
Seating news part of Passenger Experience Week happenings

By **Rick Lundstrom** on April, 13 2016 | Seating



Organizers for this year's Aircraft Interiors Expo were expecting more than 16,000 visitors to step through the doors of the Hamburg Messe this year for what was billed as Passenger Experience Week.

News was generated from one end to the other in the massive halls and exhibits. Much of it came from companies - both new and established - that manufacture aircraft seating.

In the March-April AIX issue, Recaro CEO Dr. Mark Hiller told *PAX International* that the company sees the seating market increasing at a compound annual growth rate of 5% per year and surpassing US\$4 billion by 2020. In that time, not only will sales increase, but so to will variations in the airline cabin.

The move toward airlines adding a premium economy cabin will continue apace in the years to come. Some companies at AIX pegged growth in the Premium Economy category at around 7% per year.

One of those companies was Italy-based [Aviointeriors](#). At this year's AIX, the company debuted its C4, Premium Economy Seat. The C4 is a derivative of the Aviointeriors Columbus line of seating.



The C4 offers more than 10 inches of recline. It also has space for a larger IFE screen than the other

Columbus models. Since it is based on a current line of seating company officials say they can offer the C4 a competitive price.

“We are looking at enhancing this feature further in line with industry trends and customer expectations,” said a release from Aviointeriors.

The company has also added several customers. Air Niugini has selected the Business Class Sophia seat for its Fokker 70 and Fokker 100 retrofit program. Rossiya Airlines of Russia will be taking the Andromeda seat for its 10 A319-A320 retrofits starting this fall. Also, TUIfly of the Netherlands has selected Aviointeriors for the company’s Columbus Crew Rest seat on two of its 767-300s.

The titanium made [Expliseat](#) will now be available on ATR aircraft. As a follow on to the announcement last June that the company would now have its lightweight seats available on the turboprops, last week officials from the French aircraft manufacturer and French seatmaker held a press conference to announced a buyer-furnished equipment agreement.

Air Tahiti was the launch customer for the Expliseat and the first installation on its ATRs will be in May of this year.

Also in Hamburg, Expliseat unveiled its NEO seat in collaboration with the Peugeot Design Lab. The NEO is designed for flights of up to seven hours and weights in at five kilograms per passenger fully equipped.

Shortly before the start of this year’s AIX, [HAECO Cabin Solutions](#) announced that it has received TSO C127b from the U.S. Federal Aviation Administration on its Vector single aisle economy seating solution.

TSO C127b is a new FAA requirement for aircraft seat original equipment manufacturers on new products. HAECO Cabin Solutions has qualified the Vector single aisle seat platform for all seat configurations on 737 aircraft to meet TSO C127b and will complete the process on the A320 family of aircraft this year.



“Obtaining this pre-qualification will streamline the certification process and allow HAECO Cabin Solutions to decrease the lead time on products,” said a release from HAECO.

HAECO Cabin Solutions has also completed its “Partnership for Safety Plan” (PSP) with the FAA. The PSP allows the company to further simplify the TSO approval process by having the authority to review minor trim and finish changes internally.

Among the new products by HAECO is the personal electronic device holder that will be a catalog option on the Vector™ platform. The PED holder is designed to hold a tablet up to 12 inches x 8.6 inches with and without a case and at an angle up to 90 degrees. A retaining mechanism in the PED holder can grip a personal device to maintain a secure hold.

Perhaps the most high profile announcement came with the help of AirAsia CEO Tan Sri Tony

Fernandes, who blew into Hamburg with a group of the airline's flight attendants to sign an agreement to be the launch customer for the Hawk Economy Class seat from UK-based [Mirus Aircraft Seating](#).

The Hawk will be retrofitted on the airline's A320 aircraft and on its future A320neo fleet once it obtains regulatory approval.

Like a growing number of seating designs now finding their way to market, the Hawk from Mirus borrows some of its features from the automotive industry. One of the chief developers is Mirus' Phil Hall, who worked on products for Formula One racers, a background shared with Fernandes, who once owned the Caterham F1 team.

Production of the Hawk will begin in the third quarter of this year.



Aircraft seating giant Recaro brought a number of innovations to this year's Aircraft Interiors Expo. On the two-floor stand, the company showed visitors its [PL3530](#) seat outfitted for less weight and more comfort for taller passengers. The company has modified the seat for a wider leg rest and features to make it more comfortable for taller passengers.

But the features of the new seat may have been overshadowed by a spate of new orders from longstanding airline customers. Singapore Airlines has placed an order for more than 14,000 CL3710 economy seats for the airlines' A380, 787 and A350 aircraft beginning in 2017. Ten of Air China's A350 aircraft will soon be taking off with Recaro's CL3710 with an order of 2,500 units.

TAP Portugal will be equipping the cabin of A330-900neo aircraft exclusively with seats from Recaro. The order amounts to more than 4,000 economy and business class seats. Delivery will begin in July 2017.

Cebu Pacific Air is the first airline in the Asia Pacific region to order the Recaro SL3510 for 30 new A321neo aircraft. Also in Asia, Hainan Airlines recently placed a large order of the CL3710 for its A330 aircraft. In the future, the fleet will be taking off with the multi-award-winning economy seat.



“Excellent Customer Support Performance” was in bold type on a press release by [Stelia Aerospace](#). Airbus Supplier Support Ratings recognized the company in an opening day event at the company’s stand in Hamburg. The company was assessed the designation based on product reliability, documentation and technical assistance; service - including repairs performance, spares performance, communication and warranty management; and cost of operating and cost of spares and repairs.