

WTCE returns with celebration of industry innovation



SATS was one of the prominent new exhibitors at this year's WTCE

The [World Travel Catering & Onboard Services Expo \(WTCE\)](#) welcomed 4,909 visitors to its first live, face-to-face event since the beginning of the Covid-19 pandemic June 14-16 in Hamburg.

And there was additional reason to celebrate, with the show also observing its 10-year anniversary. This year's focus was on how the industry can accelerate post-pandemic recovery, while developing sustainable solutions and enhancing the passenger travel experience.

More than 250 exhibitors from across the catering and onboard services industry welcomed attendees from 138 global, regional and low-cost airlines such as [Emirates](#), [Virgin Atlantic](#) and [easyJet](#), as well as rail companies and international caterers including dnata, [Newrest](#), [SATS Catering](#) and [LSG Group](#).

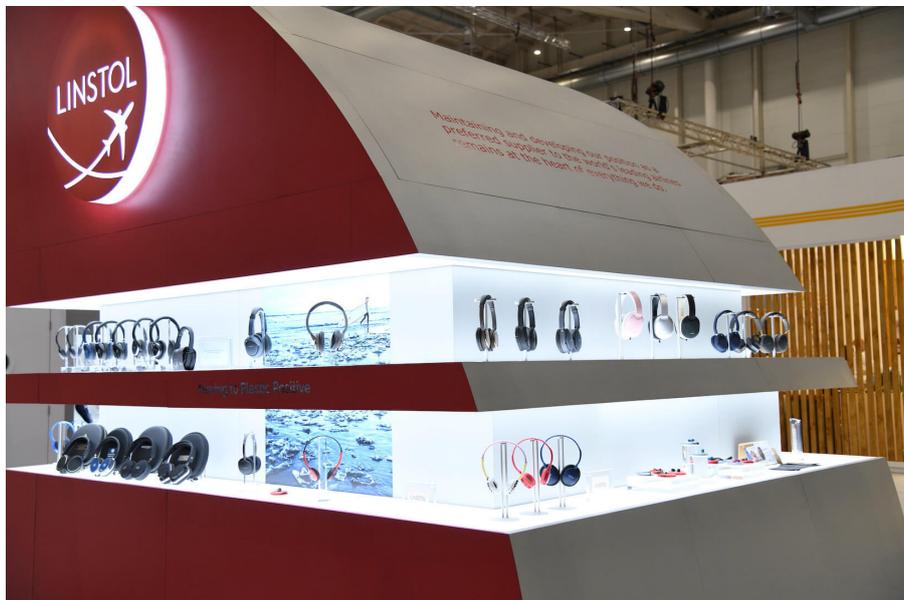


Longtime exhibitor dnata welcomed many to its stylish stand

“This is the best show we have ever had, and we’ve been coming since inception. We have always enjoyed it, and this year has passed our expectations,” said Robin Padgett Divisional Senior Vice President for Catering and Retail at [dnata](#). “It’s a huge commitment for most of the industry and the show has generated a years’ worth of work for us. WTCE provides us with great leads, and we have had the chance to rebuild and rekindle relationships.”

Abdulrahim Aljneibi, Procurement Manager, [Etihad Airways](#) added: “I came to WTCE to meet up with suppliers face-to-face and expand our portfolio and build up relationships. We want to discuss and see how the new market is growing. I have really enjoyed the environment here. Everything has been really organized.”

WTCE’s return signaled the brighter future ahead for global travel by debuting new products, service innovations and exclusive passenger insights from some of the biggest businesses and industry experts.



Linstol's line of headsets covered Economy to First Class

Meeting old friends and new

Making connections is at the heart of WTCE and this year it was even more important than ever for visitors and exhibitors to find the space and time to meet in person. To help this, WTCE launched a new online tool - WTCE Connect - for attendees to easily arrange meetings in advance. More than 1,000 meetings were set up using the new tool, as it matched onboard buyers with products and suppliers based on their registration responses, plus allowed them to search for and invite relevant industry associates to connect.



The Tom Savano stand featured an extensive line of pre-mixed cocktails

The new smart badging system in place meant that visitors were able to scan in and request more information over email when speaking to an exhibitor, with both parties then receiving a checklist of everyone they had spoken to on stand, making it easier to follow-up with specific contacts after the event.

Future focused

This year's WTCE offered a plethora of pent-up innovation, and new faces. German technology company [Omnevo](#), for instance, were first-time exhibitors, showcasing a suite of omnichannel solutions to help airlines drive additional ancillary revenue.

Alongside on-trend food and drink products – from prepared meals to meal components, snacks, and beverages – other exhibitors highlighted how cleanliness is now high up the priority list, demonstrating an array of amenity kits and hygiene solutions for both passengers and in-cabin.

