



ECONOMY SKYNEST TO PUT ECONOMY TRAVELLERS TO SLEEP

News / Airlines



The Economy Skynest is the result of three years of Air New Zealand research and development, with the input of more than 200 customers at its Hangar 22 innovation centre in Auckland. The airline has filed patent and trademark applications for the Economy Skynest which provides six full length lie-flat sleep pods. Air New Zealand Chief Marketing and Customer Officer Mike Tod says that as the airline operates some of the world's longest flights, such as the upcoming Auckland-New York service at up to 17 hours 40 minutes one way, it is committed to putting more magic back into flying.

"We have a tremendous amount of development work underway looking at product innovations we can bring across all cabins of the aircraft. A clear pain point for economy travellers on long-haul flights is the inability to stretch out. The development of the Economy Skynest is a direct response to that challenge," Mr Tod says.

Air New Zealand will make a final decision on whether to operate the Economy Skynest next year after it has assessed the performance of its inaugural year of Auckland-New York operations. General Manager of Customer Experience, Nikki Goodman says customer and cabin crew feedback on the Economy Skynest during its final phase of development has been outstanding with significant partners also keenly involved.



"We see a future flying experience where an economy-class customer on long-haul flights would be able to book the Economy Skynest in addition to their Economy seat, get some quality rest and arrive at their destination ready to go. This is a game changer on so many levels," Ms Goodman says.

"We're so excited to be sharing this product development with our customers. This is one of the highlights of three years' intensive work centred on customer wellbeing. We're sure this innovation is going to be a game changer for the industry and bring significant improvements to long-haul flying. We expect other airlines will want to explore licensing the Economy Skynest from us just as they have with the Economy Skycouch."

Air New Zealand's Head of Airline Programmes Kerry Reeves says 'can do' is one of the airline's key values and the Economy Skynest prototype is a tangible example of this.

"At Air New Zealand, we continue to nurture a can-do attitude, we're not afraid of being bold and trying new things. The question is never 'can we do this' but instead 'is it right to do this for our customers?' and, if so, 'how will we do this?'"

"Our ability to take a good idea, to execute and deliver an innovation that works in our environment, our market and for our people and customers gives us an edge."

Mr Reeves says the scale of the challenge in developing the Economy Skynest and working through its certification with the necessary regulators is immense compared with the development

of the Economy Skycouch™.

"But it was a prize worth chasing and one that we think has the potential to be a game changer for economy class travellers on all airlines around the world."

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