

Air Freight Forwarding Market to Reach USD 210 Billion by 2034 Driven by Global Trade and E-commerce Boom

The air freight forwarding market is witnessing steady growth driven by global trade expansion, rising e-commerce demand

VANCOUVER, BC, CANADA, August 28, 2025 /EINPresswire.com/ -- The global [Air Freight Forwarding Market](#) is set for steady expansion, projected to grow from USD 120 billion in 2024 to USD

210 billion by 2034, registering a CAGR of 5.80% over the forecast period. Rising global trade, rapid e-commerce growth, and the increasing reliance on just-in-time manufacturing are among the strongest drivers shaping this market.



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Key Market Drivers

The growth of air freight forwarding is tied closely to the globalization of trade. According to the World Trade Organization (WTO), global trade volumes are increasing by 3.5% annually, highlighting the importance of efficient logistics solutions. At the same time, e-commerce continues to transform consumer expectations. Online retail sales are growing by 20% year-over-year, and by 2025, e-commerce is expected to account for 22% of total global retail sales. This shift is boosting demand for fast and reliable delivery, positioning air freight forwarding as a vital part of supply chains.

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Manufacturers are also turning to air freight as just-in-time production practices gain traction, ensuring timely delivery of parts and finished goods while reducing inventory costs. Deloitte estimates that adoption of these practices will grow by 10% annually. Supportive regulatory reforms, such as those from the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO), are also streamlining cross-border operations, reducing barriers, and fostering trade.

Market Restraints

While opportunities remain strong, the industry faces challenges. Air freight operations are expensive compared to other transport methods due to high fuel and maintenance costs, with fuel alone accounting for 30% of total operational expenses (IATA). Regulatory hurdles around customs, security, and environmental compliance add further pressure. For example, the European Union's Emissions Trading System (ETS) has raised compliance costs by 15%.

Environmental concerns are another key restraint, as the aviation sector contributes about 2.5% of global CO₂ emissions (IEA). Although sustainable aviation fuels (SAFs) are being explored as a solution, they currently represent less than 1% of aviation fuel consumption due to limited supply and high costs (IRENA).

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Regional Insights

Asia Pacific currently dominates the market, supported by strong manufacturing activities and trade volumes.

Middle East & Africa is the fastest-growing region, thanks to infrastructure investments and its strategic location as a logistics hub.

Market Segmentation Highlights

By Product Type

General Cargo leads the market, expected to reach USD 105 billion by 2034 at a CAGR of 5.5%, driven by retail and manufacturing demand.

Perishable Goods is the fastest-growing segment, expanding at 6.5% CAGR, fueled by rising demand for fresh produce and pharmaceuticals, supported by advances in cold chain logistics.

By Application

Commercial remains the largest application, projected at USD 120 billion by 2034, driven by e-commerce and retail.

Industrial is the fastest-growing segment at 6.0% CAGR, boosted by just-in-time manufacturing requirements.

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[freight-forwarding-market](#)

By End User

Retail is the largest end-user, expected to reach USD 90 billion by 2034, largely driven by the e-commerce boom.

Healthcare is the fastest-growing segment at 6.8% CAGR, supported by rising demand for pharmaceuticals and medical devices, requiring advanced cold chain solutions.

By Technology

Digital Freight Platforms hold the largest share, projected at USD 70 billion by 2034, as companies increasingly adopt digital tools for operations.

AI and Machine Learning is the fastest-growing technology, advancing at 7.2% CAGR, enabling predictive analytics and real-time shipment tracking.

By Distribution Channel

Third-Party Logistics (3PL) dominates, expected to grow to USD 100 billion by 2034, supported by rising outsourcing of logistics needs.

Online Platforms are the fastest-growing, with a 6.7% CAGR, driven by increasing adoption of real-time tracking and digital logistics services.

Industry Trends

The market is undergoing a digital transformation, with AI and blockchain enhancing efficiency, transparency, and predictive capabilities. According to PwC, AI adoption in logistics is expected to rise by 20% annually. Meanwhile, sustainability trends are shaping the future of logistics, pushing operators toward greener practices despite high costs.

E-commerce has already increased air freight demand by 15% annually, while IATA projects overall freight volumes to grow by 4.5% per year in the coming decade.

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Air Freight Forwarding Competitive Strategies & Notable Developments

DHL Global Forwarding

Kuehne + Nagel

DB Schenker

FedEx

UPS

Nippon Express

Sinotrans

Expeditors International

DSV Panalpina

CEVA Logistics

Air Freight Forwarding Market Segmentation

By Product Type

General Cargo

Perishable Goods

Dangerous Goods

Others

By Application

Commercial

Industrial

Others

By End User

Retail

Manufacturing

Healthcare

Automotive

Others

By Technology

Digital Freight Platforms

Blockchain

AI and Machine Learning

Others

By Distribution Channel

Direct Sales

Third-Party Logistics (3PL)

Online Platforms

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