



Case Study



Avanade supports JAL Group in leveraging generative AI, assisting in the development of “JAL-AI” and scaling use cases

Development of dedicated generative AI tool to automate and streamline business operations

Do what matters

Japan Airlines Co., Ltd (JAL) partnered with Avanade to accelerate its digital transformation with the development and deployment of "JAL-AI," a dedicated generative AI tool designed to enhance efficiency and employee productivity. In alignment with JAL's strategy to leverage AI and data across the business, the project focused on improving internal knowledge access, automating meeting minutes and streamlining operations at airports. A strong communication framework and onsite collaboration also helped tailor tools to real-world use cases, boosting adoption across office and field teams. Today, nearly 100% of back-office employees actively use JAL-AI, and 90% of airport staff reported improved customer response times in demonstration experiments. JAL continues to expand its AI use, backed by Avanade's ongoing partnership and innovation.

Inspiring change:

JAL emphasizes "an enhanced AI and data-centric DX strategy" as one of its key management policies within the Rolling Plan 2025 in the JAL Group's Mid-Term Management Plan 2021-2025. This strategy is dedicated to driving transformations that provide safe and secure travel and create new value in customer experiences. Leveraging AI and data as tools to achieve advanced customer-oriented marketing strategies, and to realize enhanced productivity and value creation in talent-driven management strategies, is becoming a major theme.

"Since the rise of ChatGPT, there has been growing excitement for the use of generative AI. In response, the Security Planning Group established a working group in April 2023 to evaluate risks and explore potential applications of generative AI, and the group has been actively engaged in discussions."

– Manabu Yamawaki, Director, Security Planning, Digital Platform Department, JAL

At JAL, the "AI-center concept" is designed to support the use of AI and data across various domains, including operational processes and customer marketing, positioning AI as one of the crucial technologies for driving adoption and digital transformation (DX). Mr. Yamawaki states: "As we moved toward fully integrating generative AI into

Company Name: Japan Airlines Co., Ltd

Country: Japan

Company Size: ~15,000 employees

Industry: Air, Freight & Leisure Travel

Solution: "JAL-AI" generative AI platform

our business, we recognized potential hazards and risks through thorough risk assessments. While exploring how to mitigate these risks to facilitate the use of technology, we have decided to enhance productivity and efficiency by harnessing generative AI."

The risks involved concerned information leaks, such as confidential information uploaded to ChatGPT by employees and the likelihood of that confidential information being used for AI retraining and potentially leaked externally.

"To safely utilize generative AI, it is crucial to prevent information leaks while ensuring accountability, transparency and the protection of copyrights. We believe that addressing this ethical consideration is essential."

– Manabu Yamawaki, Director, Security Planning, Digital Platform Department, JAL

Since June 2023, the company has worked with third-party partners on specific projects to use generative AI. However, due to technical challenges encountered in improving the accuracy of RAG (Retrieval-Augmented Generation) to enhance the functionality of generative AI by referencing their proprietary data, the team ultimately considered reexamining the project.

JAL partnered with Avanade for our expertise in AI support, and restarted the project in January 2024.

Driving innovation:

Avanade provided support for enhancing the organization's operational efficiency through generative AI by specifically focusing on the following key use cases:

- Search and utilize internal knowledge

CASE STUDY

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- Bridge to and leverage other systems (API integration)
- Automatically generate meeting minutes for improved operational efficiency
- Access and refer to manual guides and documents for maintenance team

With these efforts, a dedicated generative AI tool was developed, called "JAL-AI." This tool is available to all group employees, including those working in offices as well as field staff primarily using iPads.

According to Mr. Yamawaki: "Following the release, we have continuously implemented feature updates with the support of Avanade. For instance, by using RAG, we enhance the search capabilities for internally accumulated information and improve its accuracy." This includes functionality tailored for the use case of meeting minute auto-generation and advanced file searches.

"From a technical perspective, improving the accuracy of AI responses was a key focus. We fed various company documents into the system, identified areas where accuracy was still insufficient, and applied multiple RAG methods to enhance accuracy through evaluations and improvement cycles (PDCA). Additionally, we made refinements to make the context more AI-friendly, such as providing advice on how to phrase questions and revising document formats in collaboration with JAL."

– Kotaro Saito, Group Manager, Apps & Infrastructure Practice, Avanade

Mr. Yamawaki adds: "For airlines, ensuring safe operations is the top priority. If maintenance staff receive incorrect information when making inquiries, it could lead to safety issues. That being the case, an advanced in-drive file search system, designed to enhance search performance and avoid hallucinations, was implemented to resolve this challenge. Additionally, the team is currently developing voice-activated prompt input capabilities and generative AI tools for drafting approval documents."

