

ALASKA GETS UP TO SPEED WITH AIRCELL'S GOGO® DESPITE SUCCESSFUL TRIALS WITH ROW 44

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of the fleet by the end of the year. Alaska decided against satellite technology because it was more expensive and would have taken longer to deploy, he said.

The News Tribune observed that when Alaska announced its partnership with Row 44 two and a half years ago, "the airline was a pioneer among domestic carriers. Had...Alaska rolled out that wireless Internet service on schedule, it would have been the first major domestic carrier with that capability. But technical, political and financial issues intervened, and Alaska, save for one demonstration aircraft, still doesn't offer Internet access on its flights. Meanwhile, many of its competitors do."

Aircell tells *WIN* that it plans to install six towers that will provide continuous service along the airline's major flight paths in Southeast Alaska, Southcentral and to Fairbanks by the end of the year—another indication of Alaska's concern for the schedule.

If Air Canada chooses to move forward with Aircell, following evaluation of the trials it concluded last month, Aircell and Canada's SkySurf are expected to collaborate in developing a seamless network bridging the U.S.-Canadian border in the near future, and Aircell tells *WIN* it is negotiating with the spectrum licensee in Mexico to extend Gogo's footprint south.



Aircell is currently limited to 'lower 48' coverage, but will install six ATG towers along Alaska's major flight paths in Southeast Alaska, Southcentral and to Fairbanks by the end of the year.

The reason that Row 44 was left at the altar is a bit perplexing to some industry

Airline	Installed Aircraft	Left to be installed
Delta/Northwest	390	145 in 2010
American	15 767-200s & 150 MD80s	Plans to begin installing 737 fleet
Air Tran	138	Completed
Virgin America	28	Completed
United	13	Unknown
US Air	-	50 in 2010
Continental	-	21 in 2010
Alaska	-	Entire fleet In 2010
Southwest	4	530 from 2nd quarter thru 2012
Air Canada	2	Evaluating trial results

Summary of Aircell and Row 44 North American airline relationships and installation schedules

observers, given Alaska's satisfaction with the service, and the IFEC blogosphere is in full speculation mode. As for installation speed, Row 44 is installing its service on Southwest Airlines at the rate of 15 aircraft per month, and at some point will increase the rate to 25. If that rate of installation was applied to Alaska, that airline's goal of being installed by the end of the year would be in reach.

Row 44 will begin installing its equipment on Southwest in the second quarter, but with more than 530 aircraft, will not be completed until 2012. However, if the Alaska installation could not be done at the same time as Southwest and Alaska waited in queue that would be an entirely different story with regard to Alaska's desire to be fully installed this year.

An Alaska spokesperson declined to elaborate on the speculation, saying only that airlines have many operational constraints for installation of significant equipment including inflight WiFi, and given these constraints, the fastest way for Alaska to provide inflight Wi-Fi to customers is to deploy Aircell's Gogo service. Aircell has installed Gogo on more than 700 aircraft for all eight of its customers at this writing.

Preferring to let Alaska speak for itself, Row 44 CEO John Guidon tells *WIN* that: "We are disappointed we could not work out a mutually agreeable business relationship. But based on information we learned during their successful passenger trial, we know passengers were extremely satisfied with our service, including coverage into Canada and the far reaches of the airline's namesake state."

Looks to ancillary revenue from IFE

2009 was the sixth straight year of profits for Alaska on an adjusted basis. "It was a great year for them compared to the prior year where they broke even and barely made any money," according to Mike Roarke of McAdams Wright Ragen, a brokerage firm in the Pacific Northwest. "They performed much better than almost all domestic airlines in 2009."

"Our profitability was driven by significant reductions in fuel costs and an aggressive reallocation of flying to new markets in our system," said Chief Financial Officer Glenn Johnson in recent reports. Economic fuel costs—or what it pays for fuel after it hedges—declined

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ALASKA GETS UP TO SPEED WITH AIRCELL'S GOGO® DESPITE SUCCESSFUL TRIALS WITH ROW 44

(cont. from page 2)

38 percent in 2009 from the prior year. Alaska cut capacity by 4.4 percent, and reallocated aircraft to ensure the right capacity in the right markets.


Though 2009 was a good year overall, the fourth quarter was more difficult, with the profit of 12 cents a share representing a decline of 73 percent from the prior year. Alaska's US \$15 fee for the first checked bag helped the quarter's results. Alaska's liquidity is a significant strength, carrying about US \$1 billion in cash on the balance sheet.

Johnson says that Alaska's focus for 2010 is on the revenue side, including driving ancillary revenue higher by charging for things like onboard meals and inflight entertainment.

| **Michael Childers** | Managing Editor |

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For complete coverage of AIME, see Brendan Gallagher's report from Dubai on page 11.



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OMAN AIR MARKS CONNECTIVITY MILESTONE

| **Muscat** | Earlier this month, Oman Air became the first airline in the world to fly both mobile broadband and broadband Internet on an A330 with OnAir Internet and OnAir Mobile. The event is not only significant for Oman, but also marks the real launch of SwiftBroadband (SBB), say industry observers.

Oman Air's A330 fleet has been fitted with the Airbus ALNA V2 system, using Honeywell's HYPERLINK "http://www.inmarsat.com/Services/Aeronautical/SwiftBroadband/default.aspx" SwiftBroadband (SBB) solution. This supports both mobile phone and Internet in-flight communication, ensuring that whatever devices passengers choose to use, they will receive a swift and effective service.

Launching the new service, Oman Air's Chief Executive Officer, Peter Hill

says, "We are delighted to be leading the field by bringing the digital age to in-flight passenger communications. From mid-February we will be unrolling full connectivity across our Airbus A330 fleet, completing the task in the summer. This great new service will enrich the passenger experience and complement the stunning new interiors we are offering in all three classes of travel.

The passenger price plan for Internet access on laptops via WiFi is US\$29.95 for 26MB per flight, with each additional KB costing US\$0.006. For webmail the rate would be US\$9.95 per flight for body copy only plus US\$0.006 for attachments. For webchat the rate is US\$4.95 per flight for unlimited use.

