consider two important aspects when embarking on a project. Firstly, he recommends that each startup should do their best to find an 'Innovation Champion', like Malpica at Etihad, who can advocate for their solution internally on their behalf, thus speeding up the implementation and innovation process. And, secondly, to create a comprehensive Statement of Work (SOW) before the commencement of the project with well-defined details and outlined deliverables for the



project. In doing so, the startup can facilitate a more efficient review and approval process, while ensuring all third parties involved in data and information sharing are properly onboarded.

## Do you want to work with startups like FullStory?

Accelerate@IATA is an industry-owned travel tech accelerator fostering innovation by connecting airlines with vetted startups. The program aims to establish pilot opportunities, offering selected startups mentorship from IATA experts and support for implementing projects with member airlines.

At Accelerate@IATA, we carefully source and select startups with a diverse range of experiences and geographical locations. Furthermore, all startups sourced are carefully vetted by IATA Subject Matter Experts prior to segment negotiation with airlines, leaving you and your airline with peace of mind. Each startup undergoes industry-specific training to ensure they are up to speed with industry challenges, so that your bottom line solely involves negotiation for implementation, saving you money and time in the long run.

To learn more about the program and the future themes that we are focusing on, please check our [website](#) or email [pardop@iata.org](mailto:pardop@iata.org). We would also be delighted to facilitate an introduction between you and the FullStory team!