

Case study



World Travel Put Its Counselors in Front of the Conversations That Need Them

World Travel, Inc. is a U.S.-based global corporate travel management company that has differentiated itself for more than four decades by delivering high-touch service in an industry where that level of care is increasingly difficult to scale. With approximately 350 counselors handling roughly 92,000 voice, email, and chat interactions a month, the structural pressure on that service promise had outgrown the manual workflows underneath it. World Travel made a different call than the obvious one. Rather than incrementally optimize legacy workflows, the engineering team transformed the work itself, deploying agentic AI behind the counselor desk for PDF booking intake, email triage, and live disruption recovery. Booking errors dropped 98 percent on the automated PDF channel. Roughly 20 percent of incoming non-actionable email is filtered before it reaches a counselor. The fully agentic disruption recovery engine inside the company's WorldMobile app went from concept to MVP in three months, on a NiCE CXone platform foundation that itself was lifted into production from a legacy system in approximately one month.

98%

Reduction in booking errors from agentic PDF intake



3 months

Concept to MVP for the agentic disruption recovery engine



~40%

Increase in counselor email throughput per shift



1 month

NiCE CXone lift-and-shift from legacy contact center platform



~20%

Non-actionable email volume deflected before counselors see it



350

Counselors empowered across its operations



Customer profile

About

World Travel, Inc. (WTI) is a US-based global corporate travel management company, 100 percent employee-owned, with more than four decades of high-touch service to corporate travelers across the globe.

Industry

Corporate Travel Management

Region

Global

Size

Mid-Market

Website

worldtravelinc.com

Products

- NiCE CXone
- NiCE Workforce Management
- NiCE Interaction Analytics

Goals

- Transform booking intake and disruption recovery rather than incrementally optimize legacy workflows

- Deploy agentic AI on the back end so counselors are freed for the conversations that genuinely require a human
- Compete with industry giants on speed and outcomes without scaling into one

Features

- Agentic email intelligence that filters non-actionable traffic, summarizes content, and flags sentiment shifts
- Agentic PDF intake that validates booking forms, autonomously emails requestors for missing details, and routes a clean digital summary
- In-app disruption recovery in WorldMobile that retrieves trip context, queries live alternatives, applies waivers, and rebooks autonomously





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We were going down the optimization route, and then we asked ourselves: Is optimization the right approach? It's not. What we need to do is transformation. How can we use these modern tools to transform how we accomplish these tasks?

Matthew Gyrion
Manager of Engineers, World Travel, Inc.

01 Before

A service promise the manual workflow could no longer match

World Travel Inc. has spent more than forty years building its brand around one principle: when a corporate traveler picks up the phone, a real person answers and does whatever it takes to make the trip work. The company has never merged or been acquired. It is 100 percent employee-owned. Its 350 counselors handle roughly ninety thousand voice, email, and chat interactions every month and the 99.2 percent client retention rate the company has held for years rests on every one of those conversations going right.

Matthew Gyrion, Manager of Engineers at World Travel, took over the unified communications team a little over a year ago and started by mapping what the workflows underneath that retention rate actually looked like. The company's scale had grown faster than the manual processes that supported its counselors, and the gap was where the next opportunity sat.

A typical PDF booking form arriving by email required a counselor to extract trip and profile data by hand, validate it against existing records, and re-enter it into the booking system. Forms arrived inconsistently complete, and counselors sometimes returned to the same requestor seven or eight times before a booking was clean. Email volume ran at roughly forty-five thousand messages a month, much of it auto-replies, thank-you notes, and out-of-office responses arriving in front of human eyes that did not need to see them.

Disruption was the greatest test. When a strike, severe weather, or a single airline incident disturbed thousands of itineraries simultaneously, every affected traveler turned to the same support line. During a snowstorm, hold times could stretch to two hours as counselors worked diligently to assist stranded travelers one by one. Through it all, World Travel consistently delivered on its service promise. The challenge, however, fell on counselors managing volumes that no manual workflow could sustainably support at the scale corporate travel had reached.



02 Opportunity to Change

Stop optimizing. Transform.

