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# BUSINESS AVIATION MAGAZINE



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It often occurs to me how fortunate we are to be bound up with this fascinating, amazing industry. There is, of course, nothing easy about it. The old joke that aviation is a great place to turn a \$10 million fortune into a £2 million fortune is painfully true.

In fact, in this issue Stephan Krainer, the CEO of Primus Aero, quotes another great saying that has long made the rounds of this sector. “You don’t make money from flying, you make money around flying!” Even then, of course, you need discipline, deep skills and the ability to deliver world class services, to succeed.

The bottom line is that in business aviation, as in all other industries, the world is changing. This is very clear with every new model the OEMs produce. In his article in this issue, Mark Burns, President of Gulfstream, emphasises how far innovation has come since he joined the industry as a CAD operator, more than 30 years ago.

In this industry, companies that rest on their laurels miss the boat. It is all about evolving and continuing to develop one’s deliverables to meet the changing needs of the client.

As Neil Book, President and CEO of Jet Support Services, Inc. (JSSI), emphasises in an interview in this issue, developing new market and new services as well as continually innovating in your core offerings is vital to long term success.

One thing that is most certain as we head for Geneva and EBACE 2019 is that the various exhibitors will be demonstrating, in spades the ability of the sector to innovate and to respond to changing requirements.

As usual, we will be hosting the iconic BAM EBACE After Party. This year’s event will be held at the Maison Hobo Nightclub, Quai du Seujet 18, Geneva, on Wednesday 22nd May, starting at 8.00 pm. We owe a huge vote of thanks to our Party Sponsors, JSSI, Jet Edge, Primus Aero, Academy 147, Argos VIP, AEGFUELS, Altenrhein Aviation, Design Q, Plane Audits and LimousinesWorldwide.com. Contact Max Raja for invites.

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# GROWTH THROUGH ALLIANCES

UAS Unifies Solutions and Transforms the Business Aviation Customer Experience, by Jane Stanbury, BAM Global Luxury Correspondent

Over the past 19 years, UAS has enjoyed great success and distinguished itself as one of the leading global trip support solutions providers. The company, which spans four continents, with headquarters in Houston, Hong Kong, Johannesburg, and Dubai, continues to evolve and enhance its offering to the industry, with a number of new divisions designed to support the customer experience.

The Executive Travel division provides a high-value luxury travel service, including options for risk mitigation services, customised travel insurance and airline ticketing, which complements the UAS Air Charter business. It has also been spreading its wings with the development of its own business aviation technology solution. The UAS Evolution® suite was developed to eradicate common operational challenges and pain-points for business aviators as well as making their operations more time and cost-effective.

2018 was an outstanding year for UAS, and the company is determined to continue building on this momentum. For 2019, the company plans to

completely reimagine the customer experience as it creates a seamless ecosystem that optimizes existing services and integrates new products.

“We’re totally focused on taking business flight to a new level and setting a precedent in terms of what clients can expect from every stage of their mission. This will continue to inform our strategy over the coming years,” said UAS Co-Owner/Founder and Executive President, Mohammed Husary.

“We’ve been building competencies in many areas for a number of years now and we’re about to see the fruition of this investment,” he added.

UAS is growing its global network by forming powerful alliances in places where demand is high. By continuing to form mutually-beneficial relationships with strategic partners globally, the company is creating a network of







best-in-class suppliers. The aim is to consistently provide the UAS quality standards far and wide. For customers, the offering will deliver the same fine experiences whether UAS has a physical base or is working with a carefully selected partner.

Investment in resources will ensure clients can expect the highest standards available at their destinations. Ultimately the investment in resources will ensure clients can expect operational excellence and a similar standard of quality supervision for all UAS clients, no matter where they are worldwide.

The UAS station manager network throughout Africa and China is showcasing the need for excellence in these

emerging markets as operators welcome the high levels of supervision the teams deliver. Demand is high as operators, accustomed to dealing with third parties throughout their missions, struggle to deal with multiple layers of communication and points-of-contact. A breakdown in communication can result in major implications for the mission, leaving crew and passengers extremely frustrated, and stress levels running high. Multiple vendors also add to the mission costs incurred by the operator.

UAS is aiming to mitigate these fears through the UAS station manager network. The crew has a single point of contact, an aviation professional that has undergone rigorous training programs and accumulated an impressive amount of experience. With this expertise shared and implemented, clients can be reassured no short cuts will be taken.

“We’re totally focused on taking business flight to a new level and setting a precedent in terms of what clients can expect from every stage of their mission.  
Mohammed Husary, UAS Co-Owner/Founder & Executive President



Each UAS station manager is a business aviation expert with extensive amounts of local and regional knowledge. They understand the intricacies of the local cultural dynamics, the social nuances and how to effectively get things done. The idea being that the client has the reassurance that UAS is right by their side at every stage of their mission in the air, as well as on the ground.

This is particularly valuable in volatile operating environments where natural or man-made disasters can severely disrupt operations. Local knowledge, personal connections and an extensive network all combine to get clients moving fast, with minimal schedule impact. UAS has a total of 12 station managers on the ground in Africa and capable of moving to neighboring destinations as required.

The latest region of focus is China where UAS is currently investing in the further development of its China ground support. China can be a challenging place to operate. Operators in the region regularly face difficulties securing consistency of service, with language, service levels, and cultural barriers all proving problematic. UAS aims to entirely eliminate the need for any third-party dealings.

“We are imagining and creating seamless operations throughout China. Our customers will literally deal with a single UAS employee throughout the course of their mission, safe in the knowledge that every element of every leg has been meticulously planned, to ensure it will be executed smoothly. This level of confidence and ease will totally transform the client experience,” said UAS Co-Owner/Founder and CEO, Omar Hosari.

“Our station managers represent amazing quality for our clients. Our plan is to continue to focus mainly on emerging markets and we look forward to continue watching these regions flourish.”

The cost-saving and time-saving benefits of UAS’s technology suite, UAS Evolution®, have not been going unnoticed in recent years. The groundbreaking suite of online and mobile platforms are built with mobile-first infrastructure. The platform can be used inflight with or without a data connection. In 2017, enhanced features were added to evolve the flagship product, UAS FlightEvolution®.

The powerful, intuitive flight planning and weather tool is designed to deliver advanced worldwide flight planning, weather, and mapping. The personalized demos UAS offers at industry gatherings, such as EBACE and NBAA-BACE, attracts significant interest. Its blazingly fast speed and capabilities allows users to visualize their missions with a stunning level of detail.

“As well as the obvious power of the technology itself, operators are also surprised by how easy it is to switch from their existing flight planning system, or to upgrade to UAS FlightEvolution. It’s a pretty seamless process that is transforming how operators plan their missions,” said UAS Co-Owner/Founder and Executive President, Mohammed Husary.

In support of the customer need for connectivity, in 2017 UAS introduced two additional products. UAS LinkEvolution®, a communications technology, provides seamless global connectivity to the cockpit and the cabin, so crew and passengers remain contactable and connected for the entire flight. The technology also increases flight safety capabilities, cost-effectiveness, and operational efficiency.

The suite also includes UAS TMSEvolution, a Trip Management System giving real-time access to mission critical information and providing responses for operational requests. The innovation of the suite extends to the sophistication of the technology which delivers exceptional speed and stunning detail as well as being incredibly intuitive.

As with the wider business aviation sector, connectivity continues to be a key focus of the business. A strategic partnership between UAS and Honeywell, announced at ABACE in Shanghai in April, sees the two power-houses joining forces to provide global connectivity to the business jet fleet of Asian charter operator, Hongkong Jet.



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With the implementation of UAS LinkEvolution® for flight services and communication, combined with Honeywell GoDirect cabin services, Hongkong Jet now has a single-vendor solution for its entire fleet. The system provides unlimited datalink communications over all VHF and satellite networks with no per kilobit charges or satellite premiums and reliable, 24/7 technical support, powered by Honeywell.

The latest developments build on the strategic alliance set up between UAS and Honeywell in May 2017, when Honeywell ratified a partnership with UAS to expand flight deck and cabin connectivity services through LinkEvolution.

“UAS is incredibly proud of the success we’ve had in promoting UAS LinkEvolution globally. We have been delivering cost-efficiencies and reliability to operators since we began this partnership with Honeywell. We’re delighted to introduce Hongkong Jet to this technology and are confident their experience will be overwhelmingly positive,” said UAS Co-Owner/Founder and CEO, Omar Hosari.

UAS is also using its expertise and industry experience to advocate on behalf of the business aviation industry



**Mohammed Husary**, UAS Co-Owner/Founder & Executive President (MEBAA Board Member) with Ali Al Naqbi, Founding & Executive Chairman, Middle East & North Africa Business Aviation Association (MEBAA)

worldwide. At the MEBAA Show in November, UAS’ Mohammed Husary was welcomed onto the board of the Middle East Business Aviation Association, just a few weeks after he was named in the inaugural National Business Aviation Association (NBAA) Top 40 Under 40, for his leadership and business management skills at the helm of UAS. More recently, at ABACE 2019, CEO Omar Hosari was appointed to AsBAA’s Board of Governors.

“We are so passionate about the furtherment of the industry we love and want to do what we can to secure and sustain the most prosperous future possible for it

and for everyone working in and benefiting from it. There’s no better way to do this than to volunteer our acumen to these incredible organizations that do so much to ensure governments, authorities, and investors understand what business aviation is capable of doing for economies the world over,” said UAS Executive President, Mohammed Husary.

“We are tremendously proud of our long tradition in the industry. We will continue to evolve in response to industry demand. It is essential for us that we continue to meet the changing needs of those we serve within this dynamic sector,” UAS CEO Omar Hosari added. |BAM



**Omar Hosari**, UAS Co-Owner/Founder and CEO (AsBAA Board of Governors member) with fellow AsBAA Board members at UAS/AsBAA Reception and Networking Event ahead of ABACE 2019



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# CHANGING THE FOCUS

Stephan Krainer, CEO,  
Primus Aero, talks to  
Anthony Harrington about  
the company's plans

**AH: You recently changed the company name.  
What was that about?**

**SK:** We changed our name recently in 2019 to Primus Aero. Before that, from our launch in 2010, we were known as Primus Aircraft Management Solutions. However, much has happened over the last two years, we've had some ups and some downs and we have rather dramatically moved the focus of the company as well as the organisation itself.

We are now, even more so than before, not a traditional top down company. We have embraced an "agile" model. This means that everyone in the company is meant to be equally important and not everything ends up on my desk. Our staff is now much more involved in the decision process. As such we have also established a COO position, now held by Matthias Kortschak, as my right hand.

“The point about the name change is that we now do so much more than aircraft management.”



**PRIMUSAERO**



We had a new shareholder join us early last year and that was really the catalyst for some major changes. The point about the name change is that we now do so much more than aircraft management. Much of our business is now focused on helping to support other companies providing services to business jet owners and operators.

**AH: How is that working out for you?**

**SK:** It has been a very rewarding strategy shift. We still manage around 30 aircraft, mostly in Africa, for the likes of the Angola based Bestfly, who are our biggest customer in the region.

The strategic point of our business is that while the largest companies have enough resources in-house to manage all the things they need to manage, smaller operators run on very tight resources and they welcome a trusted partner that they can outsource a whole range of services too.

Doing everything from Continuing Airworthiness Management to all the other things that a small operator has to manage is very difficult. They need help but their prime concern in outsourcing is that they could end up losing clients to the outsourcer.

Because we are focused on them and not on running end-user customers ourselves, they quickly come to see us as a key extension of their business, rather than as competition. That is something we are actively encouraging.

We say to potential client businesses, give us a try. Start to work with us and see what we can do for you. We don't mind if they start with a small scale, limited project and increase the scope of their demands on us once they gain confidence. That model works well for us.

**AH: When we last spoke, the parts acquisition and supply side of your operation had recently launched and was looking very promising. How is that going?**

**SK:** The provision of spare parts is now a very big part of our business. There is a lot of potential in this market and the support we can provide to the smaller aircraft management companies in this area can make a huge difference to their clients. It can really help them build the client relationship because our team is expert at sourcing parts below the cost that OEMs and others charge.

We recently had a case, for example, on a very large ticket item, where the quote differential between ourselves and our nearest competitor was 30 percent, in our favour. When you are talking about a part priced at \$500,000, 30 percent really matters. When you can show consistency in achieving this for clients they can see that it is really worth using your service. For us, this means that it is a major business focus and we are putting a lot of effort and resource into building up this side of our operation.

Of course, one of the challenges we have is that when you come in with a part that is significantly under the price that people are expecting, it looks suspect. What we say is, give us



**M**atthias  
Kortschak  
COO

**S**tephan Krainer  
CEO

a test on a part you are having difficulty finding or a part at a price you think we can't improve on, and see what we can do. The risk for the aircraft operator is zero, and we make our margin on part of the price differential.

What we have identified is that a lot of the issues with parts comes on the logistical side. It can be very complex getting the part from wherever it is, to the aircraft, particularly in an AOG situation a long way from the aircraft's home base. Either it is hugely expensive, or it can be very difficult to get any certainty on the delivery arrival time.

As a result, we are working on a system for the next 12 to 18 months, to produce parts logistics solutions that are faster and cheaper than are currently available. This is still in the conceptual stage, but it looks very promising indeed.

What we want to end up with is a web app that will show you what is required if you want to get a part from a city in the US to somewhere in Europe, for example. Ideally, the web app will give you a quote then and there, with the delivery date, and you can book that logistics solution directly on the web.

