

Flydubai switches to streaming IFE

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Dubai-based Flydubai has invested in new IFE systems for its Boeing 737 fleet. The airline previously used Lumexis' FTTS (Fiber-To-The-Screen) seat-centric IFE technology, which in 2015 became a line-fit option for the B737NG and B737 MAX, but in June 2016 the company suspended most of its business operations. Flydubai is now using systems from Global Eagle, the carrier's wi-fi connectivity provider.

Passengers travelling on the airline's 36 B737-800 (B737NG) aircraft can now access a complimentary digital streaming IFE service, which replaces the seatback systems in the economy cabin, while passengers in business class can also access IFE content via their dedicated HD touchscreens.

"We are very pleased that wi-fi connectivity is now available on 40 of our fleet of 50 Boeing 737 aircraft. We continue to invest in technology and enhancing our product offering," said Daniel Kerrison, VP of inflight product at Flydubai.

The airline has further plans for its inflight entertainment offering, as Kerrison explained, "Over the next few months, we will roll out more services including our new online eShop for passengers to pre-purchase a selection of hundreds of products VAT-free, to be delivered to their seat during the flight."

The airline is also introducing Bluetooth headphone pairing on its Boeing MAX aircraft, allowing passengers to bring their own headphones and connect wirelessly to the seatback displays. 10 aircraft in Flydubai's fleet of 14 Boeing 737 MAXs have returned to passenger service since 8 April, having met all the regulatory requirements.

There are further investments in the passengers experience for the B737 MAX fleet, with Thompson Vantage flatbeds in business class (the first fitment of lie-flat seats in a B737) and new Recaro CL3710 seats in economy class, all customised in partnership with JPA Design.

Flydubai's B737 MAX aircraft are fitted with the seat-centric RAVE system from Zodiac Inflight Innovations, with full HD 11.6in screens in economy (entertainment packages start at AED 15 (US\$4), with a selection of movies, TV shows, music and games in English, Arabic and Russian). Passengers in business class can enjoy complimentary IFE content on 15.6in displays.

Daniel Kerrison added, "The onset of the pandemic in 2020 has reshaped the way people travel and the way airlines operate. We have taken all necessary precautionary measures to safeguard our passengers and that meant doing things differently. We temporarily discontinued our onboard duty-free sales, altered the meal service to individually packed meals, disabled our touch screens and limited movement in the cabin. A year on,

we have gradually and safely reintroduced some of the onboard services and continue to add new features to enhance our onboard experience.”

By Adam Gavine

