

Qantas axes in-flight Internet after poor take-up

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A Qantas A380 Airbus sits on the tarmac at Melbourne's Tullamarine Airport in 2011. Qantas's trial of in-flight Internet access has been shelved due to a lack of interest from passengers who prefer to sleep or enjoy a rare break from the online world while flying.

Australian airline Qantas's trial of in-flight Internet access has been shelved due to a lack of interest from passengers who prefer to sleep or enjoy a rare break from the online world while flying.

Qantas began a service in March which gave travellers on Airbus A380s flying to Los Angeles and London in-flight connectivity using their personal [WiFi](#)-enabled laptops and other [electronic devices](#).

But it said Tuesday that while keen to offer the WiFi service to long-haul passengers, less than five percent of customers had made use of it and it was discontinued last month.

"The commercial trial found that the customer take-up of the WiFi service was extremely low," a spokesman said.

"Most of our A380 services operate at night and so another dampener on demand was the fact people preferred to sleep than surf the web."

Cost was also likely a factor, with the price ranging from Aus\$12.90 (US\$13.45) to Aus\$39.90 for various data packages.

"Naturally, the costs associated with offering a reliable Internet connection in-flight are significantly higher than on the ground, particularly when you are flying over vast expanses of ocean and can't connect to ground towers," the spokesman said.

Qantas said customers indicated they would prefer better Internet access at airports, so the airline was investing in upgrading WiFi technology across its domestic and international lounge network.

"Right now, our customers are telling us that access to the Internet on the ground is more important than in the air," the spokesman said.

"We will continue to evaluate demand for WiFi options onboard."

[Qantas](#) passengers will still be able to send and receive text messages and make telephone calls in-flight on A380s, selected B747s and [A330](#) aircraft.

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