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ASSOCIATION FOR AIRLINE PASSENGER RIGHTS CALLS ON DOT TO RECONSIDER CLOSED-CAPTIONS

CLOSED CAPTIONS

Advocacy group attempts to reopen the issue that was first confronted by the DOT and WAEA in 2006 and ruled upon in 2009 with DOT saying "we cannot adopt a regulation governing entertainment displays at this time." DOT will revisit the matter in the future.

| **Washington, DC** | The Association for Airline Passenger Rights (AAPR), the advocacy group that cites its mission as promoting fairer customer service and accessibility standards in the airline industry, has formally requested the U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) to require air carriers to provide closed-captions or subtitles on all inflight entertainment for the deaf and hard of hearing passengers.

The action comes less than a year after DOT declared, "We have reluctantly concluded...that we cannot adopt a regulation governing [closed captions on inflight] entertainment displays at this time." Citing the responses submitted by WAEA and the National Center

for Accessible Media (NCAM) to the agency's announced intention to require closed-captioning on entertainment content in IFE, DOT ruled, "We cannot conclude on the basis of the comments that providing high-contrast captioning for entertainment displays is technically and economically feasible now, nor can we ascertain a date by which it most likely will be."

The agency also said "we will shortly be issuing an SNPRM [supplemental notice of proposed rule-making] to call for more current and more complete information on the cost and feasibility" of providing high contrast closed-captions on entertainment in the future. DOT cited the work of WAEA's Technology Committee and Digital Content Management Working Group in the creation of digital delivery standards in IFE that "reflects progress toward development of a common methodology for delivering digital content" that would likely be helpful in arriving at a future solution.

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ASSOCIATION FOR AIRLINE PASSENGER RIGHTS CALLS ON DOT TO RECONSIDER CLOSED-CAPTIONS

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Observers in the IFEC community did not see the 2009 ruling as eliminating the imposition of the closed-captioning requirement for entertainment content, but simply as an action to move such a rule into the future to allow the IFEC community to address the technical issues and look for a means of implementation that would be more economically feasible. The current AAPR action indicates that pressure from advocacy groups will remain.

Kenneth DeHaan, the founder of the Facebook Cause called "Require Subtitles

TELEVISION CAPTIONS:

Most television captioning technology was developed to coincide with analog broadcast standards of the television broadcast system in the territory.

In NTSC content—indigenous to the U.S., South America, and Japan—captions were encoded into "Line 21" of the vertical blanking interval.

In PAL—indigenous to most of Europe—and SECAM—indigenous to France—teletext was used rather than Line 21, but using similar preparation methodology.

But the world is going digital and for the digital ATSC standard, three streams are encoded in the video, two of which are backward compatible to Line 21.

DVD and Blu-ray cannot carry Line 21 due to the HDMI interface, but can carry closed captions as a bitmap overlay that can be controlled by the player by selecting a subtitle track labeled "Subtitled for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (SDH)." There are similarities between this solution and Panasonic's solution for captions in IFE.

Movie captions have both open caption and closed caption solutions including the "Rear Window Captioning System" developed by the National Center for Accessible Media (NCAM) that has worked with WAEA's DCMWG to develop closed caption solutions in IFE.

on All Airline Carriers," said of the re-proposed requirement: "We lose value in our tickets when we cannot enjoy the entertainment onboard because there are no subtitles. It is not right that we have to pay a full fare and not receive the same service as hearing passengers."

History of the issue

In February 2006, DOT issued the Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (DOT NPRM 14 CFR Part 382) in response to initiatives in the disability community to seek to make inflight communications and entertainment more accessible to deaf, hard of hearing, and deaf-blind individuals in the presentation of inflight audiovisual displays.

The NPRM was designed to amend the Air Carrier Access Act (ACAA), a 1990 U.S. law specific to the airline industry that defines passenger rights and airline obligations regarding physical and mental impairments of passengers. The NPRM read that it would amend ACAA, "...requiring U.S. and foreign carriers to provide high-contrast captioning on entertainment videos, DVDs and other audiovisual displays on new aircraft."

It became clear at the time that advocacy groups and the disabled community mistakenly believed that providing captions, as one petition said, "only requires the pressing of buttons that already exist on the television or audiovisual equipment"—an easy mistake to make if you are used to the capabilities of broadcast television.

Responding to §382.69 of the NPRM, WAEA attempted to correct the misunderstanding by describing current technological limitations and observed that "some of the captioning requirements would impose unacceptable financial burdens on an already beleaguered airline industry."

| **Michael Childers** | Managing Editor |

WIN

CONTENT

35 CONTENT PROVIDERS EXHIBIT AT THE WAEA TV MARKET 10-11 MAY, FRANKFURT

| **Frankfurt** | Thirty-five exhibitors will offer television or television-based content at WAEA's TV Market on 10-11 May at the InterContinental Hotel in Frankfurt, Germany. Nine airlines have already confirmed, along with five content service providers, with that number expected to increase. Because the event involves pre-scheduled meetings with content providers, airlines are registered on a first-come, first-serve basis, and once all of the appointment time slots are filled, no more may be scheduled.

The 2010 event marks its 16th year, and is focused on bringing together the buyers of short subject content—particularly airlines—and the providers of short subject content to IFE from around the world.

The two day market is highly-structured, with a pre-set appointment schedule that ensures that over the two-day market each exhibitor/content provider and each airline/buyer has a specific appointment in a semi-private setting. The market is used by content providers to introduce new content offerings, and is used by airlines to help plan the coming year's short subject offerings.

This year there will be integrated educational sessions offering delegates an overview of the IFE market and trends.

Airlines and CSPs are urged to register to attend as soon as possible to ensure participation as places are limited. We would like to thank our sponsors France 24 and TV France International.

For further information please contact Steven Mindel—steven@mindelpartners.co.uk.

A registration form for TV Market can be found at: http://waea.org/edu_events/WAEA_week/documents/WAEA2010TVMarketSFwform_000.pdf

SFW: Content, 12 May

WAEA's Single Focus Workshop: Content (cont. on page 5)

**35 CONTENT PROVIDERS EXHIBIT AT
THE WAEA TV MARKET
10-11 MAY, FRANKFURT**

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will be held the day following the two-day television market at the same venue. The workshop focuses on issues of importance to IFE professionals, and is tentatively scheduled to include a review of music licensing issues and a look forward to 3D content and its potential place in IFE.

