

Spafax weighs in on the future of IFE ahead of AIX

This is a special feature from the [April 2026 AIX Hamburg issue](#) of *PAX Tech*, on [page 76](#).



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[Spafax](#) recently announced IFE wins with [Cathay Pacific](#) and [Oman Air](#), starting 2026 strong. At [APEX TECH](#) in Los Angeles, Dimitrios Tsirangelos, Vice President Business Development IFE Technology & Innovation, Spafax, sat down with *PAX Tech* following his discussion panel, to share his outlook on the future of IFE and content rights.

The session, “Edge Caching and Streaming - Focus on Supply Chain Technology, Standards, Market Dynamics, and Technical Implications of Different Business Models,” saw panelists agree that as airlines move toward hybrid cloud and edge-caching models, competitive advantage will depend less on streaming and content storage and more on intelligent curation, data-driven personalization and

rights management.



Dimitrios Tsirangelos, Vice President Business Development IFE Technology & Innovation, Spafax

“We have heard increasing discussion over the past year about whether consuming content onboard an aircraft constitutes viewing in a public environment, and that naturally introduces legal considerations,” Tsirangelos says. “Airlines license content with the help of their CSPs from studios for inflight exhibition across seatback screens and onboard portals. That licensing framework is distinct from the personal-use rights consumers receive through their streaming subscriptions.”

He adds that complexity can arise in certain technical environments.

“When content is edge-cached on an onboard server, the rights framework is clearly defined,” he explains. “If any content is stored, or edge cached, through the aircraft system, it must be covered by the appropriate inflight exhibition rights. That is not about restricting passengers — it is about

ensuring that the airline's distribution model fully respects studio agreements."

For Tsirangelos, the priority is straightforward.

"Whatever the delivery mechanism, the most important principle is protecting the rights of content owners while maintaining a compliant and sustainable ecosystem for airlines."

Content curation for the cabin

As inflight content becomes more dynamic, there is a potential shift in the business models for licensing and monetization happening. Tsirangelos paints a picture of what this model could look like in a scenario where licensed content is stored on an aircraft's cloud server and the technology identifies whether or not that specific piece of content has already been streamed. In the future, he suggests that technology may allow airlines and providers to consider new content purchasing models.

"Today we have specific packages we buy from the studios and provide to the airlines," he explains. "But it might be possible in the future, if we start thinking about new pricing models, to have a model like pay-per-view or models where the CSPs are buying a bulk of rights and then they distribute these packages between multiple airlines."

He adds that content curation is important, especially for airlines that want to embrace their brand through content selection.

"This is something that we at Spafax think would be valuable when it comes to small airlines with smaller fleets that do not have the curation capability or the IFE teams to do so. We could offer a specific package for them," Tsirangelos explains.

For Tsirangelos, the future of content curation for airlines involves a shift to AI. When thinking about an infinite content library in the cloud, he says curation can happen based on passenger data. He notes that at present, content curation is largely based on human-centered expertise, data-driven decision making, and insight from previous content cycles. But, soon, recommendation engines and AI may be capable of taking the lead.