**AH: How is your business in Africa developing?**

**SK:** Most of our business is in Africa. The great thing about Africa is that it is in the same time zone. There are plenty of businesses there that are running very lean, or that don't have deep expertise in specific fields and need support. We come in as a support company, and that is a great business for us because we are seen as a neutral partner. They know we are not going to be stealing their clients.

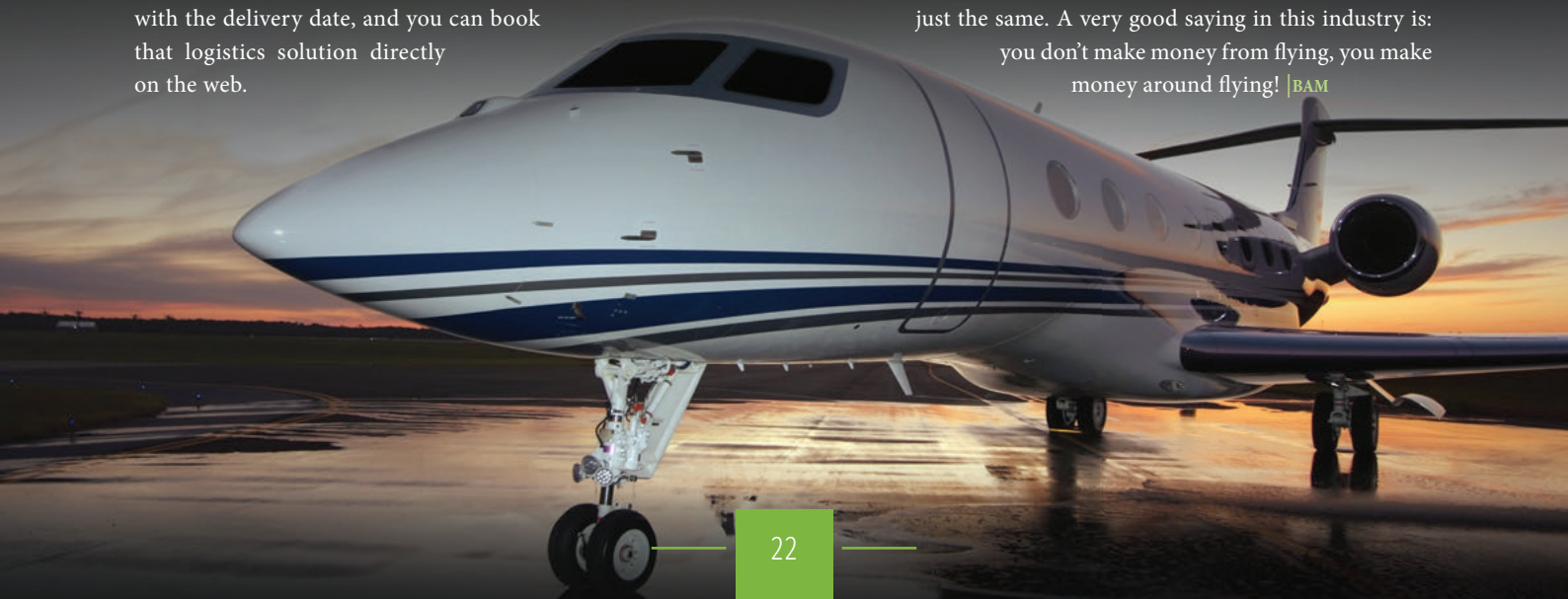
It takes a while to build up that sort of relationship and we can point to our ten year track record and our great reputation in the region.

**AH: Are you still doing pre-purchase appraisals?**

**SK:** We do a good deal of that for banks. Our favourite business in this area is aircraft repossessions. However, in the current buoyant market these are few and far between. When the next downturn strikes we would expect to see a lot more of this kind of work.

**AH: It sounds as if even a down market will work for you.**

**SK:** To be honest, we are fairly well insulated against fluctuations in the market. The aircraft that are already out there need all kinds of attention and the attendant services to keep them flying continue just the same. A very good saying in this industry is: you don't make money from flying, you make money around flying! **BAM**





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# A MAMMOTH MILESTONE

Werner Kartner, Chief Commercial Officer at the interior manufacturer F/LIST, about one of the milestones in its history – F/LIST signing off the 1,500th cabinet shipset

In early 2019, F/LIST delivered its 1,500th OEM interior. Coincidentally, this is also the 15th year since we entered the aviation business as a complete newcomer. From the first interior up to the 1,501st, we have learned many lessons. At heart, we have always been a joinery, a craft business. As such, we have a very specific perception of how the market – in particular, the interior market – has evolved since we started.

## A BRIEF HISTORY OF F/LIST

F/LIST originated outside the aircraft industry and had a rich history of large-scale hotel, cruise ship and yacht interior projects. When we started the first experiments to transform our products so they would be suitable for aviation, we did not have proven aerospace experts to support us. Enthusiastic engineers, joiners and varnish technicians started trying new veneer treatments and lightweight constructions, without any guarantees for success. Only after a period of continuous development and testing were we able to present the first acceptable results. But if there is anything that the world's success stories tell us, it is that failure is a necessary part of achieving greatness.

The actual start came in 2004 when we became a tier 2 supplier on the Learjet 40/45. Just a year later came the Challenger 300, and it challenged us indeed. We had to adapt to the larger size and the demanding requirements. The materials we had painstakingly developed for the Learjet now needed to become even lighter. More and more surface materials needed to be qualified and made fit to work with. End-to-end 3D engineering became a standard procedure.

After the start of the Legacy 450 and 500 programs, the PC-12 was our first tier 1 project. This again entailed new challenges, which only marginally prepared us for what came in 2009: The second tier 1 program, the Embraer Lineage 1000E, brought the challenge to a completely new level. For the first time we had to develop and implement all systems, wiring and plumbing,




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and conduct qualification & certification tests such as frangibility. We developed new mechanisms for doors and tables from scratch. The sheer size of the aircraft compared to the PC-12, and the resulting floorplan flexibility meant that, basically, no shipset was the same as the previous.

That was when we ultimately became a one-stop shop for plug-&-play aircraft interiors. The bundling of competences and the know-how we were forced to build up for the Lineage is now one of our main USPs: customers demand more integrated interiors with fewer interfaces – the idea is: unbox the F/LIST product, plug it in and go.

With the Phenom 300 NetJets configuration, Challenger 350 and PC-24 well implemented, the Global 7500 currently marks another milestone on the way ahead. Complete, integrated lavatories including showers, credenzas, tabletops, wood and stone floorings – with integrated heating, if desired – as well as stone and Corian® countertops and vanities constitute only parts of the cabin, in addition to delivering veneers for the remaining interior. The stakes have indeed been raised once again, with even more challenging demands. But at this point, with the experience of 1,500 shipsets, we are confident enough to say that we are among a select few companies able to handle these requirements.

## 1,500 LESSONS LEARNED

From the PC-12 up to a Boeing 747-8 – every aircraft, big or small, has its specific challenges. With each new platform came new challenges and stricter requirements. First and foremost, everything needs to become lighter; the materials have made significant progress in terms of weight, workability and flexibility. In the coming years, carbon fiber will play a crucial role in the continuous weight reduction and creation of more daring interior designs. HILITECH, our joint venture with Hintsteiner Group, which specializes in ultra-lightweight carbon composite components, is an invaluable asset in the race for the lightest cabin systems on the market. Also, other criteria, such as acoustics, vibration, various resistances and a continued demand for ever more integrated products, necessitate growth and investment.

However, not only aircraft manufacturers' direct requirements present challenges. The implementation of the REACH regulation in 2007 made it necessary to develop a compliant, proprietary flame retardant formula, and the switch from a polyester to polyurethane-based varnish system constituted a fundamental shift of technological paradigms. Sure, this brought a higher surface quality and clarity, fewer cracks, and shrinkage reduced to a minimum; in fact, the shrinkage values are now good enough that our customers have decided to no longer conduct shrinkage measurement; but such changes require enormous, years-long effort, investments and perseverance.

A major factor, which contributes to the trend of tightening requirements, is the increasing direct influence of the end customers' desires, which, in our experience, are constantly evolving to present ever more challenging demands.

Everyone wants something unique, something never seen before, which will allow their interior to stand out. A rule of thumb is: the larger the jet, the more frequent and the more special and unique the requests.

At the same time, timelines become stricter. As in most other industries, we have to deal with costs, efficiency and tight schedules. It becomes increasingly important to manage the balance between optimized lead times and the flexibility to implement principals' spontaneous changes of mind. A high degree of automatization and modern technology are no longer advantages, but fundamental prerequisites to compete in the interior market.

Tastes, trends, perceptions of comfort and luxury, and the unspoken desires of the principals are not easy to grasp and even harder to implement. This is why, in aircraft, seats are largely still bulky, mechanisms are still heavy, and window shades still look the way they do. In terms of desired design and functionality, we see parallels to trends in the automotive industry, but much slower and later.

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With cars, you usually produce much higher quantities to compensate for the development costs; in aircraft interiors, purposeful innovation pushes up the price per unit and thus makes innovation extremely costly. Complex certification requirements make the area of aircraft interiors slow to evolve; but over 15 years there have been tremendous shifts nonetheless. Even though change takes a long time, stagnation is fatal in aviation.

For us, it is important to internalize the fact that the definition of luxury is shifting slowly but steadily from the abundance of precious and expensive materials to sleek design, automatization, wireless connectivity and integration, from surface aesthetics to functionality. Especially in the larger jets, wealthy principals are no longer content with decorating pre-engineered components with shiny surfaces. They tend to aim for a personal touch from the floorplan up to cabinet geometry, but also for their jet to become a suitable office in the sky.

Connectivity, practicality and availability will be the determining factors for the future. The immaculate and inimitable surface finish was, and still is, one of our USPs; nonetheless – or even all the more so – we are pushed to innovate, to enhance furniture elements with additional functions and to create more productive space.

Currently, we aim to integrate various functions into single monuments, such as a side-ledge with included storage space, wireless charging unit and capacitive touch switches integrated into the wood veneer surface, which control the CMS/IFE systems. The latter's seamless integration into the interior has recently been in very high demand and led us to new development projects, e.g. experimenting with display foils.



Apart from the 1,500 complete OEM shipsets, we have done numerous refurbishment projects, component commissions (e.g. floorings) or one-off bespoke solutions. Especially the latter are major drivers for innovations, which we then often go on to include in our OEM interior portfolio. Despite the growing number of aircraft refurbishments, the yearly number of delivered OEM shipsets is still on the rise. In total, the ongoing boom in the business aviation industry is directly reflected in interior sales and product development.

The positive aspect of the rather slow renewal process within aviation, with few disruptive shifts, is its foreseeability; if we continue to think ahead, to ask questions that haven't been asked yet, and to set the pace for the industry, we are looking forward positively to the next 1,500 interiors. |BAM

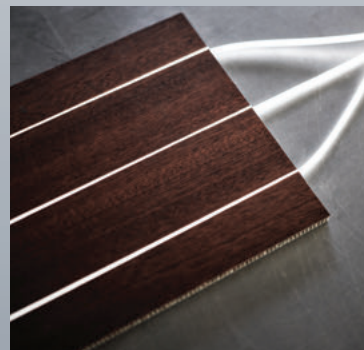


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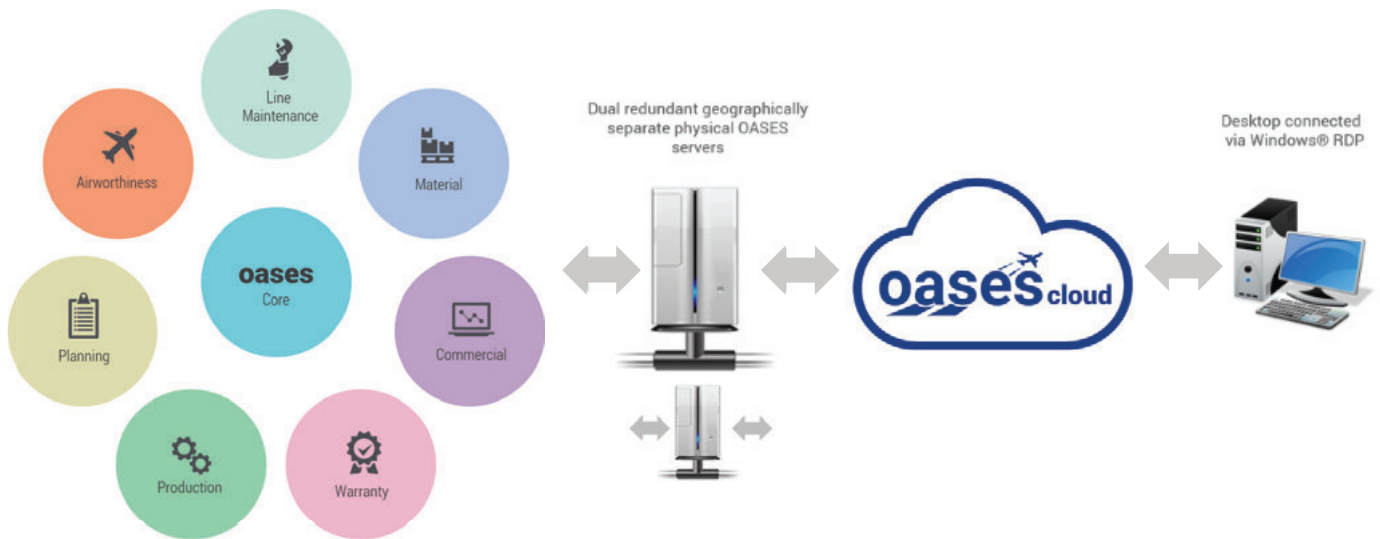
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# GETTING A GRIP

Nick Godwin, Managing Director of Commsoft on how the company's software helps organisations get control of MRO

## Q: How did the company get started?

NG: Commsoft has been going for a long time now, since 1971. Laker Airways was Commsoft's first airline customer, around 1975, when the base engineering system had been built and was ready to deploy. Freddie Laker was one of aviation's pioneers, and it is quite topical now, with so many airlines trying to find a way of making budget long-haul work.

