



## Flying high with green credentials

### PROJECT PROFILE:

- WEEE Legislation
- Safe Disposal of IT Equipment

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Operating out of more UK airports than any other airline and with major bases at Birmingham, Southampton, Belfast City, Manchester, Jersey, Guernsey, Exeter, Inverness, Edinburgh and Glasgow, Flybe is the biggest regional airline in Europe.

Following the successful acquisition and integration of BA Connect in March 2007, Flybe's route network is 70% domestic UK, 20% European business and 10% European leisure destinations. In 2008, Flybe handled over 7.5 million passengers.

Flybe is also at the forefront of the efforts by the airlines to reduce the environmental impact of air travel and promote sustainable growth in the aviation industry. "We support the view that human activity, including air travel, is contributing to global climate change and we accept that, as Europe's largest regional airline, we have a responsibility to reduce the carbon emissions produced by our aircraft," explained Jon Phillips, IT Systems Support Manager. "As a regional airline, we take our responsibility to the communities we

serve very seriously both in terms of the economic growth we stimulate and the effect upon the local environment."

Like all major organisations, Flybe has an ongoing programme of updating and refreshing its hardware estate. However, Flybe is somewhat unique in its policy of replacing aging equipment with the latest and greenest technologies. "In addition to reducing aircraft carbon emissions, we also ensure that all of our electronic equipment has the lowest possible carbon footprint," continued Jon. "We are replacing a lot of older and energy-inefficient kit with greener technologies, but this in turn creates its own problems when it comes to disposing of redundant equipment."

Operations as large as Flybe have huge amounts of electronic and office equipment – PCs, laptops, printers, scanners, fax machines, photocopiers, etc. Programmes of replacing and updating large hardware estates rapidly generate stockpiles of outmoded equipment that needs to be managed in an efficient, effective and

environmentally sound manner. "Not only is this a considerable logistical challenge, the redundant equipment has to be disposed of in accordance with the Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment (WEEE) Directive," added Jon. "As an environmentally responsible business, Flybe takes the initiative across the airline industry by ensuring that our obsolete equipment is recycled and reused wherever possible."

The WEEE Directive came into force in January 2007 with the aims of encouraging the reuse, recycle and recovery of electrical and electronic equipment and to improve the environmental performance of businesses that manufacture, supply, use, recycle and recover such equipment.

Flybe approached its IT partner, Softcat to explore how the disposal of its increasing stockpile of outmoded equipment could best be handled.

David Bennett, Softcat's Account Manager for Flybe, takes up the story. "The ever-increasing legislation and duty of care obligations surrounding IT asset disposal means that organisations now need an effective, reliable and financially secure service to manage and dispose of end-of-life IT equipment. From our discussions, it was clear that Flybe wanted a partner that was efficient, responsive and which would provide the comprehensive asset management audit, inventory control and certification that was needed."

An additional concern of Flybe was the secure disposal of hard drives and media. "Although we physically erase the contents of all storage media before disposing of PCs and laptops, we know that it is sometimes possible for this information to be recovered," explained Jon. "It was therefore vitally important that our disposals partner could provide confidential disposal and data erasure services in line with WEEE directives and the Data Protection Act."

Under the Data Protection Act 1998, organisations have a duty of care obligation to ensure that the confidential data it holds is not released in an unauthorised or accidental way, particularly that relating to employees or customers. This includes storage media such as hard disk drives both during business use and once the hardware is scheduled for disposal.

Once Softcat had a full understanding of Flybe's requirements and objectives, it approached its long-term end-of-life IT asset management partner, and jointly developed a complete equipment disposal, remarketing and redeployment programme for Flybe.

Softcat's aim was to help Flybe maintain and enhance its green credentials by getting the maximum value from its computer disposals and ensuring all UK and European legislation was met. Softcat provides a wide range of disposal services which are based on the configuration, capability, age and quality of used computer equipment

together with the client's business objectives:

- **Equipment Resale** - Selling equipment to the second-user consumer, trade and international markets, generating revenue for the client.
- **Redeployment Services Upgrade** - Reconfiguring and redeploying IT equipment for reuse within the client's organisation.
- **Computer Recycling** - Environmentally responsible computer recycling with 0% to landfill, protecting employees, the public and the environment.
- **Employee Purchase Scheme** - Password protected exclusive online internet shop.
- **Charity Donation** - Transfer of equipment to charity, education or non-profit making organisations.

With data security being of paramount concern for Flybe, Softcat's partner use specialist data overwriting and disk formatting software on all media storage devices. A check is also carried out to ensure the drive has been properly overwritten and a text file created that affirms the data has been eradicated. Hard Drives that are faulty or cannot be wiped of data are physically impaired rendering the unit inoperable prior to recycling through an approved process.

Occasionally, Flybe identifies devices that are known to contain highly sensitive and personal information. In these instances, the units remain under close observation of disposal technicians immediately upon collection from Flybe's offices. "Hardware containing these levels of information are never out of sight," explained David. "A security guard remains with these units at all times up to and including their destruction."

Indeed, so environmentally aware is Flybe that it regularly sends representatives to the recycling centre to ensure that all units are being disposed of in the most efficient and effective way. The same representatives also observe the secure erasure and destruction of media storage devices that are known to hold sensitive data. As a part of the service, Flybe is provided with a full audit trail showing the stage and outcome of its entire IT disposal process, allowing it to demonstrate to all stakeholders, government inspectors and financial auditors that it continues to help to protect the environment by meeting WEEE Directive requirements in respect of computer recycling targets.

Softcat now collects redundant and obsolete electronic equipment from Flybe on a monthly basis. Each collection can consist of some 100 individual items.

"Softcat's end-of-life IT asset management services have helped Flybe maintain its green credentials," concluded Jon. "A high percentage of the equipment is recycled, resold and donated to charities, schools, and not-for-profit organisations where the useful life can be extended. Not only does this allow these organisations to redirect their tight budgets to provide increased and improved services to the community, it also substantially reduces the need to consign any components to landfill, to the benefit of the community and the environment."