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SHOWPREVIEW

ASIA 2009

Welcome to Aircraft Interiors Expo Asia 2009



This year's Aircraft Interiors Expo Asia will be held at the AsiaWorld-Expo in Hong Kong from 8-10 September. The event, which is held every two years, is once again co-located with Asian Aerospace.

"Aircraft Interiors Expo Asia is a regional event for the interiors market providing a great opportunity for international suppliers to meet with the region's airlines," says John Hyde, marketing manager at Reed Exhibitions, which organises the show. "At the time of writing we have five weeks still to go and we already have over 30 airlines registered to visit, including some that don't currently visit Aircraft Interiors Expo in Hamburg. We are anticipating an attendance of between 1,500 and 2,000 for Aircraft Interiors Expo Asia, which does

not include attendance from Asian Aerospace or other co-located events."

Also on site will be a free-to-attend 'Flying in the 21st Century' strategy forum, which was originally launched at Aircraft Interiors Expo USA in 2008. The forum will feature key speakers from the interiors industry including airlines, suppliers, OEMs and even specialists in hospitality and customer service from outside the industry.

"The most well-attended section of our Americas forum included a speaker from the Disney Corporation who presented a session on 'delivering superior customer service' to airline attendees," says Hyde. "By inviting experts from outside the industry we are able to gain an insight into how other sectors deliver excellence to their customers."

The first day will focus on opportunities to drive down costs, including a panel discussion chaired by Robert Lange of Airbus on how airlines can reduce costs by taking weight out of the cabin. The other three sessions – maximising the lifecycle of the cabin; using smart technology to reduce cost; and a case study of Airbus's SPICE galley project – will all be chaired by Vern Alg, industry consultant and former director of project management at Continental Airlines; and will feature speakers from Cathay Pacific, Row 44 and Airbus.

The focus of the second day will be using the cabin interior to enhance profits, including a panel discussion on how to make money from IFE and connectivity, featuring representatives from Panasonic, Row 44, AeroMobile, OnAir, and

V Australia. The other sessions – on cabin segmentation; preparing for the upturn; and Boeing's Sky Interior for the 787 – will include speakers from Boeing, Airbus and Teague.

On the final day, industry experts will outline their visions for the future – the key trends that will shape the cabin and airline businesses – over a round table featuring Duncan Palmer of Langham Hotels International and The Langham Hong Kong; Ingo Wuggetzer of Airbus; and Michael Young, interior, furniture and industrial designer at Michael Young Studio. The day will also include case studies from Blake Emery of Boeing (on the design of economy-class seats), and from Magnus Aspegren of BMW Group DesignworksUSA's Singapore studio.

light lunch

Diethelm Keller Aviation (DKA) will exhibit its Ultra Lightweight (ULW) inflight service carts. The company says that since the product launch in late 2008, it has sold thousands of units. With increasing importance on being 'weight savvy', DKA expects more airlines to switch to using lighter carts. Made of aluminium alloy, DKA says its ULW carts retain the same strength and rigidity as conventional designs. A full-size ULW cart can weigh just 16.5kg, with a certified gross weight of 113.4kg. Thermal performance features include thicker sandwich panels and small, rounded extrusions designed to reduce thermal conduction. Door seals are now available as an additional thermal enhancing feature. Other options include an ergonomic flip handle, and pull-out tables to increase user friendliness.



HOT PROPERTY

Franke Aquarotter will present some of its washbasin solutions for the A380. The various product solutions were designed in response to specific requirements from several international airlines, and were driven by special spatial and installation conditions in the individual lavatory modules. In addition to the standard solutions, these optimised variations will be applied in business- and first-class lavatories. The wall-mounted faucets are designed to facilitate easy temperature selection by means of two touch sensors and an LED temperature display. A separately controlled electromechanical thermostat maintains the required water temperature and at the same time provides safety against scalding by keeping the temperature at a maximum of 40°C. Water flow is triggered by an optoelectronic user sensor. The faucet facilitates a water consumption of 1.5 litres per minute, while an energy-efficient heater ensures there is always hot water available. An integrated controller monitors the faucet functions continuously.



