

# PRESS RELEASE

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## **Lufthansa Group Airlines sign partnership agreement with Kakao to cooperate on Direct Connect solutions**

- **Lufthansa Group Airlines, via an NDC solutions partnership with Kakao, become the first airlines to join 'Flights by Kakao'**
- **Lufthansa Group Airlines to present differentiated travel content, offering personalized flight products with diverse ancillary service options**

Lufthansa Group Airlines – which include Lufthansa German Airlines, SWISS and Austrian Airlines – announced on 23 April that they have signed a partnership agreement with Kakao to cooperate on NDC-based Direct Connect solutions. New Distribution Capability (NDC) is a travel-industry standard developed by IATA, aimed at enhancing capabilities and communications between airlines and travel agents.

With the partnership, Lufthansa Group Airlines will become the first airlines to join the 'Flights by Kakao' platform. The partnership signing ceremony was held at Kakao's Pangyo office, with Lufthansa Vice President Sales Asia Pacific Dieter Vranckx, Kakao's head of AI division Byung-hak Kim, and other executive members participating.

'Flights by Kakao (m.flights.kakao.com),' a real-time flight comparison, booking, and payment service, has only so far partnered with travel agencies. Lufthansa Group Airlines will become the first airlines to directly join the platform, with its service launch scheduled in the second half of this year. Consumers will then be able to conveniently access and purchase the airline's diverse content via the Kakao platform.

The partnership between Lufthansa Group Airlines and Kakao is the first-ever application of the NDC standard in a non-travel agency distribution channel in Korea. With the adoption of the distribution standard in 'Flights by Kakao,' the two companies will provide ancillary services such as seat upgrades, meal options, and in-flight Internet on the Kakao platform.

Lufthansa Group Airlines will be able to offer differentiated travel content to consumers with personalized flight products. Furthermore, passengers can use the Kakao platform to conveniently purchase flight tickets and other services from SWISS and Austrian Airlines, in addition to Lufthansa German Airlines.

"Kakao and Lufthansa Group are definitely a match as both companies are leading in their field when it comes to digital innovation. Being present on the platform gives us the chance to target the individual traveller with tailor-made offers. We are very proud to kick off this collaboration where we are the first direct connect airline within the Kakao environment!" said Dieter Vranckx.

“We are pleased to bring global-level travel products and content conveniently to Korean customers via the partnership with Korea’s largest mobile platform Kakao,” said Alejandro Arias, General Manager Korea, Lufthansa Group Airlines. He added, “Lufthansa Group Airlines will continue to lead the innovation of Korea’s tourism industry with continued investments and partnerships in diverse forms.”

“This partnership could be realized because we teamed up with Lufthansa Group Airlines, an aviation industry leader in digital innovation. We will present a more powerful and differentiated ‘Flights by Kakao’ service with the partnership,” said ByoungHak Kim, Vice President Head of AI Division, Kakao.

**[Photo]**



Participants pose for a photo with the signed agreement at the ‘Lufthansa Group Airlines-Kakao partnership signing ceremony’ held at Kakao’s Pangyo office.

(From left) Lufthansa Group Airlines General Manager Korea Alejandro Arias, Senior Director Sales for Korea and Japan Donald Bunkenburg, Vice President Sales Asia-Pacific Dieter Vranckx, Kakao Vice President Head of AI Division ByoungHak Kim, and Director AI Division Search Development Team YoungKwang Park.



At the ‘Lufthansa Group Airlines-Kakao partnership signing ceremony,’ executives of the two companies exchange gifts in celebration of the partnership.

## **About Kakao**

Kakao, better known as South Korea's largest mobile messaging app operator, is an integrated mobile lifestyle platform company with services including Communication (Kakao Talk & Daum portal), Mobility (Kakao Taxi), Commerce (Kakao gift), FinTech (Kakao Pay), AI, Game and more.

With the mission of "Connect Everything", Kakao is dedicated to creating an ecosystem of connectivity where people can stay connected with family and friends by sharing what matters to them.

For more, please visit at [www.kakaocorp.com](http://www.kakaocorp.com).