

AUTUMN 2019

BUSINESS AVIATION MAGAZINE

Power of 5

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Well, here we all are again, gearing up for yet another mega-show as the NBAA Exhibition and Conference comes around once more. We've already seen some rumblings of complaint about the way these events keep escalating in price, but when they're good, they're great, and NBAA rarely disappoints.

For all the hoo-ha over costs, there is no doubt that these shows do provide the industry with a wonderful platform to showcase its best offerings. A glance at the more than 1000-strong exhibitor's list gives a pretty good glimpse of how intensive and fascinating this year's show is going to be.

This industry is definitely on the move, as far as innovation and change is concerned. With every month that passes we seem to get closer to the era of the light electric aircraft. The Alpha Electro, from Pipistrel, is already being touted as a great light trainer. Its two batteries provide an ultra low-cost hour of flight time, providing ample opportunity for a student to hone his or her take-off and landing skills. Other aircraft are in the process of prototyping, with ranges up to 1000 kilometres or better.

Electric aircraft won't be doing transatlantic flights any time soon, but they are close to bringing about a transformation in the one-to-two hour flight, air taxi market. We'll probably be seeing them in Europe within a year or three.

Then there is the whole biofuels revolution. It is going to take the industry some time to ramp up production to the point where the majority of fuel facilities at airports are running a 30-50 per cent mix of biofuels and petroleum fuels, but a good beginning has been made. Expect this to be one of the key themes again at NBAA.

This is our biggest ever issue of BAM, with more top CEO interviews than ever. Our thanks once again to our advertising partners and friends in the industry for making it all possible.

We've changed things up with the traditional BAM After Party this go round. This time we're doing a professional networking cocktail reception for sponsors and BAM supporters at the 1923 Bourbon Bar, inside Mandalay Bay Hotel and Casino, on 23rd October, from 8 p.m. to 11 p.m. Our thanks to the sponsors, who include Jet Edge, Aeristo, Academy 146, Stevens Aerospace and Defense Systems, AIC Title Service, Flightdocs, Straube's, Skylink, Saint Louis Designs, Inc., Design Q, Lee Aerospace, MSB, Limousines Worldwide.com, Chicago Jet Group and WesternJet Aviation.

ANTHONY HARRINGTON

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AUTUMN

ISSUE 11 2019

10 The Power of 5
Gogo's Mike Syverson, Senior Vice President, Operations and Engineering, and members of the senior management team on the benefits of Gogo's coming 5G service

16 The OEM ecosystem
Kriya Shortt, Senior Vice President, Textron Aviation, on the company's philosophy and approach to after-market services

22 Growing an MRO
Jim Hansen, Founder, Owner and General Manager of Western Jet Aviation on the challenges involved in founding and growing an MRO

28 Why integration matters
Rick Heine, Chairman and CEO of Flightdocs, and Greg Heine, President, on the company's integrated approach to flight operations

36 Keeping them flying
Derek Zimmerman, President, Customer Support, Gulfstream, on what it takes to keep the global fleet flying

44 Optimising connectivity
Claudio D'Amico, Business Area Director for Business Aviation at Viasat on transforming in-flight broadband services



48 Staying the best
Christian Sasfai, President, Stevens Aerospace, on the challenges of running one of the US's top MRO businesses

56 Making growth happen
Jim Rankin, CEO, West Star Aviation, talks about the company's growth strategy

62 Solving the recruitment challenge
Shannon Gill, Managing Director of MSB Aerospace LLC, the US-division of MSB Group, on company recruitment

66 A winning training formula
Andy Trincherro, Academy 147's co-founder and Managing Director, on the company's five years in the training sphere and the challenges to growth

70 Sound vision, strong strategy
Dave Paddock, President, Jet Aviation, on the company's strategic vision under his leadership

78 Four top FBOs
Kirstie Pickering looks at four highly rated US FBOs

86 The power of added value
Clay Healey, the owner of AIC Title Service, on the company's title services and its expansion plans

90 Good times or no?
Jay Mesinger, CEO/President of Mesinger Jet Sales reflects on 2019

94 Painting the Skies
Straube's Aircraft Services on what it takes to run a top class coast-to-coast aircraft painting service from multiple locations



98 Africa and beyond
Dawit Lemma, founder and CEO of Krimson, begins a series of columns talking about business challenges in Africa. Here he talks to Jane Stanbury about the complexity of permits

