

Listening lineup: Linstol's innovative headphones and earbuds

This is a special feature from *PAX Tech's* [June 2023 AIX issue](#) on [page 18](#).



Linstol headsets and earbuds are flying on more than 55 global airlines

[Linstol](#) prides itself on producing industry-leading headsets and earbuds with customizable designs at a competitive price that ultimately provide a high-quality IFE experience for passengers. *PAX Tech* spoke to CEO Mark Russell about how improving comfort and having better acoustic traits will lessen listening fatigue and ultimately level up the passenger experience.

Currently, Linstol has over 30 fully-customizable designs on offer to clients. New products can be “unique to a specific client both acoustically and visually,” Russell tells *PAX Tech*.

The headsets and earbuds are flying on more than 55 global airlines including Air New Zealand, ANA, British Airways, Cathay Pacific, Delta Airlines, Etihad, Air France, Korean Air, Qantas, Qatar, Singapore

Airlines, Saudia, United Airlines, Virgin Atlantic and many more.



Mark Russell, CEO, Linstol

The company's design team works collaboratively to bring new products to life. Russell explains that the process starts "as either a need to solve a technical issue for a customer or as a design idea that gets transformed into a conceptual drawing." The team prints 3D versions of ideas and from there products "are literally sculpted and adjusted to create a finished conceptual model," Russell says.

Next, Flysonic takes the product to the R&D team to develop handmade samples for design review. The acoustic specialist comes in after that to optimize the sound quality of the product and, finally, the team begins to stress test the product to confirm it is "exceptional sounding" and "will also hold up well to the unique environments of our industry."

Linstol works with Meridian Audio, a global leader in acoustic design, and its Engineered by Meridian (EBM) division to consistently drive for improvement in audio performance. "By constantly challenging convention, they help us enrich the customer's onboard experience," Russell says.

Linstol has also worked with Phitek/Amphenol to operate all Phitek headset-related activities since April 2020.

In 2022, Linstol produced over 200 million earbuds and headsets for airlines. The product packaging includes “a variety of earth-friendly paper products, wraps for Business Class and Economy Class headsets as well as multi-use solutions that encourage the passenger to reuse packaging over multi-flight itineraries,” Russell tells *PAX Tech*. Using this environmentally friendly, multi-use approach helps Linstol and its partners lower the amount of plastic waste produced.

Working toward a “zero-landfill” goal is important to the company. Russell says that collaborations with companies like MNH Sustainable Cabin Services help Linstol reach that goal. Linstol also recently introduced a relationship with The Plastic Bank that aims to incorporate recycled plastics captured from ocean-bound waste streams into new headsets.

For Russell, it has been exciting to see how the industry has shifted from prioritizing the lowest possible cost “to a willingness to invest funds in improved earbud/headset programs that allow for a minimal investment and yet reap huge rewards from a passenger perspective.”

Looking ahead, Russell sees that Bluetooth technology is starting to take hold in the industry. Linstol is working with several airlines on new products that incorporate this technology. In addition, Linstol’s R&D teams are looking at ways to improve the life cycle of products. “This includes everything from ARINC standard pin designs to breakage analysis with our refurbishing partners that will help us better understand how to build stronger products,” Russell says.

“I’m excited about the future of Linstol and the airline industry.”