Exhibitors:

3STARS MANUFACTORY LTD
 AAR
 Adams Rite Aerospace Inc
 AeroMobile
 Aircraft Belts
 AmSafe Inc
 Astronics/Luminescent Systems Europe BVBA
 Axminster Carpets Ltd
 Boltaron Performance Products
 Botany Weaving Mill
 Bucher Leichtbau AG
 Desso Aviation
 Diab (Kunshan) Co., Ltd
 Diethelm Keller Aviation Pte Ltd
 EAD Aerospace
 EADS Sogerma
 Flight Focus
 Franke Aquarotter AG
 Geven srl
 Hansair Logistics GmbH
 Hypercoat Enterprises Pte Ltd
 Iacobucci HF Electronics Spa
 Imagik International Corp.
 Inseat Solutions LLC
 INTHEAIRNET
 KYDEX LLC
 Long Prosper Enterprise Co Ltd
 Madelec Aero
 Marion Aircraft Supply
 Panasonic Avionics Corporation
 Replin Fabrics
 ROW 44
 Sabert (Zhongshan) Ltd
 Skandia
 Starr Aircraft
 The IMS Company
 The Shephard Group
 Topcast Aviation Supplies Co Ltd
 Unison Industries LLC

big noise

Long Prosper Enterprise (LPE) will demonstrate its LPE-502S product (pictured) – surround-sound headphones for in-flight entertainment (IFE). LPE produces three million headphones monthly, with a product line that includes pneumatic headsets, low-cost headsets for economy class, and electronic headsets incorporating noise cancellation (NC) technology for premium and business classes. It has also added a new mid-size noise cancellation headphone product (SF-07NC) and surround sound and noise cancellation headphones to its range. The company says that by combining surround sound with noise cancellation, it can eliminate the space-restraint perception that normally coexists with noise cancellation.



Daniel Baron

MANAGING DIRECTOR,
LIFT STRATEGIC DESIGN

How would you define Asian airline style? Asia is home to a huge selection of airlines of every size, shape and flavour. Is there a common link? Not really, until we group them by popular image or ranking. The top-rated legacy airlines in Asia spend a huge amount of time and energy on market research, cabin interior design, inflight product development and service delivery. These carriers take a traditional approach to service – in front of the customer, front line staff perform in ‘customer interface mode’ – every action and utterance is focused on service delivery. This goes a long way to protect the brand image when seat hardware or in-flight entertainment (IFE) fails to live up to expectation.

In terms of colour and pattern, the cabins of Asian airlines tend to reflect not only the brand identity, but also the country of origin. In most cases, the airline is a flag carrier, and selling the country as a destination is part of the vision of management and/or the owners. The desire for a dose of local flavour means that one is less likely to see the insanely boring generic look found in the cabins of many Western countries. For a designer, this is one of the most rewarding aspects of working with Asian carriers, as there is a huge amount of variety in this vast region.

Related to this is the challenge of finding the right balance of ‘modern’ versus ‘ethnic’ in the cabin. Much of Asia is made up of developing or recently developed countries, whose airlines are seeing explosive growth in passenger numbers as incomes rise (present crisis excepted). Many of the new local fliers expect the cabin to appear ‘contemporary’; in all likelihood they see traditional patterns every day and thus perceive them as nothing special or even cheap looking. In countries with a tropical climate, where high humidity accelerates corrosion and bright sunshine causes colour fading, certain colours may carry negative associations among locals. The long-haul tourist coming from outside the culture, however, might be expecting to have an ethnic-infused “I’ve already arrived” feeling from the moment he or she steps on the aircraft. So one must find the right balance of ‘wow’ while reflecting the brand. And then the top management may have yet a different view or set of priorities.

Standing still is simply not a part of the DNA in Asia

Why are Asian airlines known for product innovation?

