

The Decision Maker's Guide to Business Aviation

Middle East  
India & SE Asia

# BIZJET ADVISOR

WINTER 2011/12

## JOHN TRAVOLTA

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ISSN 2046-3022





# COMPLETE BEAUTY

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Why interiors matter to regular travelers

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By Liz Moscrop

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International travelers who use private aviation insist on top quality cabins to keep them productive and comfortable on the road. Ultimately, beauty and functionality are the order of the day.

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Edése Doret's 'living wall', set for delivery in a 787-9 in 2015  
(Photo © Edése Doret)



Put a world-class designer together with a large space, and creativity flourishes. One of the most innovative offerings at this year's National Business Aviation Association Convention was a "living wall" for a business jet cabin. Designer Edése Doret had been thinking about the idea for more than a year before pitching it to a client. The customer was delighted, giving the green light to Doret's New York-based company to proceed with the project.

What followed is four Living Walls,

which will form part of the structure of a privately-owned Boeing 787-9, which will be delivered in 2015. They will feature in the main stateroom, the hallway, the lavatory and the lounge. The resulting 'green scene' comes from the fact each wall is entirely covered with evergreen ferns that keep their leaves, are known to be hypoallergenic and do not attract insects.

The ferns are fed and watered via an irrigation system. Light comes via several mirrors that direct sunlight from

the cabin windows. This is augmented by artificial light, and both can be blocked when necessary. Doret also insists that a gardener prune the walls when necessary.

This effort is the kind of imaginative project that savvy customers in the Middle East and Asia regions love. For the most part these customers buy bigger aircraft with longer ranges, frequently opting for a full-sized kitchen (to accommodate a chef), as well as a bedroom and bathroom. >>

Global brands such as BMW, Ed ese Doret, Hermes and Versace have created impressive new interiors for jets and helicopters that are both beautiful and functional. BMW Group, for example, gave the new Boeing 787 Dreamliner a big-screen theatre, gourmet kitchen and cocktail bar, plus a built-in gymnasium. The home/office in the sky is vital in today's fast-paced business world and should include high-speed Internet access, conference presentation capability, laptop computer stations and satellite telephone access.

## The players

Certain outfitters have been providing for VIP aircraft for many years. Back in 2000 Jerry Gore and Kathy Gore-Walters, founders of Port San Antonio-based Gore Design Completions, created some interesting additions to the Business Aviation experience. Their latest innovation includes the AeroLift, which offers private access for aircraft owners and their families in order that they can stay separate from employees. Such a concept is perfect

for many VVIP customers.

New Zealand-based Altitude is another completions center watching these major markets. The company has created a mock-up of a Boeing 737 airliner, which means it can offer trials of on-board systems against a real aircraft frame, and install the luxury interior in a properly mounted aircraft structure. Pascal Jallier leads Altitude, and his apprenticeship with Jet Aviation stood him in good stead within this market.

Arguably one of the top completions centers in the world, Jet Aviation - Basel (Switzerland) frequently partners with other industries that cater to the high-end marketplace to find new ways to improve its offerings. It was one of the first completion organizations to produce mock-ups of the new Boeing 787 Dreamliner and the Airbus A350. The company partnered with designer Peder Eidsgaard to produce an open cabin with long sightlines and traffic zones comprising 24 seats, 14 can be used as sofas/reclining chairs after take-off. 10 additional beds are available.

Another of the world's top completion specialists is Lufthansa Technik (LHT), which has also produced stunning concepts for the new Airbus and Boeing types. As well as offering beautiful custom-designed airliner cabins, the German company has created a cabin management and in-flight entertainment product - NICE - which incorporates concepts such as 'niceview', a moving map system. Its new 'nicestuff' widget allows passengers to choose from a wide variety of Internet content that is processed via the onboard communications system and displayed in the cabin.

**“The home/office in the sky is vital in today's fast-paced business world...”**

| Embraer Lineage 1000 cabin





| Sample of a Jet Works Air Center Completion

Walter Heerdt, senior vice president, marketing & sales outlined, “NICE started as an idea and has been so successful in the market with Bombardier products as well as with narrow-bodies and aircraft as large as the Boeing 747-400, that we continued to develop the system, which is modular. It will even work with third party equipment and smart phones.”

