



The pilot's guide to inflight Wi-Fi

6 considerations for why you should fly connected





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To Wi-Fi or not → to Wi-Fi: Why it matters to pilots and crew

In the last 10 years, internet service onboard an aircraft has gone from a convenient perk to an expected necessity. This applies across sectors, from commercial flights and charters to corporate jets: we've all enjoyed the benefits of inflight connectivity and we all want more.

In this guide, we'll look at six real-world truths regarding inflight connectivity. You'll learn the advantages and trade-offs of having connectivity and how top flight professionals across North America are using it to improve the day-to-day experience for themselves, their crew, and their passengers.

The 6 new truths of inflight connectivity

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Inflight Wi-Fi dramatically improves the passenger experience.

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Pilots benefit significantly from Wi-Fi, too.

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Onboard internet is key to modern, two-way communication.

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Onboard internet providers are better than you think.

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01

**Inflight Wi-Fi →
dramatically
improves
the passenger
experience**

This probably is not a surprise: Inflight Wi-Fi makes a huge difference to customer satisfaction, productivity, and comfort. And, happy passengers translate to happy pilots.

As a pilot, you're invested in your passengers having a positive experience. Content passengers allow you to focus on what matters – transporting them safely – instead of troubleshooting technology issues, or keeping your cabin occupants entertained. For many pilots, that's worth its weight in gold.

“ *If our passengers aren't sleeping, they're online. Inflight internet significantly improves the customer experience. Without Wi-Fi, they're wondering, 'How long is this flight, how long until I'm on the ground and back online?' It makes trips feel much longer than they really are. It's also much harder to be productive. You're just sitting there, and our passengers can't afford that.”*

–Jonathan Corcoran, chief pilot & owner, Corcoran Aviation.

Key takeaway: Inflight Wi-Fi keeps passengers happy and productive – which means pilots are as well.

02

Pilots benefit → significantly from Wi-Fi, too

“ Having Wi-Fi opens up a broad range of weather products that you wouldn't be able to access even with a full avionic suite installed on your panel. I could have an aircraft with the latest avionics and I still couldn't get the pilot reports and weather information that I need without the internet. That's a big advantage to our pilots.”

– Denise Wilson, CEO & flight captain, Desert Jet Aviation

Wi-Fi represents a serious upgrade for pilots used to proprietary apps and older technology like satellite phones. Onboard internet gives pilots faster, more up-to-date access to relevant information and communication, including the ability to:

- Access the most current weather information
- Use flight and travel planning apps in real time
- Communicate with dispatch, FBO, passengers, and more

75% of companies flying light jets agree that **inflight connectivity** is a significant **priority**

Key takeaway: Inflight Wi-Fi enhances pilots' key capabilities and applications, like weather, flight planning, and communication.

03

Onboard internet is key to modern, two-way communication →

We're all used to instant, flawless communication, any time, anywhere – but until recently, that wasn't an option in the air. Pilots and passengers alike relied on satellite phones with spotty service, or simply assumed that once they were up, communication was down.

Inflight connectivity changes that in a big way.

“It's a great communication tool between our dispatch center and pilots. Having access to the internet means we can get more information from the ground, and for pilots, the more access to information, the better. [CLICK TO TWEET](#) Wi-Fi adds another tool to the toolbox to maximize the safety and efficiency of the flight.”

– James Elia, president & CEO, AirSprint Private Aviation

Key takeaway: Wi-Fi enables pilots to stay in constant touch with dispatch, maintenance, sales, passengers, and many others.

83% of organizations flying
light jets added internet to
benefit their **passengers**



04

Wi-Fi can make → or break urgent situations

While the improved communication afforded by onboard internet is always convenient, it also can be critical depending on the situation. Almost every pilot whom we interviewed shared a story of passengers who were able to adjust their plans mid-flight due to a family emergency, work crisis, or change of schedule due to weather – solely because of reliable inflight Wi-Fi.

Inflight connectivity allows pilots and crew to go above and beyond, not simply transporting people from here to there but using their service to make a difference in people's lives. When that call comes in, and you're able to get your passengers where they need to be, onboard internet can literally be life-changing.

“On a recent flight, the passengers were notified via the internet that there was a medical situation with a family member. The flight crew used the Wi-Fi to communicate with dispatch, have the office clear customs, gain approval from the flight operations team to land at the new airport, make arrangements for rental cars and hotels, and organize all the logistics at the new destination – all from the air. Without Wi-Fi, we wouldn't have known about the issue until we hit the ground. It made the difference of hours or even days in getting our passengers to their loved one's side.”

– James Elia, president & CEO,
AirSprint

Key takeaway: Wi-Fi is convenient for every day communication, but can be life-changing in urgent circumstances.





“As a pilot, you’re always making educated guesses. Wi-Fi makes you more educated. You’re still going to make decisions based on your flight knowledge and flying experience. But, because I have more real-time information, I’m a smarter pilot.” [CLICK TO TWEET](#)

- Joey Meier, chief pilot for Brad Keselowski

Connectivity in the cockpit: One pilot’s take on inflight Wi-Fi →

We sat down with Joey Meier, chief pilot for Brad Keselowski, champion NASCAR driver, to get his commentary on how inflight Wi-Fi has changed the game for pilots.

