

GROWTH IN THE MIDDLE EASTERN AVIATION INDUSTRY LEADS TO BOLD EXPANSION PLANS



business models even further.

The aviation industry in the Middle East has experienced a commendable level of growth in recent years, with low cost carrier traffic doubling in the last five years, but local companies are still looking to build upon this success. There are a number of airlines operating successfully within the region, which includes the European airlines easyjet and Wizz Air, and there are plenty of plans to make the most of the improving market and to expand

How are local airlines hoping to build on their previous success?

There are currently three carriers in this LCC market that are based in the Gulf - Air Arabia, flydubai and Jezeera Airways - and even though the former two are already big players, with services to Europe, Central Asia and India, this doesn't deter them from looking ahead to even bigger fleets and more routes in the future. flydubai are planning to add new aircraft to the fleet to create new routes based on growing demand, with a second order of planes being placed already, while Air Arabia - who are currently seen as having a lesser, non-hybrid model in the LCC market because of the lack of perks or business class - are looking to create new services to major Arab cities in an expansion of their routes. Elsewhere, flynas, a Saudi Arabian company, wants to develop long-haul flights to the UK, something that would be a real step forward for Mideast aviation because LCC long haul models were once seen as infeasible.

It seems that all the major players in this regional aviation industry are hoping to ride the current wave of success and, with economic experts insisting that the role of these low cost carriers cannot be underestimated and that it will be one of the most important trends over the next decade, it is easy to see why they are making such bold expansion plans.

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