

Lufthansa announces management changes at Eurowings and SunExpress



Max Kownatzki, incoming CEO of Eurowings (left) and Marcus Schnabel, incoming Chief Executive Officer of SunExpress (right)

[Lufthansa](#) has announced management changes at [Eurowings](#) and [SunExpress](#). Max Kownatzki, currently Chief Executive Officer of SunExpress, will assume the role of CEO of Eurowings on February 1, 2026. He succeeds Jens Bischof, who will step down from the management board at the end of the year after more than five years leading Eurowings and over 35 years in senior positions within the Lufthansa Group.

Marcus Schnabel, currently Head of Ground Operations for Lufthansa Airlines in Munich, will succeed Max Kownatzki and take on the position of Chief Executive Officer of SunExpress starting February 1, 2026.

Carsten Spohr, Chairman of the Executive Board of Deutsche Lufthansa AG, said, "Jens Bischof has significantly shaped and advanced Eurowings over the past five years. He has transformed the airline into Germany's leading leisure carrier in the highly competitive point-to-point market while also repositioning it as a European carrier with international bases. Under his leadership, Eurowings has successfully embarked on the path of profitability.

"With Max Kownatzki, we are gaining a top manager for Eurowings who will continue the company's successful course. His experience as CEO of SunExpress, his strategic foresight, and his high standards for operational excellence make him the ideal candidate for this role."

Spohr continued, "Marcus Schnabel brings the necessary expertise and entrepreneurial drive as an experienced airline manager to guide SunExpress during a pivotal phase of growth. I am confident

that he will successfully continue the strategic and operational development of the airline.

"I am particularly pleased that we are able to fill these strategically important leadership positions within the Lufthansa Group from our own ranks."

Kownatzki is well-acquainted with Eurowings: In 2015, he served as Chief Commercial Officer of Eurowings Europe and later as Senior Vice President responsible for Eurowings' business development. He began his career in 2002 at the strategy consultancy Oliver Wyman, where he worked as a Senior Partner until 2013, advising international airlines with a focus on alliances and commercial topics. Subsequently, he became Chief Strategy Officer of the Jetstar Group, a subsidiary of Qantas Airways, before taking over network planning and strategic alliances for the Lufthansa Group's hub airlines in 2017. He also served as a member of the supervisory board of Air Dolomiti. Since April 2020, he has been CEO of SunExpress.

Kownatzki studied Business Administration at the University of St. Gallen, where he earned his doctorate. He also holds a commercial pilot license.

Schnabel has 20 years of leadership experience within the Lufthansa Group. His career includes senior positions responsible for flight and ground operations, safety and security processes within the Lufthansa Group, as well as operations planning and management at SWISS in Zurich. Since 2024, he has been responsible for Ground Operations and the Deputy Head Lufthansa's at Lufthansa's 5-Star hub in Munich. and is the Munich Hub Deputy Head. In all his roles, he has consistently driven commercial excellence, quality, efficiency, and innovation in complex operational environments.

Schnabel studied Business Administration at Ludwig Maximilian University of Munich and the FernUniversität Hagen. He also holds a professional pilot license.