

On-board connectivity a priority for bizjets: Rockwell Collins

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[Rockwell Collins](#) views soaring demand for mobile connectivity as a key driver of company growth, but while much aerospace industry attention is focused on developing onboard internet access systems for airliner cabins, the avionics and communications systems giant sees little potential in that market as historical precedent does not suggest passengers will be willing to pay for the service.

However, says chief executive Clay Jones, the business case for providing seamless, mobile connectivity to business jet passengers is compelling because, to them, the aircraft is a mobile office where productivity matters. Collins is thus keen to offer all-aircraft packages of avionics and communications, including internet connections. Technically, cabin connectivity can be provided as an extension of Collins' work to improve flight deck connectivity, says Jones.

Jones was speaking last week in Paris, having flown from Cedar Rapids, Iowa, aboard the company [Bombardier](#) Challenger 605 along with his executive vice president for international sales, Greg Churchill, on a four-day, five-country tour that wouldn't have been possible without the corporate jet or its connectivity.

Also pressed into service on that trip was Rockwell's new flight services operation, which Churchill likens to [General Motors'](#) OnStar trip management system, familiar to US drivers. Using the combined capabilities of trip planning specialist Air Routing International, acquired in November 2009, and the scheduling and dispatch capabilities of Computing Technologies for Aviation, acquired in January 2011, [Rockwell Collins](#) is now able to offer the business jet pilot a facility to plan trips, including the provision of catering and on-ground service or maintenance, as well as to make mid-course corrections that don't leave the catering or ground services requirements up in the air

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