A registration form for the Single Focus Workshop can be found at: http://waea.org/edu_events/WAEA_week/documents/WAEA2010TVMarketSFwform_000.pdf

The registered airlines and exhibitors are:

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WIN

INFLIGHT ADVERTISING

**JETERA AND GUESTLOGIX
TO OFFER PRECISION-
GUIDED ADS**

| Toronto | Targeted-advertising specialist Jetera and onboard retail partner GuestLogix say they will start putting destination-specific ads on receipts issued to U.S. travelers before the end of June.

Called OnTouch Ads, the capability will be based on point-of-sale handhelds and onboard transaction processing software from GuestLogix, along with Jetera's Precision Ad Network application. The combination will make it possible to print on the receipts revenue-generating advertisements placed by suppliers of goods and services in the destination city. In the longer term, the companies plan also to serve up ads via travelers' own wireless mobile devices.

The partners will name the first airline users soon, according to Jetera chief executive Jeff McChesney. "We're going to launch with U.S. airlines and will announce two of them in the near future," he says. "When the U.S. roll-out is complete we'll address airlines elsewhere in the world."

The necessary data about the ads will be transmitted by Jetera to the GuestLogix network and then to each handheld device every time it connects, usually daily. "The launch version of OnTouch Ads will not use information on individual passenger preferences and itineraries," McChesney says. "But we may include that in later versions."

GuestLogix already has a substantial presence in air transport, with a claimed total of more than 20,000 POS devices in service with airlines carrying an aggregate of nearly 800 million passengers a year. Jetera opened up shop in 2006, promising big things for its ability to support ad insertion, targeting, financial reconciliation, analysis and other aspects of online advertising campaigns.

The core Jetera software includes ad delivery and targeting systems, associated logic with a software-configurable business-rules system, and robust logging routines for metrics and analysis. According to McChesney, it will support the delivery of personalized multimedia advertising to in-seat screens: "The ads will be timely and relevant to each passenger, based on when, where and how he is traveling."

Advertisers will be able to insert ads monthly, weekly, daily and even between flights, according to McChesney. "Our system makes it easy to customize ads to meet individual airline needs," he says. "It also revolutionizes the way ads are inserted into IFE systems by replacing the traditional labor-intensive method with a dynamic and responsive network."

In 2008 IFE system provider Thales Avionics announced that it would add the Jetera software to its TopSeries system. Labeled "Precision Ads-IFE" in this application, it is being jointly marketed by the two companies—"We have not integrated with an airline customer so far," says McChesney.

The Jetera offering is designed to help airlines earn much needed extra cash by allowing third parties to advertise to their passengers. In its publicity, the company suggests that a typical airline could bring in revenues of as much as US \$20 million a year through applications like OnTouch Ads and on-screen advertising. But, cautions McChesney, "We are pre-launch and typical revenue is only estimated at this time."

Republic opts for GuestLogix

Republic Airways has opted for GuestLogix's retail transaction platform for use on flights operated by its subsidiaries Frontier Airlines and Midwest Airlines.

(cont. on page 6)

JETERA AND GUESTLOGIX TO OFFER PRECISION-GUIDED ADS

(cont. from page 5)

The airline has also chosen GuestLogix's OnTouch onboard store design solution.

The GuestLogix solution will support Frontier and Midwest's use of credit cards on all flights, using point-of-sale handhelds and transaction platforms to make it convenient for passengers to purchase items onboard using a single cashless processor. The implementation will also provide back-end inventory controls to manage the movement of physical products onboard. The airlines will maintain existing onboard retail operations with snack, meal, and beverage sales, and then expand their retail program to include GuestLogix' OnTouch access to ground connections, entertainment and event offers.

| **Brendan Gallagher** | Contributing Editor | London

WIN

CABIN INTERIORS

GULF AIR LAUNCHES 'FALCON GOLD' COMBINING PREMIUM CLASSES

| **Bahrain** | Gulf Air has launched a new premium cabin that combines its first and business classes, its CEO Samer Majali announced. The reason for the change was the large amount of the carrier's traffic that consists of passengers transiting through the kingdom and it is easier to cater to them with a single premium offering.

Falcon Gold fares will be on a par with traditional Gulf Air business class fares with a simple choice of pricing options linked directly to the flexibility of the ticket, the airline said.

As part of a substantial fleet and product upgrade program, Gulf Air will introduce a new state of the art flat bed throughout the Falcon Gold cabins on long haul routes over 4.5 hours beginning at the end of 2011.

WIN

RECARO ECONOMY SEAT IS OFFERABLE ON A350

| **Hamburg** | Airbus has selected Germany's Recaro as a contracted supplier of seats for the A350. The agreement covers the company's CL3620 economy-class design.

The award of Airbus Contracted Supplier (ACS) status means that the seat will be added to the catalogue of approved A350 cabin equipment once it has completed qualification. Airlines will then be free to specify it for their aircraft. The new twinjet is due to fly for the first time in early 2012.

CL3620 is designed to draw the sting of long-haul flights in economy. Derived from the established CL3610, it weighs less and offers what the company describes as exceptional legroom. Like its predecessor, it is based on a single-beam structure designed to replace the two support beams of conventional designs and so provide extra space for the passenger.

"The entire beam is made from aluminium, and our innovative mounting technique also helps to cut weight," says Recaro chief executive Axel Kahsnitz.

"Increased modularity in the design has cut parts count by 800, simplifying assembly, taking out more weight and easing maintenance. The flexible material in the headrest, the footnet, the ultra-thin backrest and other innovations all add up to an exceptionally comfortable experience for the passenger."

The seat's virtues were recognized with a Crystal Cabin Award at last year's Aircraft Interiors Expo in Hamburg.

This is the first time that Recaro has obtained ACS status, which was awarded after a series of audits by Airbus. "This is a major milestone that confirms our standing in the seat industry," says Kahsnitz. "We succeeded in satisfying Airbus with our products, our processes and our skills."



