

SPRING 2026

EVA

EXECUTIVE &
VIP AVIATION
INTERNATIONAL

SHELTAIR

Sheltair Aviation: Meticulous, Exceptional, Unwavering

Jeremy Phillips, General Manager, Sheltair Melbourne

VistaJet Sleep – Matteo Atti, Global Chief Marketing Officer, VistaJet

Four Decades of Passionate Service – Tony Buckley, President & CEO, jetCenters of Colorado

Global Presence, Local Insight – Andrew Miller, Nominated Person, Ground Operations, TAG Aviation

Simplifying the Conversation – Claudio D'Amico, Vice President of Strategic Market Engagement, Business Aviation, Viasat



Design,
elevated
in leather.

WWW.TOWNSENDALEATHER.COM



Contents

SPRING 2026



40 Tough, Beautiful and Sustainable

The textile of choice for business jet seating, leather is sustainable and subject to surprising technological advances. Executives from Bombardier, Garrett Leather, Gen Phoenix & Townsend Leather tell a tale as old as the Stone Age

Tough, Beautiful and Sustainable

Leather may be dyed to an infinite number of shades. Townsend Leather

It is difficult to imagine a business jet cabin without leather. It is the textile of choice for usability proven over thousands of years. It is also sustainable and subject to surprising technological advances. Executives from Bombardier, Garrett Leather, Gen Phoenix & Townsend Leather tell a tale as old as the Stone Age

People have been making and using leather for at least 400,000 years – its first use probably dates to the Palaeolithic, or Stone Age. Leather is also intrinsic to business and VIP aircraft cabins. Ask someone recently back from their first business jet experience about the cabin, and there is every likelihood the leather upholstery will figure high in their recollection.

The enduring qualities that have made leather so useful over millennia, including durability, versatility and texture, are eminently applicable to aircraft cabins. And while modern production techniques might be unrecognisable to our ancient forebears, the stages of leather production, from raw hide to ‘cut and sew’ would be entirely familiar.

Historically, tanning, the process in which animal hides are treated to become leather, was smelly and dirty. Later, it used

toxic chromium compounds, but today the industry has cleaned up its act. Another aspect of leather with little relevance to our Stone Age user but deeply important today is that it is naturally sustainable, a quality reinforced through modern production techniques.

Johnstown, New York-based Townsend Leather supplies leather to the business jet industry (alongside several other markets). Sarah Eckler, SVP, Sales & Marketing, says: “We take great care to implement the best environmental practices. Our leather is primarily sourced from European suppliers. The hides are already tanned, and the tanning process is strictly regulated in the European Union to ensure minimal environmental impact. The hides are reclaimed from the waste stream of meat production; they are a by-product, making leather inherently sustainable.

“Once the tanned hides arrive at our manufacturing plant in Upstate New York, they are dyed and finished, embossed and

so on. We continually invest in production equipment and have reduced chemical consumption and emissions by more than 30%. Vegetable-based re-tanning agents are used, as well as water-based finishing systems. Effluent waters are monitored and pre-treated before they leave our factory to remove compounds that do not meet strict state and federal standards. This water receives additional purification in a state-of-the-art waste water treatment plant on our premises that was engineered to meet the needs of the leather industry, assuring complete environmental compliance.”

Another significant leather supplier to the aviation industry, Garrett Leather is based in Buffalo, New York. Sustainability takes on high importance for the company, as Roberta Sand, VP of Marketing, explains: “We have an established history and long-standing relationships with our primary tanneries that span decades. We choose tanneries whose values align with ours and consistently meet our quality and

environmental standards. Before working with a new tannery we conduct a thorough vetting process.

“Our tanneries are in Europe, primarily Italy, a country renowned for crafting the finest hides. Legislation in Europe requires its tanneries to meet numerous environmental standards relating to water quality, air quality, chemical management, energy efficiency and waste management. Our tanneries are also REACH [Registration, Evaluation, Authorisation and Restriction of Chemicals] compliant. A mandatory European Union standard, REACH improves the protection of human health and the environment from risks that can be posed by chemicals. Europe is the world leader in defining, enacting and implementing environmental standards for tanneries, and Garrett Leather manages this aspect of its business by conducting annual visits to its tanneries and monitoring their processes and certifications to confirm they remain compliant.”