During their formative years, the largest and highest-rated carriers in Asia were government-funded or supported, and the image of the country or territory as a tourist destination or business hub was linked with the flag carrier. Intense competition among Asian airlines, and between them and established Western carriers, fuelled an obsession with becoming top performers in product. In a few cases, such as the ones with no domestic market, being ahead was necessary for survival. As their size increased and the ratings went up, the airlines came to understand the link between product and profit, and the tremendous brand equity resulting from continual investment in cabin interior and inflight product. Even in the extraordinarily challenging climate today, the top players in the market are looking ahead toward the next innovations, the next trends. Standing still is simply not a part of the DNA in Asia.

What are the key opportunities for Asian airlines going forward?

Historically, many countries in Asia enjoyed government protection of varying levels and/or access to cheap loans for aircraft. This helped the carriers gain and maintain an edge in product. Market liberalisation has been slow but it is definitely happening. New carriers have popped up throughout the region, and the notion that Asian travellers would never embrace the low-cost carrier approach has been negated by the success of several new entrants. As competition increases, we will likely see even greater segmentation and differentiation with cabin interior hardware and soft product. This is particularly so in mainland China, where the proposition used to revolve mostly around price. The mainland now has hundreds of thousands of millionaires who can afford to fly in the premium cabin and expect hardware and service delivery to be on par with the highest-ranking carriers in the region. The Chinese carriers are likely to rise to the task with large investments in both cabin hardware and soft product.

customer care

Bucher Leichtbau AG is devoting special attention to its 16g New Generation Stretcher (NGS) system (pictured). The product weighs 38kg and is quickly ready for patient transport. Folded together in a box, the stretcher saves space in the cargo area and can be transported easily. The company reports that the product has

enjoyed sustained success on the market, even more so since it has been available with full 16g compatibility. The company will also display a folding table for the Maybach luxury car – a product that the company says typifies its expertise in realising high-quality interior fittings, particularly for VIP and corporate customers.



CREAM OF THE CROP

Andrew Muirhead and Son will show Arisaig, its new leather product. Made from traditional British beef cattle, Arisaig is designed for corporate and high-end interiors. Arisaig has been developed to have excellent aesthetic and tactile qualities but also deliver to the highest performance and durability specifications. The company says that after choosing the best-quality hides, these are put through a wet process that gives a rich through dyeing and then finished with a specially formulated resin topcoat. The leather is created with specifications that exceed BS6608, Crib 5 and CAA Airworthiness, and is available in 16 colours.

ELIXIR OF LIFE

Imagik has developed a line of large screens, retractors and in-arm monitors, along with brackets, shrouds and enclosures, to replace aging in-flight entertainment (IFE) monitors. "In these difficult economic times airlines are extending the life of their aircraft, which among other things has had a significant impact on sustaining and repairing rapidly aging IFE monitors and projectors," says Guy Kennett, vice president of sales and marketing at Imagik. "Many of the parts for these monitors and projectors are obsolete and the downtime caused by failure is now becoming unacceptable, not to mention the ongoing deterioration in the passengers' viewing experience. Finding suitable FAA-approved and compatible replacement monitors at reasonable prices without jeopardising quality and reliability is not always easy. This is further compounded by the need to provide in-fills, brackets and shrouds that allow for an easy and aesthetically pleasing installation." Imagik says its retrofit monitors improve the viewing experience for passengers, upgrade the look of the cabin, save power and reduce weight – all while requiring no maintenance for up to 50,000 hours.

STRONG STUFF

Axminster Carpets Group will present Durawool, a technological process for producing durable carpet yarn. The process starts at the company's processing plant with the selective grading and blending of the raw wool fleece, and continues through to the spinning and dyeing of the yarn substrate. The company says that the yarn is the most important aspect of the carpet as it is the performing component. It also says that the process makes its yarn up to 60% more durable, and enables the yarn to achieve a higher grading for appearance retention. Onboard trials have resulted in the company securing a contract from a major low-cost carrier, and it has three other in-service trials lined up. The company says the development is fully compliant and available for almost any colour or design scheme with total carpet weights starting from 1,300gms/m². "The benefits of the product are very clear – extended carpet life, enhanced longer term appearance, reduced replacement / trim costs and potential weight reductions," says Steven Keast, business development manager at Axminster Carpets Group.



