



# North America full of opportunities



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**THE AVIATION** industry in North America is changing rapidly across all aspects of the industry including commercial, business and general aviation. It is an industry characterised by rapid technological advances and new product and service innovations. And the pace is set to accelerate over the next two decades. New Zealand aviation companies are well placed to take advantage of a multitude of opportunities arising from this rapid and sustained market growth.

The Airports Council International (ACI) predicts the number of global passengers will rise from 5 billion in 2010 to more than 9 billion by 2025. The freight market is expanding even more quickly and is estimated to nearly triple between now and 2025. Combined with aircraft movements almost doubling over the same period, this will bring substantial investments in new airports. Airports will not only need to keep up by delivering better and more efficient services but new infrastructure will also be needed.

## **NZ solutions for the world**

New Zealand is poised to respond to this need with baggage handling solutions, passenger check-in systems, air traffic control systems, in-ground aircraft systems, specialised ground support equipment, IT solutions and even airline safety systems. New Zealand can also supply security technologies, especially given the growing threat of terrorism that has sent security costs soaring and has alienated passengers.

Even in the growing field of aeronautics there is much research going on to reach long-sought efficiency goals, paving the way toward the first practical application of drag-reducing laminar flow control on a transport aircraft. New Zealand is already experimenting with drag-reducing laminar flow on light aircraft to improve efficiency.

Light Sport Aircraft (LSA) has emerged

as a significant new trend and one that is a good fit with New Zealand's reputation as a leader in adventure sports. The FAA is currently reviewing LSA regulations which could grow the potential for this market.

There is a global shortage forecast in pilots and aeronautical engineers. This represents an opportunity for training, which New Zealand already has a solid reputation for - as well as terrain that lends itself well to pilot training. However, New Zealand will also need to do whatever it can to continue to attract skilled workers.

International maintenance, repair and overhaul services (MRO) are expanding globally and New Zealand has a highly talented workforce and extensive experience in servicing some of the world's leading high performance engines.

These are just a few examples, and by no means a definitive list. The emergence of new technologies such as titanium alloy, composites and the development of new fuels will also likely be characteristics of the industry over the coming years. Focusing on safety, reliability, innovation and above all, tailoring solutions to specific challenges faced by the aviation sector will mean new business for New Zealand.

## **AirVenture & AeroInnovate at Oshkosh**

One of the highlights of the North American aviation calendar, and the place to see the latest in all things aviation is Experimental Aircraft Association's annual AirVenture in Oshkosh, Wisconsin. With more than 550,000 aerospace enthusiasts attending, the show is the perfect backdrop for New Zealand's aviation industry to network and learn.

I recently attended Oshkosh, along with a number of New Zealand companies including Spidertracks, Pacific Aerospace, Airmaster Propellers, Campbell Aero Classics, Prototype Design, Flyinn Tour and the Aviation Industry Cluster. It was, as always, an amazing few days.

One of the newest features at Oshkosh is AeroInnovate – developed by the Wisconsin Entrepreneurs' Network and the University of Wisconsin Oshkosh to bring innovators together, bring new technology to the forefront and create a consortium for sharing ideas and start-up efforts with investors. AeroInnovate highlights cutting edge technologies, entrepreneurs, emerging companies, investment trends and other recent developments in the aerospace/aviation sector.

The aviation community, like many

## **Contributed by Rod McDonald**

others, loves their 'sport', and many investors in the industry are motivated by their interest level in the technology or product and will put money into the opportunities that they feel connected to or like. AeroInnovate is a forum to connect with investors and other industry leaders and entrepreneurs. Before AeroInnovate it was very difficult, if not impossible, to connect with aviation investors at the show. Given the issues in New Zealand regarding the availability of capital for the aviation industry, a forum such as AeroInnovate is one that New Zealand companies should be seriously considering.

AeroInnovate is a good model for New Zealand, especially during Flair 2011 in Hamilton next October which forms part of the Real New Zealand showcase. This is planned as a part of business-focused activities timed to make the most of the Rugby World Cup influx of visitors to New Zealand. Flair will be a mini Oshkosh of sorts – showcasing everything New Zealand has to offer when it comes to all things aviation.

Oshkosh 2011 will be held next July, and I encourage New Zealand aviation companies to consider attending the show in some capacity. If nothing else it is a chance to get a feel for the breadth and depth of the industry here, build relationships, and see first-hand some of the latest emerging trends.

## **More Information**

NZTE: [www.nzte.govt.nz](http://www.nzte.govt.nz)

NZ Flair 2011: [www.nzflair.com](http://www.nzflair.com)

Real New Zealand Showcase:

[www.nz2011.govt.nz/business](http://www.nz2011.govt.nz/business)

AirVenture: [www.airventure.org](http://www.airventure.org)

AeroInnovate: [www.AeroInnovate.org](http://www.AeroInnovate.org)

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