Offcuts and scrap

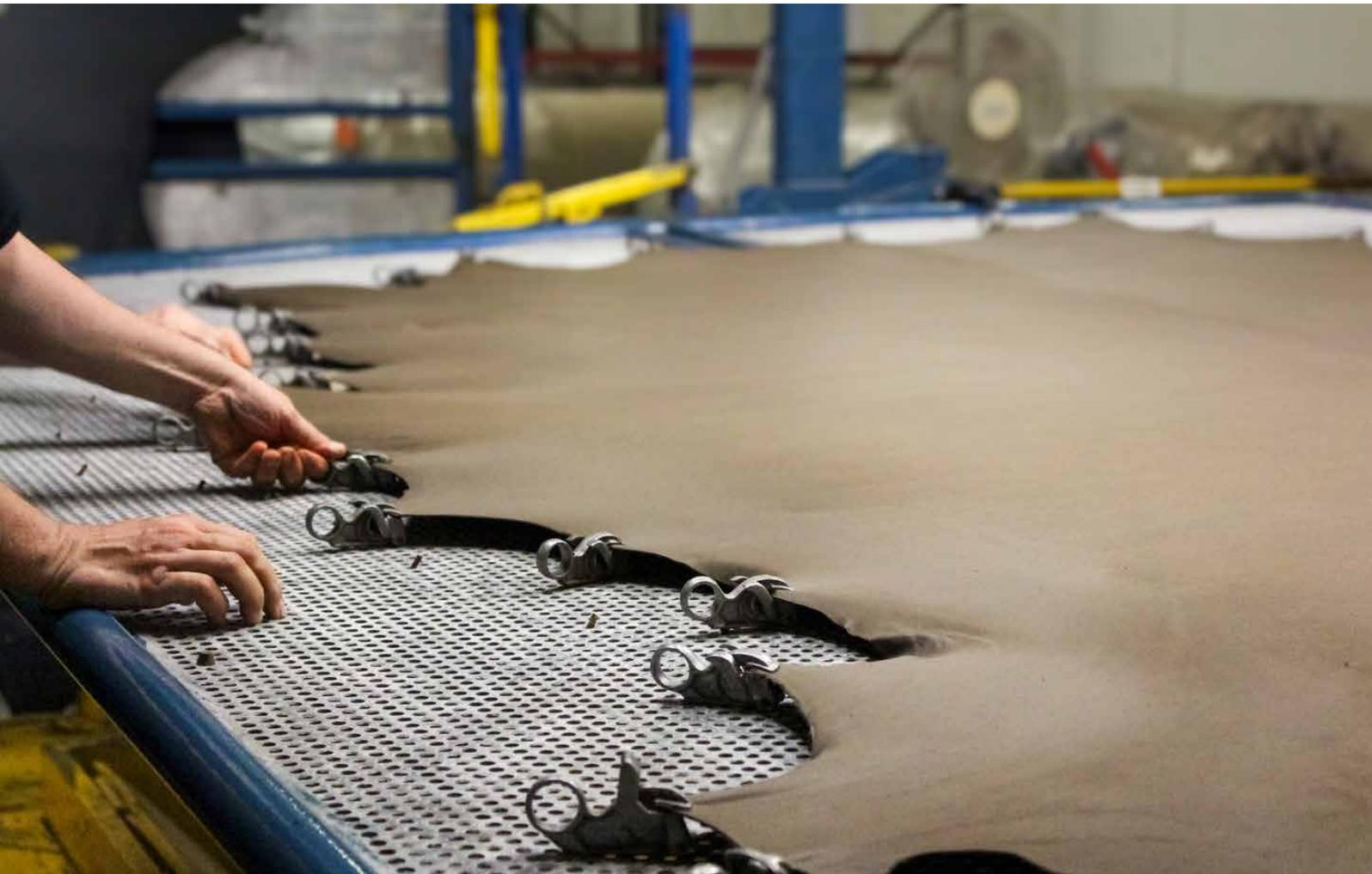
Treated hides are essentially raw materials for the facilities Garrett and Townsend run in the US. There is unavoidable wastage as the tanned hides are worked – natural products, hides are inescapably irregular in shape, while business jet seats, for example, are not. Offcuts are an inevitability and careful thought is needed if they are not to be thrown away.

