

Virtual EBACE

connected our industry



Ed Bolen considers how the business aviation community adapted to new forms of communication, and looks ahead to the return of in-person gatherings post-pandemic

Even more than one year later, I remain amazed and humbled by the tremendous innovation and resilience our industry displayed in responding to the COVID-19 pandemic, including by how quickly the business aviation community adapted to new forms of communication.

At NBAA, we revamped our entire model for connecting with our members to utilize the virtual environment. With our world and our industry *"locked down"* around the globe, NBAA's News Hour webinars, our NBAA Insider Daily summary of the latest news in our industry and immersive virtual convention platforms all proved to be vital and highly-effective tools as we navigated the COVID environment.

As *World Commerce Review* readers know, the 2020 edition of the European Business Aviation Convention & Exhibition (EBACE) was one of the first major industry events to be cancelled last year as the full scope of the pandemic became known. However, I'm pleased to note we've recently wrapped a successful virtual edition of the event for 2021, EBACE Connect.

Held 18-20 May and presented by the European Business Aviation Association (EBAA) and NBAA, this online exhibition soared beyond expectations and demonstrated the global business aviation community's eagerness to embrace the future, focus on new opportunities and fire the imagination.

EBACE Connect served to bring the business aviation community together to share a common vision for the future and to plan for our post-pandemic world. The event made clear that business aviation is focused on much more than just returning to a *"new normal"*; our industry is evolving, coming back stronger, more adaptive and more innovative than ever.

More than 1,600 attendees participated in EBACE Connect, which featured keynote discussions with aviation leaders and visionaries. Famed pilot and philanthropist Erik Lindbergh opened the program by sharing personal insights on the next great era in aviation, while day two featured a Lightning Round session with the CEOs of all the major business aircraft OEMs highlighted their perspectives.

The future was in focus throughout EBACE Connect's roster of panel sessions and 'Thought Leadership' discussions, covering advanced air mobility, safety regulation for new technologies, growing beyond COVID, market trends and sustainability. Major OEMs and leading service providers announced exciting new products and offerings to an audience that included nearly 100 international journalists registered to cover the event.

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Joining together once again as an industry

While EBACE Connect was an unquestionable success, our industry eagerly anticipates meeting together once again, in person, and we certainly look forward to the return of an in-person 2022 EBACE to Geneva Airport and Palexpo in Switzerland, scheduled to take place 23-25 May.

NBAA is also working to bring an exciting, in-person 2021 edition of our Business Aviation Convention & Exhibition (NBAA-BACE) to Las Vegas, NV from October 12-14. Interest in this event has been strong from exhibitors and attendees alike, and we're close to selling out the Exhibit Floor at the all-new, state-of-the-art West Hall of the Las Vegas Convention Center (LVCC).

Featuring 600,000 square feet of exhibit space and the equivalent of 80 new meeting rooms, the LVCC West Hall also features an expansive, 14,000 square foot outdoor terrace for receptions. NBAA-BACE attendees will further appreciate that all exhibitors will be hosted in a single area, unlike past years in Las Vegas that split the exhibit floor between the Central and North Halls.

In keeping with its unique importance this year in bringing our industry together again, NBAA-BACE will feature an unprecedented roster of impressive, dynamic and forward-looking keynote speakers and session presenters, as well as hundreds of prominent business aviation OEMs, industry stalwarts and first-time exhibitors alike.

Attendees will also experience several new features of NBAA-BACE, including a dedicated Maintenance Pavilion on the show floor highlighting the very latest resources available to the aviation maintenance technicians (AMTs) and airframe and powerplant (A&P) mechanics who have kept our industry flying safely throughout the pandemic.

Details of this and other new offerings will be available in the months ahead at nbaa.org/bace.

NBAA has also partnered with leading medical services consulting firm CrowdRX to ensure NBAA-BACE meets the highest standards for attendee safety, without losing the character and camaraderie for which the event is known. Additionally, the LVCC has earned Global Biorisk Advisory Council (GBAC) STAR facility accreditation by ISSA, the world's leading trade association for the cleaning industry.

In marked contrast to the uncertainty we all felt this time last year, I believe NBAA and our entire industry are confident of much brighter days ahead, as business aviation stakeholders worldwide embrace a promising, innovative and sustainable future. We look forward to welcoming you to a truly one-of-a-kind experience in Las Vegas. ■

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