



AIRLINE EXPECTATIONS ARE RISING FOR INTERIORS

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Airlines in the Middle East region are actively looking for innovative interiors designs and technology, as passenger expectations continue to drive the industry. When Aircraft Interiors Middle East (AIME) takes place at Dubai World Trade Centre 25-26 February 2019, the region's leading airlines will be using the event to research available technologies for their growing fleets.

Oliver Wyman anticipate 11,600 new aircraft will be delivered over the next decade – mostly narrow-bodied. The same report shows the Middle East, with 4.7% growth, as the third fastest growing market for new aircraft deliveries, confirmed by Boeing's prediction that nearly 2,900 new aircraft will need to be delivered to the Middle East in the next 20 years to accommodate growth.

In the last 18 months alone, many Middle East-based carriers have been making retrofitted interior investments. Etihad and Emirates have retrofitted their cabins, collectively costing close to a half billion dollars. In early 2019, Turkish Airlines commissioned bespoke seats for its 25 Boeing 787-9 and 25 Airbus 350-900 aircraft. Whilst Oman Air upgraded the lighting onboard and Lebanon's carrier, Middle East Airlines, replaced their cabin seating.

The 2019 edition of AIME attracted airline buying representatives of 71 airlines from the Middle East and Europe, and AIME 2020 is predicted to have even more. The event provides an ideal platform for exhibitors to interact with airline buyers and decision makers in a dedicated environment.

“Attending AIME provides the ability to meet a number of suppliers in a very conducive environment,” said Chris Byrne, Senior Manager, Contracts at Etihad Airways. The sentiment was confirmed by Pineau Frederic, Cabin Aircraft Project Manager at Air France, who described his experience at AIME 2019 as “Meeting with various suppliers that allow business to progress quickly on the specific topic.”

“AIME is the Middle East's only dedicated aircraft interiors event,” says Caryn McConnachie, Aerospace Director of show organisers Tarsus F&E LLC Middle East. “As such, it provides the ideal platform for airline interiors buyers and suppliers to really connect and do business. Year after year the feedback that we receive tells us that the market sees AIME as an unmissable event.”

“We have been exhibiting since the first year of AIME,” says Francois Tissier, Sales and Marketing Manager at Gerflor. He added, “We have had some good visitors and made some good contacts, we got visits from the main airlines.”

Many exhibitors from around the world have already signed up to be part of AIME 2020, including SITA on Air from Switzerland, Beijing Cronda Aviation from China and Astronics from the USA.

14 OCTOBER 2019

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