Recaro's CL3620 is chosen by Airbus for the A350.

The company has also announced the opening of a materials purchasing office in Shanghai. "This will facilitate the buying of materials in Asia and allow us to benefit from the savings available in the region," says Recaro purchasing manager René Dankwerth. "Our goal is to lower costs while maintaining our high quality and performance standards."

| **Brendan Gallagher** | Contributing Editor | London

WIN

AIRASIA X TO TRADE EMBEDDED IFE FOR FLAT-BEDS AND PMPS

| **Kuala Lumpur** | Malaysia's low-cost, long-haul carrier, AirAsia X, will scrap premium economy seats on its A330 aircraft, and remove the IFE system from seatbacks, investing instead in the introduction of lie-flat beds on its Kuala Lumpur to UK and Australia routes. The additional cost of operating a system showing Hollywood content and adding to weight could not be justified, the airline said, opting instead for renting portable media players (PMPs). AirAsia X is a PMP client of The IMS Company.

WIN

SRILANKAN TO ADD FLAT-BED SEATS IN BUSINESS CLASS

| **Katunayake, Sri Lanka** | SriLankan Airlines is initiating a new passenger experience initiative on ground and in the air, and has begun by asking airline rating organization Skytrax to conduct a full audit of its customer experience. "The audit is in progress and will run for several months, as the Skytrax team travels onboard SriLankan flights in all regions, and evaluates every aspect of customer service and our product," said Manoj Gunawardena, CEO of SriLankan.

SriLankan also plans to offer more comfortable seats on board, with more leg space and flat bed seats in business class. Seat covers will also change to complete the new look.

WIN

ARE AIRLINES FAILING TO KEEP PACE WITH GROWTH—IN WAISTLINES?

| **Dallas** | While Southwest Airlines has shown a savvy knack for using social media to Tweet themselves into the hearts and minds of passengers, the airline was on the receiving end of a Twitter maelstrom involving the director of the movie *Clerks*, whom the airline ejected from a flight because his size exceeded the capacity of its seats.

Demonstrating that social media cuts both ways, director Kevin Smith bypassed customer service protocols and turned to his Twitter account to exclaim: "I broke no regulation, offered no 'safety risk' (what was I gonna do, roll on a fellow passenger?). I was wrongly ejected from the flight."

The incident went viral and caused the blogosphere to erupt with criticism that the airline industry is not keeping up with

"Federal health surveys show that over the past four decades, the mean waist size for men has grown from 35 inches to 39 inches; for women from 30 inches to 37 inches." — *health.usanews.com* [U.S. data as of 2005]

the growth of the average American waistline—which has reportedly grown by seven inches for women and four inches for men since 1960, while the width of an airplane seat has remained between 17 inches and 18.5 inches since 1958. According to Boeing, a 17-inch wide seat is suitable for 95 percent of fliers.

California's *Sacramento Bee* observes that with the growth of America's girth, toilet seats have gotten larger, car companies are positioning pedals farther apart, and even trendy clothes are available in super-sizes. Only airlines have kept seats the same size for five decades, they contend.

Reportedly, the director in question, Kevin Smith, normally abides by the airline's policy for those of his girth and purchases two tickets, but on the flight in question—he wanted to change to an earlier flight—only one seat was available, creating the issue. But, Brandon Macsata, executive director of the Association for Passenger Rights, says, "It's not the size of a person's butt that's the issue. It's the size of the seat the butt is sitting in."

According to CNN.com, the Federal Aviation Administration's current weight-per-passenger estimate (including carry-on luggage) is 190 pounds.



Macsata goes on to comment, "If you go to a movie theater or you get on a train, the seats are actually bigger than on an airplane." Macsata and his association—who also advocate against multiple-hour tarmac delays and for accommodation of deaf passengers by way of captioned IFE (see story in this WIN)—are advocating for airlines to retrofit the first row in coach to accommodate larger passengers for a slightly higher ticket price.

On 1 February, Air France—which has offered passengers "with a high body mass" the option of buying a second seat in economy at a 25 percent discount—said it would refund the cost of the second ticket if the plane wasn't full, reported The New York Times.

BTW, Southwest apologized to Smith and gave him a voucher for future travel—good for two seats.

BIG AND TALL CRY FOUL IN UK

| **Edinburgh, UK** | The UK's tallest travelers have joined those with larger waistlines in alleging 'body discrimination' by airlines.

Following a recent poll on travel site Skyscanner where 76 percent of people voted in favor of a 'fat tax' being charged for passengers who cannot safely fit into a single seat, Skyscanner has been inundated with emails from Britain's tallest air passengers who have expressed solidarity with overweight passengers.

Many airlines charge significant premiums for seats with extra legroom. Qantas, for example, charges an additional A\$160 on some flights for an exit seat.

WIN

KOITO INDUSTRIES TO RE-TEST 150,000 SEATS UNDER ORDER BY JAPANESE CAB

| Yokohama | Koito Industries of Yokohama will re-test 150,000 aircraft seats installed on approximately 1,000 aircraft operated by 32 airlines, under order from the Japanese Civil Aviation Bureau (JCAB) who further ordered the company to make any necessary fixes.

JCAB accused Koito of falsifying data from tests on the seats' fire and shock resistance, and Koito subsequently admitted wrongdoing. JCAB said it has evidence of false data tests going as far back as the 1990s. Japan Airlines, ANA, Singapore Airlines, Continental Airlines, and Virgin Atlantic are all known Koito customers.

WIN

IFE HARDWARE

PANASONIC TO PROVIDE IFE ON ISRAIR A320 AIRCRAFT

| Lake Forest, CA | Panasonic announced that it has been selected to provide inflight entertainment systems on three Airbus A320 narrow-body aircraft owned by Tel Aviv-based Israir Airlines.

The first aircraft is equipped with the Panasonic Digital Multiplexed Passenger Entertainment System (DMPES), an overhead IFE system.

The Panasonic DMPES is an audio and video distribution system for narrow-body aircraft such as the A320. The system uses the latest technology that incorporates Panasonic's X Series System, which reduces space, weight and power when compared with traditional overhead systems. The 10.4 inch touch screen Crew Panel provides a user friendly and easy access point for the crew.

