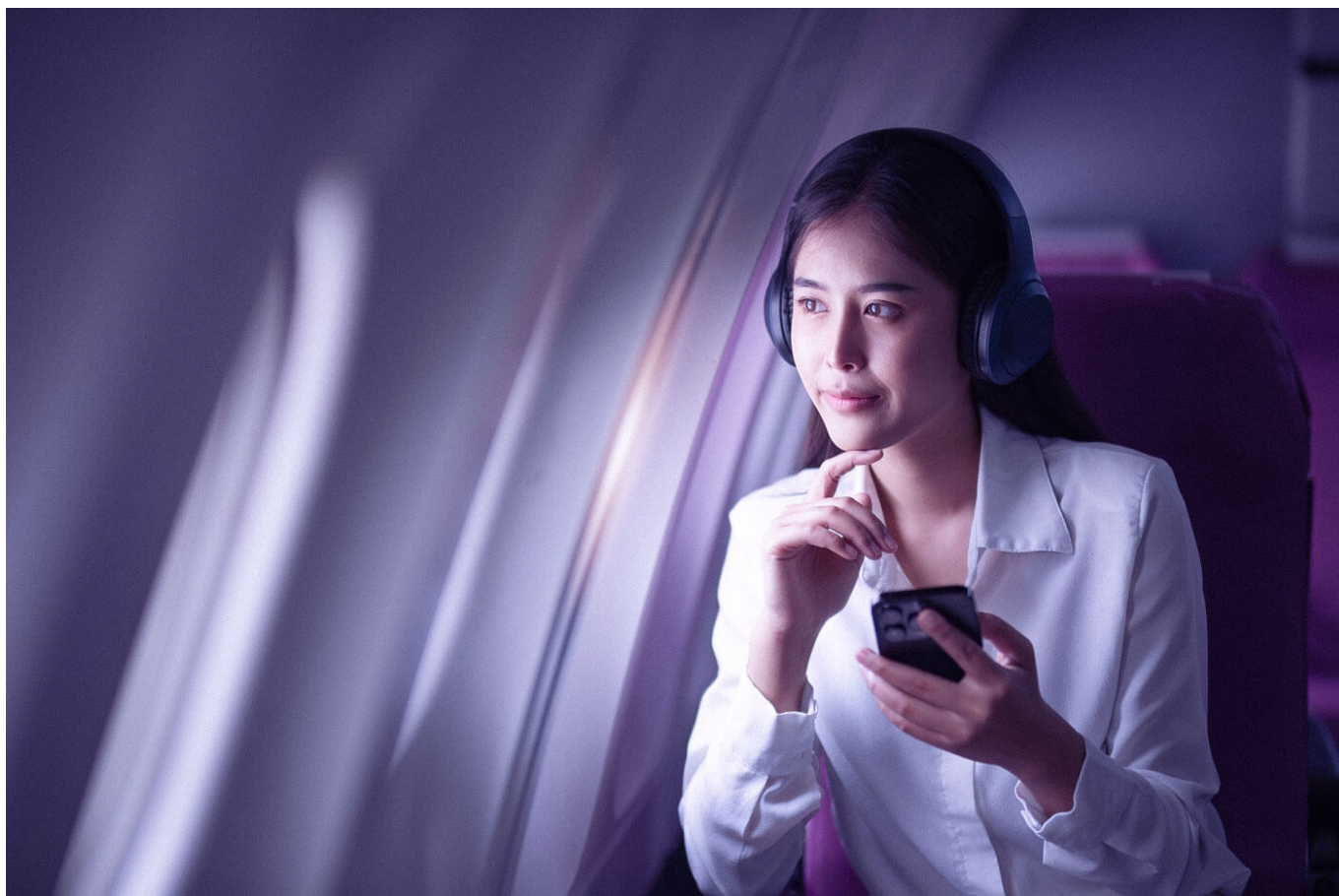


# Spafax adapts content formats and delivery to meet demand

This is a special feature from the [September 2025 APEX Global EXPO](#) issue of *PAX Tech*, on [page 22](#).



