

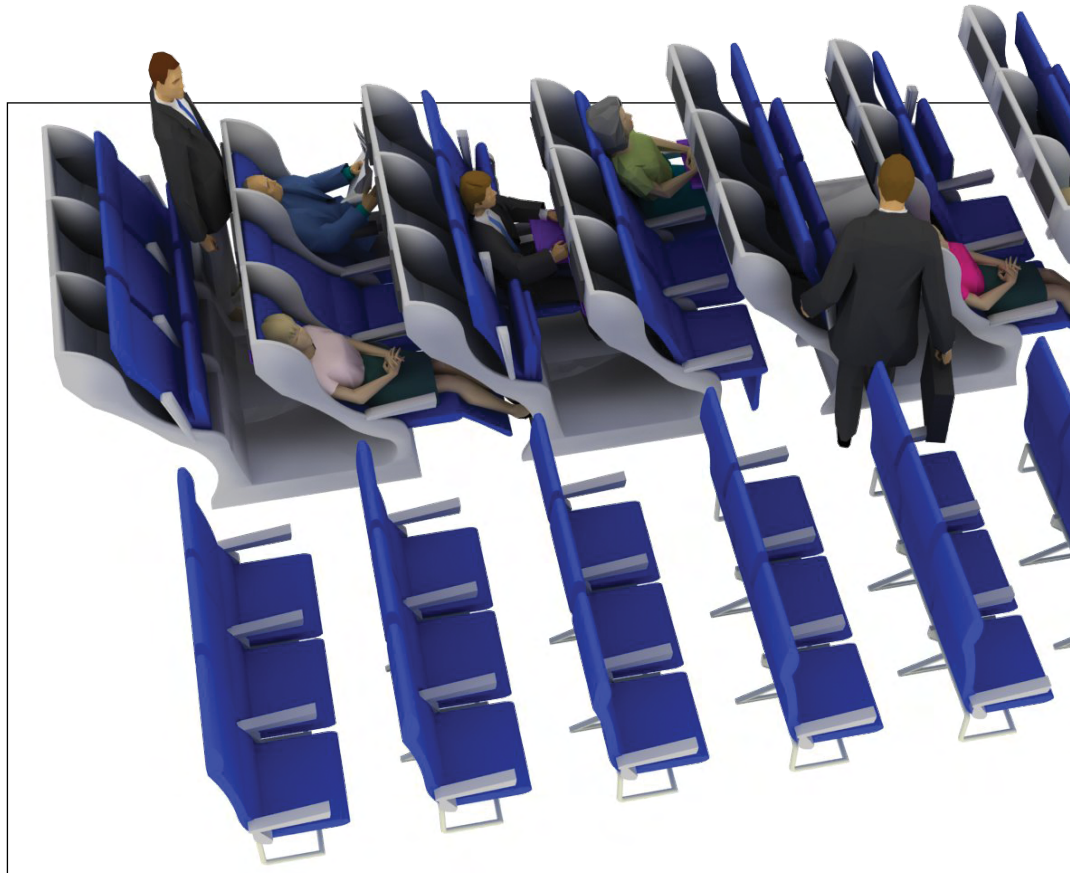
# what'sup

**BRIEF:** With airlines configuring economy cabins for maximum return, and many operating at the minimum pitches as set out by aviation authorities, there seems to be little opportunity to raise comfort levels for economy travellers. It's time to try a new direction...

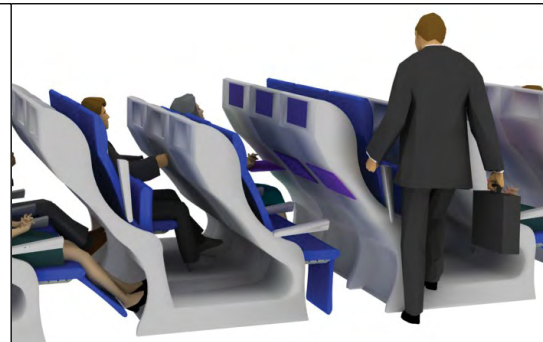
**DESCRIPTION:** With the StepSeat Economy, aircraft interiors concept company Jacob Innovations has eschewed the usual lateral thinking, instead creating an economy seating idea that uses the available vertical space to enhance comfort.

The idea is simple and elegant: by mounting alternate seats on 'steps' – basically small platforms the height of a conventional step – legroom is increased and the occupant can recline to around 45° within the fixed shell, with no cabin density penalties. An optional leg rest further aids comfort, making this one of the best economy seats available for stretching out and possibly sleeping.

The inventors say that while access to the seat looks rather narrow, it is actually almost the same as a conventional economy seat at a tight pitch. More space, more comfort, with no density penalty – the only obvious downside is that with that deep recline, as an economy seat this concept would make an airline's premium economy offer redundant. Therefore we see it best used as a premium economy seat that provides the benefits of a conventional premium seat, but at the same pitch as economy.



**VERDICT:** The concept does show promise. However, while we like the use of vertical space, there are some potential downsides. Clearly, that step will add weight, and with two rows attached to each step, if one row develops a fault and needs to be removed from the aircraft, both rows will have to be removed. We could also imagine a few ingress mishaps occurring on night flights. ☒



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