catch the sun

EADS Sogerma will show Solstys (pictured), its forward-facing premium business-class seat that converts into a fully flat bed. Solstys was developed following on from the success of the Pearl seat designed for Etihad Airways, and was launched at the 2008 Aircraft Interiors Expo in Hamburg. The seat is designed for privacy, and provides each passenger with direct access to the aisle. The company will also present Ultimate 17, its new luxury lounge concept for first class, and Evolys, its core business-class seat. Evolys flies on over 10 airlines and is certified for A320, A330, A340, A380, B777 and B747-400 aircraft.



Nicholas Ionides

VICE PRESIDENT PUBLIC AFFAIRS,
SINGAPORE AIRLINES

Is the recession having an impact on cabin strategy at Singapore Airlines (SIA)? Like other airlines around the world, we are not immune to the effects of the global economic downturn. However, despite the challenges that accompany it, we continue to enhance our products and services – we see this as an investment in further improving our customers' travel experience.

We have just launched an aircraft cabin retrofit programme that will see new interior products introduced on some of our Boeing 777s. In maintaining a focus on service, innovation and product leadership, an initial batch of seven B777-300s will be refitted with the airline's most recent cabin offerings. This will include the installation of new seats in first and business class, improvements in economy class and in-flight entertainment (IFE) system enhancements. The programme will provide customers with additional comfort and more space, while there will also be greater product consistency across the fleet.

We are also continuing to take delivery of new A380 aircraft, which feature our latest product offerings. In addition, in January this year, we took delivery of the first of 19 A330-300 aircraft, which also feature new product offerings. This includes a new business-class seat specially designed for regional and medium-haul routes, and new-generation economy-class seats ergonomically designed to provide customers with an unsurpassed level of comfort. All seats also feature our award-winning IFE system, KrisWorld, and in a world first, iPod and iPhone connectivity in every seat, including economy class.

What trends are shaping SIA's cabin strategy? We always try to offer the best product for the sector or route. For example on our long-haul A380 routes i.e. Singapore-London or Singapore-Paris, we feature the widest full-flat business-class seat in the industry, measuring 34in in width. The seat is almost 50% wider than most products in this class. The wide seat, together with its recline, leg rest and ottoman features, allows customers the freedom to relax in the seating and lounging postures that they

Customer service is essentially the cornerstone of SIA's mission

most prefer throughout the flight. The product can be converted into one of the largest full flat beds in its class – 76in long.

On the other hand, the seats on our A330-300 aircraft are designed specifically for regional and medium-haul routes. They have been designed such that they are fully adjustable and capable of transforming from seat to bed mode, and any position in between, easily at the touch of a button. For added convenience, there are also four preset seat positions – dining, working, lounging or sleeping – whilst the adjustable lumbar and headrest support ensure the customer is at his/her most preferred resting position.

Above all, we develop our cabin interiors with the comments and feedback of our customers and frequent fliers. And for many of our cabin designs e.g. for our A380, customers have been involved in every step of the process, from the initial conceptualisation and the review of design ideas to the testing and evaluation of the prototypes through workshops, focus groups and surveys.

Our aircraft are equipped with the in-seat telephony service and we remain potentially interested in other inflight connectivity services, although there are no concrete plans at present.

How do the expectations of Asian consumers influence your business? Customers in all our markets are important to us. In fact, customer service is essentially the cornerstone of Singapore Airlines' mission, directing and guiding every single one of us in whatever we do and in whichever division we are in. The importance of service is not only manifested in our mission, which is to provide air transportation services of the highest quality, but is also reiterated in one of the Singapore Airlines Group's six core values – 'Customer first'; our customers are foremost in our minds all the time and we go the extra mile to exceed their expectations. Much emphasis is placed on service (and innovation) because we believe it is an important differentiating factor and even more so when the global economy is not at its most robust.