102 Re-imagined blast from the past
Howard Guy, CEO at Design Q, on the Ecurie Ecosse LM69 racing car

106 BAM's EBACE After Party in pictures

108 A great first year
Citadel Completion's Managing Director Joe Bonita reflects on the company's first year



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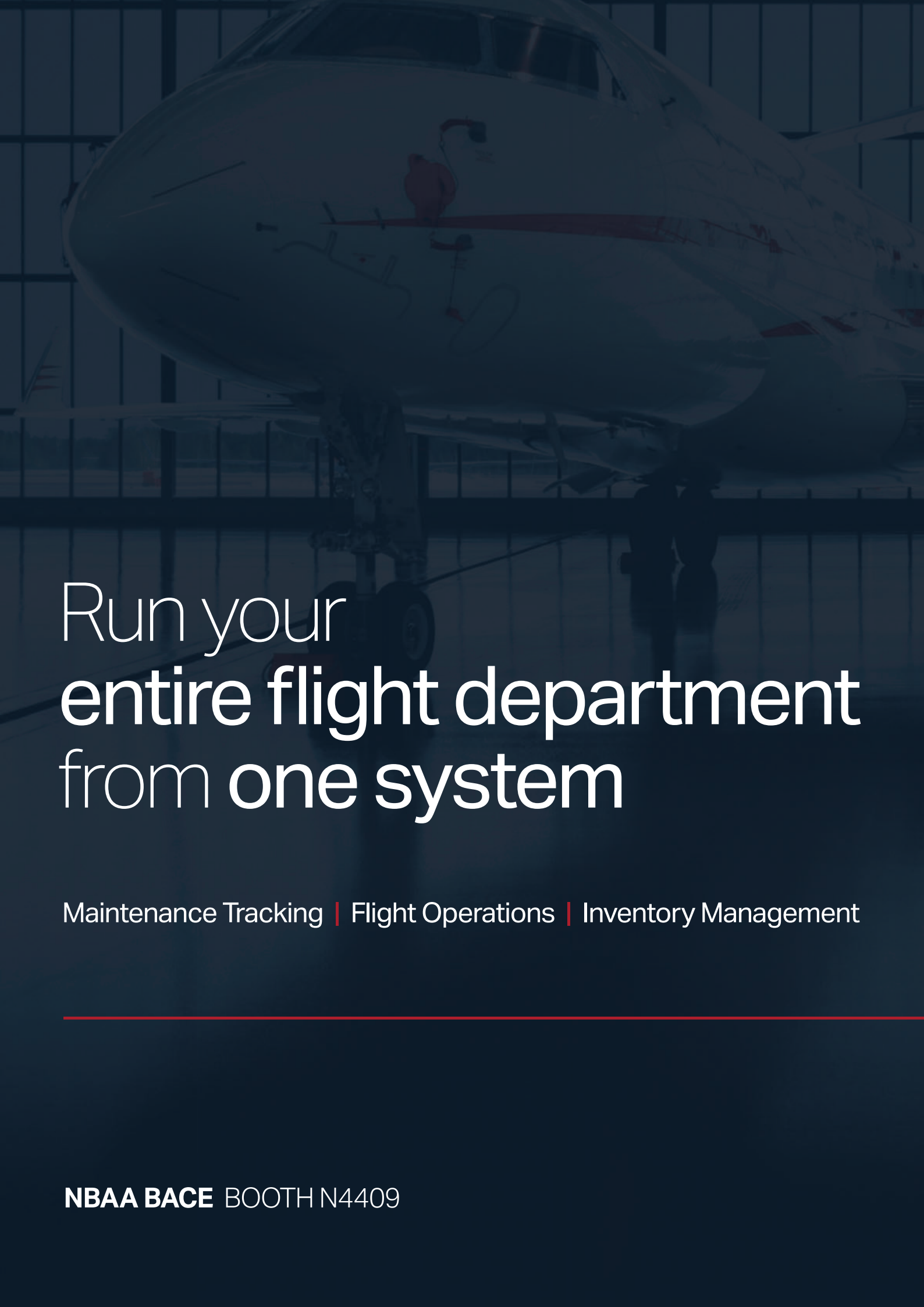


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THE POWER OF 5G

In May, Gogo announced it would be the first inflight connectivity provider to build a 5G network dedicated to aviation. It was a significant announcement not only for Gogo but for all of aviation, and specifically for those who fly privately, because it marked the first time that an air-to-ground network would launch using the same technology that the wireless carriers are using in their networks, and at nearly the same time.

