AIX highlights trends shaping Middle Eastern cabin innovation

Aircraft Interiors Expo (AIX) has released a new report examining the trends shaping aircraft cabin innovation in the Middle East, highlighting growing investments in premium seating, digital connectivity, passenger well-being and sustainable design.

Drawing on insights from industry leaders including Emirates, Qatar Airways, Etihad Airways, Riyadh Air, RoyalJet, F/LIST and Gogo Business Aviation, the report identifies six key areas influencing cabin development across the region.

According to AIX, the Middle East's commercial aircraft cabin interiors market was valued at US$1.4 billion in 2025 and is expected to exceed US$2 billion by 2031.

Premium travel remains a major focus, with nearly 15 percent of passengers flying Business or First Class in 2024, the highest share globally.

"Premium travel remains a key differentiator for the region, while competition amongst airlines in the Middle East for the premium traveler's business continues to be intense," said Anita Gradwohl, Group Director Customer Relations and Sales, F/LIST.

The report also highlights the growing importance of cabin interiors as long-term investments, with airlines prioritizing flexible designs that support brand identity, passenger loyalty and future upgrades.

Digital connectivity is another key consideration as carriers introduce high-speed internet, artificial intelligence AI enabled personalization, 4K OLED displays and smart cabin controls.

"Connectivity in the Middle East is much more than an expected service; it is essential," said Dave Falberg, Senior Vice President Sales EMEA/APAC, Gogo Business Aviation.

Beyond technology, the report identifies a shift toward understated luxury, with cabin designs incorporating circadian lighting, enhanced acoustics, improved air quality and greater privacy.

Sustainability is also influencing aircraft interiors, with lightweight materials, modular components and responsible sourcing becoming increasingly important to long-term cabin strategies.

With approximately 800 aircraft in regional orderbooks and Boeing forecasting demand for 1,370 new wide-body aircraft over the next 20 years, AIX expects Middle Eastern carriers to play a significant role in shaping future cabin standards.

"The Middle East continues to set the pace for premium cabin innovation globally," said Archana Dharni, Event Director, AIX.

"From digitally enabled personalization to culturally nuanced design and long-haul comfort leadership, the region consistently challenges conventional thinking."

Several companies featured in the report are expected to exhibit at AIX 2027, bringing regional perspectives on cabin innovation to the international aircraft interiors industry.

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