

Interview with Viasat: Full, fast, free connectivity



Viasat's Don Buchman at APEX Global EXPO 2024

[Viasat](#) was not far from home last month when attending [APEX Global EXPO](#) in Long Beach, California. The company, headquartered in Carlsbad, California, has set its sights on market expansion in the coming year.

As Vice President Commercial Mobility, Don Buchman tells *PAX Tech*, the company is always looking to the future. “We have been talking about the future since we entered this market. We launched on JetBlue in 2013 and we were full, fast, free.”

Buchman says that all of Viasat’s investments before 2013 and since have supported being able to deliver a capacity that meets the demand of where the market is going.

“More people want to be online, most people are on two or three devices when it is free,” he explains. “That is where we saw the market going, which is a data hungry world.”

He notes that capacity density plays an important role in being able to deliver the in demand data efficiently, particularly in hubs like New York, Chicago and Toronto, that are busy air corridors.

“We led the market, now we are starting to see the market catch up to where we've been going in terms of offering free inflight Wi-Fi ,” Buchman says. He notes that after investing in the market for more than 10 years and looking to the future, Viasat continues to expand its market reach beyond North America, to Europe, the Middle East, Asia and Pacific.

“Our next satellites are addressing all those markets,” he says.

Looking ahead to the future of inflight connectivity, Buchman says the convergence of entertainment and connectivity will be key. As airlines strive to deliver an inflight experience that resembles the entertainment experience passengers have in their own living room, Buchman says passengers expect their favourite content to travel with them, from streaming service subscriptions to live TV events.

“Passengers have subscriptions that they want to access around the world. They want to watch them on their personal devices’ screens, at the hotel, in their living room or even on the seatback device,” Buchman says. “Those are barriers that have yet to be broken, but they will be.”

As for what is next for Viasat, ViaSat-3 is the company’s latest satellite constellation. ViaSat-3 F1 entered commercial service in August, delivering inflight connectivity on routes to Hawaii from North America. Feedback on the performance of ViaSat-3 F1 connectivity on routes to Hawaii has been very positive in the months since commercial service started, with passengers experiencing fast and consistent speeds.

Buchman says that Viasat’s next two satellites (Viasat-3 F2 and F3) will be launched after the Aircraft Interiors Expo ([AIX](#)) 2025, and those will be of global capacity.

“It is really allowing us to stay ahead of that data-hungry world,” Buchman concludes. “We are glad the industry is finally catching up to full, fast, free. We know what we built is ready to serve that increased demand, so we are going to continue doing that.”