

CEO interview: Steven Greenway highlights flyadeal's ambitious growth strategy

This is a special feature from the February 2026 [Pre-AIX/Middle East Report issue](#) of *PAX Tech* on [page 10](#).



flyadeal CEO Steven Greenway (left) and *PAX International* Managing Editor Jane Hobson at IFSA Global EXPO in Long Beach, California in September 2025

In September 2025, Saudi Arabia's low-cost carrier flyadeal entered its ninth year in service with a sharpened focus on growth, efficiency and alignment with the Kingdom's Vision 2030. Under the leadership of Chief Executive Officer Steven Greenway, who took the helm in January 2024, the airline is scaling rapidly to meet the needs of mass-market travelers while positioning itself as a crucial pillar within parent Saudia Group's broader strategy.

A complement to Saudia's premium positioning

flyadeal was launched in 2017 as a sister airline to full-service national carrier Saudia—both part of Saudia Group—with its inaugural flight between Jeddah and Riyadh. In just eight years, the carrier has expanded its fleet to 42 A320s, operating scheduled flights to 19 domestic and 14 international destinations across six countries, alongside seasonal international routes and charter services as part of a dynamic growth strategy. The airline's primary base is Riyadh, with additional key operations in Jeddah and Dammam.

International expansion is a central focus for flyadeal, which currently operates 25 percent of its

network on international routes. The airline aims to achieve a balanced network of 50 percent domestic and 50 percent international services by 2030.

Differentiating itself from conventional low-cost carriers, flyadeal maintains strong partnerships with travel agents and this year became a member of [IATA](#), further strengthening its industry credentials.

Saudia, meanwhile, is pursuing an increasingly premium strategy with upgraded fleets and enhanced service offerings. That shift has created a market opening for flyadeal in the Middle East, where LCC penetration is quite low, according to Greenway.

“We are really the mass market play for the group,” Greenway tells *PAX International*. “We offer an opportunity for travelers who are seeking more of a cheap and cheerful option.”



flyadeal staff join Airbus management for the airline's 40th aircraft delivery in Toulouse

This role is particularly important as Saudi Arabia pursues Vision 2030, the government's transformation program that seeks to diversify the economy, expand tourism and increase connectivity. flyadeal's low-cost proposition supports inbound travel, domestic mobility and religious pilgrimages at scale.

“It is not one or two customer segments,” Greenway emphasizes. “When you are looking at only one or two hours to get across the Kingdom, most people really do not want the bells and whistles at all. They just want to get from A to B. We have these cost-conscious consumers.”