Heerdt concluded that most customers are looking for the highest quality High Definition screens and in-flight entertainment offerings for their cabins.

Dallas, Texas headquartered Associated Air Center (AAC) is one of the world’s heavyweights when it comes to large airliner VIP conversions. The company has done everything from moving a stairway on a Boeing 747-400, to installing the latest entertainment and office systems, to outfitting a galley worthy of a three-star chef. To date it has completed 21 Boeing Business Jets.

In 1999, the company performed its first VIP completion on a Boeing Business Jet (BBJ) for the Miami Dolphins (American Football team). While AAC has performed completions

on the entire range of Boeing narrow-body and wide-body aircraft, from the 707 through the 747, its relationship with Boeing Business Jet has been a particularly fruitful one. AAC is a designated Boeing 737 Business Jet Completions Center.

It has also outfitted over 15 ACJs for clients such as the Royal Thai Air Force, the Brazilian government and Pharmair of the US. The company is in fact a designated Airbus Industries A319 Corporate Jet Completions center too.

Fellow Texas-based completions house Jet Works Air Center has been converting factory-new BBJs for 15 years for customers prior to delivery, as well as revamping older aircraft. Last year the firm delivered a Boeing

**“Smaller airliner variants are also creeping into the world’s Business Aviation fleet slowly...”**

737-300 and three BBJs to owners from markets in the Middle East and Indonesia.

Smaller airliner variants are also creeping into the world’s Business Aviation fleet slowly, and it is Embraer’s regional jet E190 derivative - the Lineage 1000 - that is proving popular in the Middle East especially.

Companies like Raleigh, North Carolina’s Jetcraft Corporation are teaming with the likes of UAE-based Project Phoenix (which sells versions of Bombardier’s CRJ 200 airliner) to offer converted airliners to clients. However, design definitions remain similar.

Comlux - The Aviation Group - is a skilled completions specialist, and also offers charter services. At the October NBAA Convention in Las Vegas it announced that it would be the launch customer for the executive version of the new Sukhoi Superjet 100 regional airliner, which will be in operation by 2015. The agreement covers two Sukhoi Business Jets (SBJ) and options for two more.

With more than 30 years of experience in corporate aircraft refurbishment and its completion center dedicated to Bombardier aircraft, the company has integrated in-house facilities including a cabinet shop, finish shop, upholstery shop, entertainment system integration shop, sheet metal shop and avionics shop.

Montreal, Canada-based Flying Colours Corp has partnered with Bombardier as a preferred completion center for the Canadian OEM’s green Challenger 850 line since 2008. Flying Colours has invented and certified an >>



Dassault creates its own interiors  
in Little Rock, Arkansas

auxiliary fuel system that extends the range of the aircraft to approximately 3,000nm. This is now installed as standard.

Flying Colours recently delivered a Challenger 850 to aircraft charter and management provider ExecuJet Middle East. Eric Gillespie, Flying Colours' director, points to customer preferences for interior touches. Most of the company's Bombardier Challenger 850s will have a zone dedicated to socializing (for example a conference group or dual aft cabin divans) aimed at facilitating meetings or meals.

## OEM Completions

Of course manufacturers also produce (or collaborate with designers for) their own interiors. As the only company dedicated to Airbus' ACJ Family, the Airbus Corporate Jet Centre (ACJC) offers top-quality cabin outfitting and innovative packages of nose-to-tail services to VVIP and Head of State customers.

Established in July 2007, the Airbus Corporate Jet Centre is a 100-percent Airbus subsidiary based at the company's site in Toulouse. The center's team of approximately 200

engineers, craftsmen and designers offer corporate jet customers a full range of outfitting services for Airbus ACJ318s, ACJ319s and ACJ320s – from help with interior design, production, installation and certification to a complete support package called "VIP Pass" for all Airbus aircraft.

