



CASE STUDY

# MORE THAN TWO DECADES OF INNOVATION AND COLLABORATION

Thornton Aviation and Freeman Spogli's shared care  
of a Falcon 2000

“What stands out about Thornton Aviation is their attention to detail and genuine commitment to our mission. They’ve been with us for years, ensuring continuity and the highest standards of service.”

**RON SPOGLI, FREEMAN SPOGLI**

For more than 20 years, Thornton Aviation and Freeman Spogli have cultivated a partnership built on trust, performance and a shared commitment to excellence. This enduring relationship has seen Thornton Aviation serving as a steadfast collaborator. The Falcon 2000 stands as a testament to this partnership, reflecting the continuous investment in safety, technology and passenger experience that defines both organizations.

This long-standing partnership has also seen Thornton Aviation perform three C checks on the Falcon 2000, underscoring the depth of their maintenance experience and commitment to the aircraft’s continued reliability and safety. Their familiarity with the airframe, developed over years of routine and major inspections, has played a critical role in supporting the aircraft’s operational excellence for Freeman Spogli.

### **PROJECT SCOPE: COMPREHENSIVE AIRCRAFT UPGRADES**

In the latest phase of this long-term relationship, Thornton Aviation undertook a major upgrade of the Freeman Spogli Falcon 2000, delivering a suite of enhancements designed to set new standards in comfort, connectivity and cockpit technology. The project encompassed the installation of Universal Avionics’ InSight Integrated Flight Display system, a state-of-the-art cockpit upgrade that brings advanced situational

awareness and reliability. Alongside this, Thornton Aviation executed a full interior refurbishment, the dry bay modification to enhance safety and structural integrity, a 1C inspection and a cabin management system overhaul to improve passenger experience.

Gogo’s L5 system and PS Engineering’s PAC45 audio panels were installed, ensuring seamless inflight communication and entertainment. Every aspect of the project was managed with precision, resulting in successful delivery on time and within budget.

“Thornton Aviation has consistently delivered for us, year after year. Their team knows our aircraft inside and out, and we trust them to handle both routine maintenance and major upgrades,” said Tyler Thomas, Freeman Spogli’s chief pilot. “The new InSight cockpit is a game changer for our operations, and the upgraded

**AIRCRAFT:**  
Dassault Falcon 2000

**SCOPE OF WORK:**

- Universal InSight upgrade
- Cabin upgrades
- Scheduled maintenance
- Dry bay modification

cabin systems have been very well received by our passengers. It’s rare to find a partner that brings this level of dedication and expertise to every project.”

Ron Spogli, representing Freeman Spogli’s leadership, added, “What stands out about Thornton Aviation is their attention to detail and genuine commitment to our mission. They’ve been with us for years, ensuring continuity and the highest standards



of service. The recent upgrades have elevated our capabilities, and we look forward to continuing this partnership for years to come.” Freeman Spogli is a private equity firm based in California. When the aircraft isn’t being used by the company, it is available for charter through Clay Lacy Aviation.

“Our relationship with Freeman Spogli is a source of pride for our entire organization,” said Steve Zimmerman, Thornton Aviation CEO. “Delivering this comprehensive upgrade required coordination across our engineering, avionics and interior teams. We’re proud to have maintained the trust of the Freeman Spogli team over the years, and we remain committed to supporting their evolving needs.”

While the Falcon 2000 is known to have a stable flight deck, upgrades like the Universal InSight cockpit presented unique challenges. Specifically, this aircraft was equipped with Universal FMSs, whereas the STC certification aircraft featured Collins FMSs. This difference led Thornton Aviation to perform several deviations, including those related to the transponders and TAWS. The team worked diligently to address and resolve these challenges as well as other discrepancies identified during operational testing.



Vince Russo, director of avionics, noted, “This InSight cockpit installation was a technical milestone for our team. Collaborating closely with the owner, Universal Avionics and the STC holder ensured that every detail met the client’s expectations. Successful delivery, on schedule and within budget, speaks to the strength of our partnership and the expertise of our staff.”

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### **TYLER THOMAS, CHIEF PILOT**

“What I like best about the Thornton Aviation team is the professionalism and the communication. I know that they’re going to do a great job and get the airplane returned on time.”

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“What truly distinguishes this partnership is the exceptional technical capability of the Thornton Aviation team. Their sales and technical professionals possess a comprehensive understanding of our systems, enabling seamless integration and optimized performance with every installation. This expertise, combined with their unwavering focus on customer satisfaction, allows us to

deliver a superior experience for flight departments,” said Marc Bouliane, vice president, business development, marketing and services for Universal Avionics.

The story of Thornton Aviation and Freeman Spogli is defined by the people behind the aircraft. From technicians who have worked on the same airframe for years to pilots who rely on Thornton Aviation’s expertise for every flight, the relationship is built on mutual respect and shared goals. The continuity provided by Thornton Aviation has ensured that institutional knowledge and personalized service remain at the forefront.

The recent upgrades to the Falcon 2000 have set a new benchmark for performance and passenger satisfaction. More importantly, they have reaffirmed the value of a trusted partnership—one that balances technological innovation with a deep understanding of client needs. As both organizations look ahead, the legacy of collaboration promises continued success, adaptability and a commitment to excellence for years to come.





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