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Pivot in the Skies

Few industries have been hit as hard by the coronavirus as aviation. Now is the time to develop ideas that will facilitate a rapid return when the crisis is over. Digitalization and sustainability will play an important role.



Plexiglass barriers were installed at shared assembly stations to protect Rolls-Royce employees, like here in the Trent XWB engine facility at the Rolls-Royce plant in Derby, United Kingdom. Photo: Rolls-Royce

But hardly anyone doubts that the aviation market will grow again in the future, although from a lower starting point. "When it's possible to do so, everyone will want to stroll across a piazza in Italy again or relax on a beach in Spain," says Fraport manager Prümm. "The

human desire to travel is unquenched—and might even be stronger after the crisis than before.”

A similar view is found at Rolls-Royce. “Aviation makes an incredibly important contribution to society, and is a valuable and crucial driver of global growth,” says Resch. “All that will return—the only questions are when and how.” Porsche consultant Kirsch sees a major opportunity for the industry in starting again. “Instead of cutting back on every corner to win the price war, now is the time to reflect on the quality for which aviation was once a symbol. The digital transformation offers enormous opportunities for this along the entire value chain, and can completely reshape passenger experience.”

Rolls-Royce

...produces large-scale power generation systems, propulsion systems for large yachts, the strongest tractors and the biggest agricultural machines, and above all, engines for airplanes and helicopters. Nearly half of its global workforce of 50,000 is active in the aviation sector, and they contributed around nine billion euros to the company's sales in 2019. Before the outbreak of the virus, more than thirty different aircraft types with a total of 13,000 Rolls-Royce engines were in use.

Fraport AG

...not only runs Frankfurt Airport but also is involved in the operation of thirty additional airports on four continents. In 2019 it posted worldwide sales of 3.7 billion euros and served 182 million passengers. Frankfurt Airport alone accounted for 70.5 million passengers and more than 500,000 flights.

Satair

...is one of the world's largest suppliers of replacement parts for planes and helicopters. Its catalogue lists more than a million different components. Headquartered in Copenhagen, this subsidiary of the Airbus aircraft manufacturer posted worldwide sales of around two billion dollars in 2019.

Info

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