How has inflight connectivity changed your flying experience?

Connectivity in the cockpit allows you to leave the ground without losing your connection to everything on the ground. That means that whatever you need, whatever you’re facing – weather, catering, a ride, a medical issue, a diversion – you’re never out of reach of your team.

Before Gogo, you had to wait to get into radio reception, or call an airport below you, to say, “Hey, I need a favor, can you call this number?” Then you’d wait for a return phone call and by that time you may be out of range. Wi-Fi alleviates all of that.

I used to have to wait to get within 30 minutes of my destination airport to get weather. Now, I can find weather and see

the trend all the way back to our home base. With inflight Wi-Fi, even though I’ve left the ground, I’ve never left the ground.

What are your favorite capabilities of onboard internet?

I’m a huge lover of Gogo Text & Talk. On every departure, our director of maintenance waits to hear from me. That used to be an ACARS message, but we don’t use that anymore. Now I text him after takeoff, “Everything looks great. You can head home.” It eliminates him hanging around the airport longer than necessary. Now he gets mad if I take off and forget to text him – he’s like, “Hey, is everything okay? I was getting worried!”

Does onboard Wi-Fi help you fly safer?

Wi-Fi doesn’t tell you what to do, it informs you about circumstances in real time and allows you to make better decisions using better information than you’ve had in the past. [CLICK TO TWEET](#)



05

Onboard internet providers are better than you think →

Inflight connectivity has a reputation for being overpriced and underwhelming, especially from early adopters who used the original systems. Today, however, people and organizations have a variety of options as far as how and with whom to connect in the air.

Many of the pilots we interviewed shared their satisfaction with our service and the support that we provide. They appreciated being able to choose from a variety of plans, upgrade easily if and when necessary, and always reach someone to address any issues – even if they were in the air. These features removed the administrative burden from the pilots so they, and their passengers, could enjoy the benefits of inflight Wi-Fi.

“With Gogo, setup was as easy as a single phone call and customer service has been great. In fact, our passengers have been using the service so much that we had to upgrade our plan, but before the billing cycle ended, I called in, requested an upgrade to the unlimited plan, and we were taken care of.”

- Jonathan Corcoran, Corcoran Aviation

Key takeaway: Onboard internet doesn't have to be another burden for pilots to manage – it usually solves more headaches than it creates.

56% of organizations flying
light jets have internet on
some of their aircraft



06

Inflight Wi-Fi is surprisingly cost-effective

Price is the biggest roadblock for most organizations when considering adding Wi-Fi to their fleets.

Onboard connectivity is a significant investment, but it's also one that pays off – and it isn't as cost-prohibitive as you might think.

Perhaps more importantly, inflight Wi-Fi is not a write-off – it's an investment. It adds value financially by driving new business, providing competitive differentiation, boosting brand equity, increasing return bookings, and usually delivering positive return on investment (ROI) in as little as three years.

“Upfront, we use it for services that we used to have to pay for separately. Instead of paying for a bunch of separate apps, we can go online and file flight plans, email FBOs, and more. We were able to cancel the other services, which saves us hundreds or even thousands of dollars per month – that adds up over the course of the year.”

– Jason Park, chief pilot for a corporate flight department

Key takeaway: Think of inflight Wi-Fi as an investment – one that can reduce other expenses while adding value and driving ROI.

Is Wi-Fi worth it? →

We asked our panel of pilots a simple question: Is Wi-Fi worth it? The answers were unanimous.

"Absolutely. Once you have it, as a passenger or a pilot, you'll wonder how you ever lived without it."

– Jon Becker, Don Davis Aviation

"Without a doubt. If you're on the fence, get on a plane with Wi-Fi and experience it. You'll fall in love and there's no way you'll go back."

– Jonathan Corcoran, Corcoran Aviation

"Yes – even just for the resale value. All other things being equal, an aircraft with Wi-Fi will book and sell before an aircraft that doesn't have it."

– Denise Wilson, Desert Jet

"Yes. People want Wi-Fi; it's what they expect. In gathering input on which service to use, everyone I spoke with consistently said 'Go with Gogo.' It was an easy choice and I would make the same decision again."

– Jason Park, Corporate Flight Department

"When you're evaluating Wi-Fi, it may seem hard to justify the cost. But when you actually have it onboard, it's a game-changer. Don't underestimate the power of Wi-Fi for improving the flight experience, passenger experience, and crew experience."

– James Elia, AirSprint





How Gogo → can help

At Gogo, we work with pilots and other flight professionals every day to ensure that each organization gets the best service at the best cost. Whether you're researching your options to make a recommendation, want to better understand how inflight connectivity impacts pilots and crew, or talk technical details, we're here to help.

Talk to a Gogo inflight connectivity consultant about how Wi-Fi will change the way you fly.

[Schedule a custom consult
to get started.](#)



ABOUT GOGO BUSINESS AVIATION

Gogo Business Aviation is today's leading provider of in-flight connectivity solutions that increase the productivity, safety, and enjoyment of the business aviation travel experience. A trusted brand in airborne communications, Gogo Business Aviation is a factory option at every major business aircraft manufacturer and installed on the world's largest fractional ownership fleets.

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