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# Wireless IFE on the rise, but seatback systems will persevere

By **Rachel Debling** on December, 18 2017 | Inflight Entertainment



Many airlines seem intent on making the transition to wireless IFE, according to recent research from [Valour Consultancy](#), with over 15,000 aircraft expected to be fit with wireless IFE systems by 2026. As just over 6,000 are presently equipped, that means the number will grow by two and a half times in less than a decade.

Report author Craig Foster noted that 81% of wireless IFE systems were installed alongside connectivity in 2017, adding that the industry can “expect this proportion to increase as IFC technology improves and the benefits of an integrated IFEC approach (greater personalisation, tailored content, operational efficiencies etc.) become more obvious.”

However, Foster is quick to dispel the myth that seatback screens are headed for extinction. “Nearly every single wide-body aircraft is delivered with embedded IFE and this is unlikely to change for some time yet,” he commented in a December 12 press release. “Additionally, passengers have come to expect that they will be able to watch the latest Hollywood blockbusters on longer journeys, but this early-window content still cannot be streamed to passengers’ devices.” In fact, Valour Consultancy estimates that embedded IFE systems can be expected to grow to 8,600 by 2026, up from 6,500 in 2016.

Overhead screens are on the decline, the report noted, which is in part due to the introduction of virtual reality headsets and their ilk, seen as the next IFE realm to explore.

“Airlines are always looking at new ways to innovate and stay one step ahead of the competition,” Foster noted. “This, coupled with the fact that some passengers want to cut themselves off from the cabin environment and forget the unpleasantness associated with air travel, has resulted in interest in more immersive IFE platforms”.

For more on this report, visit [Valour Consultancy's blog](#).