BAM sat down with members of Gogo's senior leadership team to talk about 5G – specifically what it is, what the company is doing to bring Gogo 5G to the market, and what it will mean for those who fly on business jets in North America.

Q: From a big picture standpoint, what impact will Gogo's 5G network have in business aviation?

Mike Syverson, Senior Vice President, Operations and Engineering: We believe it is the most impactful development we've announced in many years. Gogo 5G will be significantly better than any other inflight Wi-Fi experience in the market today. Not only will Gogo 5G be faster and provide greater bandwidth, it will be the most reliable network for aircraft, thanks to the redundancy we'll offer with our existing 4G network. When we launch, we will provide nationwide coverage, and from a customer-service perspective, we're making it easier than ever for our customers who have AVANCE L5 installed, to upgrade to Gogo 5G.

Q: I've heard you talk about the Power of Five. Can you explain what that means?

Mike Syverson: There are five key differentiators that we will deliver with Gogo 5G. 1) Performance, which is excellent already for those using our AVANCE L5, and will be even better with all the benefits outlined below that

Gogo 5G will deliver; 2) Reliability; the redundancy of our networks is a critical differentiator that separates us from every other inflight connectivity provider and will enable a seamless experience nationwide; 3) Scalability, meaning Gogo 5G is more adaptable to new technology and the changing needs of users; 4) The software-centric design of the AVANCE platform; 5) Our superior customer service.

Q: What are Gogo's plans for rolling out the 5G network?

Mike Syverson: We plan to launch our 5G network in 2021 on a nationwide (US and Canada) scale in North America, and then add additional capacity when and where we need to, like we did when we launched our original network. In essence, we will flip a switch to turn on the nationwide Gogo 5G network and make adjustments thereafter as needed.

Q: What does the use of unlicensed spectrum allow Gogo to do?

Mike Syverson: Using unlicensed spectrum along with the spectrum we own is a big competitive advantage. Through channel bonding and carrier aggregation, we are able to use a much bigger frequency range as we design the

“ We're making it easier than ever for our customers who have AVANCE L5 installed, to upgrade to Gogo 5G.
 - Mike Syverson





“ Gogo 5G will be significantly better than any other inflight Wi-Fi experience in the market today.
- Mike Syverson

network. Additionally, as spectrum opportunities become available and the ability for us to use either continuous spectrum or spectrum that is not in the same block, we will be able to add additional capacity and capabilities to our network without having to build a whole new network in the future. We're designing the Gogo 5G network with all of that in mind.

Q: What is Gogo doing to make the transition to 5G as smooth as possible for customers?

Dave Glenn, Senior Vice President, Customer Operations: The biggest thing with ATG on an airplane is that the technology evolves so fast. It's a much faster cycle for connectivity on an aircraft. Many operators are used to putting avionics on an aircraft and having it last 15 years. The point here is that things move much slower in the aviation industry than in telecom. Because the upgrades are done more frequently, customers have told us they want us to make the process simpler and easier – decrease the cost, decrease the complexity of the installation, and make it faster. We've listened carefully to that feedback and our development teams have responded.

5G is a good example. With Gogo 5G you'll need to install new antennas, but we're making the 5G antennas with the same hole patterns that the AVANCE L5 antennas have. And even though customers may need to install a new LRU, with Gogo 5G, the new hardware slides right in where previous equipment sat. Those are examples of the things we're doing to make it easier for the customer.

Q: What will happen to the current Gogo Biz 4G network once Gogo 5G is available?

Mike Syverson: Gogo is going to utilise our networks to ensure that customers will get the best experience they can get when using our air-to-ground network. Our 4G network will remain operational, it's not going anywhere. With 5G we're adding capacity without sacrificing any of the current capabilities our customers have on today's networks. People shouldn't worry that they'll lose their existing coverage if they have an ATG system or an AVANCE L3 or L5 system onboard. Nothing with those systems changes. With 5G we have the ability to utilise our networks and always ensure our customers will have the best experience they can get.

Q: Gogo talks a lot about the importance of network redundancy. Why does that matter?

