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## BAGGAGE TRANSPORT REINVENTED – FRAPORT ACHIEVES MAXIMUM EFFICIENCY

**F**raport AG is a global leader in the airport business, managing operations and services at 29 airports across four continents. Its wholly owned subsidiary, Fraport Ground Services (FGS), is indispensable to Germany's largest airport, Frankfurt (FRA), where it provides the entire range of critical aircraft ground handling services. When FGS sought to optimize complex challenges on the apron — ranging from resource allocation to tight turnaround times — it turned to INFORM, a software company specializing in optimizing business processes through artificial intelligence (AI) and advanced operations research.

### PANDEMIC AS A TURNING POINT (2021 – 2022)

With the drastic decline in passenger volume during the Covid-19 pandemic, FGS had to significantly reduce the complexity of processes in ground handling operations. Separate systems for baggage service, loading and unloading, and baggage transport caused high costs and a lack of flexibility. Additionally, the drivers were assigned to inbound flights — no matter how often they had to drive to perform the tasks for each flight.

Fraport used the crisis to streamline its IT landscape. The old baggage transport system was taken out of service. Instead, baggage service, loading and unloading were integrated into the existing dispatching system.



*The action plan was designed to introduce greater flexibility into both planning and operations to mitigate delays due to apron positions being located far from the main buildings.*

### SOFTWARE SOLUTIONS INVOLVED

- GroundStar (GS) RealTime Staff & Equipment: Managing baggage and staff on the day of operation.
- GroundStar (GS) StaffCommunication: Mobile app for task communication.

**“Our long-standing collaboration with Fraport has reached a new level. We didn't just implement software; we jointly created opportunities for employees to apply their skills in a broader range of tasks, strengthening both efficiency and engagement. Celebrating the successful completion of projects like the baggage handler integration as a unified team truly demonstrated the power of this partnership.”**

— Christian Weiss, Project Consultant, INFORM Aviation



After analyzing the results from the first phase, an action plan was developed for the next step. This plan had to account for a unique challenge at Frankfurt Airport: many apron positions are located far from the main buildings. These long distances result in extended travel and task-commitment times for ground crews, which limits operational efficiency. Therefore, the action plan was designed to introduce greater flexibility into both planning and operations to mitigate these delays.

Fraport gained significant operational improvements and cost savings by transitioning to this integrated system. The resulting reduction in complexity, combined with the decommissioning of outdated solutions, lowered overhead. Furthermore, personnel gained the flexibility to deploy effectively across a wider range of roles.

### OPTIMIZATION IN THE RAMP-UP (2023–2024)

With increasing flight and passenger numbers, Fraport needed a system that could bring together two worlds:

- Flight-driven dispatching for aircraft parked closest to the baggage belts.
- Dispatch of single trips for outbound and inbound aircraft parked further away.

In addition, qualified personnel were in short supply, which made optimal use of apron driving licenses necessary.

Fraport executed a strategic restructuring by incorporating a segment of the driver pool, alongside the loading crews, into the dispatching system. Inbound drivers could be consequently re-tasked and transitioned from transport-only roles to a model where they could be concurrently utilized within loading groups. This integration generated significant synergy: drivers with the required apron license performed both routine transport runs and specialized equipment operation at the aircraft positions. The outbound drivers continued to operate as an independent working group.

Faced with a skilled worker shortage,



*Fraport boosted its operational efficiency through flexible personnel deployment and optimized resource utilization. The result is stable, reliable handling, even when managing aircraft turnarounds as tight as 45 minutes.*



**“Within just three years, we have implemented three major projects with INFORM — with strategic consulting and careful integration of new solutions into the existing IT landscape. All of them were completed on time despite time constraints and have measurably stabilized our operations and made them future-proof.”**

— Dennis Stein, VP Logistics and Information Management, Fraport Ground Services

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### DEDICATED BAGGAGE HANDLING SYSTEM WITH GS STAFFCOMMUNICATION (2025–PRESENT)

Anticipating significant traffic growth by 2025 and the opening of Terminal 3, Fraport required a powerful, dedicated system for baggage transport. The challenge was to deliver a rapid rollout before the 2025 summer operations, minimizing risk and avoiding cost-intensive new hardware purchases.

Utilizing a standard software approach that allows for easy, perpetual updates, Fraport successfully rolled out INFORM’s new baggage transport system (GS RealTime Staff & Equipment) and the GS StaffCommunication driver app within a few months, meeting the specified deadline. The system is strategically connected to the dispatching system to exchange task information, ensuring that drivers are dispatched only when the loading team is available, thus optimizing resource deployment and eliminating idle time.

Given Fraport’s large operation — managing approximately 2,000 dispatches daily with eight dispatchers

overseeing 150–200 drivers — a crucial factor was the speed of user adoption. The system required minimal training; drivers were productive after just 90 minutes of instruction. The transition was further smoothed by running the new system in parallel with the old one and utilizing existing hardware. 

### KEY SUCCESS FACTORS OF THE PARTNERSHIP

- **Commitment & Reliability:** All project phases were successfully completed within extremely tight, predefined time frames.
- **Sustainability & Futureproofing:** The deployed solutions are designed to be future-proof and fully scalable to accommodate expected growth.
- **Seamless Integration:** The project operated as a true partnership between Fraport Ground Services, INFORM, and internal Fraport IT (ICT), moving beyond classic supplier interfaces to function as a unified “full circle.”
- **Efficient Decision-Making:** Collegial collaboration and short communication distances facilitated rapid decision-making, which was critical for ensuring project completion remained on schedule.