You have to remember that the computing environment in those days was one where the computers filled a room and had less information power than you have in your smart phone. So, Commsoft has been around providing IT support for maintenance since 1975, and its offering has been through many iterations and has evolved into the platform that, today, we call OASES.

## Q: When did you join the company?

NG: I joined the company in 2008. Of course, even by then the power of computing had increased enormously, both in processing speed and in terms of access to data. So, from 2005 we moved from a green screen system, introducing a new user interface and the Oracle database at the back end, which vastly increased the power of the system. Progressively from that we introduced much faster development methodologies and techniques.





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We recently introduced a web-based service desk that controls all the events involved in supporting our customers. Perhaps the key point to make is that when I joined the company there were possibly ten stakeholders in any maintenance or aircraft operations company that had an interest in MRO engineering data. We were probably touching three or four of those, with quality information, but that was it.

Today, by the end of 2019 we will be touching all of them at a reasonable depth and they can all get the reports they need off the system and do queries in real time. We have and are reworking the system so that it has things to offer airlines, corporate aviation, aircraft operations management companies and maintenance organisations, as well as to parts supply organisations.

I'm very proud of what we have done. It is now a very well-rounded product. We now have Commssoft OASES Private Cloud to offer clients, hosted services through Microsoft RDP. Since we introduced that in 2012 we find we have been able to attract both large clients and a wide range of smaller clients, including CAMO (continuing air worthiness management organisations).

**Q: How are things going now?**

NG: The combination of the depth of our software, the web-based service desk, our support centre in India, and our new development model, plus the creation of an implementation team, has really made a difference.

The implementation team is all about onboarding new customers. Each aircraft has a long history and there is a lot of work behind the scenes to get it all loaded onto the system. This is particularly true of older aircraft which have a huge amount of data associated with them.

It is a massive task, and it is probably the biggest cost in taking new software on board. You really have to be convinced that you are going to get substantially more value out of the new software than you were getting out of your old support

systems, before you change. So providing the customers with help to get all the data loaded and to get up to speed with the system is crucial.

Our approach is to make it more affordable and to provide assistance. We now find that when customers want to onboard aircraft, they approach us. They know that we charge a fair price, and they will be getting a fair service that will get the job done. They will struggle to do it because of their other responsibilities.

There are a lot of systems in the market for business aviation that come incorporated in the aircraft price. These systems are subscription services, where the data is entered exclusively for the customer and they are checked and validated. But when you get several different types of aircraft in your fleet some very significant gaps and disparities can start to emerge between the



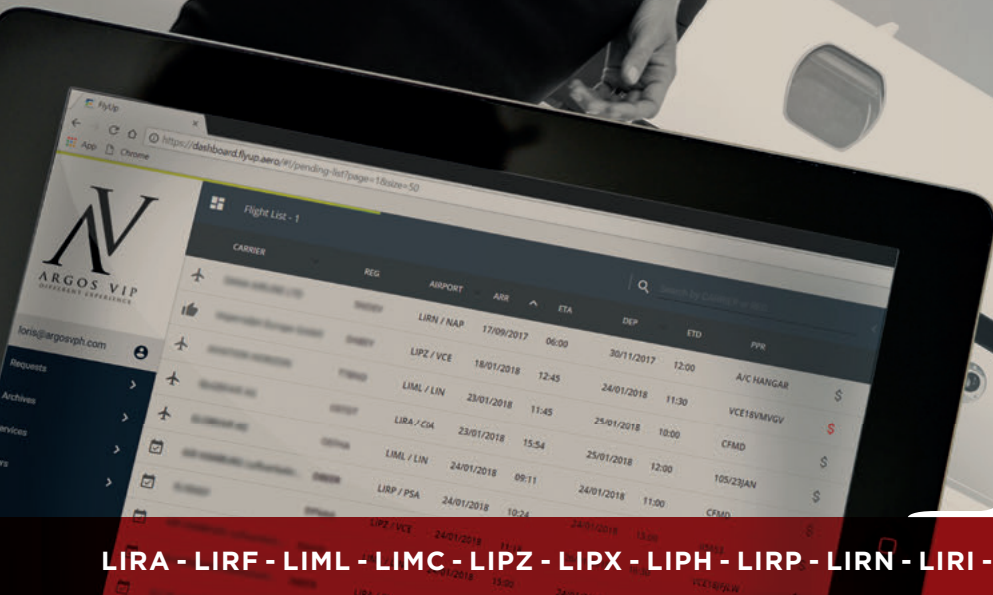
various systems. Our approach is that when we implement a customer, we are the glove that fits the hand. We work together. We need to do more than just implement the data on our system because if that was all we were doing the client would not know how to extract real value from the system. They work closely with us, hand in glove, to understand why they are making the decisions they are making, and at the same time, they are correcting any past historical errors in the data.

Everyone we talk to starts off telling us they have perfect data. But

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when we implement it on the system they discover that there are issues to resolve. The software is designed to make sure that what they have in the system is accurate going forward. So they have to make conscious decisions, working closely with us.

We don't believe in doing everything for the customer. We believe in helping them to help themselves, so the final system that they get is one they understand and know how to use and extract value from.

When I joined the company it viewed itself as a software house. We don't look at ourselves like that any more. We are now a service company that happens to produce software. That software is useless to the customer unless we help them understand how to get value from the data. We help them to interface with their other systems, finance systems, HR systems, shipping systems and so on.



all of those. There are lots of really good systems out there. Our system gives you a very strong overview of a fleet of aircraft with many different types of aircraft.

**Q: There is a lot of background noise if you have multiple aircraft types in your fleet.**

NG: Subscription services do a fair job. The challenge is, though, that because corporate and private aircraft do not fly as regularly as commercial

aircraft, you can get caught out with these systems sometimes. We have a lot of CAMO clients who use both OASES and the subscription services that are aircraft type specific. They use us for aircraft approved maintenance programmes, and for service bulletins. They may use the underlying data in the subscription services, but they use our service for the overview between the various aircraft types.

**Q: What kind of penetration do you have now, across the industry?**

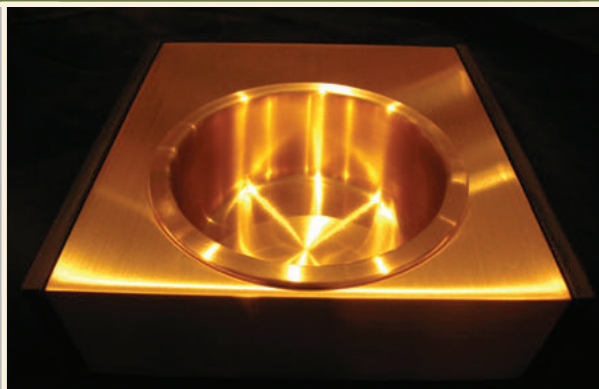
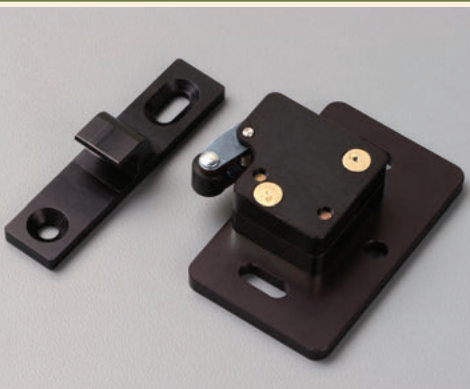
NG: We have a very good reach across the industry. We have a number of corporate MRO organisations and CAMOs that look after corporate aircraft fleets – we are particularly strong with commercial aircraft that have been converted to business jet use, with 737s, 757s, A319s and so on. But we also have smaller CAMOs that are looking after King Airs and Citations.

We rely quite heavily on word of mouth as a generator of leads for us. We announced quite recently that Emirates Flight Training Academy bought OASES as its CAMO system looking after their Phenom jets and Cirrus aircraft. JetOps, a Cessna 208 floatplane operation in Dubai has also signed up with us, so we have a growing mix of customers. We cover a wide range of types from helicopters all the way up to an Airbus 380. |BAM



To me, the success of OASES is not just the software. It is the total product and suite of services that we provide that gives it its value. To really generate business value, you have to integrate it with operating systems, with finance systems and





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# PUSHING THE BOUNDARIES

Mark Burns, President, Gulfstream Aerospace Corp, on what it takes to keep Gulfstream on top



**Q: You started at Gulfstream as a CAD operator more than 30 years ago. So much has changed in the industry since then. In your mind, what are some of the most notable things the company has achieved?**

**A:** When I first came to Gulfstream, we were producing the Gulfstream III, which later became the first business jet to fly over both poles. When I look back at the products Gulfstream has produced since then, I am truly amazed at how far we have come in terms of innovation. Now, we have the G650ER, which last year made a record-breaking flight from New York to Shanghai over the North Pole, in 13 hours and 40 minutes. That is a challenging flight the aircraft made with ease and speed -- proving once again that performance has always been a priority for Gulfstream. If we consistently put our own products to the test, we ensure that customers are getting what we promised. Our current aircraft, including the all-new G500 and G600, have nearly 250 city-pair speed records.

Gulfstream has always been laser-focused on continuous improvement, on besting ourselves for the benefit of our customers. With each new generation of aircraft, we have introduced new innovations and technology to the industry. The Symmetry Flight Deck is one of our latest

to do this with industry-first active control sidesticks, the most extensive use of touchscreen technology and a data concentration network that removes more than 200 pounds of weight from the aircraft.

When I started at Gulfstream, I could see the Gulfstream III production line from my desk. I now have to drive around our campus to see production of the G650, G650ER, G500 and G600. We've gone from being a single-line facility to now encompassing four manufacturing buildings. We even brought wing and empennage production in-house. So much of this comes down to continuous improvement, and our three Collier Trophy wins are a testament to that. Another constant at Gulfstream is our company culture. Integrity is our corporate value, and has been at the forefront since I started. We make promises that we keep and we produce aircraft that do what we say they can do. In many cases, like the G500 and G600, we exceed our initial promises—both of those aircraft deliver more performance than initially announced.

# Gulfstream

“In many cases, like the G500 and G600, we exceed our initial promises—both of those aircraft deliver more performance than initially announced.



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**Q: Competition in the industry seems to have reached fever pitch, from new aircraft announcements to support. How does Gulfstream maintain its leading edge?**

**A:** One thing that sets Gulfstream apart is how we approach new products. We start with our customer first. Through ongoing discussions, we learn and understand what our customers want and what is important to them. We then take these insights to our own research and development team to create a Gulfstream product that is truly customer-focused.

We also realize that innovation and attention are important after our customers take delivery of their Gulfstream aircraft. In the past few years, we have innovated our Customer Support business with a new, dedicated aircraft-on-ground center staffed by an enterprise-wide team of Gulfstream experts monitoring the worldwide fleet. As we look to the future of customer support, we are conscientiously expanding our network to accommodate the geographical reach of the Gulfstream fleet. This includes the more than 760,000 square feet we are currently adding to our support network.

**Q: How does Gulfstream support such robust research and development?**

**A:** When General Dynamics acquired Gulfstream in 1999, we gained a strong, disciplined parent company that gave us the support to grow our own research and development team exponentially. We now have a campus in Savannah dedicated solely to R&D, and they are the linchpin of our product development.



“We learn and understand what our customers want and what is important to them. We then take these insights to our own research and development team



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G500 Interior



G500 Interior

Thanks to General Dynamics' support, we invested in extensive research and development ground labs for G500 and G600 development and have taken those aircraft through more than 87,000 hours of testing in labs alone to help ensure that customers would receive mature, proven aircraft upon delivery. The proof: the G500 entered service last September with more than 20 speed records to its credit and by mid-April had already flown nearly 2,000 flight hours around the world.

**Q: What is more important for customers, cabin comfort or performance?**

**A:** Our customers see the value of both equally. You really can't have one without the other. Business jet passengers want their aircraft to make long-range flights at high speeds and do so in cabins where they can feel the same way they do when they are at home or in the office. And we deliver innovation with both hand-in-hand.



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I mentioned the enterprise-wide teams in our Customer Support AOG center; this collaborative approach is everywhere at Gulfstream. Our interior-design team collaborated with our industrial designers and engineers on the award-winning seats for the G500 and G600. We approached the design of the seats from the perspective of our customers and paired the mission with design – how you use your airplane impacts what you want out of the seat. Are you going to be sleeping and relaxing more or holding more meetings? As a result, the design teams came together to create the ergonomic architecture and ensure the design works with the overall interior elements.

**Q: What are your expectations for the G500 and G600 in the coming year?**

A: As I mentioned earlier, we already know that we are delivering mature, proven G500 aircraft and expect to do the same for the G600 later this year.

“This collaborative approach is everywhere at Gulfstream. Our interior-design team collaborated with our industrial designers and engineers on the award-winning seats for the G500 and G600.”

I look forward to customers experiencing the joy of these aircraft. Pilots already love the flight deck and the aircraft’s smooth handling, ease of operation and efficiency. Because of the technology in the Symmetry Flight Deck, pilots can move more effectively through phases of flight; power-up to taxi takes 10 minutes instead of the typical 20.