Sustainable packaging solutions were also very much in focus, with exhibitors including [Cyclups Creation BV](#) from the Netherlands offering 'plantastiq' compostable wheat-based straws and cutlery, [Sier Disposables](#) highlighting its creative sustainable disposables, and [Eco-Material Co Ltd](#) from Taiwan demonstrating its molded pulp foodservice and packaging products.

Other returning exhibitors included [Linstol](#), [Frankenberg](#), [Portfolio Partners](#) and [Formia](#), alongside new brands making their debut at the 2022 show.

These included cocktail specialist [Tom Savano](#), who introduced visitors to their personalized cocktail offering which allows airlines to tailor their passenger's experience to their flight destination, as well as [For Aisha](#), dairy-free, halal baby food, gourmet popcorn brand [4700BC Popcorn](#) and [Coconuts Organic](#) with its exceptional vegan ice cream.

Sustainable flavor

With sustainability remaining high on passengers' agendas, this year's three-day show included the ever-popular Taste of Travel program, with a line-up featuring sessions focused on sustainable

catering.

Curated in association with *Onboard Hospitality* magazine, Taste of Travel's educational content was delivered by a line-up of top passenger experience professionals and sustainability experts. The program also featured cookery demonstrations by some of the industry's leading chefs and numerous sampling opportunities. Jetvine showcased products from its portfolio, including Fruits for Drinks and MOTH cocktails in a can, while Marc Wade from Libero Special Meals opened the first day of the program, discussing the dietary needs of special meal passengers. He then went on to lead a panel of food and diet experts in a thought-provoking discussion about allergens, diets, and the future of special meals onboard.

Passengers lead the sustainability cause' was the topic explored by Lauren Costello from the [International Flight Services Association](#). Her session underlined the message that airlines cannot afford to ignore passenger demand for sustainable inflight service.

Multiple sessions over the course of the show examined sustainability issues in detail, including Julie Baxter, Editor of *Onboard Hospitality*, taking a closer look at the need for different industry stakeholders to work together in her session *The Urgent Need for Global Collaboration*. Elsewhere, Ariane Van Mancius, Founder and Owner of [NowNewNext](#), examined the real price of sustainability and Bjoern Orth of the LSG culinary team, who showcased a range of dishes that create zero food waste.

Visitors were also invited to explore technological advances with subjects ranging from pre-ordering and in-seat ordering, personalized meals and the supply chain with experts ranging from Maryann Simson from [Jetway Communications](#), Job Heimerikx, CEO of [AirFi](#), Nils Taubert, CEO of [Retail inMotion](#) and Michael Raesch, CEO of Omnevo.

Elsewhere on the show floor, visitors were delighted with the developments in sustainable solutions demonstrated by exhibitors. Linstol introduced attendees to its headphones made from 100 percent recycled plastic from the ocean, Incredible Eats showcased its range of flavored edible spoons, Playin Choc gave visitors the chance to taste its dairy-free and gluten-free chocolates packaged in biodegradable, plastic-free packaging, and B Conspiracy had its single use self-care solutions on stand to show visitors how to reduce waste onboard.

"I'm particularly interested in sustainable products and companies with innovative thinking," said Tetsuya Maeno, [All Nippon Airways](#). "And I've found that WTCE has been a great place to meet suppliers with innovation and sustainability front of mind."

The co-located Passenger Experience Conference, taking place one day before WTCE, also offered visitors the opportunity to immerse themselves in new ideas, innovations, and the evolution of the onboard passenger experience. And Aircraft Interiors Expo (AIX) offered an educational program running in parallel with WTCE, which offered expertise, case studies and insights.

A decade of WTCE

To celebrate WTCE's 10th anniversary, a series of special events marked the milestone, including the 'Onboard Icons' awards which recognized the contribution of 10 of the most influential people in the sector - as voted for by the industry. Additionally, a showcase of 10 of the 50-plus companies, which have exhibited at WTCE since 2012 was presented at the show, with many having gone on to successfully develop their businesses.

And to keep visitors and exhibitors in the party spirit, as well as offering yet more networking

opportunities, all were invited to a drinks reception sponsored by Heineken on the evening of Wednesday, June 15.

WTCE Event Director Polly Magraw added: "We're absolutely blown away by the sheer level of industry enthusiasm and support for this year's show following what has been a very challenging few years for travel.

"It's clear that while passengers and stakeholders were forced to stay at home and shut down, innovation was still very much top of mind, so we've been hugely excited by the new products, services and technologies showcased this year. If this year's support for WTCE is anything to go by, global travel is well on its way to a fantastic recovery."