VIP Pass can include cabin upgrades and refurbishment, airframe maintenance and upgrades, spares support, engine maintenance, airworthiness and maintenance engineering services as well as flight operations publications. To date the center has completed the outfitting of 17 Airbus cabins.

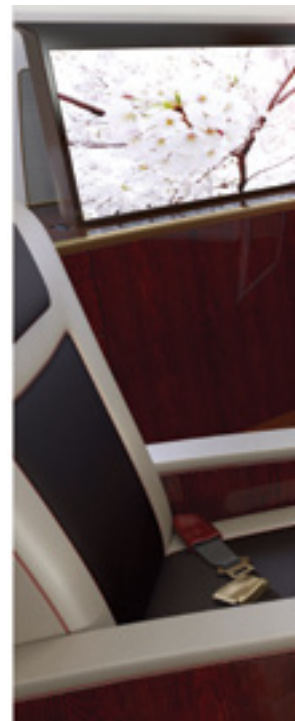
Airbus is also looking east. The OEM announced in March that it had appointed Taikoo (Xiamen) Aircraft Engineering Company Ltd (TAECO) as its first approved cabin-outfitter in the Asia-Pacific region, thereby expanding its range of completion centers available to corporate jet customers. TAECO's approval follows a complete audit of the company and its capabilities, allowing Airbus to recommend it to customers.

Tom Williams, Executive Vice President, Programs at Airbus, outlined: "Our customers expect a

quality Airbus Corporate Jet from us, even when the cabin is outfitted by another company. We are determined to help them achieve that, which is why we encourage them to choose an approved completion center."

Fellow France-based OEM Dassault Falcon Jet also creates its own interiors for its aircraft fleet. The company's biggest completion facility is in Little Rock, Arkansas. Current production model Falcons are manufactured in France, then flown in "green" (pre-completion) condition to the completion center in the USA where optional avionics and custom interiors are installed, and exteriors are painted to the

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Gulfstream's 'Elite' interior will incorporate aspects of the G650 into G550 and G450 aircraft



customer's wishes. Expansion plans in Little Rock are currently underway for both completions and service center areas. With construction completed in 2009, Dassault Falcon - Little Rock has expanded to occupy a nearly 827,000 total square foot area today.

Meanwhile at NBAA, Gulfstream Aerospace unveiled its 'Elite' interiors for the G550 and G450. The design draws on much of the look and feel of the clean-lines interior the company developed for its new flagship G650 ultra-long-range business jet. The Elite includes metallic detail, LED lighting throughout, and stainless steel galley accoutrements with glossy surfaces. The full flat executive seats feature

one-touch berthing, leg rests and heat and massage. Tables and monuments also have the look and feel of those onboard the G650.

Most aircraft manufacturers have their own outfitting centers and will also send customers to a list of their recommended partners. Airbus, Cessna, Gulfstream and Hawker Beechcraft offer aftermarket completions.

Brazilian OEM Embraer created the Lineage 1000, largely based on

the successful Embraer passenger jet, the Embraer 190. The greatest change in the Lineage 1000 is the added fuel tanks in the lower deck cargo hold space, nearly doubling the jet's range. The aircraft also boasts a lavish interior, divided into as many as five sections, including an optional bedroom, washroom with running water and a walk-in cargo area at the rear. Embraer completes the aircraft in-house in a variety of standard customizable configurations. (The Lineage 1000 is only topped in available cabin space by the Boeing BBJ, Airbus ACJ318 and Airbus ACJ319.)

The first Lineage 1000 was delivered to HE Aamer Abdul Jalil Al Fahim on May 7, 2009. Subsequently the aircraft has gained significant popularity in the Middle East as several operators have taken delivery of, or have ordered the Lineage 1000.

We trust you have enjoyed the designs displayed over these pages. On the surface it seems as though there is a huge variety of choice. The reality is that there are very few completion centers worldwide capable of installing the type of stunning interiors desired by the world's elite. It will always pay to shop around and ask critical questions of the outfitters assigned to your aircraft. <<