Mike Syverson: Redundancy of networks is critical to ensuring a seamless connection, especially when flying for any notable length of time or in congested airspace. In the same way your cellphone goes from 4G LTE to 3G, and then back to 4G LTE, with our 5G network you'll see a 5G connection and then if needed the system will connect to the 4G signal, and then jump back to 5G when it becomes available. Our service will work the same as the experience you have on your cellphone when it comes to network availability, so if 5G isn't there, 4G will be. Even better, the customer won't know when they are going back and forth.

Q: How important is the AVANCE platform relative to 5G?

Andy Geist, Senior Vice President, Business Aviation Solutions: Gogo 5G is another area where we'll be a market disruptor – and that's something we've done from our founding. It's in our roots. The AVANCE platform is a recent example of our innovative approach to enabling



“With Gogo 5G you'll need to install new antennas, but we're making the 5G antennas with the same hole patterns that the AVANCE L5 antennas have.
- Dave Glenn



“Gogo 5G is another area where we'll be a market disruptor – and that's something we've done from our founding. It's in our roots.
- Andy Geist

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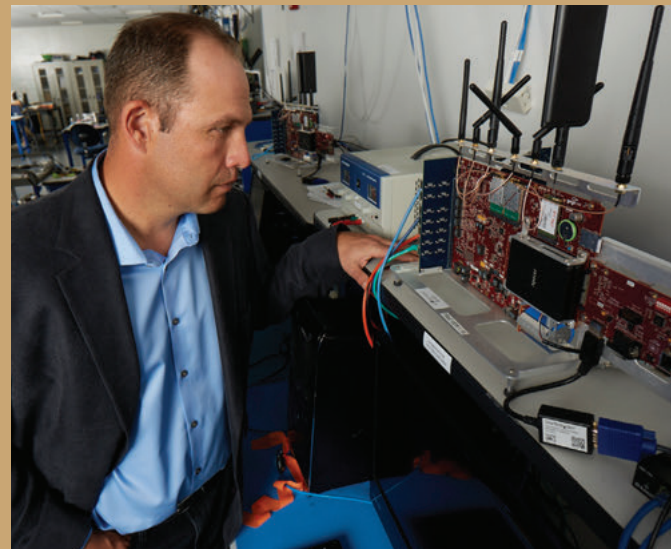


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connectivity. AVANCE is software-centric and is really the brains on board that enables us to be much more efficient with how we use our spectrum, and we are able to enhance the onboard experience through our software.

Additionally, we're making sure that the investments people made when they installed an AVANCE L5 system will continue to pay off. You'll need AVANCE L5 to upgrade to Gogo 5G, and it will be the most seamless upgrade we've ever designed.

Q: Will the capabilities with 5G be that much different than with 4G?

Mike Syverson: With Gogo 5G our goal is to deliver bandwidth to the airplane that will provide an experience in the air that is similar to the experiences that are available on the ground. With 5G, additional streaming capabilities become available along with so many other enhanced capabilities – it will be a significant change.

Q: How is Gogo's network unique from other networks serving aviation?

Dave Glenn: Gogo is the only inflight connectivity provider that owns and optimises its whole network infrastructure, and is the only provider that manufactures the equipment for its onboard systems. Because we operate and manage our systems end to end, we can monitor and analyse the performance, and the security, of our network and onboard systems, and quickly deploy corrections when and where needed. No other provider can do that.

Q: What steps has Gogo taken to be able to launch 5G so quickly?

Andy Geist: We're launching Gogo 5G at roughly the same time the wireless carriers will be launching 5G on the ground. That is noteworthy because in the past aviation has typically lagged years behind, relative to the technology on the ground. But because of our innovative approach to software, hardware design, and our network technology which is already in place, we are able to operate at a different speed and pace than many others in aviation.

Q: What makes Gogo different from everyone else from a customer service perspective?

Dave Glenn: Our main focus the last several years has been on transparency and providing more information to our customers. By introducing new systems

such as Gogo DASH, which has both an app and a ground portal, we can give the end user on the aircraft insight into the onboard system at a device level. It helps our operators understand their system and it makes it easier to get to the actual issue. The 5G experience will be added into the DASH application so they will have that information right off the bat as soon as they buy it.

Q: From a network perspective what is Gogo doing to ensure a seamless transition for customers?

