MINIMIZING CRASH RISKS: CAN TECH MAKE AVIATION SAFER?

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The never-ceasing technology quest keeps shaping the landscape of aviation. Transforming existing payment technologies, exploring the vista of cryptocurrencies use, fostering artificial intelligence and augmented reality are just a few of recent developments that are aimed to improve aviation safety by focusing on what human mind cannot ensure – but progressive tech conceivably can.

Within the matrix of aviation there are some major steps taken from entertainment to more serious issues. For instance, recent augmented reality developments are aimed at enhancing pilots' set of capabilities in the cockpit. When a project named AeroGlass presented its self-contained smart glasses back in 2016, it became clear that sooner rather than later the experience of pilots could be extended and complemented by spick-and-span new dimensions, helping them visualize terrain, manage navigation, and, in fact, store all airspace information eliminating the need of other instruments.

Blockchain capabilities can secure transactions, making them visible to every member of the network at the same time, which guarantees transparency of a transaction and makes each tiny change noticeable and fully trackable by every member of the chain. Barring financial transactions, blockchain principles suppose all information is stored in a cloud

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register, thus the probability of data loss becomes almost impossible. Safer data storage, in turn, amounts that issues of data forgery may be prevented much easier. The logged data cannot be modified, averting flight log forgery, flight hours underreporting or any other kind of falsification that can cause an accident.

Several companies are already applying safer data storage solution in aviation. For instance, in 2017 Airbus together with Palantir Technologies introduced Skywise – open aviation data platform, aiming to become the single access point to all of the data, stored in a secure cloud format. Integrating operational, maintenance, and aircraft data into one platform, the program intends to organize a more convenient and reliable storage for airlines and Airbus records.

“The vexing question considering incorporation of new technologies, however, is whether airlines will be ready to digitize all the information that previously was stored as paper records. And how much time and effort the transition to safe and secured digital mode will take, considering issues ? like reframing confidentiality ? this move unequivocally evokes”, points out Skaiste Knyzaite, General Manager of AIR Convention 2018 ? an aviation forum heavily focused on technology and innovation.

Whether or not these particular developments will be able to positively affect aviation safety by balancing the level of machine/human participation remains a question. However, the actions taken already reflect the hive mind enthusiasm by letting technologies take the lead and control more and more processes within the context.

More opinions and aviation experts’ forecasts will be presented during a specifically dedicated Technology and Innovation speaking panel during AIR Convention Global Aviation Forum in Vilnius, Lithuania, on September 26-27, 2018.

More information about the event, conference panels and speakers can be found here: https://www.airconvention.com/

09 AUGUST 2018

ARTICLE LINK:
https://ids.50skyshades.com/news/airlines/minimizing-crash-risks-can-tech-make-aviation-safer

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