

IFSA enters new chapter with 2026 Global EXPO in Dallas

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IFSA Global EXPO is entering a new era in 2026, marked by its relocation to Dallas, Texas from Long Beach, California, and an ongoing focus on strengthening its position as the leading event for the onboard services industry. The EXPO will take place from September 8 to 10 and will continue to serve as a key platform for industry engagement and innovation.

This summer, *PAX International* caught up with Lauren Costello, Executive Director of the International Flight Services Association ([IFSA](#)), to discuss the strategic move to Dallas.

“This move allows us to create an experience that is even more tailored to the onboard services community,” Costello says. The transition builds on strong momentum in recent years, including rising attendance, exhibitor participation, sponsor engagement and broader industry involvement.



Lauren Costello, Executive Director, IFSA

The 2026 edition will introduce a more independently focused format for the onboard services community, with IFSA-specific programming, an expanded opening networking reception, a strengthened thought leadership agenda and a larger IFSA Awards program.

Designed to enhance engagement while maintaining the core value of the EXPO, the event will foster meaningful airline-supplier connections to advance onboard service innovation. A continued partnership with Future Travel Experience ([FTE](#)) will broaden discussions to include a wider passenger experience and technology audience.

Costello notes that while IFSA Global EXPO continues to evolve, the broader APEX, FTE and IFSA community remains united by a shared mission to improve the end-to-end passenger experience. She highlights that food, beverage, hospitality and service expectations now span the entire journey, reinforcing the importance of cross-sector collaboration.

Despite the growth of digital communication, Costello emphasizes IFSA's continued focus on face-to-face engagement, with stakeholders valuing opportunities to connect with the right people, hold meaningful conversations and build relationships in a focused timeframe. She adds, "There is no substitute for in-person."



Designed to boost engagement while preserving IFSA Global EXPO's core value, the 2026 event will strengthen airline-supplier connections to drive onboard service innovation

Looking ahead to Dallas, key themes include sustainability, premiumization, operational efficiency and food safety. Airlines are investing in elevated onboard hospitality, chef-driven menus, branded partnerships and enhanced service concepts to strengthen differentiation and passenger loyalty.

At the same time, digital transformation continues to reshape onboard services, with airlines adopting tools such as forecasting, pre-ordering, personalization and inventory management systems to reduce waste, improve efficiency and enhance the passenger experience. Food safety remains central, supported by updated IFSA World Food Safety Guidelines aimed at strengthening global standards and supply chain transparency.