

June 24, 2004

Hello to all,

Last Fall Steph and I spent a couple of months touring sub-Saharan Africa on our BMW R1150GS Adventure motorcycle. We had what we considered some life-changing experiences, including visiting the townships of Cape Town, South Africa and a few days getting up close and personal with the wildlife of Botswana's Okavango Delta.

When we spent time with our friends and family upon our return we did the typical gushing about our experiences and how different we were as a result of them. Uniquely among our friends, Sid Adelman, a friend of ours from our former industry of Business Intelligence, held the position that we really hadn't changed a bit. As you might expect, google-eyed from our exposure to the glories of Africa, I thought Sid was more than a little off his rocker.

This message is testimony to the fact that you can take the bit-head out of the tech stream and plop him in the jungle, but you can't take the tech out of the bit-head, and to Sid's insight into my true nature (no pun intended).

We're currently at 34,000 feet somewhere over the Atlantic on Lufthansa flight 452 and we are blessed with a brand new Airbus A340-300, replete with sparkling new business class amenities, including Boeing's Connexion broadband wireless internet capability.

What do you do with wireless broadband at 34,000 feet? If you're a business person, you burn up the bandwidth with red flag, eyes-only emails, web research and life-stopping, bit-pushing Virtual Private Network (VPN) mission critical operational applications and analysis. If you're on sabbatical like me, you send pictures of the seat system to your friends and family.



Those who follow the aerospace industry will appreciate the irony of a brand new Airbus A340-300 equipped with Boeing's Connexion broadband wireless internet system.



Watch movies, surf the net, play games, it's all here in a 12" flat screen at every seat. Not big news to Jet Blue customers, but revolutionary to customers of foot-dragging, Luddite, full service airlines.



Stephanie "Vanna" Hackney displays the Recaro ® seat system controller that provides access to the interactive flat screen monitor; electrically controlled, fully reclining, massaging seat; video; audio and internet systems. The seat system is classically Italian, beautifully seductive in visual design combined with fundamental design flaws such as 90% less seatback storage than the typical business traveler requires and the inability to extract the seat table with any drink glasses in either of the cup holders. Smooth, cold and overreaching in its efficiency, its Lufthansa specific design mirrors the 33% over-designed nature of most Germans' eyeglass frames. (Five-stitch Turkish-broken-glass-palm-injury optional)

We hope you enjoyed your tour of our aircraft cabin. Please ensure your tray table and seat back are in their fully upright and locked position as we prepare for landing. Thank you for choosing Lufthansa for your air travel today, we appreciate your business.

OK, that last part was fictional. Lufthansa would never thank you for your business. You'll take their service and you'll like it. Although, I'll have to admit, this cabin crew was one of the nicest, best-mood crews ever on this airline, able to compete with all other carriers in their own right. This is unusual, as we usually segregate Lufthansa crews into a separate rating category altogether, apart from all other airlines on earth, just next the snarling wild beast group.

We're looking forward to seeing all of you soon and sharing our adventures from our latest trip to explore the world's cultures.

Be well,
Doug