"We are very impressed with Panasonic's global support network, and having local support based in Tel Aviv was important in our decision to choose the Panasonic DMPES," said Mr. Tamir Jacoby, Service Manager at Israir.

WIN

CONNECTIVITY

THALES LAUNCHES NEW CONNECTIVITY SUITE

| Crawley, UK | Thales is launching a new Connectivity Suite in its Crawley, UK, facility to allow airlines and partners to "experience firsthand the different options in connected airborne solutions," the company said in a statement.

"Connected IFE is the new direction of this market," commented Alan Pellegrini, head of Thales Inflight Entertainment Systems. Pellegrini believes that connectivity has become a compelling market differentiator for airlines through the ability to provide real-time validation of pax credit cards in support of revenue generating opportunities, real-time "Connected IFE" applications such as alerting ground personnel of passenger needs, offering live news updates, seatback email, and SMS.



Thales' Ken Codrington (right) being shown the connectivity 'big picture.'

"Connected IFE is the new direction in this market."—Alan Pellegrini

The suite demonstrates cabin applications such as WiFi, VoIP, GSM and IFE web portal connectivity, along with cockpit safety applications



Thales' Cockpit Voice

such as voice, data and Electronic Flight Bag, in real-time via the INMARSAT SwiftBroadband satellite network.

WIN

FIVE CARRIERS WILL HAVE EXCONNECT BY END-YEAR, SAYS PANASONIC

| Lake Forest, CA | Panasonic expects to see its eXConnect Ku-band satellite broadband offering in the hands of five airlines by the end of the year. The service, which forms part of the company's Global Communications Suite along with eXPhone onboard cellphone and its Airborne Television Network, has been in development since the middle of the decade.

"The first aircraft for our five eXConnect customers will be delivered by the end of the year," David Bruner, the company's VP for global communications services, told WIN at the AIME show in Dubai at the beginning of the month. "And you should look out for an announcement any time now from Lufthansa, our launch customer."

Bruner spoke highly of the German flag carrier. "They now have the system flying," he said. "You couldn't ask more of a partner than what we have had from Lufthansa in the way of help to get it up and running. They negotiated a great deal with us, but we will be the beneficiary in the long run because they have pushed for the best possible quality."

According to Bruner, the carrier plans to equip a significant number of aircraft before marketing the service, a successor to the pioneering Connexion by Boeing. "We will launch on the North Atlantic," said Bruner. "When we do, travelers on Lufthansa's Europe-USA routes will be able to count on having it whenever they fly."

The second announced taker for eXConnect is Turkish Airlines. "But another carrier will be the second to offer service," Bruner said.

Panasonic announced recently that eXConnect and the other elements of the Global Communications Suite would be made available on the new Airbus A350. Bruner confirmed that offerability on the rest of the Airbus range was in development.

| Brendan Gallagher | Contributing Editor | London

WIN

SOUTH AFRICA'S MANGO TO OFFER ROW 44 BROADBAND

Low-cost airline Mango will be South Africa's first domestic airline to offer inflight broadband over WiFi. The service will be provided by Internet service provider WirelessG, which has an agreement with Row 44 for exclusive distribution of its Ku-band inflight connectivity solution on the African continent.

To be available later in 2010, the service has not yet been approved by South Africa's Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) which has said that it is open to the plan "in principle." When approved, Mango will provide the service across its fleet of B737-800 aircraft.

WIN

ASIQ PITCHES ULTRA CHEAP MESSAGING TO AIRLINES

| Research, Victoria | Australian connectivity provider ASiQ has issued a challenge to the onboard mobile phone dominance of OnAir and AeroMobile, claiming that its SafeCell solution can support air-to-ground messaging at a fraction of their prices.

"Despite high roaming charges, large numbers of messages are being sent from the first airliners to be equipped for GSM," says ASiQ chief executive Ron Chapman. "We believe that the lower costs associated with SafeCell would make it affordable to all passengers, not just business people. We see SafeCell as a real option for the airlines."

ASiQ's technology is based on the Bluetooth short-range radio capability found in most mobile phones. Proprietary ASiQ software available for installation on the passenger's phone compels it to use Bluetooth instead of cellular frequencies to communicate with a specially developed cabin access point connected by Ethernet to the onboard satcoms installation. The call is carried to the ground by satellite in the same way as traffic over the AeroMobile and OnAir

systems. Final delivery is accomplished via the Internet, followed by the cellular network for the "last mile".

"We think Bluetooth is the future of wireless in aircraft," says Chapman. "Only 10 percent of cell phones have WiFi, compared with 90 percent with Bluetooth, and it been shown to be safe for use in aircraft."

SafeCell has now been successfully tested with all of the currently available aeronautical satellite networks, according to Chapman. "We've used Iridium for the past 12 months on a Falcon 2000EX business jet to support messaging, text email and news updates," he says. "We have used GPRS for text, multimedia messaging (MMS), email and voice over the Thuraya Middle Eastern system. And we've tried out a full range of communications over the Inmarsat Classic Aero, Swift 64 and SwiftBroadband services."

The trials featured the use of multiple phones and multiple applications simultaneously in both directions, says Chapman. "As a result, we're confident we could meet the messaging needs of 400+ passengers on a widebody airliner, and at prices that could be lower than those charged on the ground."

The key to SafeCell's economics is its claimed ability to avoid cellular roaming charges. "We could provide text messaging for as little as 5 cents per message and MMS for under 25 cents, with Instant Messaging completely free of charge," Chapman declares. "On the ground we connect via the Internet to a major international consolidator who has arrangements with 200 mobile operators around the world. So there are no roaming charges, just the much lower charge for last-mile delivery."

Chapman says that ASiQ is about to release details of the last piece of SafeCell's onboard infrastructure, an aviation-certifiable Bluetooth access point.

| Brendan Gallagher | Contributing Editor | London

WIN

ENTERTAINMENT

SPAFAX LAUNCHES SPARKSHEETTV

A curated compilation of the best airline marketing content on YouTube

| Montreal | Sparksheet—the international media and marketing blog published by custom-content company Spafax—has created its first YouTube channel, "SparksheetTV: Airline Videos." It may be seen at: <http://youtube.com/user/Sparksheet/>.

