

ANA Delivered Business Growth and Superior Customer Experience

Largest Japanese airline deployed numerous Akamai solutions to ensure the performance, availability, and security of its digital presence



Ensured
website uptime



Improved
cybersecurity



Protected
brand online

Japan's largest airline earns high rankings

As Japan's largest airline — and one of the world's largest — All Nippon Airways (ANA) flies to about 50 destinations in Japan and 32 international destinations in Asia, Europe, and North America. For 11 consecutive years since 2013, it has been awarded a 5-Star rating from Skytrax, the international airline-ranking organization based in the U.K. Committed to continually improving the passenger experience, ANA uses a range of Akamai solutions to ensure the performance, availability, and security of its website and applications.

Ensuring uptime for decades

In the 1990s, ANA started offering both domestic and international flights. Simultaneously, online shopping started gaining popularity, so ANA enabled customers to purchase tickets via its website. Passengers rapidly embraced online ticketing, to the point that ANA's web servers were overwhelmed. According to Akihiro Wada, Senior Director for ANA, "A 30-minute or one-hour outage can affect hundreds of thousands of customers."



Location

Tokyo, Japan
ana.co.jp

Industry

Retail, Travel & Hospitality

Solutions

- Account Protector
- App & API Protector
- Bot Manager
- Brand Protector



Struggling to increase central processing units (CPUs) so it could enable more users to access the ANA website, the company searched for solutions and learned of Akamai's CDN. "We've used it ever since to provide customers with an optimal experience. Akamai ensures our website never goes down," continued Wada.

Supporting post-pandemic traffic surges

In March 2022, ANA celebrated its 70th anniversary with a campaign offering an exceptional fare to fly anywhere in Japan. The first sale resulted in a sudden spike in traffic and a record high number of online transactions.

Since it was urgent to control reservation access, ANA decided to introduce a virtual waiting room. A partnership between Akamai and Queue-it enabled ANA to integrate Queue-it's virtual waiting room, without touching its codebase, via Akamai's EdgeWorkers [edge computing](#) solution.

"Using Queue-it, we were able to minimize stress for customers during peak hours by adjusting the processing capacity of the reservation page," explained Wada.

Prioritizing security

As part of delivering an outstanding customer experience, ANA prioritizes security. Since ANA handles volumes of customer data, it is extremely vigilant about data leaks. "Our goal is to ensure the safety of our customers, and all of our practices are based on that. We have also strengthened our data management, and aim to make safety the foundation of our business," explained Wada.

With that in mind, ANA called upon third-party solutions to address its needs. As Wada underscored, cybersecurity is something that ANA cannot address independently. "We do little in-house development anymore, and have been moving everything to the cloud or SaaS. As we do so, we need to adjust our security measures. Akamai has provided us with a number of solutions to help us do that," he continued.



We have been fans of Akamai since 2003, and appreciate that Akamai has supported our business for so many years.

– Akihiro Wada
Senior Director, ANA



“Even during the COVID-19 pandemic, Akamai provided us with friendly support, making our customers’ lives more comfortable and safer. We want to continue offering the services made possible by working with Akamai.”

— Akihiro Wada
Senior Director, ANA

Confirming legitimate website access and thwarting bot attacks

Some customers wanting to determine which reward flight seats are available for a specific date resort to programming techniques and bots. This puts a lot of load on the ANA site and can make performance sluggish for customers. When it detects such cases, ANA checks to see if they are legitimate requests. “Akamai App & API Protector has greatly improved this process, enabling us to ensure only legitimate users access our website,” said Wada.

Ever since online reservations became mainstream, ANA has been the target of attacks. In 2013, attack traffic from bots increased, and the company became the target of organized attacks that exploited its website. To address this issue, it used [Bot Manager](#).

Securing APIs

ANA customers can use two apps on their smartphones or other mobile devices to do everything from checking seat availability and boarding to earning miles on everyday purchases. As vital tools for ANA passengers, the airline takes measures to ensure the security of data associated with ANA Smart Travel and ANA Mileage Club.

“If our apps are susceptible to tampering or frequent downtime, it reflects poorly on our brand. To enhance the security of our APIs, we use Akamai App & API Protector,” he said.



Protecting its brand reputation

ANA called upon [Brand Protector](#) to ensure it maintains control of its brand online. “Previously, we couldn’t identify fraudulent sites unless customers reported them. This situation was unacceptable for our company,” explained Wada.

By implementing Brand Protector, ANA discovered fake sites, along with legitimate sites that were not well managed, including sites under development. Brand Protector scores the risk and automatically detects sites.

The impact was remarkable. In addition to discovering fake sites, ANA used Brand Manager to take care of sites that were not properly governed. We highly value this solution as it is useful for discovering unsecured sites and sites under development that have been exposed on the internet due to configuration errors,” explained Wada. In those instances, ANA can immediately send feedback to the development team to fix configuration errors and take down shadow sites.

Pursuing future improvements with Akamai

To date, ANA has appreciated being able to rely on Akamai’s solutions and technical expertise. “As we strive to create a world where people can experience ANA in both the real and virtual worlds, I believe our collaboration with Akamai will deepen. Together, we aim to ensure our customers’ comfortable journey in the sky,” concluded Wada.



Founded in 1952 with just two helicopters, All Nippon Airways (ANA) has grown to become the largest airline in Japan. ANA’s legacy of superior service has earned Skytrax’s 5-Star rating every year since 2013, making it the only Japanese airline to win this prestigious designation for 11 consecutive years. ANA has topped Cirium’s Asia-Pacific on-time performance rankings for five consecutive years during which the awards were announced. For more information about ANA and ANA Holdings, please visit ana.co.jp/group/en.