Townsend Leather has identified several uses and outlets for offcuts and scrap, as Eckler explains: “We use much of the larger scrap for sampling, which our customers require for nearly every project. We also work with international companies that take large amounts for reprocessing and reuse, and we send boxes of it to have leather wristlets, wallets, pencil cases, passport covers and other accessories made as giveaways at our trade shows. And we have several customers who buy boxes of scrap for use in their own small leather accessories business or donate

them to schools or nursing homes. Here in Upstate New York, we host an annual garage sale that’s open to the public, offering any remnants and boxes of scrap we have at a huge discount. It’s amazing to see the creativity so many people have and what they can make out of our leather.”

Sand confirms that Garrett Leather also makes careful use of offcuts for sampling and explains how technology reduces leather waste. “We use a state-of-the-art computerised double-bed cutting machine that minimises offcuts. The machine has a reciprocating blade instead of a rotary blade, which makes far more precise cuts. This cutting system keeps the leather stationary, with no pulling, resulting in accurate, clean cuts for small details and intricate patterns. The dual table allows us to plot cuts on one hide while a second hide is being cut or pieces are being stacked, providing increased efficiency. Most notably, the machine accurately cuts ‘common lines’, which means there is minimal space between cut pieces.”

Hands-on human expertise remains essential to the leather industry. Townsend Leather



Elsewhere, Bombardier manufactures the seats for its Global range in-house, a process which, of course, produces offcuts. The leather is sourced only from carefully chosen vendors. Matthew Nicholls, Senior Advisor, Public Relations and Communications at the airframer, notes: “Getting these vendors onboarded as ‘Bombardier-approved’ suppliers is a complex and lengthy process that can take years of effort through audits and contractual negotiations. Leather is chosen based on consistency in quality, workability and colour options to support our clients’ custom aircraft interiors and the highest overall standards.”

