AirAsia: adopting a modern identity solution with Google Cloud

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At AirAsia, we operate a fleet of more than 270 aircraft across 23 markets, fly to more than 150 destinations and carry 100m guests each year. We've also been named the world's best low-cost carrier for 11 years running. To accomplish all of this, we rely heavily on our 22,000 Allstars (employees). As AirAsia co-founder Tony Fernandes likes to say, "it has always been about the people."

In my role as CIO, it's critical that I give our Allstars the tools and technology they need to get their jobs done, while at the same time ensuring that our company's data is protected and secure. While this is challenging enough in normal circumstances, we're also in the midst of rapidly moving from legacy on-premises technologies to the cloud. Google Cloud has been a critical partner for us in this journey.

Identity challenges

AirAsia, like many other enterprises, has relied on a legacy on-premises directory for many years. As our company has quickly grown and expanded to new markets and regions, we've had to manage multiple servers across a number of on-premises data centers and the public cloud, which has proved costly and time-consuming. Our Allstars, located all across Asia, need to easily access a number of legacy on-premises apps in addition to a growing number of SaaS apps. As a business, we also needed a more seamless integration between our HR system of record and our identity solution for user provisioning and lifecycle management. Solving these challenges with our existing on-premises directory was simply not feasible for us.

In recent years, we partnered with Google Cloud to help drive our digital transformation, including moving dozens of workloads and

apps to Google Cloud Platform (GCP), deploying G Suite as our collaboration and productivity solution for all of our employees, and replacing thousands of Windows laptops with fast and secure Chromebooks. We brought up our identity concerns with the Google Cloud team, and after a number of conversations, we decided to deploy Cloud Identity, Google's cloud-based identity and access management solution, to help address the identity challenges we were facing.

Why Cloud Identity for AirAsia?

We ended up choosing Cloud Identity for a few key reasons. Here at AirAsia, we are eager to move to the cloud as quickly as possible, and moving identity management to the cloud is a key enabler of this and our broader digital transformation. Managing identities from the cloud also enables us to have a single identity and set of credentials for each employee, which they can use to access all of the applications they need to be productive, both in the cloud and on-premises.

In addition, deploying Cloud Identity is a key step towards enabling the BeyondCorp (or zero trust) security model, which we feel is the best approach to strengthen our security posture and fight modern threats.

Cloud Identity also integrates seamlessly with our existing technologies, which includes not only Google Cloud products like GCP, G Suite, and Chrome OS, but also third party tools like Citrix, Papercut, and others. And finally, Cloud Identity offered us significant cost and resource savings. |With Cloud Identity in place, our IT department can spend less time worrying about managing multiple on-premises directory servers and can instead focus on delivering value to our Allstar employees.

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Find out how G Suite and Cloud Identity can help your business.