

A circular arrangement of tree canopies against a clear blue sky. The trees have dense green foliage and intricate branching patterns. The perspective is from below, looking up through the canopy.

New
life for
old
parts



New life for old parts



An aircraft's life is long. Several decades often pass between Entry Into Service, modification, resale and decommissioning. But even then, it is often not the end of the line. End-of-life aircraft contain spare parts and valuable materials that can be reused. And seats, wall elements or wing parts are ideal for creating unique home and lifestyle accessories.



The veteran Boeing 737's last journey takes it to Tulsa, Oklahoma. Over the course of its life, the aircraft has performed nearly twenty thousand takeoffs and landings at airports throughout the world. It has safely carried more than a million passengers to their destinations. Now the time has come for retirement. But that doesn't mean the decommissioned airliner will be left to rust away on the outskirts of Tulsa International Airport. Instead, the old lady will be professionally recycled.

Aircraft recycling is still a fairly young industry, but it is developing rapidly. There are now numerous companies all over the globe specializing in the professional scrapping of old machines, and they perform this task flexibly and at the preferred location. The scrap is subsequently packed into containers and transported to plants that shred all the parts and separate the materials from each other. The final step is to transform these residual materials into valuable new commodities, such as temperature-resistant superalloys for the aerospace industry. But the roughly 30 tonnes of aluminum that can be recovered from the 737's fuselage can also be readily reused, maybe forming a part of new aircraft components but also as a Coke can in an airplane trolley.

Treasure chest with wings

As well as valuable scrap metal, a decommissioned aircraft also contains numerous components that can be used for spare parts. At the Tulsa site, Lufthansa Technik Component Services (LTCS), a wholly-owned subsidiary of Lufthansa Technik, is responsible for checking which components come into question. The company has been recycling components from long-serving aircraft since spring 2012 already. So far, they have already dismantled and recycled 37 aircraft: 30 Boeing 737CLs, five Boeing 747-400s and two Boeing MD11s. After the aircraft's final landing in Tulsa, LTCS employees remove usable and valuable parts from the aircraft within roughly two weeks, including drive units, engine components, flight computers, lights, cockpit instruments and the entire electronics. After removal, all these parts are rigorously checked for

**LTCS EMPLOYEES
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functionality, recertified and, if necessary, overhauled in Lufthansa Technik's workshops. They are then added to the Lufthansa Technik material pool. This offers several advantages for Lufthansa Technik customers in America and worldwide. On the one hand, components that normally take several months to procure can be supplied within a very short time. And on the other, it enables aircraft owners to bypass costly repair processes and purchase high-quality spare parts at favorable prices. Moreover, the environment also benefits from this approach: The recycling and reprocessing rate of around 92% makes it possible to recover many tonnes of valuable resources and components.



Trash can be so stylish

In recent years, another way of recycling old aircraft components has become increasingly popular: upcycling. With a little imagination and craftsmanship, used components are transformed into something completely new. Numerous vendors have discovered this attractive market, and the trend is growing. They purchase aircraft interiors and components from airlines, waste disposal companies, or auctions and then refine them into unique lifestyle products with a history. Their creativity knows no limits. The portfolio ranges from compact key rings, shelving units with airplane windows to extravagant designer objects such as a whirlpool made from a former aircraft turbine.

The airlines themselves have also recognized this trend and have lately been getting heavily involved in upcycling. Lufthansa, for example, has already launched its second collection exclusively for Miles and More customers. A variety of products are on sale, from attaché cases made out of business class blankets to a coffee table built from a wing flap section. All of them come with details of the decommissioned parts' origin – a great way to preserve some of an aircraft's spirit and allow aviation enthusiasts to share in its special history.

Location Tulsa, Oklahoma

COMPONENT SERVICES FOR THE AMERICAS



Tulsa has been the headquarters of Lufthansa Technik Component Services since 2017. The location is strategically advantageous, as the markets in both North and South America are equally easy to reach from Oklahoma. The team at this site has now grown to over 300 employees, offering a comprehensive range of aircraft component services on approximately 115,000 square feet in state-of-the-art workshops. They include the maintenance and overhaul of a wide range of aircraft components such as engines, hydraulic pumps, gear drives and avionics. Customers also benefit from materials management, warehousing and now Mobile Engine Services, with an AOG Desk available around the clock.

Our facility with over 300 employees offers a comprehensive range of services for aircraft components.

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New life for old parts

Seatbelt key rack Three former seatbelt buckles now serve as key hooks.



Flying coffee table A section of the wing flap was repurposed for this extravagant side table.



DECOMMISSIONED, BUT NOT OBSOLETE

Turning selected vintage aircraft parts into exclusive furniture.



Overhead bin sideboard This item of furniture combines the straight-lined Bauhaus style with the overhead bin from an A320-211 D-AIPM.



Wall bar This combination of an oak box and the aircraft skin of a D-AIPM provides an exclusive space for drinks.



Pouf A handy additional seat for the home, made of repurposed headrest cover fabric and barrier tapes.



Whirlpool This unique piece was made from a section of turbine fairing combined with Douglas fir wood.