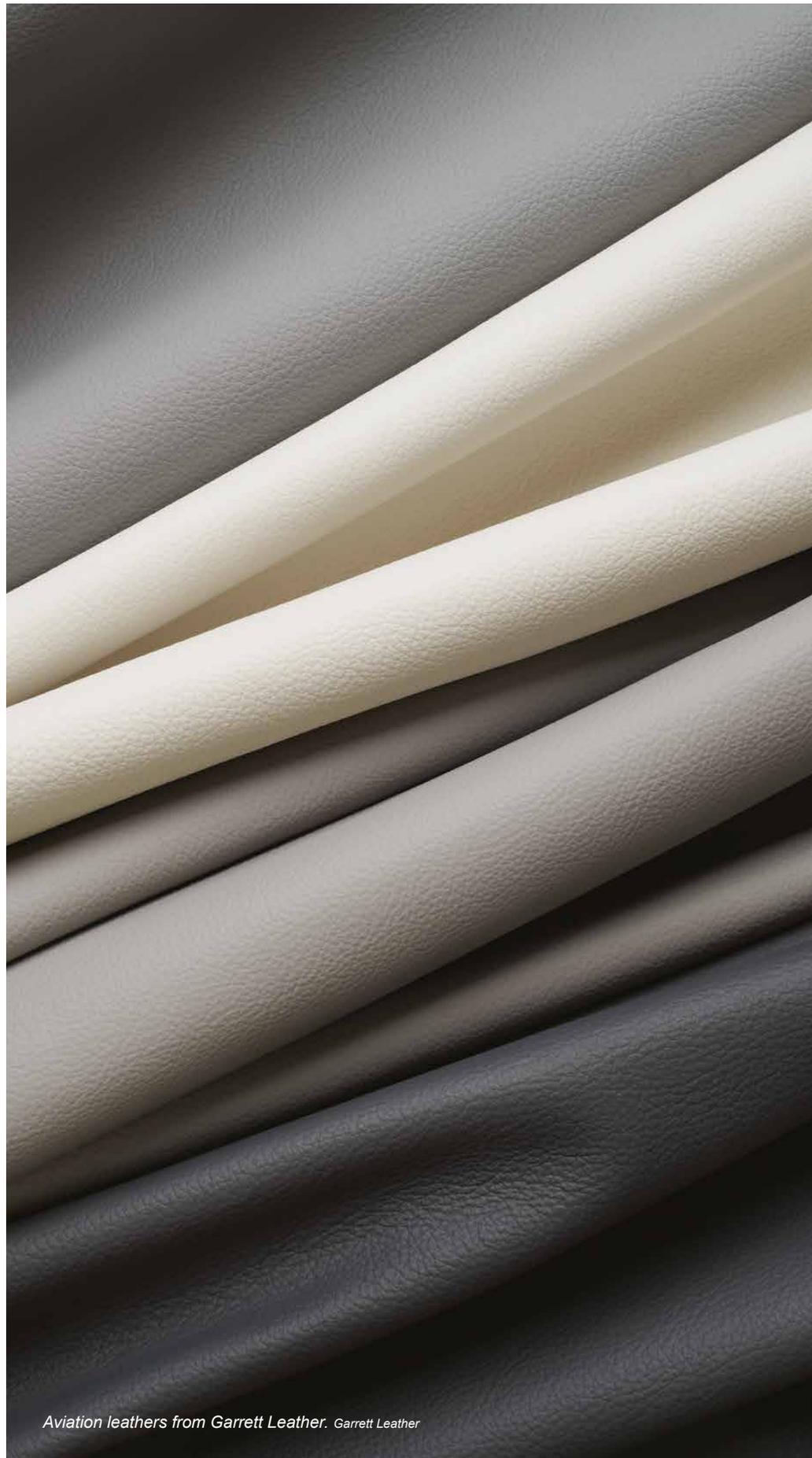
Sustainability takes a prominent place in Bombardier’s customer offer and, like Garrett and Townsend, over the years the company has devised a variety of uses for offcuts. “This includes using excess leather for aircraft mock-ups and creating merchandise items. We have also donated excess leather and fabric to several charities,” Nicholls confirms.

Recently, Bombardier found an additional use for ‘Global leather’, teaming with WANT Les Essentiels to create an exclusive range of bags and accessories. Nicholls explains: “We wanted to work closely with a Canadian company to develop bespoke items that we could use to create upscale, unique client gifts. The process included using the leather used to create our Nuage seats to design a custom client gift meant to travel with them as they traverse the world.

“It was essential that these gifts were reflective of our new brand and, depending on the project, Bombardier works closely with the WANT Les Essentiels team to align on colours and the leather amounts needed to develop specific projects, whether luggage tags, air tags or passport holders.”

These items can be manufactured from offcuts, while for larger items, including a variety of bags, different shades are used depending on the available leather.

UK-based Gen Phoenix does not produce leather and neither does it serve the business aviation market. But it has made significant inroads into the transportation industries, including airlines, with its Eleather product. Eleather takes tannery waste materials, passes them through an extraordinary, somewhat magical production plant, and from them creates a material indistinguishable in look and feel from traditional leather.





Advanced technology features in modern leather production, here exemplified by precision cutting equipment at Townsend Leather. Townsend Leather

The requirements of private aviation are likely always to be too small to make economic sense for Gen Phoenix, but the company could become another consumer of offcuts and scrap. Nicola Rapley, Director of Marketing & Aviation Sales, reveals: “Gen Phoenix is currently in the trial stage, working with a select number of tanneries and leather finishers that supply premium markets, including automotive and aviation. These partners generate finished leather waste during production, including offcuts, edge trims and finished scrap that would otherwise go to landfill or incineration. Incorporating these waste streams is an important part of our future circular materials model and directly supports sustainability goals within our brand partners’ supply chains.