The decision to act came out of a CIO-level conversation that left the engineering team with a different lens on the work ahead. World Travel had been operating in optimization mode: incremental gains on legacy workflows, tighter QA scoring, more efficient throughput per counselor. The metrics moved. Nothing fundamental changed for the people doing the work.

That was the moment World Travel reframed the question. Not “how do we make these workflow faster?” but “how do we transform them so counselors are not doing them at all?” The premise was specific. Use agentic AI to take non-value-added work off the counselor’s plate, then put the counselor in front of the conversations that actually require human judgment. PDF transcription, email triage, and routine rebooking became candidates for autonomous handling. The complex case, the high-stakes disruption, and the conversation a stranded traveler needed in real time stayed with the counselor.

Inside an employee-owned company, the case for that reinvestment looked different than a public-company AI deployment. World Travel’s counselors are also its owners. The conversation was not about reducing headcount; ESOP economics make that the wrong question to ask. It was about reinvesting human capacity into the kinds of service moments the company is paid to deliver. Every task taken off a counselor’s plate is more focus the counselor can put on the white-glove service the customer is paying World Travel to deliver.

03 NiCE solution

A platform built fast. Capabilities built where the friction lived.

World Travel’s agentic program runs on a NiCE CXone foundation that was already in place when the AI work began. The migration onto CXone from a legacy contact center platform predated the current engineering leadership and was completed in approximately one month against a typical six-month timeline, an early demonstration of the speed at which the WTI team can move when a platform decision needs to land. With CXone stable and the omnichannel routing, workforce management, and interaction analytics layers operational, the engineering team turned to the workflows where counselor friction was highest. The capabilities that followed were sequenced in increasing complexity, each one earning the credibility for the next.

Agentic PDF intake

The first capability replaced manual PDF transcription with autonomous form processing. The agentic system reads the incoming PDF booking form, extracts trip and profile data, validates completeness against profile records, and generates a clean digital summary in the format a counselor expects. If a field is missing, the system itself emails the requestor for the specific information needed and waits for the response before routing to a counselor. The same workflow that once required a counselor to chase missing information across seven or eight email exchanges now arrives at the counselor’s desk complete on the first pass. “I had to go back eight times to a company,” Matthew said. “Now by the time it comes to you, it’s complete.”



Agentic email intelligence

The second capability put an agentic layer in front of the counselor inbox. Every incoming email is read by an agent that classifies its purpose, summarizes content for the counselor in the structure of a working brief, and assesses whether human action is needed. Out-of-office responses, thank-you replies, and other non-actionable traffic are filtered out before counselors see them. Approximately 20 percent of incoming email volume is deflected on this filter alone.

The same layer assigns sentiment scores to incoming customer messages and routes alerts to operations when dissatisfaction crosses a defined threshold, surfacing intervention points before complaints are filed. Counselors who once held three or four email threads at a time are now working five, six, or seven in parallel. Throughput per counselor lands close to 40 percent higher on the same eight-hour day, with the counselor reading a structured summary rather than dissecting a raw email.

WorldMobile disruption recovery

The third capability is the most ambitious in the program. WorldMobile is World Travel's proprietary mobile application, designed to support travelers throughout their journey. When a flight is cancelled or significantly delayed, the traveler opens WorldMobile and starts a chat. The agentic AI built into the chat retrieves the traveler's trip and profile context, validates the disruption against live airline data, queries the GDS and Lumo for alternative flights, and applies any airline waivers eligible for the traveler. It returns three personalized alternatives with predictive disruption likelihood scores, weighted against the traveler's preferences. If the traveler selects an option, the system completes the rebooking instantly and issues an updated itinerary. If none of the options work, the chat hands off to a live counselor on the NiCE platform with the full conversation history and trip context preserved.

Concept to MVP took three months. The capability is deployed to initial customers, with a structured proof of concept running through June 2026 measuring accuracy of itinerary identification, routing accuracy for counselor escalations, waiver retrieval rates, and conversion of selected alternatives into issued tickets. The framing for the build is consistent with the rest of the program: prove it on flights first, then extend to hotel and ground transportation.