In the back of the airplane is an exquisite cabin. When we first introduced the aircraft, we flew customers in simulations on the ground and in test flights to get their feedback. As a result, we enhanced ergonomics, lighting, storage and more, to create a cabin environment that really does provide so many of the creature comforts of home and the productivity of the office.

**Q: The industry as a whole has put a focus on sustainable alternative jet fuel (SAJF) coming into EBACE. What is Gulfstream doing to support the effort?**

A: Gulfstream took a leadership role in increasing the availability of sustainable alternative jet fuels in 2015, when we set up our own supply of SAJF in Savannah. Since then, we have been using the fuel for our corporate, demonstration, Customer Support and Flight Test fleets. We took this commitment up a notch, too, with a recent sale of the first batch of SAJF to a Gulfstream operator, a U.S.-based multinational corporation. |BAM



G600 Interior



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## DREAMING BIG, PLANNING BIG

Tahnoon Saif, CEO, Mohammed bin Rashid Aerospace Hub, talks to Anthony Harrington about the Dubai South Aviation District expansion plans and the current state of the project

It is hard to overstate both the scale of the Dubai South Hub, and the enormous ambition behind the whole venture. It was conceived from the start as a synergistic operation with the adjacent Al Maktoum International Airport. The UAE is determined to make this airport the largest in the world. Upon completion Al Maktoum will have the capacity to fly more than 220 million passengers and handle around 16 million tons of cargo a year.

The design of Mohammed bin Rashid Aerospace Hub seeks to take full advantage of its strategic location close to Jebel Ali Seaport and adjacent to the Dubai South Logistics District. The aim is to be able to move sea-to-air cargo more quickly, efficiently and cost-effectively than any other place in the world, setting a new, global four-hour, sea-to-air standard.

Business Aviation has a key role to play in all of this. BAM spoke to Tahnoon Saif, CEO, Mohammed bin Rashid Aerospace Hub about the zone's expansion plans.

### AH: Can we go back a bit in time and look at how the idea for Dubai South originated?

TS: The idea itself goes right back to 2005 when His Highness Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Vice President and Prime Minister of the UAE, and Ruler of Dubai, set out his vision for a major international airport on this side of the City. It is now a central part of



the vision for Dubai and is widely recognised as one of the most ambitious projects in the world. It embraces over 145 square kilometres, which is almost twice the size of Hong Kong island.

The vision is for Dubai South to be an economic zone designed to support logistics, business and commercial aviation, commerce, exhibitions, and residential areas, along with other related businesses, such as supply chain management. The Mohammed bin Rashid Aerospace Hub is an integral part of the master plan and comprises seven square kilometres.

In January this year, the Aviation District and the new e-commerce zone within Dubai South's Logistics District, was rebranded as the Mohammed bin

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Rashid Aerospace Hub. The unveiling ceremony was attended by His Highness Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum. Our goal is for the Aerospace Hub to create a strong and effective value chain for the aerospace sector. Over time it will have a very strong impact on the contribution of advanced industries to the Emirate's economic growth.

**AH: As anyone who has seen your detailed model of the Aviation Hub knows, it is hugely impressive. Does the model work as a means of attracting potential tenants and companies to set up here?**

TS: It has been very effective in communicating the scale of the vision. Right from the outset the idea was not limited to just building one of the world's biggest airports. The vision included the whole aviation ecosystem side by side with the logistics that go along with it. You need the manufacturing part, the training academy, general aviation, aerospace, maintenance and manufacturing.

Another level to the plan is that every aircraft needs a full range of services, including maintenance and support, along with the educational facilities for technicians and pilots. We now have the Emirates pilot training academy up and running. Now they are expanding the dormitory capabilities from the initial 200 living quarters to 400, or even 500.

**AH: How well are you doing in terms of the take up of facilities in the Aerospace Hub by outside companies?**

TS: You have to take into account the fact that the Aerospace Hub right now is just three and a half years old. It was opened in 2014. We initially expected that filling the Aerospace Hub would be a very long term project, with say, near full occupancy by 2030 or 2040. What we have seen in fact has been a very fast pace of take up. So, we are now looking very closely at land values in the Aerospace Hub, and we are looking at expanding in different directions. We are developing an integrated approach, you need seamless operations. We have a very good blend of airside hangers, for aircraft, and landside factories for maintenance and manufacture. We have MRO operations in place already.

**AH: So when you receive an application from a prospective tenant company, looking for premises in the Aerospace Hub, do you pay close attention to how they would add value to the integrated approach you have here?**

TS: This is very important for us. Where there is no compelling link to aviation, we would forward that application to, say, the Logistics District, where it might make a better fit.

Because we have a unique approach here, we are able to facilitate MRO operations, which a number of suppliers find very appealing. For example, if there is an AOG incident elsewhere in the Middle East, you

can ship the parts and fix the aircraft, and the paperwork to move the parts cross border will follow in 48 hours. So it is a very pragmatic, practical approach that we take and this extends to Customs formalities as well. We have a paintshop now, we have ExecuJet building a big hangar on one plot, and Jet Aviation building a hangar on two plots. Falcon Jet is building a hangar here and they and Jetex have wonderful FBO terminals here at Dubai South.

We are looking to open a helipad here near the VIP terminals so private jet passengers can connect simply to their destination of choice in the Middle East.

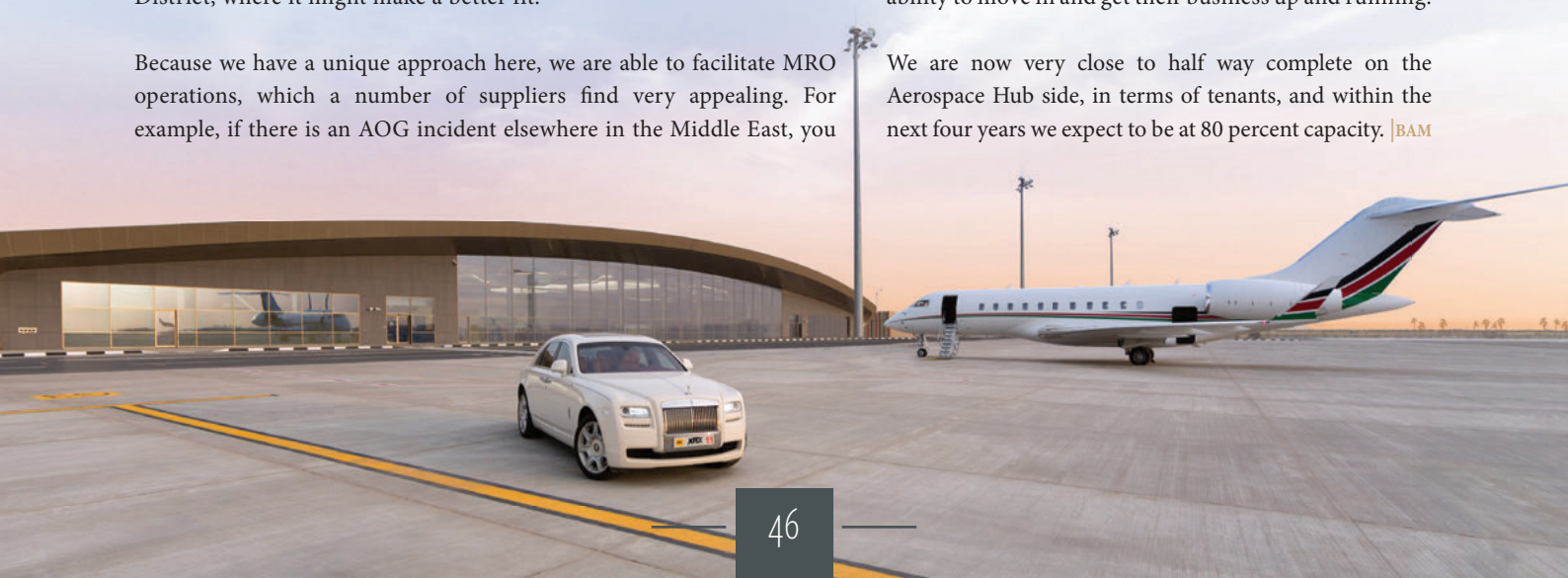
We are also giving a lot of consideration to the accommodation units that will be necessary for all the people who work in the Aviation District. One hangar, for example, running at full capacity, could require anything up to three hundred highly skilled technical staff. So we have one area earmarked for senior executive housing and another area on a more affordable scale, as it were, for more junior staff.

**AH: How are you pricing lots and units? Are your prices going up as demand grows?**

TS: No, actually we are taking a long term view of this project. The aim is not to achieve a rapid break-even. This is a massive capital project designed to benefit Dubai for decades to come. The vision is not to try to bring in investors and build a business case for rapid returns. The vision is what matters. Our aim is to bring clients here and create a win for them. We have different solutions. For example, in some instances, we absorb the cap-ex associated with creating buildings for them. Or they can go into shared buildings with other tenants. We have very reasonable land rates and we do everything we can to support our tenants.

We only do bespoke building here on site for Tier One companies. If they are bringing hundreds of millions to the project, of course we will build bespoke units for them. For others though, we want to expedite their ability to move in and get their business up and running.

We are now very close to half way complete on the Aerospace Hub side, in terms of tenants, and within the next four years we expect to be at 80 percent capacity. |BAM







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**AH: Congratulations to you and the JSSI team, Neil, on the company's 30th anniversary. How do you plan to mark the event?**

**NB:** Well, of course we're going to celebrate at BAM's annual EBACE after-party. Later in the summer, we're going to mark the anniversary with an event that will bring together the entire JSSI team, from around the world, for a three-day strategy session and team-building exercises. We are all really looking forward to that.

While I believe it is important to celebrate key milestones, I am much more interested in looking forward than looking back. I'd much rather look to the next 30 months, than dwell on our achievements over the last 30 years. Our customers aren't interested in what we did for them yesterday, so our focus has to be on today.

**AH: Predicting the future in the aviation business is always a tricky affair, since the industry is so tightly coupled to the state of the global economy. What do you see, looking forward?**

**NB:** It is very hard to look ahead in this industry, but what I feel confident in predicting is that JSSI will continue to deliver the best service experience in our space. We will also continue to enter new markets and provide industry-leading maintenance programmes.

We will also be aggressively pursuing acquisitions that take us into markets that allow us to create additional value for our customers. We continue to be excited for the next generation of Conklin & de Decker products.

**AH: Last time we spoke you were developing the parts side of JSSI's operations. How is that going?**

**NB:** We are now well positioned with our very capable parts and logistics business. This has been our fastest growing business and we have seen 75 percent year-on-year growth in this side of our operation.

We opened a new warehouse in the US this year and we are looking at expanding. JSSI Parts & Leasing is a key division for us, since it gives us the ability to provide parts quickly and efficiently to our own maintenance programme customers, as well as positioning us to sell parts and lease assets into the market.

**AH: Parts can be highly profitable and it is obviously a great fit with your maintenance side. However, one of the drawbacks to a parts business is the scale of the inventory one has to keep, which ties up large amounts of cash. Is that a concern?**

**NB:** We are in the unique position that our inventory can support the 2,000 aircraft and 8,000 events we cover, or it can be sold to third parties. As a result, we take very limited risk when acquiring inventory.

In our business, we rely on our maintenance forecasting data,



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# LOOKING AHEAD

Neil Book, President and CEO of Jet Support Services, Inc. (JSSI), talks to Anthony Harrington about the company's 30th Anniversary and future plans

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“We opened a new warehouse in the US this year and we are looking at expanding. JSSI Parts & Leasing is a key division for us.



“The engine leasing business is very solid. Our whole model is based on the principle that we need to keep the customer flying, so having a pool of engines means we can get the customer’s aircraft back in the air that much quicker.

coupled with strong capital reserves. If you don’t have both, you can get into trouble quickly.

**AH: How is the engine leasing side of your business going?**

**NB:** The engine leasing business is very solid. Our whole model is based on the principle that we need to keep the customer flying, so having a pool of engines means we can get the customer’s aircraft back in the air that much quicker. Where there is no immediate or scheduled requirement from a customer, we make those engines available for third-party lease.

**AH: Can you give us an idea of how long the lease period might be?**

**NB:** It could be on-wing for less than 30 days, or in other instances for 90 or even 120 days. We have also created an engine exchange pool for some of our clients, particularly regional airline clients. When the engine comes off the wing and is repaired, it goes into the pool and the customer retains the replacement engine until it, in turn, needs work.

**AH: Which brings us on nicely to your move into the regional airline business. How is that going?**

**NB:** We have been building up our regional airline client base for three years now and that business is also strong. Our largest customer is Sun Air, a British Airways regional operator out of Denmark.



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They also have a Part 135 and Medevac capability, which represents a nice blend of commercial airline and business aviation interests. We are one of the very few companies who can move comfortably between these two very different areas.

**AH: You recently appointed Francisco Zozaya as your new Latin American President, as well as senior VP, business development and strategy for JSSI corporate. What can you tell us about that appointment?**

**NB:** We had several reasons for hiring Francisco. We see a great opportunity for growth in Latin America, so it made sense to hire someone with Francisco's tremendous depth of experience. He has more than a decade of experience as the pre-owned director for Aerolineas Ejecutivas (ALE), which is the biggest business aviation company in the region. He has an extensive network within the global aviation broker and financial communities and with OEMs and MRO players across the region.

We have been working with Francisco for a number of years as a partner, so we had the opportunity to get to know him well. We know he shares our value system and work ethic,

**“**We have been building up our regional airline client base for three years now and that business is also strong. Our largest customer is Sun Air, a British Airways regional operator out of Denmark.

and he has already been a great addition to the JSSI team. He is going to be instrumental to our growth in the months and years to come and we are very fortunate to have him on board.

