

The flying car might be your next company car

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We've been promised flying cars for, oh, about as long as we've been promised jetpacks. But Woburn, Mass.-based is ready to finally fulfill one of those dreams: It has spent a decade developing the Transition, a car with airplane wings whose first prototype took flight in 2009. President and cofounder Carl Dietrich says he could get this baby on the road in just two years, assuming he raises another round of financing to cover production.

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Dietrich: Absolutely. The Transition has the potential to help businesspeople do more in a day. Not only can you land closer to your final destination compared to airline travel, but you can drive straight from the airport instead of arranging another ride.

Other than saving travel time, though, how does this stand to benefit businesspeople?

For example, real estate developers with properties spread across a region could visit more sites more quickly, and regional salespeople could cover more territory. And a flying car also gives you freedom to spend more time with .

Combining a car with a plane must have presented pretty unique regulatory challenges. How do you address those?

To be road legal, the Transition required certain exemptions. For example, we use an aircraft-type polycarbonate windshield instead of automotive safety glass, to preserve visibility if the screen is broken by a bird strike. We

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were also allowed to use slightly less advanced airbags than those in the latest cars, mainly to -- our small company simply cannot afford the newest smart versions. But the vehicle still offers automotive safety technology not previously found in aviation.

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The TF-X, which looks far into the future, would allow the owner to prepare for meetings while the vehicle flies itself at up to 200 miles per hour -- roughly twice as fast as the Transition.