The accelerated shift toward wireless and BYOD is accelerating the need for adaptive and new content formats

Passenger expectations and trends shaping inflight content strategies for airlines are constantly evolving. Some of these trends include a diversification of format preferences, such as short-form content and podcasts, particularly as the industry moves further toward wireless and Bring Your Own Device (BYOD) IFE models that allow passengers to engage with content the same way they would on the ground.

As Maura Chacko, SVP Content Experience, [Spafax](#), explains, the accelerated shift toward wireless and BYOD is accelerating the need for adaptive and new content formats as well as faster delivery pipelines to match passenger expectations for a streaming platform experience.



Maura Chacko, SVP Content Experience, Spafax

“They expect their IFE system, particularly when streamed to their own device, to be on demand, fresh, updated frequently and easy to navigate,” she tells *PAX Tech*.

As a result, Chacko emphasizes that there is a diversification of format preferences for inflight with limited series, documentaries, digital native formats, influencer content (and kidfluencer content) and podcasts all growing in popularity.

### **Flexible content formats**

BYOD reshapes how suppliers like Spafax think about content packaging and merchandising, with a cloud-based content delivery pipeline pushing content service providers further. With encrypted, adaptive bitrates and API driven automated workflows, it is possible to make content available within hours, instead of weeks.

Chacko explains that passengers want flexibility and curated content that is relevant to their route, 2

time of day and mood.

“Short-form content is certainly popular on the ground and mirrored in the air, particularly when aligned with the route length,” she says. “Our data shows that passengers increasingly engage with shorter content on domestic or regional flights, especially when paired with intuitive content discovery tools.”

Factors such as airline demographic, route and flight duration allow Spafax to make strategic decisions about its partnerships and the type of content it delivers.

“We are able to expand beyond major studios and traditional IFE distributors for bespoke and exclusive partnerships with OTT streaming platforms, podcast networks and digital content creators around the world for global, regional and local content that is fresh and exciting,” says Chacko.

### **Generational and demographic trends**

Also shaping the airline content in demand today are generational content consumption trends, which Chacko says are more pronounced than ever before.

While Gen Z and Gen Alpha gravitate toward short form, digital-native content formats (podcasts, music-driven content, gamer programs and e-sports), Millennials and Gen X continue to drive engagement with prestige TV, wellness and reality formats. Boomers often prefer classic films and mainstream dramas, Chacko explains.

Tools like SpafaxIQ (a data analytics dashboard that allows airlines to understand how passengers navigate the GUI, entertainment preferences and content discovery) and Data Fusion (which identifies the most relevant advertising content for specific airlines, routes and demographics) allow Spafax to provide segmented content strategies based on the user trends in the analysis.

“We can match these shifting preferences and continually evolve our strategy and content offering so it feels intuitive, personalized and inclusive,” she explains.

The most relevant content strategy considers both the role of local and global content in engaging diverse passenger demographics. Global content provides recognizable titles and wide appeal, says Chacko, whereas local content creates relevance and connection.

“What is relevant in Asia Pacific may not resonate as well in North America or the Middle East, and vice versa, so we tailor our strategy based on insights and analysis from the data for a curated offering of globally recognized titles and local films, series, podcasts and influencer content,” she explains.

SpafaxIQ helps Spafax find the right balance of content to appeal to each airline’s passenger demographics, while also accounting for its routes and flight sectors.

### **In the cloud(s)**

Advances in content delivery are also reshaping inflight content strategies as traditional three-month supply chains are giving way to real-time, cloud-enabled ecosystems.

Chacko calls the connected entertainment experience, including late load updates, live streaming, near-live updates and other innovations such as Spafax’s Live Ticker, “game-changing” for the supplier’s content strategy.

“We can now publish updates and ads within hours,” she explains. “With new platforms like [Thales’s] FlytEDGE and our proprietary tools, we are reducing onboard lead times and ensuring passengers get

the freshest content available.”

These faster lead times allow airlines to deliver content that is relevant to what is currently trending on the ground, such as live sports updates or the season finale of popular reality television shows.

To stay ahead of the curve, Chacko says airlines must invest in flexibility—both technologically and editorially—as well as a clear marketing and promotion strategy for content.

“Airlines that combine smart data usage with compelling content storytelling and IFE-specific marketing communications strategies will define the next phase of the passenger experience,” she predicts.