Dave Glenn: The main thing relative to the network is we have a team of network professionals who have built networks before. We have a network today comprised of more than 250 towers. The tenure of our network team is such that many of the people who built our original network and put our original equipment on those towers are still here. They know our systems, they know the geography, they've done similar planning – it's not our first rodeo, so to speak. While others are trying to figure out how to do this on the fly, we've done it a couple times over, and Gogo 5G was the next natural progression.

Q: When you talk about scalability, can you explain what that means?

Mike Syverson: The big thing with scalability is it gives us the ability to add additional frequencies to the network without forcing customers to swap out hardware on their aircraft. That means the upgrade is simpler and more cost effective for the customer. Scalability also allows us to deliver higher performance to the network without the need to build a whole new network, which is simpler and more cost effective for us. |BAM

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THE OEM ECOSYSTEM

Kriya Shortt, Senior Vice President, Textron Aviation, talks to Anthony Harrington

AH: One of the themes we are seeing more frequently these days, is the OEMs looking to take back control of potential after-market revenues. How is this playing at Textron?

KS: The core of our approach at Textron Aviation has always been to provide support for our customer base, primarily on the Cessna side, via the Citation Service Centres in the U.S. About seven years ago, we decided to step up our support across our product lines for customers around the world where our customer base is substantial. We have been making those investments, with intent, over the past several years.

This is not to say that we do not still leverage our network of qualified, vetted, and very capable maintenance houses. The decision as to which companies we mandate in various regions around the world, depends very much on who has strong MRO capabilities for our aircraft models in those regions.

So, in Latin America, for example, and in Africa, we are still leveraging third-party relationships. This is also the case in parts of Asia Pacific. Within North America, however, we have been direct for quite some time on the jet side of the business. We still do have some third-party turboprop relationships here, and of course, within Asia Pacific as well.





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“For us, whether it is on the support side of the business, or the engineering and development side, we really do listen to the customers to make sure that what we are doing resonates with them.

AH: Clearly, setting up a new Textron support centre is a tremendous investment, both in parts and skilled personnel, as well as in the hangar and office space.

How is all that to be recouped and is it worth it?

KS: We look very much at the whole ecosystem that goes with being an OEM. So for us, it was never just about selling the aircraft. It was always, also, about the customer's experience throughout their ownership of the aircraft.

From the customer's perspective, when they are looking to buy an aircraft, obviously they will look at their mission profile. But what figures very largely in their purchase decision, is the quality of the support services that our team provides to them, year in and year out. This is really what underpins the bond between the customer and us. It becomes much more of a partnership, ensuring that the aircraft that they have chosen continues to perform for them.

This is true whether the customer is a business, using the aircraft as a productivity tool, or whether they are a charter operator, or a customer flying for their own convenience.

So, we see the support function as very much part of the overall package that ensures the customer feels comfortable with the decision they made to choose one of our aircraft.

AH: How important a role do you think a first-class support environment plays into their next purchase decision, as opposed to what may be some eye-

catching, fancy new offerings and models from OEMs across the sector?

KS: I think a strong support ecosystem absolutely plays into the customer's decision with respect to their next aircraft. Naturally, when they are thinking of upgrading, one of the first questions they are going to ask themselves is: what has my experience been like with this present aircraft? Has it met my mission profile? Have I had a positive interaction and experience with the OEM and the brand? Did I feel valued and listened to? This is the same, in many respects, as the decision process all consumers go through when they renew their purchases with a particular brand.

AH: That is of course very true, but how much of a bite out of an OEM's potential future sales can a rival OEM's latest offering make, when it is in the right slot for the customer's mission profile?

KS: I think we enjoy a very solid and loyal customer base. They hold us accountable, of course, and being accountable to them for the quality and breadth of our future designs and models, drives us onward to invest in new products. That way, we ensure that customers do not become twitchy—they can see an exciting roadmap ahead of them when they feel the time is approaching for them to upgrade.

For us, whether it is on the support side of the business, or the engineering and development side, we really do listen to the customers to make sure that what we are doing resonates with them.





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AH: What does Textron do to ensure that your customers are always thinking about what you have coming down the pipeline when they are getting close to an upgrade decision?

KS: We do this through ongoing relationships. It is all about staying close to them throughout their period of ownership. Our desire, as a company, is to understand what our customers want and need, whether it be for upgrades or new products.

