

APP JET CENTER HAS TAKEN A NEW APPROACH WITH ITS LATEST FBO, DESIGNED TO TARGET A CLIENT BASE FROM SILICON VALLEY

Some FBO chains might adopt a uniform design between outlets to help with their branding, and even independents may favor the use of steel and glass for a clean, business-like feel. For Thom Harrow, owner and operator of APP Jet Center, it was clear that his client base at Hayward Executive Airport in the San Francisco Bay Area in California, had different expectations, and this needed to be taken into account.

“Our new US\$5m FBO facility at Hayward is just being finished,” Harrow reveals. “It measures 3,000ft², and at the same time we’re adding a 30,000ft² hangar. While the FBO has all of the facilities you’d expect, such as a pilot’s lounge, snooze rooms, shower facilities, a concierge, wi-fi and private meeting rooms, the look and feel needed to be different. Having served the Silicon Valley market, I felt that this was a very particular client base, and they have a sense of style that differs from, say, the East Coast. That means different expectations.”

The desired look was achieved through the hiring of an interior design firm from San Francisco, Niche Interiors, which has worked on a number of residences throughout Silicon Valley, with the FBO

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Thom Harrow, owner and operator, APP Jet Center

Below: APP Jet Center enlisted the help of a local interior design firm that specializes in lavish homes, rather than taking the usual commercial route

being its first commercial interior project. Harrow describes the finish as organic, with lots of earth tones: “There are polished concrete floors; the furniture is colorful but tasteful; and there’s a kind of modern tech covering on the walls in the reception area. It’s like a Silicon Valley executive’s home.”

There are also a few touches designed to excite those in the tech business. “We’ve got really cool water fountains, which have a bottle feeder, and when you fill your water bottle they actually keep count and display on the side the number of plastic bottles saved from landfill by getting customers to reuse their own,” says Harrow. “Plus we have an open-front stainless-steel refrigerator packed with vitamin waters and health drinks, which looks very colorful, and we’ll give those free to customers.”

The approach helps APP Jet Center distinguish itself from the airport’s other FBO, which Harrow says has a classic design. “The lighting is tasteful and the conference room is a brightly lit white box with impactful artwork,” he adds. “It’s a great personal space, and the team at Niche Interiors has done a great job. I am looking forward to entering it in various interior design awards at some point in the near future.” ○

A focused network

How APP Jet Center serves customers across the USA

Thom Harrow formed APP Jet Center in 2009, buying a group of FBOs from a bankruptcy sale. Today, he has four facilities in North America and around 60 staff, working just outside Washington DC in Manassas, Virginia; Centennial Airport, Denver; Hayward Executive Airport, California; and Fort Pierce, Florida. “Every FBO is different in terms of its look and the clientele,” Harrow says. “Our FBO in Florida is part of a restaurant we own and operate called Airport Tiki, which has a tiki theme throughout, serving fries and hamburgers. It’s a community landmark with a loyal local customer base. There is nothing I would change about it.”





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