



These are the trends in aircraft cabins in 2015

New record for participants: 68 submissions from 18 countries made it onto the shortlist of the Crystal Cabin Award 2015

Hamburg, 15 January, 2015: For both manufacturers and airlines, trends and innovations in aviation are becoming ever more associated with the cabin. The shortlist for the 9th Crystal Cabin Award, with a record number of submissions this year, proves the point. The world's most highly regarded prize for on-board products and cabins is presented in Hamburg each April. In 2015, once again, the standard against which everything is measured is the more efficient usage of space and materials. In the premium classes, airlines from the Arabian Peninsula and Asia in particular are redefining themselves as they reach beyond the seat itself to offer passengers a hotel-like experience including a bathroom and lounge area. But even in economy, new standards are being set: in the future, passengers will not only be able to surf the internet using their smartphones and tablets in flight; they will also be able to connect these devices with the in-flight entertainment system.

The company Beats, which has now been purchased by Apple, has already gone one step further, streaming music above the clouds to passengers flying America's Southwest Airlines. The company behind the technology is Global Eagle Entertainment. Germany's market leader in aircraft seating, Recaro, has also turned its attention to on-board connectivity. Together with the electronics manufacturer Panasonic Avionics and the Teague design studio, the Swabian company has submitted a long-haul economy seat with an integrated monitor that connects to the passenger's own smartphone. Games, for example, can be played on the screen in the backrest, using the passenger's iPhone as a controller.

A development from the US aircraft manufacturer Boeing will make passengers on popular short-haul routes happy: The "Space Bin" concept makes it possible to stow cabin baggage in the overhead lockers in an upright position, enabling almost 40 percent more baggage to be stowed without sacrificing any space in the cabin. At the end of the year, Alaska Airlines will be the first customer to install the system. Equally practical, but not yet ready for market, is the "Side-Slip" seating system, primarily targeted at low-cost carriers. The seats can be pushed on top of one another during boarding to make more room in the aisle, thus speeding up the boarding process.

This sort of space problem is less common in the higher cabin classes, where it is the comfort factor that is increasingly taking the limelight. Two airlines have submitted their Airbus A380 cabin concepts to the Crystal Cabin Award 2015: Qatar Airways has a spacious on-board lounge for its First Class passengers, adroitly combining eastern and western influences. Etihad Airways, meanwhile, has gone so far as to introduce a class above First Class, complete with a personal bedroom: "The Residence". And for those who like to travel in even more exclusive comfort, there are new products for the private jet, including a panorama window from Fokker and a lounge suite from Lufthansa Technik that can withstand forces of up to 16 G.



Once again, the Crystal Cabin Award shortlist covers a wide palette of issues. Submissions range from overall concepts to individual items such as new textiles, self-dimming window systems, and innovative mounting mechanisms for oxygen masks. Product maturity, too, ranges from market-ready products to concept studies such as the “Athlete’s Plane” from Teague, an aircraft fully configured for pro athletes, including a training room and massage tables.

The Crystal Cabin Award, initiated by Hamburg Aviation, presents prizes in seven categories: Greener Cabin, Health, Safety & Environment; Industrial Design & Visionary Concepts; Material & Components; Passenger Comfort Hardware; Passenger Comfort Systems; Premium Class & VIP; and University. The last of these has become even more popular around the world in 2015, with entries from Hamburg but also from as far away as Singapore.

A total of 74 submissions were received for the Crystal Cabin Award 2015. After detailed examination, the six members of the preselection committee have approved 68 of these for the shortlist; six entries, unfortunately, did not fulfil the conditions of entry. In the next stage, the international jury of 25 experts, including representatives of various airlines, aircraft manufacturers, suppliers, and technical service providers, along with university professors, consultants and specialist journalists, will now evaluate all accepted entries, so that the finalists for the seven categories can be nominated shortly before the Aircraft Interiors Expo (14 - 16 April, 2015). The winners will be crowned, as they are every year, at a formal gala event held in association with the Aircraft Interiors Expo in Hamburg.

*A detailed shortlist with English press releases and press contacts for the individual entrants, along with photographic material, is available upon request:
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The Crystal Cabin Award 2015 is currently being supported by the following sponsors:

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About the Crystal Cabin Award

The Crystal Cabin Award is THE international prize for innovations in the field of aircraft cabins. A high-calibre jury made up of renowned academics, engineers, specialist journalists and airline and aircraft manufacturer representatives comes together under the slogan “Let your ideas take off” to honour extraordinary cabin concepts and products. The competition was launched by Hamburg Aviation and is organised by the Crystal Cabin Award Association. The award, to date the only one of its kind, has been presented in association with the Aircraft Interiors Expo in Hamburg every year since 2007. The trophies have become a seal of quality, known and coveted around the world.

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