



CTT
Systems

Breathe easy onboard

Flying dehydrates you and you just have to live with it, right? Wrong. **Julie Baxter** discovers how air quality can be improved and could be a passenger priority whose time has come

It is perhaps a little known fact that the air quality in Economy is generally a lot better than that in Business or First. You may think you are sharing your air with a nicer class of traveller up the front of the aircraft but CTT Systems, experts in the science behind air quality, have a few interesting facts that might make you think again.

If you are interested in your passengers' wellbeing check this out. Cabin humidity is dictated by the number of people within the cabin and the optimum comfort zone from a health, happiness and comfort perspective is 20-50% relative humidity. Check the numbers in most First cabins and it is around 5% or less, in Business 7-10% and in Economy 12% This means three hours in First or Business exposes a passenger to drier air than that they'd experience in Death Valley!

Improving humidity

There are in fact ways to counter it which some airlines are moving towards. CTT's Cair Humidification System can change the humidity imbalance and create a nicer environment, quickly improving relative humidity to 22% in First and Business, 16% in Economy. It involves installing a simple humidifier, customised by aircraft type.

CTT's vp sales & marketing Peter Landquist says: "If you can humidify the aircraft why wouldn't you? Low humidity affects the senses, impairs the taste buds and has an enormous effect on our



appreciation of the food and wine being served. It also stops passenger mucus membranes drying out – their protection against other passengers' germs – and it just makes us feel more comfortable and relaxed. Of course, this is a benefit you

feel but cannot see so it has been one that airlines often neglect to invest in."

That said, it does have a proven track record on VIP jets, and airlines have invested in

it for their crews. There are over 900 crew rest areas and flight decks fitted with this technology. It comes as a standard for Boeing 787 crew rest areas and as an option, taken up by 80% of airlines, for the flight decks. It's optional on all new

A350 and A380s but the only Lufthansa provides it for passengers - in First on its A380 services.

Wellness differentiation

Landquist predicts: "I am confident that as airlines increasingly want to differentiate their onboard product offering and wellness becomes a key issue with passengers, more carriers will invest in it for the sake of passenger comfort. They are doing plenty of fancy stuff with beds and food but for many passengers better air quality will truly be a determining factor once it is available. Once this is identified as an important point of difference, travellers will wonder why it just wasn't done before."

The investment required to improve quality is about the same as a single First class seat. •

"This is the 'last frontier' in passenger comfort and one innovative carriers will soon be championing as positively as their celebrity chef collaborations and branded amenities"