

Free WhatsApp inflight plan offered to SAUDIA passengers

By **Rachel Debling** on May, 10 2018 | Connectivity & Satellites



In a first for Middle Eastern airlines, passengers on [SAUDIA](#) flights are free to use the [WhatsApp](#) messaging app in flight thanks to a partnership between the airline and [SITAONAIR](#).

Since May 5, guests on SAUDIA's domestic flights and a few international routes have been able to use up to 10MB of text messages on WhatsApp during their flight.

Director General of Saudi Arabian Airlines, Engr. Saleh bin Nasser Al-Jasser, said in a statement released on the day of the program's launch: "WhatsApp needs no introduction – it is one of the most popular social media messaging applications in the world, and a favorite of the Middle East. To be now offering WhatsApp as a free service to thousands of passengers every day, truly reflects SAUDIA's position as the airline carrier for the digital age, and an airline which provides the latest technological advancements on board. Once more, it is SITAONAIR's flexible approach and digital harmonization mastery that has enabled us to advance our ambitions, and deliver the inflight connected experience now."

He continued: "SAUDIA, through its Transformation Plan 2020, has been introducing a series of innovations and progressive developments for the comfort and enjoyment of our loyal and valued guests on board. The introduction of this new free WhatsApp plan is the latest example of the initiatives the airline is offering, to make the travel experience enjoyable, memorable and comfortable."

Dominique El Bez, VP of Strategy at SITAONAIR, also said: "With an estimated one billion people globally using WhatsApp, we are very proud to bring considerable value to SAUDIA in making WhatsApp messaging available to its passengers. Our flexibility is a key hallmark of our best-in-class service, and it is through this and our impressive digital integration expertise that we have been able to deliver this tailored, popular service to SAUDIA."

This is not the first time the two companies have joined forces. SAUDIA and SITAONAIR worked together in 2017, for example, to allow the airline's First and Business Class passengers access to free onboard Wi-Fi by simply entering their ticket code into the Wi-Fi portal.