

# Virgin America takes top Passenger Choice Award

By **Rick Lundstrom** on September, 16 2014 | Inflight Entertainment



ANAHEIM, CALIFORNIA -- San Francisco-based Virgin America dominated a field of finalists, claiming awards for best in region, cabin ambience, inflight video and ground experience before marching up to take the award for best overall passenger experience during the annual Passenger Choice Awards Monday evening.

The Airline Passenger Experience Association (APEX) polls passengers from around the world each year to select the finalists. APEX also continues its annual Avion Awards for best achievements in technology and best single achievement in passenger experience. This year, the group also honored two members for lifetime achievement.

The early evening awards ceremony was held at the Anaheim Convention Center before the start of the APEX/IFSA Expo, which will run through Thursday. **Laura Trevelyan**, anchor for BBC World News was the host for the event.

This is the second consecutive year Virgin America claimed the top award. The awards program gives the voting power to airline passengers, who rate their travel experience through an [online survey](#). The Nielsen Company, a consumer measurement and information firm, tabulates the results.



Singled out for lifetime achievement Monday night was **Lee Casey**, Vice President of Customer Programs at [Lumexis](#) and **Mark Horton** Vice President of Non-Theatrical Sales for [Paramount Pictures](#).

In addition to her involvement in the nominating and education committees at APEX, Casey's career in inflight entertainment includes positions at Emphasis and Sony Trans Com/Rockwell Collins.

Horton also has long history in inflight entertainment with jobs in IFE at British Airways and Spafax. He has been a board member of APEX for several years and served as the APEX president in the early '90s.



Other Avion Award winners were **Viasat Inc.** for its Exede In The Air Inflight Internet product. **Norwegian** claimed the award for best single achievement in passenger experience for its Interactive Geotainment Moving Map, which also doubles as a producer of ancillary revenue through sales for placement by hotels, restaurants and destination-related attractions.

The Avion Award for newcomer of the year, was [General Dynamics](#). The award was designed to recognize specific achievement, which an airline has successfully used and implemented in the past year. General Dynamics developed a "Tri-Band" radome for Ku, Ka and K bands that is used by LiveTV for inflight entertainment reception on JetBlue Airways.

The awards program is composed of 13 categories, ranging from best food and beverage to best cabin experience and is in its fifth year. The winners of the 2014 Passenger Choice Awards are:

**Best Overall Passenger Experience** – Virgin America

**Best in Region: Africa** – Ethiopian Airlines

**Best in Region: Americas** – Virgin America

**Best in Region: Asia and Australasia** – Garuda Indonesia

**Best in Region: Europe** – Norwegian

**Best in Region: Middle East** - Emirates

**John White Publication Award** – Gulf Air

**Best IFE User Interface** – Virgin Atlantic Airways

**Best Inflight Connectivity & Communications** – Norwegian

**Best Inflight Video** – Virgin America

**Best Cabin Ambiance** – Virgin America

**Best Food & Beverage (in conjunction with the International Flight Services Association)** – Turkish Airlines

**Best Ground Experience** – Virgin America