A first-of-kind integration

The architecture behind the agentic layer is a partnership of engineered components. The agentic AI is provided by Acai, a third-party AI agent platform. World Travel built its own chat experience inside WorldMobile, hosted in AWS. The connection between the chat surface, Acai, and the contact center runs through APIs into NiCE CXone, which serves as the contact center backbone: omnichannel routing, counselor workflow, screen pop with full traveler profile, conversation history preservation, and clean-handoff into a live counselor when escalation is needed. World Travel was reportedly the first company to complete the Acai-NiCE production integration, a build that demonstrated both the openness of the NiCE platform and the engineering speed of the WTI team.

Counselors did not lose work. They got different work.

The change management arc tracked the same shape every contact center sees when AI gets introduced into the workflow. Initial reaction on the floor was that people were being automated out of their jobs. Leadership's message was direct: agentic AI is here to take the non-value-added work off the plate, not the work that pays a counselor to be in the role. The faster a capability removed grunt work, the faster the resistance dissolved. By the time WorldMobile disruption recovery went into MVP, the question on the floor was no longer whether the tool would take a job. It was when the tool would be available for the cases counselors were working right now.

04 Results

The counselors got their day back

The operational results landed quickly. PDF intake errors dropped by 98 percent against the legacy manual workflow. Approximately 20 percent of incoming email traffic is filtered out before reaching a counselor. Counselors who handled three or four email threads at a time now work five, six, or seven in parallel, a workload increase of close to 40 percent without adding a minute to the workday. On the multi-step intake workflow, counselor touches per case dropped from ten to seven, in line with what the program targeted at design.

The figures undersell what changed at the desk level. Counselors at World Travel handle approximately 11 to 12 interactions per working day. Before the agentic layer, a portion of every one of those interactions was transactional: data entry, validation, chasing the same requestor for the same missing fields. After, every interaction the counselor sees is one that genuinely needs them. The volume did not drop. The composition changed.



If you can automate that down to where you're only getting the value added, we can get those eleven and twelve to be really meaningful interactions.

Matthew Gyrion

Manager of Engineers, World Travel, Inc.



The traveler-side proof point arrived in an unusual way. A member of World Travel's own engineering team was stranded at a major U.S. hub during severe weather. He opened WorldMobile, started a chat, and was immediately rebooked on a flight three and a half hours later. The airline had been offering him an alternative two days out. The agentic system found the closer flight first, completed the rebooking, and routed an updated itinerary, all without a counselor ever being on the line. "It was faster than the airline," Matthew said.

World Travel's 99.2 percent client retention rate held steady through the transformation. The number was already industry-leading before agentic AI entered the picture; what changed was the sustainability of delivering it. The white-glove service that earned the loyalty was now reaching travelers without the wear on counselors that had been the program's quietest cost.

05 Future

Hotel, ground, and whatever comes after that

WorldMobile's disruption recovery engine completes its proof of concept in June, with full deployment planned to follow. Flight rebooking is the first scope. Hotel and ground transportation are next, building on the same architecture and the same handoff pattern to counselors when human judgment is needed.

Beyond WorldMobile, World Travel is working on language translation inside chat as the next priority. Translation done well in a chat surface lets WTI hire counselors based on availability and skill rather than English fluency without sacrificing the experience travelers expect.

A separate evaluation is underway on agentic AI for phone routing. The current interactive voice response system is approaching end of life, and the question on the table is whether NiCE AI Agents (Cognigy) replaces it natively or whether World Travel extends its existing Acai integration to voice. Either path keeps the agentic posture intact: behind the counselor, not in front of the customer. World Travel has been explicit on the principle. Travelers in disruption need help, not deflection.



Don't automate chaos. Automated chaos is still chaos. Start where the friction is highest and look at what you can transform from that friction point. Design for trust and adoption, not just to fix a problem. AI works best when it augments human judgment. It doesn't replace it.

Matthew Gyrion

Manager of Engineers, World Travel, Inc.

About NiCE

NiCE is transforming the world with AI that puts people first. Our purpose-built AI-powered platforms automate engagements into proactive, safe, intelligent actions, empowering individuals and organizations to innovate and act, from interaction to resolution. Trusted by organizations throughout 150+ countries worldwide, NiCE's platforms are widely adopted across industries connecting people, systems, and workflows to work smarter at scale, elevating performance across the organization, delivering proven measurable outcomes.

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