

United Airlines scales with speed on Atlassian cloud

5x

Faster average deployment time with Jira Software Cloud

80%

Time saved on agile coaching plans with Confluence Cloud

99.95%

Guaranteed uptime with Atlassian Cloud Enterprise

With Atlassian Cloud Enterprise, United Airlines is flying into the future – deploying 5x faster with better security, uptime, and support.

“Atlassian cloud provides you flexibility, cost savings over time, and efficiency...When I think about technology in the modern world, we would not consider anything else.”

OXANA TROTSSENKO

Chief of Staff of Digital Technology

UNITED AIRLINES

At United, Good Leads The Way. United operates the most comprehensive global route network among North American carriers, and is now the largest airline in the world as measured by available seat miles.

INDUSTRY

Aviation

LOCATION

Americas

COMPANY SIZE

100k+

ATLASSIAN PRODUCTS & APPS



Jira Software

Project and issue tracking



Atlassian Access

Security and control for the cloud



Confluence

Document collaboration

THE CHALLENGE

United's 10-year plans include digitally transforming their operations and customer experience, which requires optimizing their processes, tools, and how teams work together.

THE SOLUTION

During the first phase of their journey, the airline's Digital Technology organization paved the way by migrating 5,000 employees to Jira Software and Confluence Cloud Enterprise.

THE IMPACT

United is already deploying 5x faster; creating coaching plans 80% faster; plus enjoying 99.95% uptime, better security, premium support, and invaluable analytics.

Fast growth demands faster delivery

As the airline industry returns to the new normal after the COVID-19 pandemic, one brand has been a clear market leader: United Airlines. While the S&P 500 Index and shares of every other major U.S. airline were down double digits at the end of 2022, United experienced unprecedented growth. The company was even named a “top pick for 2023.”

United is doubling down on their successes, with plans to add 700 more airplanes (an increase of ~70%) and 50,000 more employees (an increase of ~50%) by 2032. Scaling that much, that quickly is both exciting and complicated. “When you’re growing so quickly and serving more customers and more employees, you need to make sure that you deliver digital products much faster than you did yesterday,” says Oxana Trotsenko, Chief of Staff of United Airlines Digital Technology.

To solve their scaling challenges and reach these lofty goals, United is going through a digital transformation journey, specifically focusing on three areas: people, processes, and tools. “That last piece is looking at the tool stack United is using to increase speed to market and transparency,” Oxana explains. “Atlassian helped us get to some of these key points that we’re trying to achieve.”

By centralizing onto Atlassian and migrating Jira Software and Confluence Data Center to the cloud as part of their digital transformation, United is well on their way to improving performance, security, savings, and scalability as they solidify their spot as a global airline leader.

Comparing tools based on facts, not feelings

When United began exploring a cloud toolset to support their growing teams’ transformation, Digital Technology narrowed down the options to Monday, Microsoft Azure DevOps, and Atlassian.

Although the airline already used Jira Software and Confluence Data Center, Oxana didn’t want to assume Atlassian cloud tools were the best option. She felt strongly about comparing other tools and making the decision cross-functionally and logically. “I brought up the initial conversation [about which tool to choose] to a few folks within the company. I quickly realized that it brought up very visceral feelings to a lot of people. It was almost a religious or ideological conversation,” she recalls. “So I said, ‘We’re taking a break. I’m going to talk to my

product owners, my business, my designers, and my Scrum Masters. I'm going to talk about the change management, onboarding, and operational costs as well. Then we compiled a 58-point inventory of everything we wanted to get out of the tool."

Although the decision-making process took time, it built confidence among the team that they had done their due diligence and could make the most logical decision. As they looked at the spreadsheet together, Atlassian cloud scored highest in the most areas. Some of the key factors that swayed their decision were integrations, intuitiveness for users outside of technology, and transparency of information across teams and among leadership.

"Atlassian's integrations across platforms are top notch... And when we were looking at the Atlassian tools, we found product transparency. We can use the tools in such a way that we can deliver transparency not only to our teams, but also to leadership," Oxana explains. "We decided that the Atlassian tool suite was a much better choice for us."

Atlassian Cloud Enterprise delivers a faster, future-ready platform with built-in security and support

With the decision made to move away from other tools such as Microsoft Team Foundation Server and migrate Jira Software and Confluence to the cloud, the next choice was which plan: Standard, Premium, or Enterprise. United opted to deploy Atlassian Cloud Enterprise for guaranteed uptime, time and cost savings, speed, premium support, and scalability.

"When you're building this future-proof ecosystem and architecture pipeline, Atlassian cloud provides you flexibility, cost savings over time, and efficiency," Oxana says.

The Digital Technology team saw even more opportunity to grow with an Enterprise plan. "Our Enterprise plan guarantees 99.95% uptime, and we can quickly connect with our Advisory Services team 24/7. They're responsive, and that's a much more cost-effective way to solve issues...I don't feel alone on the journey, which is great," Oxana explains. "Gaining access to Enterprise cloud features and tools like Advanced Roadmaps also enables us to roll up



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information to the program or portfolio level and have a comprehensive view of what's going on across multiple cross-functional product and leadership teams that are working together. We have a strong focus on tightening security, so single sign-on was a big factor for security and data governance. Atlassian Analytics has also been critical for accelerating improvement cycles.”

With such a large organization, access management can get unwieldy quickly too. But with Atlassian Access, United has found it much easier to streamline the process and keep a pulse on user activity. “We have over 100,000 employees. With Atlassian Access, we are not only able to consolidate our instances and have good control on who is doing what, but also set transparent guardrails about how to engage with the Atlassian ecosystem through the right channels so we can be good stewards to United,” Oxana describes.

With security and governance as such high priorities, the United team is also happy to see Atlassian's ongoing investments in these areas. “I'm super excited that Atlassian just rolled out these new security features and compliance certifications,” Oxana notes. “That's really helpful to me as an Enterprise customer representing United because some of those regulations and compliance rules are going to come into play when we talk about data management and data security overall.”

5x faster deployments, 80% faster agile coaching, and they're just getting started

While still early in their cloud journey, Digital Technology is already noticing improvements among the 5,000 users they have migrated to Atlassian cloud tools.

“We're focusing on innovation, moving toward our goals, and spending more time on what we do best,” Oxana says. “As we help teams transition off Atlassian Data Center to Cloud, it frees up time to give more to our customers.”

Speaking of time savings, United has used their cloud migration as an opportunity to optimize their processes and other tools as well. They pursued a number of initiatives, including building out an Agile Center of Excellence and



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“shifting left,” a term they use to describe moving testing, quality assurance, and performance evaluation as close to the beginning of the development process as possible. By integrating Jira Software Cloud with the DevSecOps tool Harness, United has achieved several big wins, including reducing average deployment time from 22 minutes to five minutes. Plus, by creating agile coaching templates in Confluence Cloud, coaches are planning group sessions 80% faster – giving them back valuable time that they can spend on hands-on guidance rather than on planning and logistics.

Beyond these major improvements, Oxana feels the best is yet to come. Digital Technology is now working on consolidating United’s instances, optimizing their solution, and exploring other Atlassian tools like Jira Product Discovery and Jira Align, plus cloud features like Atlassian Intelligence. Oxana says, “I imagine a world where we have cross-functional teams who are spending less time on those mundane things and can focus on being creative, collaborative, and coming up with awesome new ideas.”

United is already a “top pick” in the airline industry, and with Atlassian Cloud Enterprise, they’re looking forward to taking their digital product development – and their entire brand – to new heights.

Jumpstart your move to Atlassian Cloud.
Join the [migration program](#).