A specialized version of "JAL-AI" tailored for airport operations, named "Airport JAL-AI," has been released to enhance customer service and enable airport ground staff to search for information on tablets. Tomohito Ohashi, Manager of the Data & AI practice at Avanade, explains: "Currently, Airport JAL-AI includes several applications: A hazardous items search app that allows customers to check

whether their luggage can be brought on board or checked in at airport counters; a text-generation app for irregular announcements during various irregular events at boarding gates; and a lounge entry conditions search app that helps customers find out which lounge they can enter at lounge front counters. All these applications have been developed through extensive discussions with airport ground staff who work in the field to define requirements and have been tested on real situations in airport operations. We are continuously improving the user interface, functionalities and response accuracy to ensure speedy operation and responses when interacting with customers."

Mr. Yamawaki notes their approach to managing development projects, emphasizing the focus on enhancing communication efforts. Essentially, the project was managed through weekly progress reports to the project owner and daily meetings within each team, operating on a one-week sprint cycle.

"We organized small development teams for each function of JAL-AI, ensuring all team members communicate daily," adds Mr. Saito. "We also established places for sharing updates between teams, fostering an environment where ideas and opinions can be actively exchanged."

Tomochika Goto, Head of Data & AI for Asia Pacific and Japan at Avanade, says that during development, the team focused on breaking down and clarifying tasks and development functions, while building a development structure to support swift sprint cycles.

"The quality of delivery and communication is crucial for running sprints smoothly. This could not have been achieved without the cooperation of JAL as the product owner."

– Tomochika Goto, Head of Data & AI for Asia Pacific and Japan, Avanade

Intensive meetings focused on AI discussions, called "Innovation Camps," will be arranged every three to four months. "We are organizing discussion sessions that bring together the JAL-AI team, Avanade and development vendors," says Mr. Yamawaki. They have held two sessions on rapidly evolving AI technology to date, with a third one in the works.

Through these communication opportunities, Mr. Yamawaki notes that sharing feedback and suggestions with Avanade contributed to establishing a structure that enabled project members to respond promptly. "Throughout the project, the internal team members – called Caravan – visited various sections within the company to increase AI interest at each department by explaining functionalities and

showcasing use cases, which promoted its utilization. Our success in establishing this internal communication structure is largely thanks to the support from Avanade."

"We appreciate the swift action taken in response to our feedback and suggestions. The internal communication structure established with the support from Avanade contributed to accelerate the project."

– Manabu Yamawaki, Director, Security Planning, Digital Platform Department, JAL

Achieving what matters:

According to Mr. Yamawaki, in FY24, practically 100% of employees in the back office used AI, and as awareness increased, the number of users grew steadily.

"We've heard feedback that frequent users of JAL-AI say that it is essential to their work," says Mr. Saito. "We believe our flexible and prompt responses to their requests for feature improvements and data integration have contributed to the increase in users by continually meeting expectations. Moving forward, we plan to integrate with AI agents to further enhance operational efficiency."

According to survey results shared by Ohashi, during the pilot project of Airport JAL-AI, more than 90% of ground staff who participated in app experiments for

hazardous items search, and text generation for irregular announcements, reported improved speed in responding to customers and creating announcements. In the lounge entry conditions search, it was reported that even specialized lounge staff experienced improved response speed, with over 70% confirming this enhancement.

Mr. Yamawaki says a key benefit of the collaboration with Avanade is JAL's appreciation for the swift response to feedback and suggestions. "Although communication is often said to be important, it can actually be challenging," he says. "Avanade understands our business intentions, and provides appropriate consulting, despite the project being a major company initiative."

For example, in the case of "Airport JAL-AI," Avanade attributes the success of the project to establishing a development structure that considers logistics of the field. This involved visiting the actual site, observing the staff performing their duties behind the counters, and conducting discussions to understand the intentions of the field, which were then implemented.

Looking ahead, Avanade is currently supporting the integration of business systems via APIs and information crawling from internal portals to incorporate all internal knowledge and context. This will be used to develop an AI-powered app that can be used for various tasks through a single interface and across multiple devices. Mr. Yamazaki says the team aims to achieve overall optimization in large language models by evaluating and integrating with major overseas models as well as domestic lightweight models.

"The field of AI is advancing rapidly," he says. "In this context, we have great expectations for Avanade as a partner of Microsoft and an AI technology expert."

About Japan Airlines Co.,Ltd

Japan Airlines was established in 1951. As a member of the oneworld® alliance, it owns 232 aircraft as of March 2025, and together with its partner airlines, provides a network covering 68 countries and 395 airports worldwide. (*)

It has also been recognized as a "5-Star Airline" by Skytrax and "World Class" by the North American-based non-profit airline organization APEX and is one of the most punctual airlines in the world. Aiming to become "the world's most beloved airline," Japan Airlines provides its customers with the highest levels of safety and service quality. For more information, visit: <https://www.jal.com/en/>

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About Avanade

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