“Gen Phoenix has developed processes to reintroduce finished leather waste and offcuts as a raw material. Airlines

or cut-and-sew operations can send leather offcuts for reprocessing, provided the material stack-up is compatible or unlaminated. Clean, finished leather offcuts, even if pigmented, coated, or embossed, are suitable. But once foam is bonded to the leather, separation becomes impractical, which prevents recycling through our process. Stack-up, that is the bonding of leather with other materials, is therefore critical. If the leather has been installed in a way that allows it to be removed as a single-material layer, without bonded foam or complex composites, it can be assessed for reprocessing.

“However, most aviation seat covers and panels are traditionally produced as multi-layer laminates, where leather is bonded directly to foam for comfort and fire performance. In these cases, the laminated construction makes recycling extremely difficult. This is why design for circularity is such an important conversation. Decisions

.....

“We continually invest in production equipment and have reduced chemical consumption and emissions by more than 30%”

Sarah Eckler, SVP, Sales & Marketing, Townsend Leather

.....

made at the specification stage directly affect whether materials can be recovered decades later.”

Tradition and tech

Back in New York state, Eckler and Sand consider the unusual combination of tradition and technology that defines the leather industry. “We often remind people that leather is humankind’s oldest textile,” remarks Eckler. “At the same time, we love taking advantage of the newest technology to improve our efficiency, environmental soundness and capabilities, from our waste water treatment plant to new colour data/colour reading machines, digitised cutting, quilting and perforating machines, and newer, modern spraylines, drums, and drying machines and tunnels.

“But these technologies cannot replace the human aspect of making leather. A lot of it is done well only through years of experience. The process of colouring/aniline-dyeing hides is truly chemistry – each dye lot and hide can absorb differently and it takes a lot of experience to achieve the desired outcome with minimal shading. It’s the same for finishing the leather – the data colour machines can help suggest the most efficient formulas to arrive at the required colour, but because colour is so critical to our customers, we have a very low tolerance range on colour matching and often need to err in the direction of the other materials a customer aircraft has in it, matching our leather to a carpet, for example.



The Nuage seat in a Global 8000. Bombardier

“It is still truly a craft – leather is a natural product, and each hide has its own characteristics. We look to enhance the best qualities of each hide, and it really takes a human to do this to the level of excellence we are looking to achieve. This is what makes our work special, fun and fulfilling.”

Sand tells a similar story at Garrett Leather. “Tradition and technology are instrumental to our success. The primary manufacturing processes continue to improve and evolve, from initial selection of raw materials, through all stages of manufacturing, including tanning, dyeing, and finishing. Understanding fibre structure and the fundamentals of every step is still the bedrock of crafting high-performing, beautiful leather.

“While the steps of crafting leather remain unchanged, the technological advances in each process are extraordinary. For example, advanced equipment moves hides from one area to the next.

.....

“Gen Phoenix has developed processes to reintroduce finished leather waste and offcuts as a raw material”

Nicola Rapley, Director of Marketing & Aviation Sales, Gen Phoenix

.....

Computerised drums achieve virtually 100% dye absorption. Conveyor racks are suspended from the ceiling to allow some hides to air dry, while sophisticated heating

units efficiently dry others, and elaborate water filtration systems ensure clean water is returned to the environment. We continuously look for ways to improve our processes, and technology has helped us grow our business exponentially.”

Marketers, both Eckler and Sand have well-crafted messages for potential customers, founded upon the highest-quality products and their passion for the industry.

“We believe we have the best embossers, colour matchers and finishers of leather in the entire world and we take extreme pride in being able to deliver leather that looks and feels just like our customers designed or imagined,” says Eckler.

Sand, meanwhile, enthuses: “Garrett Leather provides the highest-quality leather following our unwavering commitment to upholding standards that meet modern flight safety and sustainability requirements without losing the tactility and longevity that make it the material of choice for premium cabins.” ■