

## Three Reasons to Upgrade an Aircraft Cabin Management System

Why upgrade a [Cabin Management System](#) or CMS in a business jet? The “backbone” of technology for the cabin communication and in-flight entertainment systems is often out of sight and out of mind for pilots and directors of maintenance, who may not give it as much thought as flight-critical aircraft components or the avionics in the cockpit.

Discriminating passengers (and who uses private aviation, besides discriminating passengers?) demand a top-notch CMS, even if they don’t specifically know what it is or what it does by name or by function. And those passengers are usually the ones paying the bills for the entire flight operation, whether it’s a corporate flight department or a charter company.

Passengers’ high expectations are perfectly reasonable. We are all surrounded by powerful technology in the form of cell phones, tablets, household appliances and even “smart” cars and “smart” homes. All of these include sophisticated technology. The technology behind making a call, watching a video, sending a document or pushing a button has become such an important part of daily business, entertainment, family connectedness, and general logistics of getting around that we don’t give them much thought.

Until they don’t work.

Whether an aircraft is used for personal charter, flying clients, or team members, passengers in private jets often expect to have all the conveniences of their home, office, or a commercial airliner.

“What we’re hearing is that it comes down to expectations,” said Eli Cotti, NBAA director of technical operations in NBAA Insider’s [Special Report on Connectivity Challenges](#). “You fly in a commercial flight and then jump into a company jet, and all of a sudden, systems are slower.”

Compounding the confusion, Cotti added, is that the business jet typically has only a few people on board accessing the Wi-Fi system, while the commercial aircraft might have 100 people or more using it simultaneously. “In the private plane, you’d think the experience would be better,” said Cotti.

**1. Perception.** Private aviation passengers are sometimes dismayed to find that the Wi-Fi connectivity, in-flight entertainment systems, and cabin switch panels or touch-screen panels seem antiquated or aren’t functioning reliably. Nervous flyers or people less familiar with private aviation may wonder if the avionics and other systems are really up-to-date, and if the aircraft is as safe as it should be if the crew and galley controls are temperamental or not functioning perfectly.

If a passenger has anxiety about your aircraft, the operator may not hear about it, but the passenger may choose a different provider in the future.

Robert McWinters, a frequent flyer on private jets for business and pleasure, puts it this way - “I analogize flying in a private jet the same as I do when I go to a restaurant. In both cases, I am putting my life in someone else’s hands. At the restaurant, I am trusting that the food is safe, conditions sanitary and that I am not going to ingest anything that is going to injure or worse, kill me. When I am in a Private Jet, it is much the same, as my health and life along with those I am travelling with are in the operator’s hands.

If I get aboard and see that multiple things are broken or missing in the main cabin, it immediately makes me wonder what it is like on the flight deck or with the mechanical side of the aircraft. What has not been checked as well as it should be, or where were corners cut? The main cabin of the operator’s aircraft is their business card to me. So yes, assumptions about the safety of the plane are made...and I believe should be.”



**2. Productivity.** Passengers on a corporate aircraft should be just as productive as they would be in the office, and older systems simply can’t manage common business tasks. Some level of security from cyber threats or hacking is required by today’s business standards. The Wi-Fi system may need to connect with ground stations as well as satellites. They may need U.S. only or global coverage for Wi-Fi. They may need to print or store documents. European passengers may need to connect equipment with Euro ISDN protocols. 4G connectivity may be expected. Corporate interior upgrades may include configurations set up for onboard meetings and/or individual work.

Many of these details are not given much thought until an important task can’t be completed, a project gets delayed or a meeting goes offline.

**3. Entertainment.** On a private or corporate aircraft, passengers expect to spend the time in comfort, and they expect music, movies, and games on high definition, high-resolution screens and with great sound quality. Touch screen remote systems should work flawlessly.



While it may not seem as vital as the perception of a modern, current, safe aircraft or productivity, entertainment is now an important part of the experience and an expectation of many private jet passengers.

Justin Crabbe, the CEO of Jettly, agrees - "We receive hundreds of requests from clients each day in terms of connectivity, and sometimes some very specific requests, like ensuring download speeds are 'X' mbps etc. otherwise our clients simply WILL NOT charter that particular aircraft.

When you're in this particular market, the sky is the limit with respect to what we get asked for.... connectivity has become the number one concern of our private flyer."

## The Solution

To sum up, perception, productivity and entertainment that were once seen as luxurious options have become table stakes for participation in the private aviation market. Upgrading your Cabin Management System (commonly called the CMS in aviation parlance) is an important part of the experience of private flight, and the value of the aircraft providing it.

Many flight departments and charter organizations find the prospect of choosing, installing and operating a new CMS daunting. There are many solutions available; some of which may or may not be adequate for passengers' needs and expectations. A number of vendors provide only a portion of the solution, making the process of upgrading an aircraft cabin time-consuming and complex.

C&L Aviation, an leader in aircraft maintenance and refurbishment, has partnered with DPI Labs, the creators and manufacturers of innovative CMS systems, switches, control panels and other components. The result of the partnership is an array of best-in-class solutions with professional consultation and installation to make the process simple and convenient for DOMs, flight department managers and aircraft owners.

"We pride ourselves on being a one-stop shop that the owners and managers of Global/Challenger, Hawker, Gulfstream and other aircraft can trust," said Chris Kilgour, CEO of C & L Aviation. "That's why it's important to us to ask the right questions and provide the best solution for each customer."

"DPI Labs recognizes C&L Aviation Group's experience and commitment to providing its customers with the best products and services available and we are pleased to enter into partnership to offer our Cabin Management Systems and components." said Scott DeSmet, Director of Business Development for DPI Labs Inc.

## About C&L Aviation

C&L is a global aviation services and aftermarket-support provider for corporate and regional aircraft specializing in interior and exterior refurbishment, avionics upgrades, heavy



maintenance, aircraft teardown services, parts support, and aircraft and engine sales and leasing. An FAA/EASA Part 145 Certified Repair Station, C&L strives to make aircraft ownership more economical by providing all services in one location: a state-of-the-art 140,000 square-foot facility at Bangor International Airport in Maine, but also maintains sales offices and warehouses worldwide.

C&L also offers charter services through the Part 135 charter company, SevenJet.

## About DPI Labs

Aircraft manufacturers and operators rely on DPI to develop, manufacture, and support quality switches and switch panels, lighting and air distribution systems, entertainment systems, and complete cabin management solutions. DPI Labs originated the “membrane” type switches specifically engineered for VIP private aircraft, and the company’s advanced SmartLink closed loop control and interface system is well-known for its reliability and durability.

DPI Labs was the first cabin management system manufacturers certified through the Boeing Aircraft D1-9000 Quality Workmanship Standard, and DPI continues to lead by exceeding industry standards.