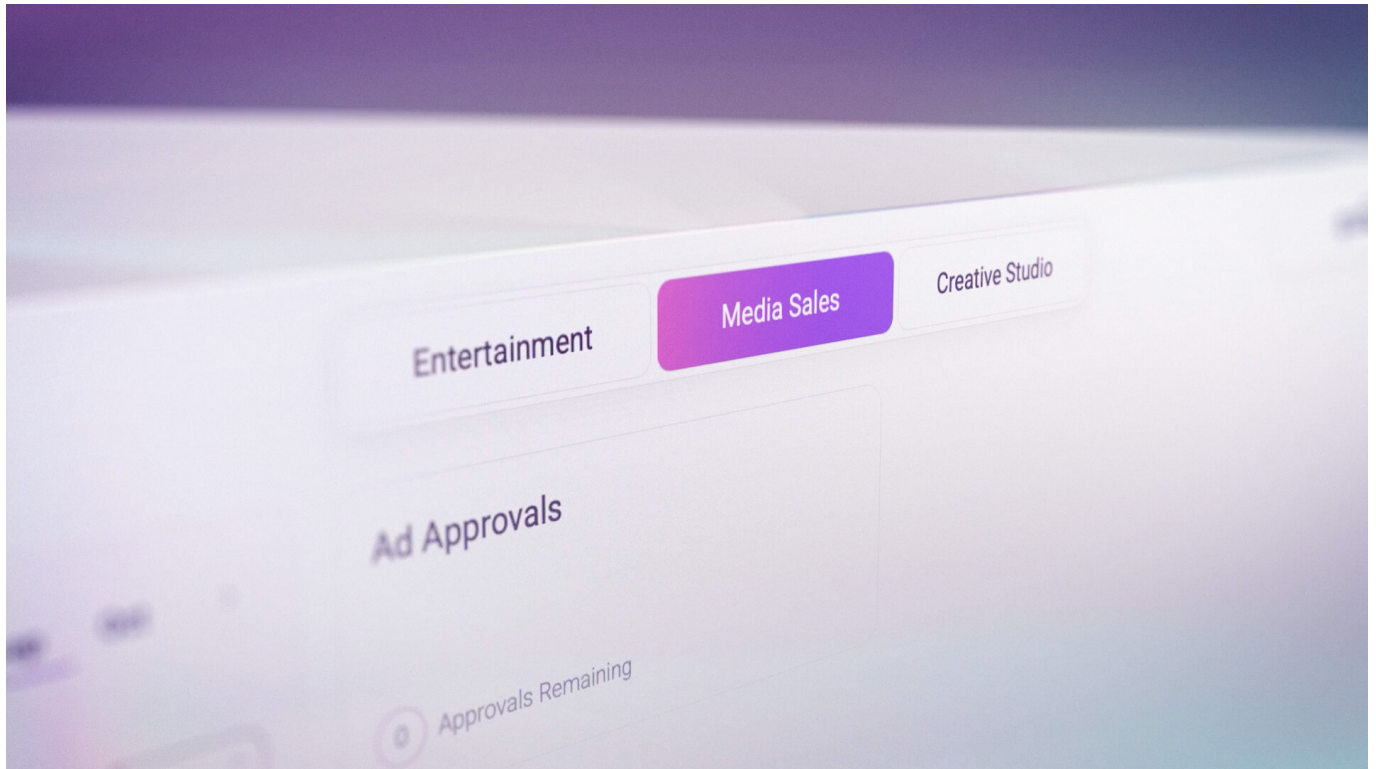
"We could have more automations, we could have more machine learning algorithms that consume audience data and curate specific content that is available through the cloud onboard the aircraft," he predicts.

Four in focus for AIX 2026

As Tsirangelos tells *PAX*, Spafax will have four areas of focus at the Aircraft Interiors Expo (AIX) 2026 Hamburg, Germany, this month. The first is a rebranding of Spafax's core products and services, including internal products like its content management system, transcoding platform and IFE discovery microsite.

"This rebranding demonstrates that we consider all these tools as being highly integrated on every level," Tsirangelos explains.

He notes that the second part of Spafax's pitch during AIX is the automation that the company is introducing, which offers a significant benefit to airlines in terms of cost.



Spafax will showcase a rebranding of its core products and services at AIX 2026, including internal products like its content management system, transcoding platform and IFE discovery microsite

“Automation significantly reduces operational complexity and provides cost efficiency for airline partners,” he explains.

The third element that Spafax will showcase at AIX 2026 is its cloud streaming capability, answering the question of supporting airlines that have purchased LEO connectivity solutions and creating a cloud streaming solution for infinite content libraries. The fourth component of the exhibitor’s approach to the event is its data lake, data analytics and advertising capabilities.

“We have an industry-first product,” Tsirangelos notes, highlighting the Spafax Cortex platform “It is a revolution when it comes to advertising and generating revenue with first party data.”