"Since the early days of Braniff, airlines have been at the forefront of video marketing," says Raymond Girard, president of Spafax Interactive and Sparksheet's publisher. "They've generated millions of hours of creative, engaging and fun content—from 30-second ads to AVOD GUI demos and safety videos.

"SparksheetTV will be your one-stop shop for the best airline-related content on YouTube and a resource for anyone wishing to market to the consumer in transit," said Girard.

SparksheetTV will be frequently updated with new content and additional playlists.

CURRENT SPARKSHEETTV PLAYLISTS INCLUDE:

- Airline Safety Videos
- Airline Marketing & Promotional Videos
- Inflight Entertainment, GUIs & Interfaces
- Vintage Airlines, Advertising & Marketing
- Airline Marketing Gone Viral
- Fun on a Plane
- Airline Intelligence & Interviews
- Airline Ads
- Engagement Checkup: Airlines on YouTube
- Airlines Unconventional

Find SparksheetTV on YouTube at <http://youtube.com/user/Sparksheet>

WIN

BUSINESS NEWS**JANUARY DEMAND IMPROVES, BUT INDUSTRY TO REMAIN IN THE RED FOR 2010, SAYS IATA**

| Geneva | The International Air Transport Association (IATA) has announced that January 2010 demand for international scheduled air traffic showed continuing improvement. Compared to the previous year, January passenger demand was up 6.4 percent. Against this improving demand, a 1.2 percent increase in passenger capacity in January pushed load factors to 75.9 percent (up from the 72.2 percent recorded for January 2009).

The large increases in year-on-year comparisons reflect a steady improvement from the precipitous fall in demand that characterized the early part of 2009 rather than a dramatic improvement in January. Compared to December 2009, and adjusting for seasonal variations, passenger demand grew by 0.5 percent while air freight volumes increased by 3.0 percent.

"Airlines have lost 2-3 years of growth. Demand is moving in the right direction. The 3.0 percent increase in freight volumes from December to January is particularly encouraging. We can start to see the future with some cautious optimism, but better volumes do not necessarily mean better profits. Passenger yields are still 15 percent below peak. And we expect 2010 losses to be US \$5.6 billion," said Giovanni Bisignani, IATA's Director General and CEO.

There are large geographical differences in the improvements. The strongest upturns have been seen in markets where economic recovery from the recession has been strongest—Asia, Latin America and the Middle East.

WIN**EXECUTIVES FORECAST MORE FLIGHTS, BIGGER BUDGETS, SURVEY SHOWS**

| USA | Executives will fly more frequently this year and spend more on flights, providing a boon for airlines, according to a survey of corporate travelers by Ascend, an aviation consultant.

The survey of 250 business travelers showed that 35 percent expect their companies to increase trips, while only 10 percent forecast a decrease. Last year, almost half the respondents predicted that corporate travel would shrink, with 10 percent expecting a gain, Ascend said.

WIN**SKYLINE HAS STRONG GROWTH**

| Suffolk | Skyline-IFE Ltd has reported growth of 22 percent as a result of an international growth plan set up by UK Trade and Invest, according to managing director Dr. Richard Barsby. The firm has made a new animated safety video for Oman Air and delivered a film for Singapore Airlines in a new format.

WIN**E.DIGITAL ENTERS IKEGAMI SETTLEMENT AGREEMENT**

| San Diego | e.Digital, a provider of portable media players in IFE, has entered into a royalty-bearing license and settlement agreement with Ikegami Electronics under which Ikegami has obtained a license and release on all e.Digital foreign and domestic patent rights and has agreed to pay an ongoing royalty for the licensed rights.

WIN**JETSTAR CIO SAYS IPAD MAY 'LEAD...TO THE END OF IFE SYSTEMS'**

| Melbourne | Jetstar chief information officer Stephen Tame has predicted that the iPad "may lead in the future to the end of airline inflight entertainment systems," according to an Australian online publication.

Now that portable device screens have reached 9 inches+, the "final barrier" has been broken, according to Tame. The prevailing view in the IFE community, however, tends to be that IFE systems will accommodate pax-owned devices, but won't be replaced by them.

Panasonic Avionics has offered the Panasonic iPod Merge to carriers such as Singapore Airlines, United Airlines, and Air New Zealand. SIA vice president of public affairs Nicholas Ionides says that USB ports and in-seat power points have been added "in response to the rising popularity of iPod and iPhone range of products."

Emirates' Patrick Brannelly says that USB ports, power sockets and large TV screens are the crucial components of next-gen IFE systems. "Their importance is likely to increase with time."

But like Mark Twain said of his own mortality, reports of the death of IFE may be greatly exaggerated. A spokesman from Boeing told *The Straits Times* (Singapore), "So far, we have not seen large-scale displacement. We are seeing integration."

WIN**CONSUMER ELECTRONICS****APPLE'S CLOUD LOOKS FOR MORE THAN MUSIC**

| Hollywood | Apple has recently spoken with some of the major motion picture studios about enabling iTunes to store content such as movies on Apple's servers, according to a report in CNET News. Apple has reportedly advised the studios that iTunes users will access video content

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APPLE'S CLOUD LOOKS FOR MORE THAN MUSIC

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from various Internet-connected devices.

Among them, if Apple has its way, would be the iPad—Apple's new tablet computer, CNET speculates. Apple's scheme is the creation of digital shelves where iTunes users store their media—essentially relegating the hard drive to ephemera. This notion follows that theory that consumers are maxing out their hard drives.

The number of people who legally downloaded songs dropped from 35.2 million in 2008 to just 34.6 million in 2009, according to the NPD Group, and Screen Digest reports that growth in U.S. online movie downloads in 2009 dropped sharply from the two prior years.

But—as reported in *WIN* in February—Apple has not signed on to the Digital Entertainment Content Ecosystem (DECE) and movie studios may be wary of supporting another proprietary platform.

