

Transforming B2B Aviation Marketing with the C Series

SimpliFlying worked with Bombardier to revamp its marketing strategy for the C Series aircraft ahead of its entry into service. The results were noteworthy.



22 HOURS

of one-to-one interviews conducted during the brand assessment and GAP analysis.

30 DAYS

to deliver marketing strategy roadmap with a new positioning for the C Series after assessment.

2000 VIEWS

of [#NotLegacy Show](#) as it streamed Live on Facebook and Twitter. Interviewees included Tony Fernandes, Steve Udvar-Hazy and more.

BACKGROUND

Bombardier Aerospace is the 3rd biggest aircraft manufacturer in the world and perhaps one of the most daring ones. Their latest aircraft, the C Series stands testament to their spirit of innovation. The C Series is the first brand new single aisle aircraft in over 30 years and has a host of groundbreaking features and technology. With the entry into service (EIS) within months, Bombardier was in urgent need to put out consistent and coherent marketing messages that best showcased these capabilities to potential clients.

CHALLENGE

The new management wanted to stand out from the competition. It engaged SimpliFlying to do a 360-degree assessment of the C Series marketing strategy ahead of its EIS on July 15th, 2016. Due to aggressive tactics deployed by competition, as well as internal pressures to drive sales, it was critical to make the aircraft stand out. The strategy to bring out the unique features of the C Series to prospective customers and provide a single marketing message that resonated with the internal teams to unify their efforts.

SOLUTION

SimpliFlying kicked off the project by conducting over 20 hours of face-to-face interviews with the C Series marketing, customer services and test pilot teams. These interviews served a dual purpose. Firstly, they helped us discover the marketing strategies that resonate equally with the people who built the product and the prospective buyers. Secondly, they helped us get a buy-in from all departments and across different managerial levels, ensuring that the marketing strategy was an extension of the product's core competencies. Most importantly, we discovered the essence of what made the C Series special.

Based on the findings from the interviews, SimpliFlying delivered a detailed assessment document for the C Series' marketing strategy. It highlighted the shortcomings of the current approach and suggested ways to overcome those through coherent messaging. We went above and beyond our mandate and also came up with a tagline that would unite the vision of the teams within Bombardier and the expectation of C Series' clients.

In our initial assessment, the SimpliFlying team pointed out, "Bombardier needs to fight on its own turf, rather than allowing legacy players to play their game." The keyword there for us was 'legacy'. By stating clearly that the C Series is not legacy, Bombardier would imply that the latest models from

others in the category are dependent on their predecessors.

For the first time the term *legacy*, largely associated with airlines, would be applied to aircraft manufacturers. We dug further and realized that the C Series' unique selling proposition was giving pilots, mechanics, airline planners and passengers freedom from the limitation of 'legacy' frameworks and rules. That gave birth to the core positioning: **Freedom. Not Legacy.**

Today, ['Freedom. Not Legacy'](#) is the official tagline for the C Series and has united the entire C Series team's marketing and sales efforts for the future. It has even appeared on a billboard at Times Square!

ABOVE AND BEYOND

Going beyond its mandate, SimpliFlying also came up with tactical campaigns to be [implemented](#) during the EIS of the CS100 at Farnborough 2016. One such campaign was the [#NotLegacy Show](#) at Farnborough 2016, where SimpliFlying also led the implementation. The NotLegacy Show focused on interviewing industry stalwarts such as Steve Udvar Hazy, Mary Ellen Jones, Davis Cush, Tony Fernandes, Robert Deluce as guests. It focused on their individual entrepreneurial journeys in aviation. The show generated significant traction for the C Series brand and is a testimony to the seamless implementation despite significant technical and coordination challenges at the show.



"SimpliFlying were already working on this project with us for some weeks, when Shashank (*SimpliFlying* CEO) called me while I was driving back home and said: "Patrick, we have it!" He then explained the whole idea behind the new Freedom. Not Legacy positioning. I immediately knew we had the new angle we wanted. Don't drive and talk to Shashank, the shock of ideas could be fatal! We then developed the full campaign that [culminated](#) at the Farnborough airshow. The only (nice) problem I had between my teams and SimpliFlying: I couldn't stop them! We brought SimpliFlying in to provide us with a new approach, and that's what they delivered."

– Patrick Baudis, VP Marketing, Bombardier Commercial Aircraft