**AH: How important is Latin America to JSSI right now?**

**NB:** As of today it represents about 10 percent of our business. But our analysis suggests that this is a market that we can really grow over time as we continue to build our brand and take market share. Francisco is already having an impact, and not just in our core business of providing maintenance programmes. He has had a very significant impact on our parts business, our engine leasing business and Advisory Services. He is introducing the entire JSSI ecosystem to the Latin American market. |BAM

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# BUILDING THE BEST

Ron Soret, Vice President & General Manager, AERIA Luxury Interiors,  
on building a top completions house

**AH: Let's go back to 2012, when AERIA Luxury Interiors launched at the Singapore Air Show. Do you think the ambitions you had back then have been realized?**

RS: The launch in 2012 was a very exciting time for the company and in a thriving economy. ST Engineering certainly saw the opportunity to extend its business dealings in the aviation sector and into VIP Completions because many opportunities arose during that time and began falling into place.

In the years that followed AERIA thrived, even as the market went through something of a downturn in 2017. We managed to stay relatively busy through that year while continuing to build a strong customer base.

To say the company has been successful is an understatement, but what's truly remarkable is that a company, considered by many, to be the new kid on the block continues to gain



momentum and do extremely well in the current market.

**AH: While 2018 was, in the eyes of most of the industry, a very good year, it is not been an easy year in the completions sector, and we have seen consolidation and some exits, let's talk about the factors that make for success in this industry.**

RS: A diverse portfolio of service and an experienced team who understand what it means to ride the ebb and flow of this industry really can make all the difference. AERIA prides itself on being a world-class completions center, but we've always recognized the importance of offering maintenance and modification services to our clientele as well.

Everything we do is done with our customers in mind. While the initial intent was to give our green aircraft clients a place they can service their aircraft with a team they know







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and trust, word of mouth grew and prospective clients began contacting us to solve their maintenance needs as well.

This quickly grew into new and old customers scheduling maintenance slots at our facility and then extending their time with us to provide upgrade solutions to outdated technology. From there it parlayed into mid-level and even complete cabin refurbishments. Having a well-rounded team with such a versatile background and years of quality experience has been the recipe for success at our facility.

**AH: When we spoke in 2015, Aeria was working on its first green BBJ completion, a VIP 737. How did that go, and how many completions have you done so far?**

RS: The Boeing B737 program was a smashing success. It was the first green completion delivered by our company and could not have run any more smoothly than it did. Aside from outfitting the complete aircraft, with what could be considered to be one of the most regal interiors now in operation, AERIA also designed an exquisite, one-of-a-kind exterior paint scheme. This was applied at King Aerospace in Ardmore, Oklahoma.

Since 2015, we've proudly delivered a privately owned Boeing B777 interior completion, on time and under budget, to a very satisfied client and we are slated to deliver our third completion program, a green Boeing B737 head-of-state, several months ahead of its projected delivery date.

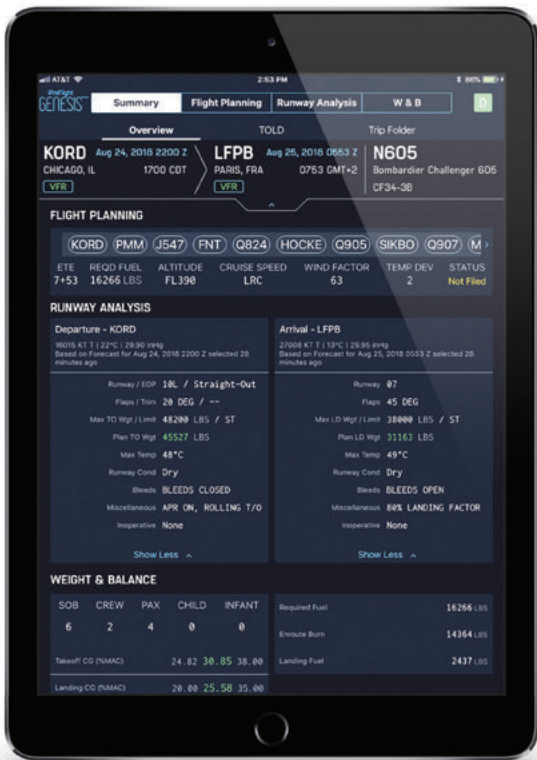
**AH: That leads me to ask about the the current projects you have in hand?**

RS: Our B737 head-of-state program is well underway and nearing completion. In addition to that, we have various maintenance programs in our hangar, including a Boeing B757 undergoing a heavy check, and a landing gear overhaul, with a few cabin upgrades. We also have a Boeing B737 for a US-based charter company underway to receive a very modern and elegant full-cabin refurbishment.

**AH: Clients differ greatly in what they are looking for in a green aircraft completion, can you take us through the process of turning their dreams into reality? What does AERIA have that gives the company an edge in this process?**

RS: AERIA's edge is our experience – our core management team averages more than 25 years active, hands-on involvement

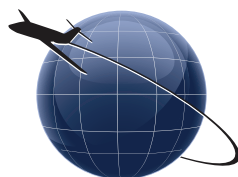




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“ With all of our customers, AERIA works hard to develop a trusting, working relationship, beginning with multiple design discussions, presentations and reviews.

in VIP, Corporate and Head-of-State interiors. That level of experience with all types of customers allows us to start new projects with a fundamental understanding of the creativity, focus and performance required for our effort to be judged a success.

That experience tells us that customers approach new projects with differing levels of preparedness. Some will have highly developed floorplan layouts and passenger counts, others bring an unscaled sketch with vague ideas about work, leisure, dining and rest. Some have a designer that they've worked with and trust; others aren't really sure how to talk with a designer about their preferences.

With all of our customers, AERIA works hard to develop a trusting, working relationship, beginning with multiple design discussions, presentations and reviews. We continue by providing a clear understanding of our completion processes, and back that up with frequent and accurate reporting of project status. Our ultimate goal is always to deliver the aircraft the customer dreamed of when they started the process.

**AH: We have seen a considerable increase in the amount of bandwidth available to the cabin in-flight. How important is this for clients and how are you taking advantage of it?**

RS: We recognize that with the growing trend of social media and video streaming on handheld devices, combined with the normal expectation of speedy WiFi internet connectivity and e-mail access, a reliable source of bandwidth technology is becoming more critical for an enjoyable in-flight experience.

For a luxury brand such as AERIA, our services offer solutions that allow our customers to operate uninterrupted at 35,000 feet with a variety of Satcom system upgrade choices. KA band antenna upgrades, in particular, have increased in popularity among our clients. In the past year alone AERIA has installed KA band antenna upgrades on several BBJ's in addition to alternate satellite communication system upgrades.



**AH: How important is MRO and refurbishment work to Aeria?**

RS: These are part of the integrated solutions that we provide to clients, who are not just looking for completions, but also to maintain and refresh their aircraft. This is the value proposition that AERIA offers, which we believe customers appreciate.

There are many privately owned business jets in operation to date, all of which will require some level of maintenance. Offering these services forges a relationship between ourselves and owners and operators. It allows persons of influence and decision-makers to visit our facility, test out our capabilities, and gain trust and confidence in our team.

Should the opportunity present itself, the goal is that as a result of their prior experience with AERIA, those very customers will look to our company to outfit their next aircraft or improve their current one. These are relationships you have to build over time. They don't often come your way without you working to create the opportunities. Customer satisfaction is what our reputation is built on and continues to drive the success of our business in all areas.

**AH: Finally, how optimistic are you with respect to 2019 and after?**

RS: With each passing year our client base continues to grow as we create innovative solutions to the everyday issues encountered in our industry. We work hard to provide outstanding customer service and an elevated in-flight experience. We look forward to the coming year and the expected uptick for VIP completions programs to hit the market while we discover new ways to improve our capabilities and build on our ability to offer superior services to our customers. |BAM



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# BIG AND GETTING BIGGER

Thomas Dunstan, Director General  
of the Bermuda Aircraft Registry  
on the world's largest offshore registry

**Q** : The Registry has a well-established track record. When did it all begin?

**TD:** Our history dates back to the early 1930s. The first ever aircraft to be registered in Bermuda came across from Canada on a boat, and was assembled here in Bermuda. That got the registry started and it gradually added a number of additional aircraft over the years, mainly from the 1970s, when aviation really started to boom.

Aircraft owners, including civil airlines, corporate and private owners of business jets, soon found that their aircraft could be based all over the world and still be registered here in Bermuda.



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Consequently, we started to see a good deal of international business, and that turned into a package that Bermuda could offer to the business world globally. In those days it took around two days to register an aircraft, which was pretty efficient timing.

More recently, in 1995 the US military withdrew from Bermuda and turned all its base lands back to the Government of Bermuda, including the airfield. At the time, this was called Kindley Airfield. Following ICAO guidelines, the Government decided to separate out the regulator, known then as the Department of Civil Aviation, from the operational side of running the airport.

It created a specialist Department of Airport Operations to run that side of things, which left the aviation regulator free to regulate, which is how most countries manage things. There is generally a split between the service provider, namely the operational authority, and the aviation regulator.

“ Our history dates back to the early 1930s. The first ever aircraft to be registered in Bermuda came across from Canada on a boat, and was assembled here in Bermuda.

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“ We are constantly looking to improve our service, be it through technology or through the way we manage customer relationships.

**Q: That changed again in 2016, did it not?**

**TD:** Yes indeed. In 2016 the Department of Civil Aviation transitioned into the Bermuda Civil Aviation Authority, or BCAA, which became a quasi-autonomous body, a “Quango” if you like.

A very positive benefit was that it allowed us more autonomy over how we manage our regulatory oversight and our human resources. That has been a considerable aid in helping us to sharpen our focus on customer service even further. We have always had a strong ethos of customer service, and we have been able to move this onwards and upwards. The transition to an Authority had the added benefit of taking a lot of expense out of the Government’s balance sheet.

As an Authority we are able to be more customer-driven. We are constantly looking to improve our service, be it through technology or through the way we manage customer relationships. At the same time, we stay on top of all our regulatory requirements and we are very proactive in our communications with clients. We make a point of keeping them informed of any changes in the regulations that could affect them.





**Q: There are several compliance issues coming through, probably chief of which is ADS-B. How is that working out for you and your clients?**

**TD:** We have been seeking to help our clients prepare for ADS-B for some time now. It is clearly a significant cost to the customer to make an aircraft ADS-B compliant. We are working with them to find ways where they can build this into their maintenance schedules. Of course, we rely on approved MRO organisations to take the customer through the installation. Anyone working on aircraft on our Registry has to be approved by us, and we will do checks on all components that have been installed through the past year when we do the annual inspection of the aircraft.

**Q: What kinds of modifications trigger an inspection audit?**

**TD:** A heavy C-check will require an inspection, but most of the sign-offs these days are done for us by approved Continuing Airworthiness Management Organisations (CAMO). A cabin refurbishment, for example, is something that an approved CAMO could sign off for us.

“ Anyone working on aircraft on our Registry has to be approved by us, and we will do checks on all components that have been installed through the past year when we do the annual inspection of the aircraft.

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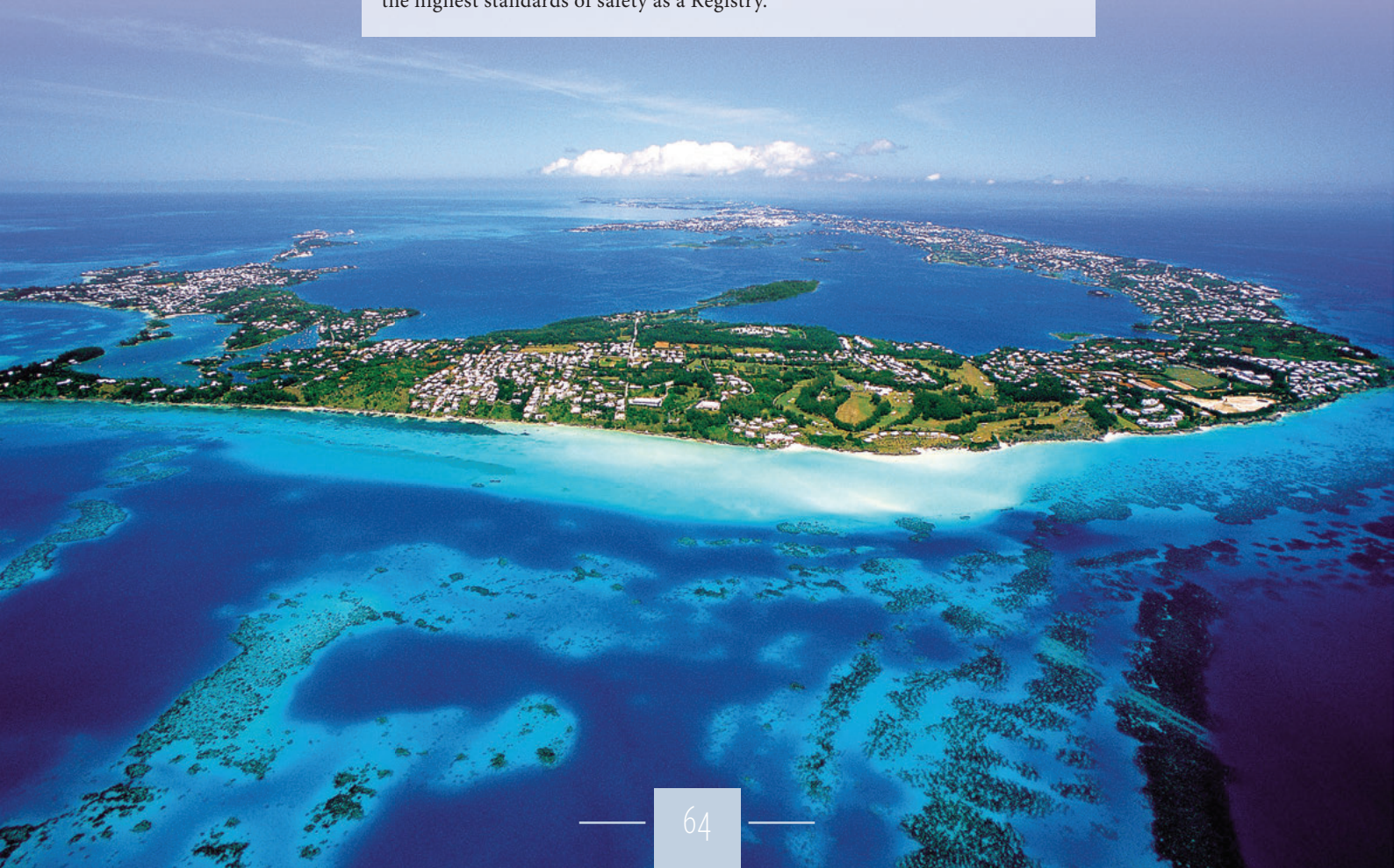
 Bermuda Civil Aviation Authority (BCAA)

 Designated Airworthiness Inspector Locations

**Q: Do you have inspectors travel to where the customer's aircraft is based when there is an inspection event, or do they bring the aircraft to you?**

**TD:** Our inspectors travel to the client site to do the inspection. We have a number of inspectors in regions around the world where we have clusters of clients. A lot of the time we will try to coordinate the inspection of the aircraft with a maintenance event so that there is minimal inconvenience for the client.

