



**Relevant and enduring
experiences thrust Cirrus
Aircraft to market leadership**

Do what matters

As we launch [Avanade X](#), our experiences business in North America, we wanted to hear directly from our clients on why experiences matter. Zean Nielsen, CEO of Cirrus Aircraft, has spent his career at luxury brands, such as Bang & Olufsen and Tesla, creating impeccable experiences for their customers. In June 2019, he took the controls at Cirrus Aircraft with one goal: to deliver a personal aviation experience to their owner community that's the pinnacle of safety, innovation, quality and service. Eric Miquelon, president of Avanade North America, met with Nielsen to discuss why experiences matter and how they'll power Cirrus Aircraft's new era of growth.

Can you set the stage by sharing Cirrus Aircraft's purpose?

The decision to purchase an aircraft is complex: Where do you learn to fly? Which airplane is right for your needs and where do you demo it? How do you finance and insure it? Where do you store and service it? How do you resell it when you're ready to upgrade? And yet, despite this complexity, a connected customer experience for aircraft owners and a 360-degree ecosystem around the plane doesn't currently exist. Historically, the industry has focused on making and selling aircraft. Once the customer takes ownership of their aircraft, many middle layers prevent the voice of the customer from being heard. Our purpose at Cirrus Aircraft is to remove those layers and make it safe, convenient, simple, affordable and accessible for people to choose personal aviation as their mode of transportation.

You call it personal aviation – not private aviation. Why?

Private aviation connotes something unattainable to many people. Personal aviation meets our needs as social creatures and is about being able to say "yes" to meetings, sporting events and precious time with family and friends... whatever matters the most to you. It's your personal time machine.

The launch of your Vision Center, the customer experience center in Knoxville, clearly signaled a deep commitment to delight Cirrus Aircraft's owner community. What made you decide to focus so heavily on the customer experience?

We are dedicated to creating an amazing customer experience – not only with the physical premises but for one's emotions – and the Vision Center is one piece of the journey.

Typically, customers ask, 'Did I get what I expected?' 'How was I treated?' 'Did I leave richer than when I came?' You create loyalty and a deep sense of trust and brand loyalty. Thoughtful experiences put people at ease and give them

confidence in your brand. We're bringing that to life at our Vision Center Campus in Knoxville, TN.

We needed a special place for customers to train and receive their type rating for our Vision Jet as well as transition or primary training for our SR Series aircraft, so we hired and prepared the best flight instructors, developed the best surroundings and training tools, installed the best simulators and brought them together in one place.

Our Vision Jet simulator is so true to flying and so life-like that the FAA has issued it a tail number! We provide our customers with both in-air and simulator training. In the full motion simulator, they are able to practice safety maneuvers with our advanced Cirrus Airframe Parachute System® (CAPS®) and Safe Return™ Autoland by Garmin®.

Not only does the Vision Center support training, but also aircraft sales, management, maintenance and delivery.

We often hear that in today's world, every company needs to think of itself as a technology company. And indeed, digitally mature organizations grow revenues five times faster than their competitors during periods of uncertainty. Cirrus Aircraft understands these modern table stakes. How important is technology to creating the pinnacle of personal aviation experiences?

We're a transportation company – moving people from point A to point B – but we can't serve that ambition if we're not also a technology company. Our aircraft themselves feature very advanced technology. In addition, the ecosystem we're creating to power our exceptional owner experience relies on technology. They go hand in hand. The experience we want to enable is one of arriving on time, safely, comfortably and recharged for your next activity, and we can't do that without technology. It allows us to deliver an exceptional customer experience consistently.

What advice would you give to other C-suite leaders on getting started with their experiences journey?

First, remember that people have options, so experience matters. Second, everyone from the C-suite on down must know and believe in your purpose. Third, technology will underpin all of your efforts, so how you aggregate information and deliver it to your customers matters. Finally, don't confuse luxury experiences with handoffs.

When I go to my car dealership for services, I don't need a coffee bar and golf simulator. The most meaningful thing you can do is get me in and out quickly. To me, that's luxury. "Pretend experiences" are a sign to me that a company is inefficient in its processes.

At Avanade, our purpose is to make a genuine human impact for our people, our clients and our communities by doing what matters. What matters to Cirrus Aircraft?

Above all else, safety. If customers question safety, they won't take advantage of their investment and the freedom it affords them. Convenience and speed also matter to us. Our customers want to make the most of their time, so anticipating their needs, from maintenance to training, matters. Therefore, we need a connected digital experience from manufacturing to services years after our owners take delivery of their aircraft so that we can cater to their individual needs and provide them with a seamless world-class experience.

What will the future of the single-engine aircraft manufacturing business look like?

It's not hard to imagine that our children's children won't be driving because at that point cars will be autonomous. The next personal transportation step after that will be hovering or flying.

We want to create a personal aviation experience that's like a luxury SUV with wings – it should be that familiar to you from an ownership experience standpoint. This is where Cirrus Aircraft is going. Once we get to that point, millions of people will come into personal aviation.

About Cirrus Aircraft

Cirrus Aircraft is the recognized global leader in personal aviation and the maker of the best-selling SR Series piston aircraft and the Vision Jet®, the world's first single-engine Personal Jet™, and the recipient of the Robert J. Collier Trophy. Founded in 1984, the company has redefined aviation performance, comfort and safety with innovations like the Cirrus Airframe Parachute System® (CAPS®) – the first FAA-certified whole-airframe parachute safety system included as standard equipment on an aircraft. To date, worldwide flight time on Cirrus aircraft has passed 14 million hours, and 230 people have returned home safely to their families as a result of the inclusion of CAPS as a standard feature on all Cirrus aircraft. The company has six locations in the United States, including Duluth, Minnesota; Grand Forks, North Dakota; Knoxville, Tennessee; Greater Dallas, Texas; Greater Phoenix, Arizona; and Greater Orlando, Florida. Learn more at [cirrusaircraft.com](https://www.cirrusaircraft.com).

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About Avanade

Avanade is the leading provider of innovative digital, cloud and advisory services, industry solutions and design-led experiences across the Microsoft ecosystem. Every day, our 60,000 professionals in 26 countries make a genuine human impact for our clients, their employees and their customers. Avanade was founded in 2000 by Accenture LLP and Microsoft Corporation. Learn more at www.avanade.com.

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