WIN

AMAZON SELLING SONY 3D BLU-RAY PLAYER

| Washington, DC | Amazon.com is now selling a Sony 3D capable Blu-ray player for US \$194. The player, model BDP-S470, will be able to display 3D Blu-ray high-def discs with a firmware update from Sony, which is expected later this year. Studios are expected to begin releasing movies in the 3D format sometime in late spring or early summer.

In addition to playing 3D discs, the player can also play regular Blu-ray discs as well as standard-def DVDs. The player also can be operated with an iPhone or iPod app, eliminating the need for a remote. And you can watch Internet videos from Sony partners with a Broadband connection.

WIN

MEETINGS & EVENTS

MIDDLE EAST IS THE BUSINESS, SAY AIME EXHIBITORS

Recession or no recession, the Middle East is still the go-to region for cabin suppliers. Contributing Editor Brendan Gallagher reports from Dubai at Aircraft Interiors Middle East (AIME), held in Dubai from 28 February to 1 March as part of Aerospace Week

| Dubai | "The Middle East is a very good opportunity for vendors, and events like this are a very good showcase," keynote speaker and Emirates IFE/connectivity guru Patrick Brannelly told the show's first-day workshop. "I shall be looking for suppliers with a passion for innovation and excellence, and I advise you to do the same."

When it comes to innovation, Brannelly knows what he's talking about. As the airline's Vice President, Corporate Communications, Product, Publishing, Digital & Events, he drove many of the new amenities enjoyed by Emirates passengers, including its industry-leading *ice* inflight entertainment and the onboard mobile phone service. Introduced in March 2008, phone capability is now available on more than 70 Emirates aircraft and is being rolled out to the rest of the fleet.

In just under two years 1.6 million passengers have logged on to the service, which has been offered on more than 55,000 flights. Around a quarter of a million text messages have been sent from Emirates aircraft this year alone. "Sooner or later the whole debate over connectivity in aircraft will be over," Brannelly said. "The only question is when, not if."

He looked forward to the imminent addition of BlackBerry connectivity to the service, asserting that hard times were no reason for a company to back off from innovation. "There are real, pressing reasons for innovation," he declared. "To begin with, the passenger goes 'Wow' at the latest offering. Then as time passes it becomes ordinary and people want something newer and better. For

example, today's business-class traveler wants more than was offered in first-class ten years ago."

Seatmakers' innovations

Among the innovators who caught the eye at AIME were seatmakers EADS Sogerma and Recaro, and two new-generation AVOD suppliers—AlsterAero of Hamburg, and Californian-based The IMS Company.

"We decided it was time we offered a first-class suite of the highest quality," said EADS Sogerma sales and marketing vp Jeff Forsbrey. The result is Ultimate 17, which made its public debut at the French seat-maker's stand.

"We unveiled it here because the Middle Eastern market is very important to us," Forsbrey said. "We have several existing and potential customers in the region, and they all value the highest possible levels of quality and comfort. This seat is designed to meet those needs in full."

Ultimate 17 is now in series production at Sogerma's facility in Rochefort, southwest France, against orders from several airline customers. Also coming down the line are seats from the rest of the existing Sogerma range – the earlier Class 180 first-class offering, the Solstys fully lie-flat business seat, and the Evolys angled lie-flat product.

The wraps will come off further new developments from Sogerma at Aircraft Interiors Expo in Hamburg later this year. "We plan to show our Ultimate Sleeper – Ultimate 17 plus a plug-in bed module," Forsbrey said. "And visitors are welcome to come and see us about other new products that we're working on."

Ultimate Sleeper is the result of a collaboration between Sogerma and Lufthansa Technik. The Hamburg-based MRO and cabin systems provider came up with the original concept for an add-on bed and partnered with Sogerma to industrialize it and carry out series production.

To date Germany's Recaro has focused successfully on the economy and business markets. "Now, as some carriers withdraw from the first class market, we're turning

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our attention to developing a design that will appeal to the two-class operators," said regional sales director Kay Follath. "It will be a hybrid business/first class seat combining fully lie-flat capability with more features than are usually found in a conventional first-class product."

The company was making its first appearance at AIME. "We're at this show because in this region there's a constant need to be present," said Follath. "But we're already strong in the Middle East, and have negotiations under way with potential new customers." Existing Recaro customers in the region include FlyDubai, Qatar Airways, Saudi Arabian Airlines, Etihad and Gulf Air.

Low-fare operator FlyDubai has ordered the company's BL3510 lightweight economy seat for the six Boeing 737-800s it has in service, with three more due to arrive by June.

Qatar Airways is the launch customer for the revolutionary new CL3620, designed to ease the pain of long-haul flights in economy. Derived from the established CL3610, it weighs less and offers what the company describes as exceptional legroom. Like its predecessor, it is based on a single-beam structure designed to replace the two support beams of conventional designs and so provide extra space for the passenger. Qatar has ordered the seat, along with the CL4420 business product, for 20 new Airbus A320s and four A321s.

Saudi Arabian Airlines has ordered CL4420 along with the CL3510 economy product for eight new Airbus A330-300s, while Etihad plans to retrofit the same combination to a total of ten A319s and A320s. Gulf Air has selected CL3510 and the CL4400 business unit for 15 A320s, with further aircraft on option.

With a pair of VIP installations already to its credit, Hamburg-based IFE system provider AlsterAero was at AIME to talk to completions centers and the airlines. "Our combined IFE/communications system is installed, certificated and flying in an Airbus A318 and an A319,"

said managing director sales Bettina Mühlenberg-Lange. "And we're talking to a number of full-service airlines about retrofits in their existing fleets."

The brainchild of some ex-employees of cabin systems leader Lufthansa Technik, AlsterAero has a staff of just 15 people. This small team has come up with a package that has attracted the praise of Airbus cabin specialists for its combination of versatility, performance and compactness.

"There are real, pressing reasons for innovation," Brannelly declared. "To begin with, the passenger goes 'Wow' at the latest offering. Then as time passes it becomes ordinary and people want something newer and better."