Safety, of course, is of paramount importance. We like to say that while we are convenient to work with, we are not a flag of convenience. We set and maintain the highest standards of safety as a Registry.



**Q: Where are you seeing demand coming from?**

**TD:** We have seen a fair bit of demand from Asia Pacific, and that continues to be good for us. The Middle East too, has been a fruitful source of new customers. We have a few clients in Africa and some in Europe. However, many European aircraft owners and operators register with their own local registries.

**Q: What would you say is unique or different about the way that you operate?**

**TD:** The big differentiator for us is the level of experience in the organisation. Another plus is the fact that we have a strong global presence. In addition to the office in Bermuda, we have an office in the UK, at Farnborough, and a contract office in Moscow. We have also recently opened an office in Shanghai. This is all about having people in the region to manage the technical side of the operation and to build up the relationship with clients and potential clients. |BAM

“ Safety, of course, is of paramount importance. We like to say that while we are convenient to work with, we are not a flag of convenience. We set and maintain the highest standards of safety as a Registry.



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# BREAKING NEW GROUND

Ehsan Shaheen, Co-Founder & CIO  
of Click Aviation Network,  
on the company's prospects and plans

**Q : Click Aviation Network's business model is something of a new concept in business aviation. How would you describe it?**

**ES:** The inspiration for founding Click is that today, to a greater and greater extent, everything is connected. The internet and beyond this, the internet of things, is changing the way that everyone does business. We saw the opportunity to promote the idea of a network that was both a network of people and an interconnected IT network.

As the founder of Click, Aiham Bader says, Click is revolutionising the aviation business through end-to-end control of the value chain. Everyone who has a service to offer, every company with a specialism of interest to business aviation, is a natural partner for us.

We are introducing a single unified approach to aviation where players operating in the aviation sector – from Charter Brokers, Operators, Suppliers and other service providers – can come together under one “virtual” roof to explore business opportunities and enable ways to increase efficiency, explore opportunities for business growth, eliminate risks, enjoy operational consistency, reduce costs and build credibility.



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We launched Click in 2016 and it is fair to say that Click is now a well-known and well respected brand in the aviation industry. We create business opportunities, along with our partners, and serve mission-critical flights using our experienced teams and technologies.

**Q: You recently launched the Click Omega Platform, what is that about?**

ES: The Omega platform and the associated technologies really communicate Click's message of connectivity to the industry. We do not compete with our partners on the platform, rather, we set the landscape for everyone to co-operate and compete for the benefit of the overall industry. We have a foot both in the IT world and in business aviation, and both of these are very dynamic spheres, with constant change and development characterising both.

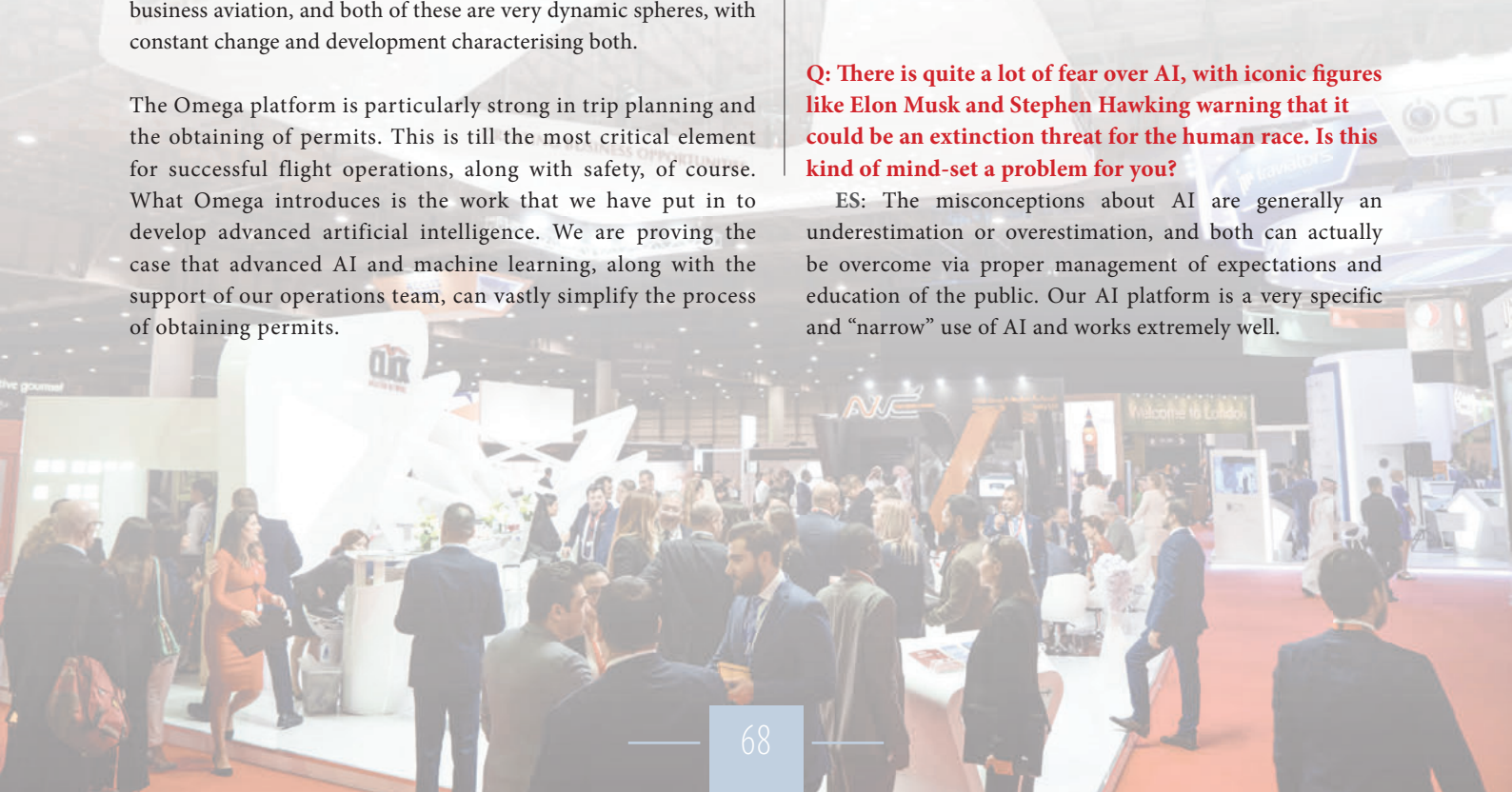
The Omega platform is particularly strong in trip planning and the obtaining of permits. This is till the most critical element for successful flight operations, along with safety, of course. What Omega introduces is the work that we have put in to develop advanced artificial intelligence. We are proving the case that advanced AI and machine learning, along with the support of our operations team, can vastly simplify the process of obtaining permits.

We have tested the system on live flights and it is now in regular use. We've expanded the Instant Permits side of this for public availability. In recent months we have increased the geographic coverage of our Instant Permits system.

“ In its short lifespan, with strong and steady steps, Click has built up an amazing team of talents in various domains.

**Q: There is quite a lot of fear over AI, with iconic figures like Elon Musk and Stephen Hawking warning that it could be an extinction threat for the human race. Is this kind of mind-set a problem for you?**

ES: The misconceptions about AI are generally an underestimation or overestimation, and both can actually be overcome via proper management of expectations and education of the public. Our AI platform is a very specific and “narrow” use of AI and works extremely well.



The adaptation process is a great adventure and what makes it exciting is that our technology is always evolving.

**Q: Are there any new advancements in the works for Click right now and how will these actions further the organization's goal of connectivity?**

ES: I won't be able to disclose exactly what is in the pipelines at the moment, but I can promise that our laboratories are continually experimenting with various technologies and features, both internally and externally, with selected network members. When we reach a success point, we begin to make the feature available to the rest of the network and publicly, such as the latest program of Instant Permits.

**Q: How has Click transformed since its founding and where do you see the company going in the next few years?**

ES: In its short lifespan, with strong and steady steps, Click has built up an amazing team of talents in various domains. Today, Click has entered the USA with a strong presence and our recent acquisition of CharterPad is an exceptional move, serving as yet another milestone in Click's journey.

In regards to your question about the future, I have to say that the future is already here! **|BAM**



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# MATCHING THE BEST

Skylink Services Owner and Managing Director, George Mavros  
on the company gaining IS-BAH Stage II accreditation



**S**KYLINK SERVICES LTD, a privately owned company and operator of the only FBO in Cyprus is proud to announce that the Company and its FBO in Larnaca, Cyprus has gained IS-BAH Stage II accreditation. This follows the accreditation of ISBAH Stage 1 to Skylink Services in 2017.

Skylink Services Ltd is an award winning FBO handler which began operations in 1998. Since then Skylink Services has grown and expanded within the country, the region and the industry by offering professional services to the full range of customers, including business travellers and Heads of State. The FBO houses the only government designated Heads of States terminal in Cyprus, offering a top level of service for visiting dignitaries.

Skylink Services owner and Managing Director George Mavros stated "Skylink Services is dedicated to the highest level of service and safety for our aircraft operators. We are honored to have completed the Stage 2 IS-BAH certification. We are committed to further Skylink Services certification effort through to Stage 3 in the near future. Aircraft owners and operators can be assured that Skylink Services and other IS-BAH certified member locations will handle their aircraft guided by the industry standard." **IBAC**







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# DREAM RACER

Howard Guy, CEO at Design Q, on the imminent launch of the 1969 dream racer, the LM69



**I**n BAM's Autumn edition we told the story of the Ecurie Ecosse LM69. This story was all about the creation of a beautifully innovative 1960s race car that Ecurie Ecosse, a racing team with over 60 years of racing history behind it, might have taken to Le Mans in 1969.

That car is now just months away from being launched on the market at a price that may well be a few hundred thousand shy of a million pounds. If all goes well, enthusiasts will be able to buy one of the (very) limited editions of this unique true-to-the-period 1969 road and track racer by the Autumn.

So, if you fancy a two-seater that can pull up alongside a top end Ferrari or Lamborghini and pull all eyes to it, rather than to the car alongside, stay tuned. But first a quick recap for those who missed the original piece by Alasdair McCaig, managing director of the race team, Ecurie Ecosse.

Through the 1960s, Ferrari, Aston Martin, Maserati, Alfa Romeo and Jaguar, along with many others, were producing iconic designs for both road and track. Thinking back on Ecurie Ecosse's Le Mans success in the 1950s, McCaig and his colleagues frequently talked about the wins the team might have had in the 1960s if they had designed their own car.



