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# An inside look at the 2018 Crystal Cabin Award

By **Rachel Debling** on March, 7 2018 | Events



*The winners of 2017's Crystal Cabin Award*

*In late February, Lukas Kirchner, Head of Marketing, PR and Events at [Hamburg Aviation](#), the organizers of the [Crystal Cabin Award](#), walked PAX International through what's new and exciting for the 2018 event.*

## **The Crystal Cabin Award is celebrating its 12th anniversary. How has the award changed since first starting out more than a decade ago?**

Over the years, the Award has changed greatly. We started out as a niche prize to highlight the best innovations of the annual Aircraft Interiors Expo in Hamburg. While the Crystal Cabin Awards are still regarded as an unofficial guidebook to much of the innovation showcased at AIX today, its significance has become truly global and industry-wide. In the past years, we've seen not only suppliers submit their concept at the Crystal Cabin Awards, but also leading OEMs, universities [and] airlines from across the globe, and with much success: the Crystal Cabin Award has become a recognized seal of quality even outside the aviation industry, with large-scale media such as BBC [and] CNN reporting on the submissions, finalists and winners. This of course makes us proud, but it also reflects the development of the interiors segment which is getting a lot of public attention these days. An aircraft cabin is no longer defined as a technical space, but as branded passenger experience, which becomes more and more hotel-like and an ever more important part of the airline's

presentation to the customer. Recent Award categories such as the holistic “Cabin Concepts” take into account this development and are perceived really well by both the industry and the public.

### **What are you doing to make this edition extra-special?**

For the (10th) anniversary season of the Crystal Cabin Awards, we had Sir Tim Clark of Emirates and Brigitte Zypries [still-Federal German Minister of Economics (our new federal government is currently forming)] as our guests of honor. But we generally try to bring something new into the Crystal Cabin Awards with every new season. This year, it will be 3D-printed lightweight trophies, which look exactly the same as before from the front but show a honeycomb aluminum structure on the back, as well as an Airline Executive Table at the prize-giving ceremony, hosted by APEX, highlighting the significance of the Awards to the airline industry even more.

### **Why is it important to highlight the contributions of the youth of today via the University category?**

The University award is a great category and we encourage every young talent in the PaxEx industry to use this window of opportunity and participate. For the students, the University category is THE chance to present themselves and their creative ideas visibly to the industry and make a name for themselves, which can potentially open new doors for their future career. For the industry, we think it’s important to not only focus on innovation taking place inside the companies but to also look to the academic stages, which is also a little “freer” to think outside the boxes. The universities are where future company heads will come from, and where their future customers are now - regardless if you’re talking industry or airline passenger. It’s important to understand what moves the younger generation because as the aviation industry it will be your future business to move them.

### **Are there any new faces on the judging panel?**

The most recent face to join the panel is Joe Leader, CEO of APEX. In the past years, we have added quite a number of new faces to the judging panel, such as a representative from Singapore Airlines, but also some female expertise with Mary Kirby from Runway Girl Network and Zuzana Hrnkova from ATR. We try to keep our judging panel both international and from mixed backgrounds, representing as many industry stakeholders as possible: OEMs, suppliers, professors, journalists and, of course, airlines.