

# Spafax caters content to carriers in APAC and beyond



Jean-Marc Thomas, Managing Director APAC, Spafax, at FTE APEX Asia Expo 2024

*PAX Tech* spoke to Jean-Marc Thomas, Managing Director APAC, [Spafax](#), at FTE APEX Asia Expo this week. With the event taking place just three weeks after APEX Global EXPO, Thomas says the expo in Singapore is a good opportunity to continue conversations that started in Long Beach while meeting with airline representatives from regional carriers who were not present in California.

“It’s regionally important for Spafax to have exposure here,” he says.

Thomas notes that the demand in the Asia-Pacific market differs from other regions in many ways, even as Asian content is becoming more mainstream and visible, in part due to popular streaming services, such as Netflix. He explains that this shift has led to content being proposed to airlines differently.

While Blockbuster hits are still the primary choice, the secondary selections are more Asian-centric to appeal to audiences flying on regional routes. As well, Thomas explains that more Asian language-films and content are becoming popular, such as Japanese cooking shows, where the content does not need to be translated or dubbed from English.

“There is quality, fun content that people want to see, with good storylines,” Thomas says of content coming out of the APAC region, giving the example of *Squid Game*, a Korean television series that became extremely popular on mainstream media globally in the last few years.

### **One step at a time**

Looking to the future, Spafax is focused on delivering content that appeals to the interests and needs of different passenger groups, from solo travellers in Business Class to families with children in Economy.

Thomas says that while the improvement in connectivity onboard may be causing airlines to fear lack of engagement with IFE on seatback screens, he believes that people will still enjoy the seatback entertainment despite having access to shows on their personal devices

“People want to watch a movie or show on the seatback screen while they scroll on their phone or respond to emails on their laptop,” he explains, emphasizing that this multi-device approach emulates the entertainment experience people are used to having on the ground in their living rooms. As such, he maintains that investing in content for the seatback system remains valuable to airlines.

He also says airlines need to consider the wants of passengers and what content people have access to on a regular basis versus what they have access to inflight in order to make the seatback IFE offerings more compelling.

One way that airlines can make these decisions is with Spafax One. This end-to-end digital entertainment ecosystem is designed to help airlines simplify and streamline content curation and delivery for a better passenger experience. It was initially rolled out on select airlines in 2023 and showcased by Spafax at the [Aircraft Interiors Expo](#) in Hamburg that year. As an example of its tailored capabilities, Spafax One was used to stream the coronation of King Charles III live to passengers travelling on British Airways. Spafax One was built around three pillars of the IFE lifecycle: Experience, curation and delivery.

Thomas explains that Spafax One is currently in use on two airlines that are providing feedback.

The end-to-end ecosystem gives insights into trending analytics and data to help inform the content decisions airlines are making.

“It is a way for airlines to differentiate themselves from others,” Thomas explains, noting that it offers huge customization opportunities for airlines to tailor their offerings to meet passenger expectations in a specific region.