LONDON OXFORD AIRPORT

M40



LONDON LUTON AIRPORT

M1

A1(M)

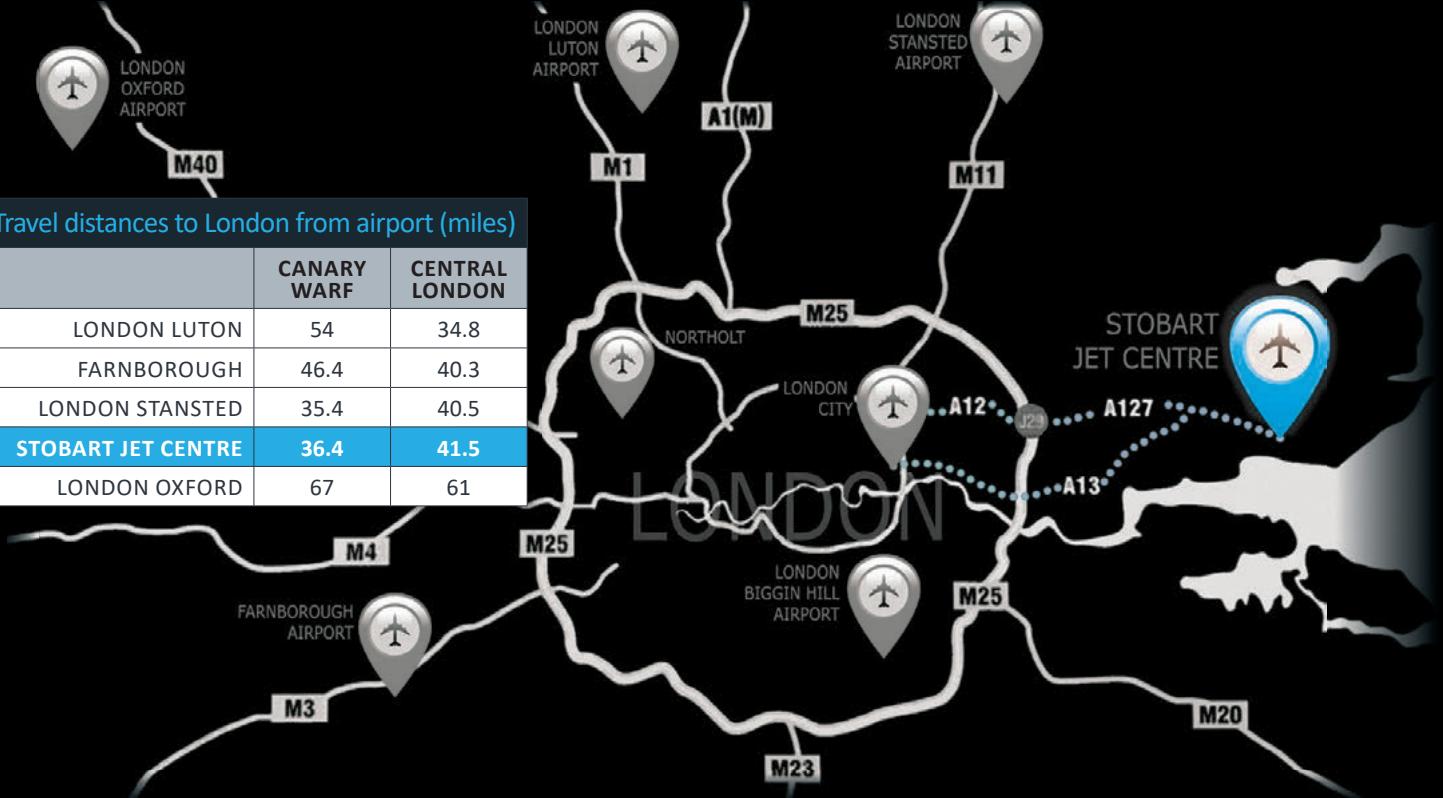


LONDON STANSTED AIRPORT

M11

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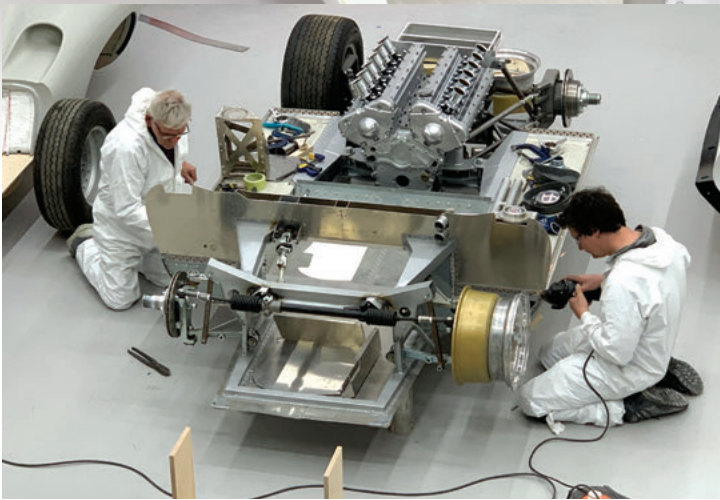
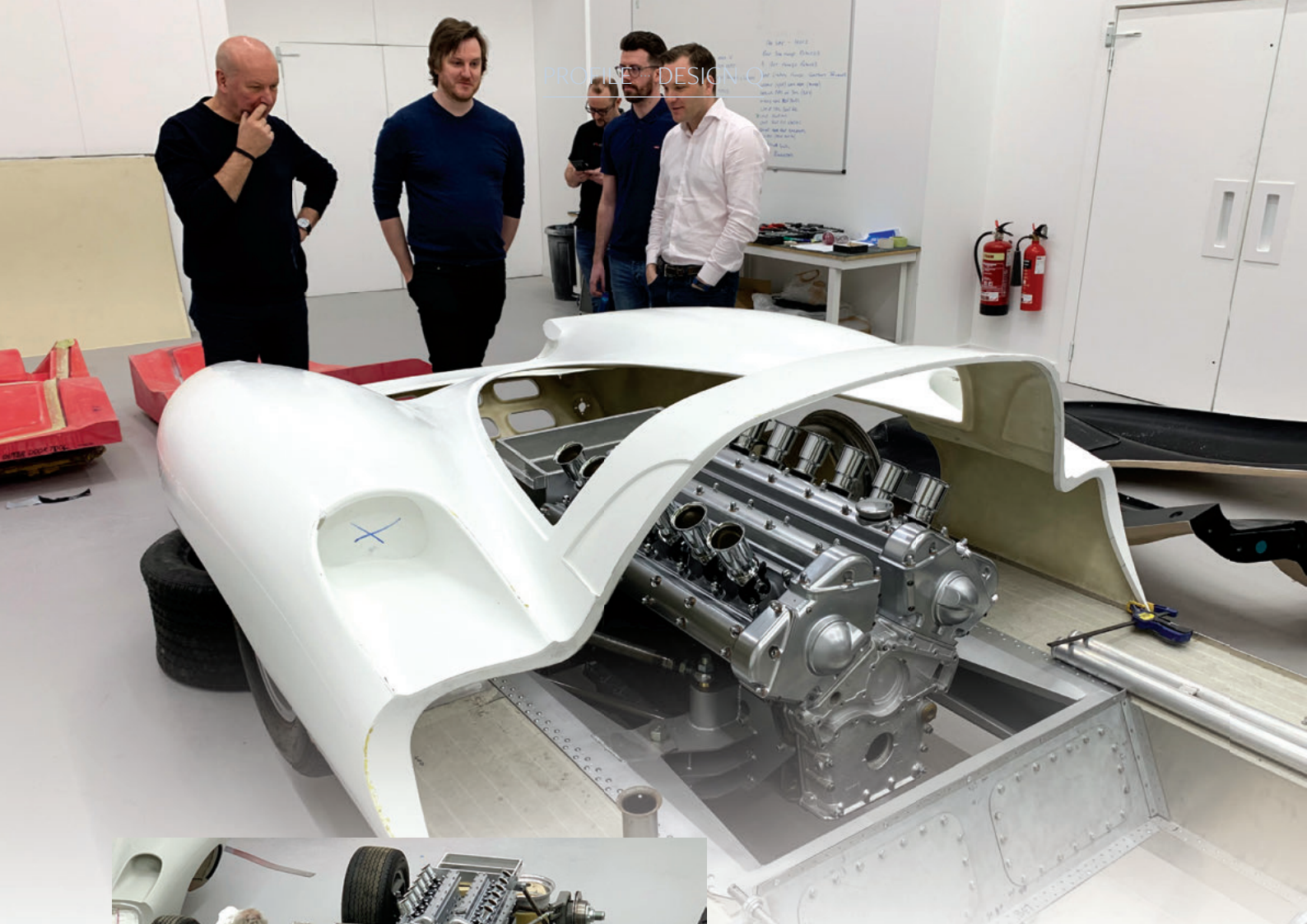
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“ If you fancy a two-seater that can pull up alongside a top end Ferrari or Lamborghini and pull all eyes to it, rather than to the car alongside, stay tuned.

That debate had real life breathed into it early in 2018 when Neville Swales, an engineer with a passion for 1960s racing cars, built a prototype inspired by Jaguar’s 1966 XJ13 Le Mans Prototype. Jaguar’s own prototype, sadly, never made it to the track. Swales turned to Howard Guy, CEO at Design Q, an internationally recognised, multi-award winning automotive & aviation design consultancy for help in conceptualising the re-imagined car’s design.

Guy, himself a former Principal Designer at Jaguar from 1987 to 1997 took up the project with enthusiasm. Working alongside Swales with his design team, Guy helped Swales take the project forward and introduced Swales to Ecurie Ecosse. BAM caught up with Guy and asked him what the latest news was on the dream car.





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HG: A great deal has happened over the last year with the car. We took an XJ13 chassis, a full aluminium chassis based on the 1966 pattern and we translated a new body over the top of it. For example, the original car did not have a roof and it was very narrow, very small inside. We've turned it into a two-seater with a fair bit more room for the driver.

We've pushed the dimensions out a bit, without over-doing it, and the wheel base is still the same as it was. We're going to have a new, quad cam shaft engine for the car and this has been designed by Neville. It's going to be a straightforward 1969-style block of an engine, with none of the electronics that you'll find in a modern car.

This is the engine that was originally planned for Jaguar's XJ13, but was never built. We've evolved it on three years, from the 1966 concept, so it is now absolutely compliant with what the authorities would have demanded for the



“ The original car did not have a roof and it was very narrow, very small inside. We've turned it into a two-seater with a fair bit more room for the driver.



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“ The beauty of this kind of car is that it will keep evolving. Cars like this relish having additional ideas and tweaks done to them to make them still faster.

1969 Le Mans race. The production Jaguar V12 engine in 1969 for the E type were a single cam shaft engine, but the original concept race engine was a four cam shaft engine that essentially strapped two straight six E-Type engines together as a V configuration.

The point is, it is a much higher power spec. engine. Jaguar went for quietness and reliability. We've gone for a really fiery five litre race engine, a true 1969 engine that no-one at the time built. We're thinking nought to sixty in about 3.5 second and probably nought to 100 in a little over five seconds. There will be an alternative, quieter option for someone who wants to take it on the road as well as the race track.







This car is really going to be a treat to drive. It is also going to be really loud. We won't be bothering to put a radio into the car, you'd never hear it.

What we will finish up with will be a car that could quite legitimately have raced at Le Mans in 1969. This has been a big part of the joy of the project, to bring to life a dream that did not happen when it perhaps should have happened.

The beauty of this kind of car is that it will keep evolving. Cars like this relish having additional ideas and tweaks done to them to make them still faster. Just by removing the regular auto bolts, for example, and replacing them with aviation bolts, you carve weight off the car, and less weight means more speed. The driver will be a part of the whole R&D process, so it is a very exciting project to buy into. |BAM

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# DREAMING IN COLOUR

Patrick Corrigan, co-owner of Corrigan Air Center, with his twin brother, Michael, and Julie Voisin, global marketing manager at Sherwin-Williams Aerospace Coatings, on the challenges in delivering dream paint designs on aircraft

**AH: I see from your web site that you and your twin brother, Michael, became aviation enthusiasts watching the crop duster aircraft doing their stuff around the Corrigan family farm, in La Pryor, Texas. How did things develop from there?**

PC: It began back in 1995, when we opened our own custom interior facility in Hondo, Texas, at the South Texas Regional Airport.

Our initial dream was to bring together the highest quality materials for interior completions and refurbishments, along

with superb craftsmanship. However, right from the outset it was clear that to attract the levels of completion orders that we were after, we needed to be able to offer a one-stop shop approach that included handing the exterior painting of aircraft. Adding this dimension would allow us to deliver a complete aircraft, finished to the highest standards.

Today, we have a track record going back 25 years in doing interiors and painting aircraft. Mike handles all the interior side of things, and I control all the exterior paint jobs, so we have a pretty good division of responsibilities between us.

Hawker 900XP

“Right from the outset it was clear that to attract the levels of completion orders that we were after, we needed to be able to offer a one-stop shop approach that included handing the exterior painting of aircraft.

Patrick Corrigan

Michael Corrigan

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**AH: What have you noticed by way of changes in fashion in aircraft paint design schemes over the last two and a half decades?**

PC: For a long time, the predominant basecoat for aircraft was a plain white. Today, when it comes to the main base coat, everyone wants Snow White. This actually looks much more like a true white and is a great basecoat to put colours and the metallics and mica paints over.

**AH: You have an established relationship with Scheme Designers on the design side. How is that working?**

PC: It works extremely well for us. One of the problems you have as an aircraft owner with an aircraft that needs painting, is that you don't have an aircraft paint shop on every corner. If you want to build an extension or redo your house you have plenty of local resources you can call on. Where you go for a paint job when you have an aircraft is not super obvious.

So, a client benefits hugely when they get connected with a design house like Scheme Designers. They can steer the

owner to the paint shop that is most convenient for them. We get some great referrals from them, but we also get tremendous referrals from word-of-mouth. This, actually, is our best sales channel. People whose aircraft we paint, love the work and recommend us to their friends, who also own aircraft. So we don't do any advertising and our pipeline of work generally stays in a very good state.

**AH: How many aircraft do you paint in a year?**

PC: We probably do three or four full paint jobs on aircraft a month. So we do between forty and fifty aircraft over the course of a year.

**AH: Are they across the size spectrum, from light jets to heavy jets?**

PC: Mostly larger jets, up to Gulfstream G4s, but we have had very good business from Phenom 300 owners, and we've done a number of those. The Phenoms have now been around long enough that they are starting to hit the refurb market pretty hard, so we are seeing a steady trickle through of orders. We are also seeing a lot of CJs.



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Corrigan Paint and Refurbish Team

When an owner is going to want to commission a new paint job is not something you can predict. It is always a timing thing. A maintenance issue might trigger a desire to repaint, or it might be that the owner has an important trip coming up and wants to repaint the jet. You're always battling with timing, to try to steady the work flow so you don't hit bottlenecks or dearths.

