

Maneesh Jaikrishna



Maneesh Jaikrishna was appointed Director of Sales & Relationship Management, South Asia and India in the recently amalgamated single SITA organizational set-up effected in mid-2006.

In his present assignment, Maneesh has the overall responsibility of the Indian Subcontinent in South Asia and India for customer relationships, sales and account management. This envelops all SITA products and services provided by its two business units: Application Services (AS), and Communication Services (CS). Having the responsibility of coordination of diverse commercial operations, he heads a team of professionals catering to the airport, airline and Government sectors while driving and contributing to the development and implementation of SITA's focused strategy in the tremendously growing Indian marketplace.

SITA emerged as a pioneer in establishing common use shared passenger check in infrastructure i.e. CUTE in India in 1998 and followed the same trend by implementing CUTE in Bangladesh in 2001. Under Maneesh's leadership in India, SITA since then continues its dominance by currently providing these and other services at the premier Indian international and domestic gateway airport terminals of Mumbai, Delhi, Chennai, Kolkata,

Hyderabad, Bangalore and Cochin airports.

Amidst severe pressure onto airlines on cost cutting, Maneesh has been instrumental in putting into action SITA's philosophy of proactively engaging with all Airline members in his region to work out the best technical solutions based on utilization patterns.

Earlier as part of SITA Information Networking Computing (SITA INC), September 2003 onwards, Maneesh headed the responsibility for sales and marketing in South Asia region. In this key capacity, he was responsible for SITA's overall commercial operations and driving growth and profitability for all SITA INC products and services in South Asia. Previously Maneesh was Regional Manager- Sales for SITA in the South Asia Region, a role he took up in September 2002. Maneesh first joined SITA in 2000 and has extensive experience in Sales & Management.

Prior to joining SITA, he worked in ELCOME India as Senior Manager – Sales and Marketing and dealt with marine electronic navigation, positioning, communication, survey and computer based aviation/ marine simulator systems. An Indian national, he has a first class first B.E. (Hons.) degree in Electronics & Telecommunications from Mumbai University and is currently pursuing his management course from one of the most prestigious and the world renowned International Institute for Management Development, IMD based at Switzerland.

achievable in deploying a Common Use Terminal Equipment (CUTE) system varies from airport to airport depending upon current costs and utilization, but is generally accepted to be in the range of 20-30 per cent. Other significant benefits include decongestion and better passenger experience.

SITA currently manages some 30,000 CUTE workstations for 285 customers in more than 200 airport locations worldwide, checking-in an estimated 580 million passengers a year. We would like to replicate the same IT penetration in other non Metro airports.

Metro Airports like Mumbai, Delhi, Bangalore, etc are fast in adopting technology because of high traffic and operational cost. Over the last one year we have partnered with high traffic metro airports and helping them in making the business more competitive, profitable and customer friendly.

IA: India expecting heavy air traffic growth in coming years, how do you think India should take on its airport modernization process to stay at per the international level?

MJ: Airport is critical component of infrastructure of any economy, more so in case of India which is one of the fastest growing economies in world. It is expected to be in the top five by 2026, topped only by Germany, Japan, China and the US. Modernization of Indian aviation sector is

important in realizing this goal. IATA in its latest estimates last October reckons India to be a driving force behind the world's civil aviation business that is globally expected to grow from US\$ 5.1 billion to US\$ 5.6 billion this year.

We have seen the high level of commitment of Government of India in this pursuit. I would like to take this opportunity to complement Praful Patel for his vision and execution of modernization initiatives. The modernization process should be carried forward with the same zeal and commitment.

Airport area refuel the economy, it helps in generating employment opportunities and also accelerate the growth of ancillary businesses supporting the airports. India has done very well in its modernization initiative but lots need to be done. I think next one decade will see lot of investment in the process of airport modernization and am sure we are gearing towards international level, its only matter of time now.

IA: What are the areas SITA is focusing on? What are the products you are offering to India?

MJ: The biggest challenge with the Aviation sector in India is to optimise their resources - manpower, aircraft utilisation and revenue. IT applications will surely become an enabler in this effort.

India will witness huge growth of IT penetration in

customer facing processes. CUSS will be great tool to decongest the airports; this will empower customers to get their boarding passes from places like Malls, Hotels and Railway & Bus stations. This will change the face of airports traffic pressure on check in counters. CUTE has been fairly penetrated in Indian airports, both passengers and Airlines have gained through CUTE technology. Radio Frequency Identification (RFID) technology can bring substantial benefits to the air transport community in the form of cost reductions, improvements in productivity, customer services and safety. While RFID offers the potential of improvement in the processing of bags at the airport (RFID readers read more reliably than bar code readers), the greatest benefit will be the ability to integrate. Ground-to-air radio telecommunications & air-to-air communications services will see huge IT penetration in India. So, overall our commitment will be towards gearing Indian aviation to become world class by providing solutions across spectrum.

IA: How important is the India market to SITA? How much growth you expect from the India market to come in the next 5-10 years?

MJ: India by large is very critical part of our global strategy, SITA has doubled its manpower in India in last six months. We are very optimistic about our commitment to Indian growth story. We have supported Indian aviation for almost half a century and will continue our commitment.