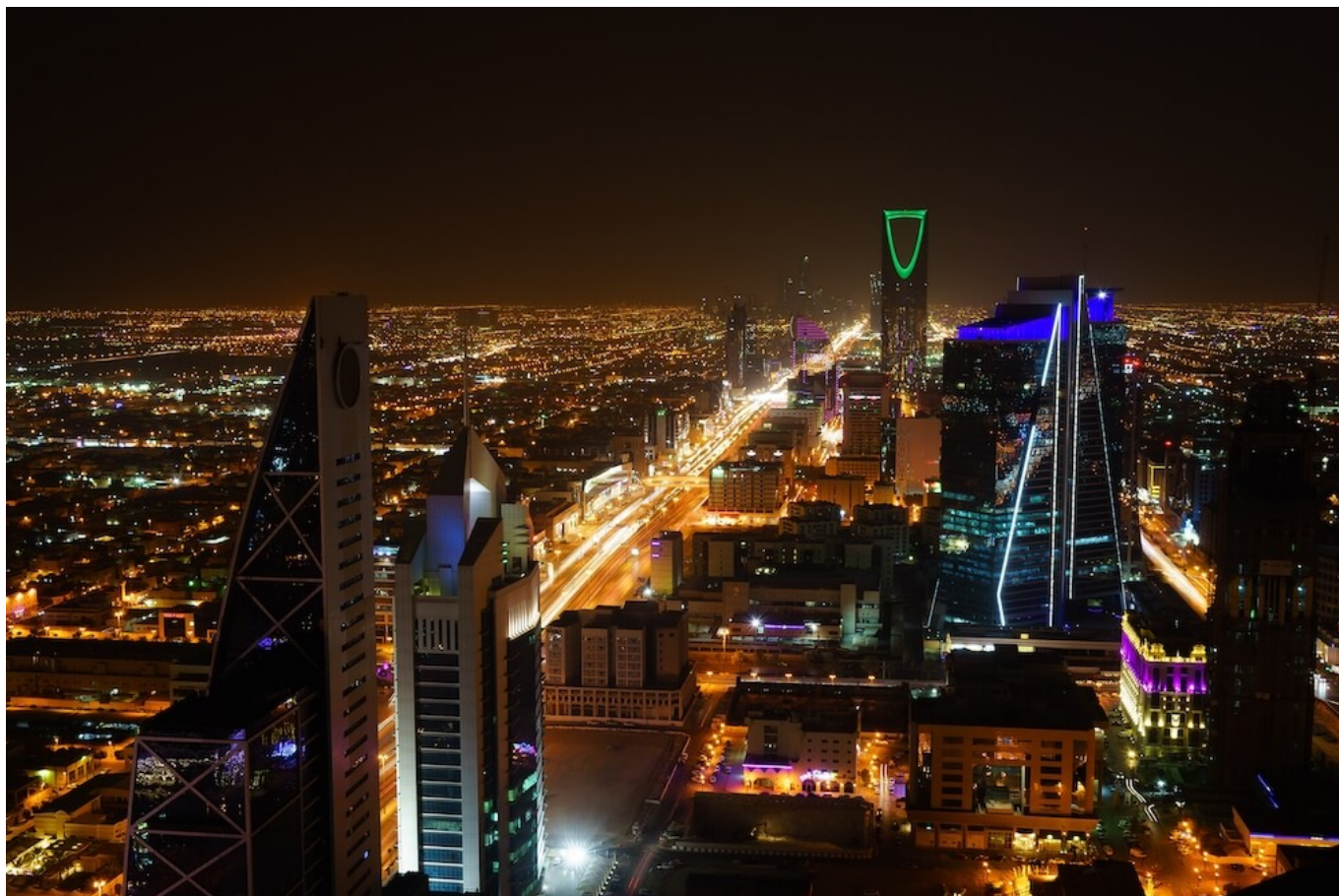
A fleet built for growth

Central to flyadeal's expansion is its ambitious fleet plan. The airline is receiving aircraft at a pace of nearly one per month through 2030. Its current orderbook for 51 A320 family aircraft comprises 12

A320neos and 39 A321neos narrow-bodies, the latter bringing additional range, capacity and efficiency, as well as 10 A330-900neo wide-bodies, which will open new long-haul markets. These aircraft will begin deliveries from 2027.

At the moment, flyadeal's baseline is the standard LCC offering: A320, 186 seats, no recline, no IFE. But Greenway highlights extra-large overhead bins as a "passenger-friendly investment" that massively benefits NPS.

The A321s, configured with 240 seats, will reduce unit costs by roughly 20 percent compared to the A320s and expand operational range to destinations in Southeast Asia, Western Europe and the Indian subcontinent.



flyadeal's primary base is Riyadh, with additional key operations in Jeddah and Dammam strengthening connectivity across Saudi Arabia and beyond

The forthcoming A330neos will mark flyadeal's entry into the long-haul, low-cost market. These aircraft will primarily operate with high-density Economy cabins but include a small premium section for passengers willing to pay for extra comfort on longer flights.

Greenway describes the introduction as both an exciting opportunity and a significant operational challenge.

"The A330 really opens up our network globally, which we are very excited about. It has a huge degree of utility," he says. Greenway is not shy to point out the other side of the coin.

"Now, that said, what terrifies me is operating a wide-body in the context of an airline that has really only operated narrowbodies. No matter how you cut it, bringing in a wide-body operation complicates your operation, and the propensity to lose money on these aircraft is huge."

Passenger proposition: Efficient and logical

As flyadeal refines its onboard offering and prepares for longer routes, the airline remains firmly aligned with Saudi Arabia's Vision 2030. Its growth strategy—focused on affordability, accessibility, and international reach—positions the low-cost carrier as a key enabler of the Kingdom's tourism and connectivity goals. By expanding its fleet and network, flyadeal is not only meeting rising passenger demand but also helping to “bring the world to Saudi Arabia and Saudi Arabia to the world,” as envisioned by the Saudia Group.