In business aviation, given the light usage of business jets, there is no real schedule. Although you have someone booked in, they might hit a starter problem when they go to fly the aircraft here, and you get those unexpected delays. One thing we are very clear about though, is that no aircraft leaves here before the paint job is perfect.

**AH: How important is it to get everything back to bare metal when doing a repaint?**

PC: It is absolutely critical. Strip and repaint is very much the name of the game. Weight is hugely important to aircraft owners since it goes directly to the range available to the aircraft. It also makes it a lot easier to warranty a paint job when you know exactly how it has been made up.

If you are just sanding over an existing job, as very often happens in this industry, then you have absolutely no control of the quality of what has gone on historically with paint jobs for that aircraft. Plus, of course, you are adding a significant amount of additional weight.

If you pick up a 10 gallon tin of jet paint it is going to feel very heavy in your hand. By the time you have painted an entire aircraft and added primer, paint and a clearcoat finish, you have layered on a lot of weight. So getting it all back to the metal is so important.

JV: Products like Sherwin-Williams' Basecoat/Clearcoat SKYscapes topcoats provide better coverage, which means less paint used. Plus, with the optimized opacity of our toner systems, full color hide with lower film build can be achieved.

However, we find the best way to control weight, is to help shops like Corrigan Air Center focus on the fundamentals. Ensuring our coatings are being applied properly and efficiently can



“The paint job that is sitting in our hangar right now, just about to be released, is absolutely outstanding. It is a CJ-3, with red engines, a red belly and gold stripes. It looks fantastic.

contribute a lot of weight benefit. Even training for the most experienced painter can provide benefits.

As our technical service professionals are working in the field around the globe, they really help customers focus on optimal processes. Coming up with repeatable systems that help ensure efficiency with every paint job is one of the top things that control the weight of the coating on the plane.

**AH: You must have done some outstanding paint jobs. Which of them really stands out for you?**

PC: Actually, the paint job that is sitting in our hangar right now, just about to be released, is absolutely outstanding. It is a CJ-3, with red engines, a red belly and gold stripes. It looks fantastic. We love the Sherwin-Williams basecoat/clearcoat approach. It brings a lot more depth to the paint job and you can polish out any issues.

But you have to get the first coat perfect. The devil, as always, is in the detail. You have to have someone who is really good at laying out the design and can put the stripes on perfectly. You need perfection in all the phases to have a perfect paint job. I always say that around 95 percent of a great paint job lies in the preparation. The best applicator in the world can't do a good job over poor prep work!

JV: At Sherwin-Williams we know that when paint shops like Corrigan are implementing designs with multiple colours, and multiple workings of a design patterns, their customers want to feel a smooth transition from one colour to another on the aircraft's exterior. Our Aerospace Basecoat/Clearcoat SKYscapes GA (for General Aviation) helps our paint shop clients to achieve this

People—especially those owning private aircraft—often want a unique color, a unique effect, something that makes their plane stand out from a personal or business brand perspective. So, we've been getting a lot of requests for a little bit more on the, as I would say, unique side for people that want to do something striking, stunning, eye-catching with their plane.

PC: And at the end of the day, the number one objective is that the paint job be perfect. For this type of business and VIP clientele, nothing but the best will do. And that also means the final paint job must be durable!

JV: Customers want the final product to maintain its color and gloss throughout the lifetime of the coating. The appearance of the coating can have a direct impression to customers and their feeling of safety so maintaining its appearance is important. Also, since the structures of most aircraft are still aluminum, corrosion control or prevention, is also an extremely important characteristic of aviation coatings. |BAM






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# MAKING LEGENDS...

The Sofitel Legend Metropole, Hanoi,  
by Jane Stanbury, BAM's Global Luxury Correspondent

It takes a certain *je ne sais quoi* to become a Sofitel Legend Hotel. There are only six on the planet. The Sofitel Legend Metropole Hanoi inspired the genre and epitomises the philosophy of iconic properties reviving cultural heritage while delivering an ideal combination of world-class service, inspiring cuisine and stunning decor.

Built in 1901 the Metropole nestles in the Old Quarter of Hanoi, a short walk from many of the city's major historical and cultural landmarks. Two wings, The Opera and The Metropole, incorporate 364 rooms, including suites named for famous residents. Graham Greene, Somerset Maugham and Charlie Chaplain, who famously brought his wife's mother on his honeymoon in 1936.

The Opera wing includes the magnificent Grand Prestige Suite, the hotel's premiere room. As with all the suites it is attended by a dedicated butler, transforming service to an art form, as every detail is meticulously attended to. Adjacent to the elegant king size bedroom featuring neutral

tones, rich red furnishings and intricate Asian rugs, is the magnificent bathroom with free-standing French style bath, steam shower and private spa area. The dining area seats up to eight, while the lounge, library and office, with floor-to-ceiling windows, make the perfect place to unwind. The suite has welcomed international royalty, heads-of-state and Hollywood celebrities.

All hotel bedrooms are individually furnished and offer the ultimate in luxury. Marble, exotic hardwoods, shimmering Vietnamese silks, whimsical *objets d'art* and rich furnishings are everywhere to be seen. This is where Asian culture meets neo-classical features, to deliver intoxicating interior elegance.



There are only six on the planet. The Sofitel Legend Metropole Hanoi inspired the genre and epitomises the philosophy of iconic properties reviving cultural heritage while delivering an ideal combination of world-class service, inspiring cuisine and stunning decor.



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Guests are mesmerised and caught up in its intriguing cultural heritage. For this reason, the hotel offers its Path of History, an insightful journey through the intricate details of the hotel's past. The most poignant moment could well be a visit to the hotel air raid bunker. As bombs fell, guests and hotel employees hunkered down in the concrete shelter wondering what they would find on departure. Musician Joan Baez was one such guest and recorded a portion of her album, "Where Are You Now My Son?" here. As it plays, goose bumps rise as the sounds of the bombs striking form the back ground to Baez's ballad. Introspection is unavoidable and perhaps best conducted in the hotel spa.

Visitors to Le Spa du Metropole are welcomed with refreshing hibiscus tea before tailored spa treatments take indulgence to a new level. Attentive therapists deliver herb-inspired massages using heated poultices, herbal cushions, and rich plant oils to release tension from every muscle. The extensive spa menu is complemented by bespoke packages created for guests seeking a specific result. Le Spa also features two themed rooms for couples, three individual spa suites, a foot-massage room, steam bath, sauna and SoFIT, a luxurious fitness centre.



On a steamy Hanoi afternoon, step straight from the spa to the garden pool where safari suit-clad, pith-helmeted, pool attendants tend your every need. Towels, tropical cocktails, refreshing fruit splashes, international wines accompany a selection of bar snacks from the Bamboo Bar. Mouth-watering, home-made ice cream is also delivered at 2pm and 4pm each day to guests lazing on sunbeds by the elegant, fountain-edged pool.



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With six restaurants and bars there is a glorious selection of dining and drinking options. Adjoining the pool is the wonderfully romantic Spice Garden restaurant serving up intriguing Vietnamese dishes. Coco tree heart with truffle oil and coriander is followed by Sa Pa mountain black pig and mac mat leaves. The restaurant specialises in Vietnamese Rem, similar to spring rolls. Diners can take a virtual tour of Vietnam following a culinary menu showcasing the regional varieties of this typical dish.

Restaurant Le Beaulieu, which, on opening in 1901 was the first French restaurant in the city, still champions classic French cuisine. Lamb, duck and foie gras all feature. Neighbouring Le Terrasse retains a café style atmosphere and is the perfect place to sip on a Jasmine tea. It featured on the cover of Life magazine during the American war when young children were photographed using man holes as a means to hide from the falling bombs. Today these manholes are home to peaceful plane trees.

Housed in a garden conservatory, Le Club Bar shapeshifts through the day. A lunch time brasserie, it becomes chocaholic heaven during the afternoon when a high tea featuring savouries, cakes, macarons and an extensive chocolate buffet, is served. At sundown an extensive cocktail menu featuring treats inspired by famous guests including Bond star Roger Moore is served. Live jazz performances accompany the classic cocktails, grand cru and whisky collection, ensuring the evening ends on a high note. The traditional décor contrasts with the contemporary styling of Angelina, the hotel's Italian restaurant and lounge. Named for guest Angelina Jolie, the vibrant bar is a capital hot spot with resident and guest mixologists conjuring up exquisite cocktails.

The hotel gently reflects the relaxed Hanoi vibe, blending elegance, charm, and colonial grace. It is a legendary place, hosting legendary people, telling bygone stories, and adding new tales as the present unfolds. |BAM



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# VIVA LA REVOLUTION

by Jane Stanbury, BAM's Global Luxury Correspondent

The future of personal and urban transportation is complex, which is what made the London Revolution.aero event, organized by the award-winning team from Corporate Jet Investor, so fascinating, as well as essential. The meeting brought together established figures from business aviation along with newcomers proudly delivering bold future visions.

Opening the event, Paul Touw, investor and co-founder of Stellar Jets, pointed out that a revolution in urban mobility is an absolute imperative. Road networks are at breaking point, and short distance transportation faces terrestrial limitations. To serve burgeoning populations new forms of transport are imperative. eVTOL (electric vertical takeoff and landing) systems could ease the pain. The eVTOL industry, Touw suggests, will require around \$28.7 billion to research, develop and implement. Some reports estimate that the industry has already spent some \$2 billion. Investment opportunity is ripe, but which one to pick when some 150 projects are currently in development.



Pegasus VTOL jet

The meeting brought together established figures from business aviation along with newcomers proudly delivering bold future visions.



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Delegates suggest success will come to those who intelligently aggregate new technologies. Electrification of aerial vehicles, generation of sustainable, alternative energy, blockchains, composite materials, sophisticated control systems and computational dynamics will all support development of high-tech machines controlled by digitised, automated systems. Or will it? That's what the conference aimed to flush out.

With the planned flotillas of eVTOLS taking to the skies, the immense quantities of data generated will need managing. The growing trend of aviation digitisation will spearhead development as data identifying each part of the aviation value chain needs to be aggregated and turned into meaningful information to support greater efficiency.

Gillian Hayes, CEO of group purchasing company Aviaa said, "While the purchasing needs of an eVTOL owner will



“While the purchasing needs of an eVTOL owner will be dramatically different from a jet owner, the challenges of the supply chain will remain.”  
Gillian Hayes, CEO, Aviaa



be dramatically different from a jet owner, the challenges of the supply chain will remain.”

Blockchain technology can provide solutions as chains of data deliver incontrovertible information, verified by network participants. Value chain components will work more effectively. Standardised aviation

data collection will also help define international operating practice and support informed decisions by regulators and certification authorities.

Sandra Ro, of The Global Blockchain Business Council, suggested that optimizing chains could support the evolution of improved and enhanced securitization, logistics, supply chain management and ultimately deliver better experiences for passengers, as well as support the growing need for alternative power.

However, Michael Liebrich, of Liebrich Associates, which advises on clean energy and transportation, smart



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infrastructure, technology, and sustainable development, questioned the availability of alternative power. "If you haven't thought about how you're going to charge all these vehicles you need to start thinking about it now," he counselled.

"The creation of renewable energy costs must be built into business plans," he advised confirming that right now there is not enough energy to sustain the existing transport sector, let alone an armada of eVTOLs.

It won't just be energy that can potentially stall development. Infrastructure, certification and regulation considerations, are paramount for industry advancement, Vertiports in urban locations, complex flight path management, eVTOL connectivity and resource training are all challenges.

With the existing pilot shortage, who will fly these machines if they are not autonomous vehicles? In the Revolution. aero Pitch event, four aviation investment experts selected one of six startups pitching for their moment in the aerial revolution spotlight. Recognising human limitations, New York-based Nodein, won the vote for the development of air traffic control systems.

CEO Suresh Kanann and his team are using Artificial Intelligence (AI) to minimise aerial collision through autonomy. The focus is on making the system safe, verifiable and significantly, certifiable. Autonomy will play a valuable role in keeping an eVTOL world safe, although delegates were skeptical about social acceptance of pilotless aircraft. However, combining AI and blockchain technology to inform a greater neural network encompassing everything the passenger touches is a powerful proposition.

So how will it play out in reality? Slowly it seems. Delegates agreed that the proving grounds for this new form of mobility are likely to be in the military and cargo sectors, in regions with challenging geo-topography such as Africa and China. In addition, the existing rules governing certification relate to present day aviation technology, so the regulatory effort that will be required is huge and remains to be worked through. While aircraft entrepreneurs remain bullish about entry-into-service dates, with some talking as early as 2023 for hybrid electric aircraft, there are some complex reality issues that need to be dealt with.

It's a brave new world on the horizon, and we are still some years away from satisfying the hunger for more carbon-friendly, efficient, and affordable urban air mobility. In a presentation extolling the power of global alliances, which became a theme at the event, Mark McCaughrean of the European Space Agency, backed the case for reducing emissions and evolving renewable energy. He presented spectacular images from the furthest reaches of the universe and made the point that if humanity is to survive, we need to care for planet Earth. As he put it: "There is no planet B."

It seems the industry is at a cross roads, where terrestrial transportation meets mass aerial mobility, and the possible and potential routes to success are many and various. Which routes will turn out to be winners remains to be determined.

However, the conference seemed clear that eVTOL has moved beyond hype and is on its way to becoming a reality. Technology, collaboration, cooperation and communication will continue to be essential across multiple disciplines, and it is these factors that will ensure we welcome the revolution. |BAM

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