

Panasonic Astrova ascends with Icelandair

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Panasonic Avionics' Astrova flying on Icelandair

First unveiled in 2023, Panasonic's Astrova IFE solution is available for both single-aisle and twin-aisle body aircraft and features a modular design that helps airlines stay current in a competitive market.

The system took off for the first time in December 2024 with launch customer [Icelandair](#). PAX Tech caught up with Andy Masson, Vice President Product & Portfolio Management, [Panasonic Avionics Corporation](#), to learn about the airline partnership and the initial passenger response to Astrova.

"In the first six weeks of revenue flights, the system has performed beyond expectations," he reveals.

Launching a lasting partnership



Andy Masson, Vice President Product & Portfolio Management, Panasonic Avionics Corporation

Masson says Icelandair's A321NEO LR fleet was a fantastic launch customer for the Astrova seat-end solution, noting that the airline is impressed with the system's modular architecture, which facilitates easy upgrades to keep pace with evolving technology.

"Icelandair's commitment to delivering a cutting-edge inflight experience underscores its prioritization of passenger comfort, which aligns with Astrova's immersive and feature-rich design," Masson explains, highlighting why the Icelandic flag carrier was the ideal partner for getting the award-winning IFE solution off the ground.

In particular, he emphasizes the increased value of IFE systems onboard long-haul routes, for which Icelandair is known, with the majority of its routes connecting Europe to North America.

"The airline has shown a history of embracing advanced digital solutions, making it a natural fit for our technology-first Astrova," he says.

Astrova is the fastest-adopted IFE solution from Panasonic Avionics, with more than 80 airline program commitments already in place. The partnership with Icelandair is the first in the program, providing Panasonic Avionics with real-world feedback and data that will be used to further refine Astrova and develop future IFE systems.

"Icelandair and their passengers continue to give us feedback that the video performance is phenomenal," Masson adds. "Both Panasonic Avionics and Icelandair are really excited to see the program continue as more A321NEO LR aircraft continue to be delivered."

Putting customization on the map



Panasonic Avionics' inflight map displays the route from Hamburg to Reykjavik

Now more than ever, passengers are seeking an IFE experience that reflects what they are accustomed to on the ground. Masson says that Astrova and Arc™ –Panasonic Avionics' 3D moving map–deliver just that to travellers on Icelandair.

Astrova's modular design ensures the system remains updated for the benefit of both the airline and passengers, with the 4K OLED HDR10+ displays, immersive Spatial Audio and USB-C fast-charging delivering what Masson calls, "a truly captivating entertainment experience."

Panasonic Avionics' 3D moving map, Arc is also flying onboard Icelandair to complement the Astrova IFE system. The map provides premium point-of-interest content to create an engaging flight tracking experience for passengers.

"Arc was designed to be in 4K resolution, so the combination of Astrova with our 3D moving map is really visually impressive. We think it's going to draw passengers into the Icelandair inflight experience, let them explore and have a more enjoyable flight," Masson explains.

He adds that customization options are available with Arc, allowing airlines to modify branding and various features. The core map functionality remains consistent for all airlines and the data-enabled features are tailored to suit the individual identity, with Masson noting a move toward live data integration and real-time information updates is key.

"For us, this is just the beginning of live data integration," he explains. "The flexibility that comes with live data will allow us to integrate shopping elements and other promotional items directly within the map, supporting the airline's ancillary revenue."

The latest iteration of the Arc Studio management interface, which began delivery last month, will

also allow an airline to update locations and identify relevant landmarks and points of interest, tailoring display information to its brand.

To achieve the level of personalization passengers see from Astrova and Arc on Icelandair, Panasonic Avionics collaborates closely with airlines through the entire process from design to installation.

“We work with the airline to ensure the system's design and integration into the aircraft cabin are as compatible as possible, considering both seat integration and cabin layout among other criteria,” explains Masson.

Rigorous testing and validation are conducted to ensure the system meets performance and reliability standards, often involving feedback from test passengers.

“We provide ongoing support and maintenance after the system is deployed to ensure that customer experience remains consistent and at the forefront of everything that we do,” he concludes.