Southwest Airlines brings live gaming onboard with Starlink Wi-Fi

A Twitch streamer engages with viewers while competing in a live gaming tournament aboard a Southwest Airlines flight

Southwest Airlines has brought live gaming to 35,000 feet, hosting what it calls the first-ever inflight gaming tournament powered by Starlink's high-speed Wi-Fi.

The event took place aboard a special flight from Austin to San Diego ahead of TwitchCon 2026, bringing Twitch content creators together to compete in real time while livestreaming the tournament to viewers on the ground.

The November 12 event demonstrated how low-latency satellite connectivity can support interactive entertainment and digital experiences beyond traditional inflight entertainment offerings.

"Gaming is all about connection, competition, and sharing the moment with a community, which made bringing a live tournament onboard such a natural fit for Southwest," said Sabrina Callahan, Senior Vice President and Chief Digital and Marketing Officer, Southwest Airlines, in the November 12 news release.

The tournament also highlighted the airline's growing investment in inflight connectivity as it prepares to expand Starlink across its fleet.

Southwest expects to become the first major U.S. airline to equip its entire fleet with Starlink by fall 2027.

Using Starlink's low Earth orbit satellite network, passengers can access high-speed, low-latency connectivity for streaming, gaming, working and browsing on personal electronic devices, including smartphones, tablets and laptops.

"Our Customers want to stay connected in the air just as they do on the ground, and Starlink is helping us deliver that experience," said Lisa Hingson, Vice President, Customer Experience and Innovation, Southwest Airlines.

"Livestreaming a gaming tournament shows what this technology can do, made possible by Starlink's constellation of thousands of low-Earth orbit satellites."

Southwest currently offers complimentary Wi-Fi to Rapid Rewards members through its partnership with T-Mobile on Wi-Fi-enabled aircraft.

The gaming tournament coincided with TwitchCon 2026, held November 13 to 15 at the San Diego Convention Center, bringing together content creators, developers and gaming communities.

The activation reflects the expanding role of inflight connectivity in enabling passengers to participate in live digital experiences while travelling.

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