The complete AlsterAero offering comprises passenger communications and IFE subsystems and a cabin management capability. Customers can opt for all three, or for one or two of them. The data backbone is Ethernet arranged in a tree structure designed to minimize cable runs. Flexible connection schemes and power transmission via the data cabling further simplify installation and have allowed the elimination of traditional seat electronic boxes.

The system boasts a software architecture that allows functions traditionally handled by analogue hardware—audio/video switching, multiplexing, mixing, the addition of audio channels for tasks such as passenger address—to be handled entirely in software.

The passenger communications capability is based on the all-digital IPTCU (IP cabin telecommunications unit) server and the Ethernet switch, which together can support Inmarsat and other satellite bearer systems and applications such as wired and wireless Internet and VPN access, VoIP to cordless handsets, and ISDN data.

The IFE subsystem centers on a cluster of 2MCU servers, each capable of delivering audio, video, moving-map, games and other content to up to 50 seats. The AlsterAero architecture also makes possible less ambitious installations based on a DVD drive distributing its

content over the same digital network. Any subsequent upgrade to a server-based arrangement is straightforward, the company says.

Economical embedded IFE

The IMS Company is also looking to break the IFE mould and came to Dubai with a product designed to solve the problems that have bedeviled audio/video-on-demand systems over the years.

"Our RAVE does away with all the snags and bottlenecks typical of conventional AVOD architectures," said Neil Morgan, the company's director of sales for Europe, the Middle East and Africa. "It speeds and simplifies content loading, and is far more failure-tolerant."

Announced last year and due for commercial availability in the next few months, the RAVE (Reliable Audio Video Entertainment) in-seat unit slots into the seatback, where it receives power and content via aircraft systems, and can be removed only by the cabin staff. Loaded with its full content set from a small (4MCU) head-end by a combination of cable and wireless, the unit is fully autonomous. If it fails, it can be replaced by a cabin attendant while normal service continues at every other seat.

RAVE comprises just two types of box—the seat display unit (SDU), which can also be configured as a crew control panel, and the head-end server (System Control Unit, SCU).

The SDU has an input for power and wired Gigabit Ethernet and wireless ports. The SCU, which acts as the aircraft interface as well as supplying content, is based on IMS's successful Terminal Data Loader (TDL). The two units incorporate highly reliable solid-state storage, expandable from four to twelve terabytes, and there will be a choice of 8.5 inch, 10.6 inch, 12.1 inch and 15.4 inch screens.

The Terminal Data Loader (TDL) was also on show, enabling content to be delivered to the aircraft on a small SD (Secure Digital) card that is inserted into the permanently installed loader, which automatically transfers the content to the

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MIDDLE EAST IS THE BUSINESS, SAY AIME EXHIBITORS

(cont. from page 12)

server, allowing the ground engineer to move on the next aircraft.

Completing the IMS range was the PAV-705 handheld IFE player, with its user-friendly touchscreen interface and 80Gb of storage for films, TV programming, music and games. Said Morgan: "We have more than 17,000 of our handheld players in service with 23 airlines."

"Vital signs" in the air

On the eve of the show UAE national airline Etihad announced that it had joined Emirates on the customer list of UK-based telemedicine provider RDT. Due to be installed in the carrier's entire long-haul fleet, starting with the Airbus A340s and Boeing 777s, RDT's Tempus IC gives cabin crew the ability to monitor the condition of passengers who display the symptoms of severe illness.

The system can gather data on a range of "vital signs," including blood pressure, and allows the crew to record electrocardiograms and take digital pictures. The information can then be delivered by satellite or other air-to-ground communications links to doctors on the ground. Equipped with a clear understanding of the problem, these specialists can advise the crew on treatment and tell the captain whether or not he should consider a diversion.

AIME was part of "Aerospace Week" that ran in Dubai from 28 February to 4 March at Airport Expo with three shows attracting professionals in aircraft interiors, capability and connectivity. More than 80 airlines and as many as 6,000 trade visitors were expected to attend the three shows over five days.

The MRO Middle East, the second edition of the maintenance, repair and overhaul conference and exhibition took place concurrently. The third event, the first Aerospace & Defence Training Show (ADTS,) took place on 3-4 March.

| **Brendan Gallagher** | Contributing Editor | London

WIN

AWARDS & RECOGNITION

AIRTRAN'S GO MAGAZINE NAMED 'BEST OF BEST'

AirTran Airways' Go magazine has been named best overall inflight magazine in 2009 by the North American Travel Journalists Association.

WIN

WAEA CONFERENCE UPDATE RE: DECORATOR/GENERAL CONTRACTOR FOR THE WAEA EXPO

After much review and discussion of the proposals received, the Events & Expo Committee (EEC) has selected a new decorator/general contractor—Freeman Company. Freeman is also being used for the two other shows co-locating with WAEA this year—International Flight Services Association (IFSA) and Aircraft Interiors (AI).

"We are excited about this change and are hopeful that the new decorator will provide superior service and pricing for our members." said Dan Callahan, EEC Co-Chair.

We would like to thank Champion for their years of service to WAEA.

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MEETINGS & EVENTS

UPCOMING WAEA ACTIVITIES:

→ **Technology Committee Meeting**
- 24 March 2010

Sheraton Universal Hotel
Universal City, CA USA

Sponsors

Crest Digital, Lumexis Corporation and Panasonic Avionics Corporation

→ **Single Focus Workshop | Connectivity** - 25 March 2010

Topic: Connectivity issues, including in-flight cell phone use, applications beyond email and internet, and operational communications

Sheraton Universal Hotel
Universal City, CA USA

Sponsors

Airbus, Crest Digital, EMS Aviation and Interact

→ **TV Market** - 10-11 May 2010

InterContinental Hotel
Frankfurt, Germany

Sponsor – TV France International

→ **Single Focus Workshop | Content** - 12 May 2010

Topic: Content issues including Consumer Behavior, Music Rights, 3D and Streaming TV

InterContinental Hotel
Frankfurt, Germany

Sponsor – France 24

→ **Single Focus Workshop | Seats & IFE** - 17 May 2010

Topic: Innovation and trends for seats and IFE

Airbus
Hamburg, Germany

Sponsor – Airbus

For more information, visit www.waea.org.

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