Case study :

Hooroo- A Qantas Startup

# How the cloud and a lean mindset helped Qantas launch a new business

DIUS
WHERE IDEAS ARE ENGINEERED

The Qantas Group's main business is the transportation of customers using two complementary airline brands - Qantas and Jetstar. It also operates subsidiary businesses including other airlines, and businesses in specialist markets.

Qantas's airline brands operate regional, domestic and international services. Hooroo Pty Ltd is a new addition to the Qantas Group and is a wholly owned subsidiary of Qantas Airways Limited. Hooroo provides access for customers to complement their flight plans with accommodation bookings.

## Business opportunity

The continuing trend for consumers to book not just airfares online, but their entire travel itinerary, presented the Qantas Group with the opportunity to both reach new customers and sell additional products and services to existing customers.

This led the Qantas Group to establish a new venture – Hooroo Pty Ltd. Whilst Hooroo has future plans to expand their offerings, it chose to focus on hotel bookings for the launch product.

## Solution

DiUS Computing was engaged to bootstrap the development during the very early stages of the company, when Hooroo only had two full-time employees - the Executive Manager and Head of Technology. The start-up process led to the team building a fresh new consumer facing web application to deliver an enhanced experience to consumers wishing to find and book hotels and accommodation online.

The initial scope for Hooroo included supporting and managing the key interactions of internal and external stakeholder groups required for an online hotel search and booking system, including consumers, accommodation suppliers, finance and other third party companies.

Hooroo supports the entire value chain, providing a new and innovative channel for accommodation suppliers to offer customers their goods and services, and providing consumers with a satisfying experience through

a recognised and trusted brand in the market. This new online channel enhances the Qantas Group's market offering, extending its offering and reaching new customers.

## Project highlights

- Starting lean, focussing on the essential and continuous delivery process needs for launch.
- Aiding in Ops/Infrastructure, automating a continuous, one-click deployment pipeline that deploys the full production stack daily.
- On-time delivery of the hotel provider interface and initial launch of the consumer site.
- Aiding the development of the product roadmap:
  a Minimal Viable Product for launch and beyond.
- Only introducing additional practices and processes that enhanced the team's performance and business value.
- Aiding in the assessment and selection of a performant and productive technology stack.

## Delivery approach

Being a corporate start-up, the development approach was vastly different to typical corporate projects. Whilst the majority of our client engagements involve working collaboratively with a number of key people, particularly the business sponsors and product

managers, Hooroo did not have the luxury of a supporting corporate structure. It was reliant on a few individuals to wear many hats.

Through the bootstrap phase, DiUS was instrumental in helping to establish the development practices and provide a solid technical and cultural foundation for the group. With a strong team in place and development of the "launch" product underway, Hooroo were able to begin the process of recruiting and establishing their permanent team at a sustainable pace, selecting quality individuals resulting in a high calibre team. This blend of senior DiUS personnel and Hooroo's internal team continues to deliver, based on close collaboration, openness and trust between both parties.

In addition, DiUS assisted Hooroo in establishing the process of getting an idea from inception to a profitable product by using a practice called Continuous Deployment. Continuous Deployment provides fast, automated feedback on the production readiness of the Hooroo application every time there is a change to the code, infrastructure or configuration.

## Benefits

A number of benefits have been realised by Hooroo since its initial deployment:

- Leverages the already established and recognised brand.
- Increased traction through campaigns and promotions.
- Provides a foundation for expanding its offering internationally.

## Technology

- Ruby on Rails 3.x
- Postgres DB
- Backbone.JS/Ember
- Engine Yard as a Service (PaaS)
- GitHub code hosting
- Behaviour and Test Driven
- Development (BDD and TDD)
- Continuous Delivery and one-click deployment of the full production stack

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As a corporate start-up, Hooroo delivered 3 major production releases in 15 months; including becoming the accommodation platform for Qantas (www.qantas.com.au), Jetstar (www.jetstar.com.au) and finally launching under its own brand of Hooroo (hooroo.com).

The initial launch to Jetstar was delivered in under 6 months, leveraging the establishment of a Continuous Delivery environment that in one click deploys the entire production stack on an as needs basis, currently this is daily. In addition, Hooroo. com uses cloud-based scaling techniques to automatically scale and meet high peak demands.

Additional major features continue to be deployed which gives Hooroo great momentum, building out and improving the full product offering.

Qantas views Hooroo as a cornerstone of its future business and the project is a highly rated success within the organisation.