This again, is why the service network is so important because it keeps that flow of information going between ourselves and the customer. When it comes time to move out of their existing model and into a new model, because their mission profile has moved on, or their business has prospered, and they want to move up, we are there to help them all the way. This is as true, of course, for our pre-owned products, which can provide great value when someone is looking to buy a newer or larger aircraft.

AH: I imagine dedicated account manager relationships play a large role in this?

KS: Absolutely they do. Really, for us, the relationship is at the forefront, and we are focused on making sure that we understand the customer. I think what customers really appreciate about Textron Aviation is that we all play a part in making their relationship with us special, from the person who greets them at reception, to the individual technicians who know their aircraft inside and out.

You have to realise that this is very much a two-way relationship. Customers are not shy. They will let us know very clearly if they feel something is not working for them, and

equally they are very kind in letting us know when they feel we have done a good job for them.

These are mechanical, complex machines, and from time to time they will have issues. So, it is really how the team respond to those issues, the timeliness with which we are able to get a response to them and the whole operational experience, that counts.

AH: Do you carry out surveys regularly to test customer opinion and attitudes to Textron?

KS: We do. Every time someone visits us or when one of our 75 globally-based mobile support teams visits a customer, we ask for feedback to understand how we can continue to improve their relationship with us.

AH: From what level in the organisation do you tend to get feedback? Is it generally the pilot, the owner's agent, or the owner?

KS: We get feedback from across the value chain. This includes owner pilots, our influencers, including directors of aviation and chief pilots, and from customer maintenance staff. It comes from the whole continuum.

We also hold regular customer conferences. Just before EBACE we held our annual US customer conference in Wichita, where we saw around 10 per cent annual growth in the number of customers attending the conference. They are very keen to stay abreast of technical topics and they are keen on deepening their relationships with us. We love hosting these. We also hosted our European customer base in Barcelona. |BAM



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GROWING AN MRO

Jim Hansen, Founder, Owner and General Manager of Western Jet Aviation on the challenges involved in founding and growing an MRO

Q : What made you want to get into MRO in the first place?

JH: Well, if we go back into my personal history, it goes back to me graduating at the Northrop Institute of Technology in December 1972. The Institute is adjacent to LAX in Los Angeles. I was taken on by a small MRO outfit at Van Nuys Airport doing maintenance on small and mid-size twin engine aircraft.

That led to me gradually working my way up to Gulfstream GIIIs and I had a fair bit of experience working on GIIIs and GIIIs. Then the company I was working for went into their fifth or sixth buyout and I decided the time had come to fulfill a long-standing ambition of mine to go out on my own.

I gave notice, and fortunately for me, I had a very strong and loyal following in the customer base. A number of them came to me and said, what are you doing? Where are you going? How can we help? These offers of support came from across the board, from owners of small turboprops to owners and operators of Gulfstream aircraft.





Q: Even finding suitable premises, never mind all the tooling that you would require, is a tough ask for someone starting out in MRO. How did you manage?

JH: The people who'd offered me support put up some money and I knew I had their business. I then ran around finding every piece of equipment I could lay my hands on. I needed a set of jacks, a power cart and tools, and I added a bunch of ladders from Home Depot, really, whatever I could get. It was a really basic start.

From there it was pretty much a case of grafting my way up, working on airplanes myself, by myself, 18 – 20

hours a day, every day. The customers starting coming in, one by one. I made really sure that I did great work for them and they were really supportive and appreciative. And little by little the business grew.

Q: How long did it take you to turn a profit?

JH: That was the really good part. Because I was operating a really tight ship, doing so much myself, to my huge surprise, I turned in a profit at the end of my very first year, and we've never looked back since. I was shocked. We had a hydraulic mule that was terrible, looked terrible and leaked, but customers knew we were just getting started and they were really good to us.

What we had going for us was that they knew that I understood aircraft and understood what they needed. They wanted their airplanes repaired economically, in a manner that would keep those planes flying safely – and they wanted it done in a timely manner. This we did, time after time, and it won us a great deal of repeat business.

In MRO, if you can satisfy the customer, because nobody wants to spend more than they have to on their aircraft, then you get repeat business. On top of this you get great word-of-mouth recommendations. They tell their friends they know someone who can do a great job on their aircraft at a fair price, and your customer base grows. To this day I have never had a sales team at WJA.

