RECARO HAS INVESTED HEAVILY IN ITS R&D FOR BUSINESS CLASS SEATS

News / Manufacturer

While the global passenger seat market will grow with an average five percent per year, RECARO Aircraft Seating expects a spike in demand for business class seats in particular. A trend further fueled by passengers' expectations for airliners to deliver 'individualized living spaces' onboard. To be fully ready to answer market needs, RECARO has invested heavily in its R&D for business class seats.

For most airliners, business class seating has become the signature product for their passengers as it offers most possibilities to reflect the airline brand. Integrating innovative features in business class, also helps them differentiate from the competition. At the same time passengers expect carriers to deliver individualized comfort in the sky, especially when it comes to business class. This has led to an increase in appreciation for business class seats.

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As a global supplier of premium aircraft seats for airlines and OEMs, RECARO has identified the evolutions in business class and in the aircraft seating market in general for the years to come.

Business class to become the new first class
There will be a – further - decline in the number of first class seats in the foreseeable future: few airliners still offer first class and when they do they tend to go for a superior first class-product with limited availability. RECARO also sees a rise in demand for a wider range of business class seats. Similar to economy+ and premium economy being available next to regular economy, business class will have different category seats offering more or less features.

Further development of a highly individualized business class product
The evolution towards more business class will have an effect on the business class seats themselves: since airlines have started to eliminate first class from their long-range fleet, business class has become an even bigger differentiator than it already was. Carriers expect a highly individualized product with a premium look & feel. Privacy, connectivity and interactivity, comfort and wellbeing as well as an individually adjustable seating environment equipped with personal air-conditioning and a mini-bar will become the new normal in business class. Passengers expect their own “individual living space” in the sky and that is what they will get.

Bespoke and platform (business class) seats
Five-star carriers strive to be ahead of their competition by bringing innovations to the aircraft cabin. As such, these airliners expect tailor-made “bespoke” products for all their seats. Carriers with smaller fleets, on the other hand, often do not have the means to bear the costs nor the resources to go through an entire product development process. They prefer to go with a mature and/or off-the-shelf platform product, that has proven to be successful with one of the 5-star carriers, enhanced with customized features.

Increase in demand for premium economy
Business class moving up to replace first class seats, widens the gap with the economy class seats and increases the need for an
‘intermediate’ economy segment. Over recent years RECARO has seen a higher demand for premium economy seats. They foresee this trend to continue in the years to come.

“RECARO has a reputation of delivering high quality seats on time, be it in business, premium economy or economy class,” says Dr. Mark Hiller, CEO and Shareholder of RECARO Aircraft Seating. “In order to uphold that reputation and meet increasing demand in the business class seating, we invested heavily in research & development for that specific class. This means we are now more than ready to answer to our customers’ every need.”

RECARO Aircraft seating will announce a number of innovations for the business class category at the Aircraft Interiors Expo in Hamburg from April 2nd to April 4th.

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