

Qantas trials inflight Internet access

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Qantas planes on the tarmac at Sydney International Airport. Australian flag carrier Qantas said Friday customers will be able to access the Internet inflight on certain services from February using their personal electronic devices.

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Airline chief Alan Joyce said the pilot scheme would start on six of its A380s on trans-Pacific flights linking Sydney and Melbourne to Los Angeles.

"From February next year our customers travelling between Australia and Los Angeles will have the opportunity to participate in our inflight connectivity trial and communicate online from 35,000 feet," he said.

"Our customers will be able to access the Internet via their WiFi enabled personal electronic devices, such as iPhones, iPads and BlackBerrys, on Qantas for the first time."

Qantas said it was aware of [Lufthansa](#) and Emirates mounting similar trials.

Passengers -- initially only in first and business class -- will be able to use the Internet in the same

way as a terrestrial Wi-Fi hotspot in which customers pay with their credit card.

It follows the airline earlier this year saying it will deliver over 200 hours of inflight entertainment options to passengers via iPads provided in the seats of dedicated Boeing 767-300 aircraft.

Customers on those flights will also be able to watch in-flight entertainment on their laptop computer, smartphone, tablet or other WiFi enabled devices, in what it claims is a world first.

Qantas is working to repair damage to its brand after grounding its entire fleet in October during a bruising industrial dispute with unions over wages and conditions.

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