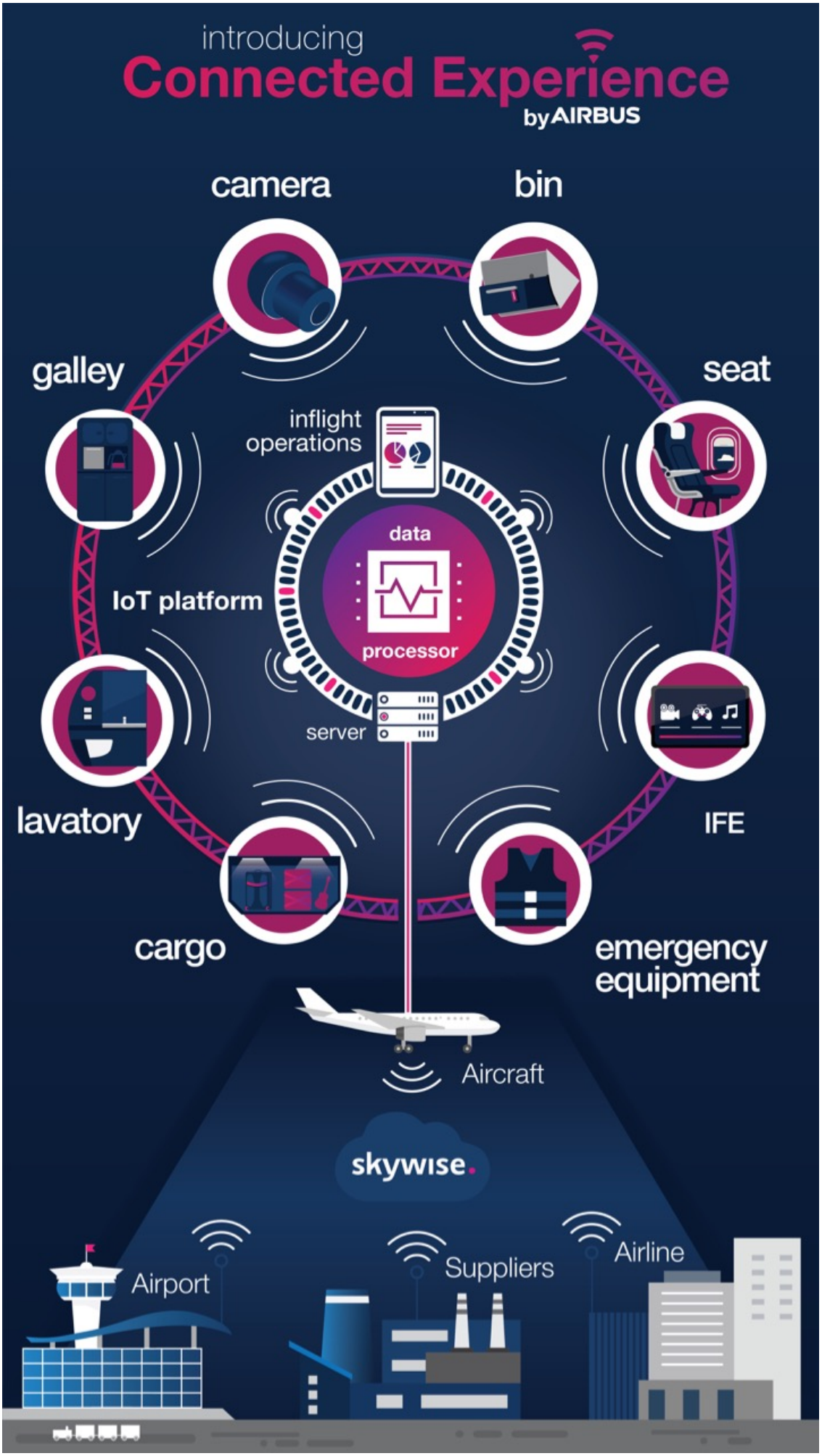
Airbus connected cabin enters inflight tests

By **Rick Lundstrom** on September, 10 2019 | Tech & Hardware



LOS ANGELES- Airbus announced today it has begun inflight trials of its “Internet of Things” connected cabin technologies on an A350-900 flight lab aircraft.

“In doing so, Airbus becomes the first aircraft manufacturer to undertake such flight-testing of actual connected cabin innovations,” said a release from company.

The platform, known as the *Airspace Connected Experience*, was unveiled at the APEX Expo last year. It touts a new personalized experience for passengers and provides opportunities for airlines to improve ancillary revenues and operational efficiencies.

The flight lab is fitted with an Airspace brand cabin, a sub-brand of Airbus, to evaluate the new connected cabin technologies in flight. A group of innovations are being tested to see how they work in unison, including prototypes of the Connected iSeat by Recaro, the Connected Galley from gategroup, a remote wireless cabin management control system, a large OLED display and the first of Airbus’ new “Internet of Things backbone” which includes an open software platform.

Through the connected cabin ecosystem, passengers will receive a more personalized travel experience specifically targeted to individual needs and preferences, based on available data. Passengers can pre-order and remote-order meals, book private bin space, adjust individual seat positions and access tailor-made IFE.

Airlines will be able to generate additional ancillary revenues through personalized retail and advertisement. The connected cabin promises improved operational efficiency, applying predictive maintenance, avoiding waste and making crew services more efficient. Other opportunities can be created and applied via apps.

Crews will have digitally enabled real-time data from the platform throughout the cabin. A mobile smart device would allow crews to monitor and operate all components.

The inflight tests began with workshops to create and prioritize innovative concepts, followed by a phase of on-ground testing and customer evaluation of the connected elements. The next steps will continue testing the current setup, then close the feedback loop with airlines using Airbus’ Customer Experience Teams (CET) forum, by approximately year-end.