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I have to say that I was blessed with some of the greatest customers you could find. They knew we had a limited staff in those early days and I was always very clear about what we could and could not do. If something was going to take five days I'd tell them that and I wouldn't try to do it in four. But I wouldn't take six days on it either.

They knew I was being honest with them and throughout the 20 years we have been in business, we have been pretty much on time and on budget 99 percent of the time. That is what customers look for and respect in this industry.

Q: Are you providing services for a range of different aircraft types?

JH: Right now, on the maintenance side, we are Gulfstream specific. In avionics, however, we are multi-line. We will do avionics upgrades across a wide range of aircraft types, right up to wi-fi installations and LED lighting, whatever the latest upgrades may be that people are looking for.

We do not do interior upgrades or refreshes. We have an expert interior shop partner organisation that does these. We pick what we are good at, and we stay with that.

Q: How does the family side of things work with MRO, which is very time intensive?

JH: It's great. My son joined the business about ten years ago. He is now my IT guy. My other son went through tech school, and he is now our avionics specialist. My daughter works in the parts department, helping to buy and sell parts.

Incidentally, the parts side of MRO is very important. Being able to source great parts for our clients at very affordable prices, is a key part of the value that we bring to the table. This is very much one of our strengths. Many of the customers let us do the parts buying for them, and that brings great benefits for them in terms of very significantly discounted pricing.

Q: So, it may have been a hard start, but looking back, has it all been worthwhile?

JH: Absolutely. We have now been in the business for twenty years and things have developed very well indeed. We moved into our current facility as a shared facility back in 2005. Our employee base grew and grew and we have now taken over the whole facility. In 2007, I wanted to add charter, so I founded Western Air Charter (WACI) with a \$5000 capital investment. Within one short year, we received our Air Operator's Certificate (AOC) for worldwide operations, had our first GIVSP based in Kuala Lumpur, and turned a profit. Within four years, we had expanded

to ten aircraft based around the globe, with profits increasing by an astounding 25 per cent every year. I sold the company in 2016, to concentrate on what we do best – maintenance and avionics. Since then, Western Jet has enjoyed significant growth, year on year, with a tremendous record for staff retention.

When Western Jet Aviation first opened its doors on September 13, 1999 my first employee was Cheryl Shaw. I'd worked with Cheryl at the Jet Center for years, going back to 1989. Cheryl is still my executive assistant today.

It is my firm belief that a strong business is founded upon good people, who value doing the job right and exceeding customers' expectations. This belief is shared by the nearly 80 employees of Western Jet today.

This Fall we will be celebrating Western Jet's 20th anniversary, a real milestone event for the company. I feel exceptionally blessed to be surrounded by the best employees, customers and local service providers I could wish for. VNY Airport management and personnel have also been very supportive of us down the years. These factors have all helped to make Western Jet Aviation a world-class organisation.

Q: What are your plans for the future?

JH: We're very much "steady as she goes" here. I am a very healthy 67, with absolutely no plans to retire anytime soon. I have great customers and great employees and I love what I do. So, this is great for me and it's great for the family and everyone involved. [BAM](#)



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STITCHING IT ALL TOGETHER

Rick Heine, Chairman and CEO of Flightdocs, and Greg Heine, President, talk to Anthony Harrington about the company's integrated approach to flight operations

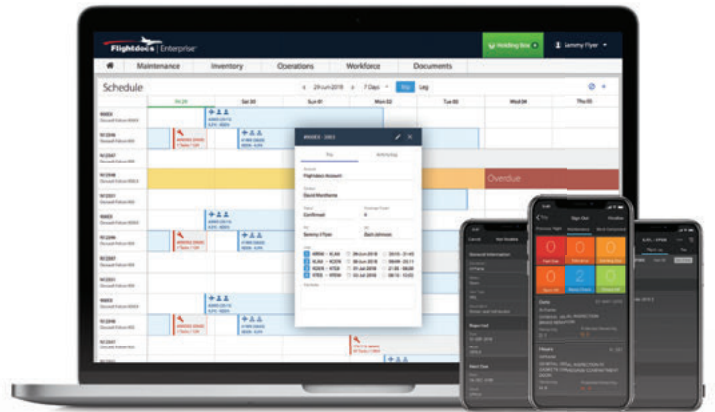
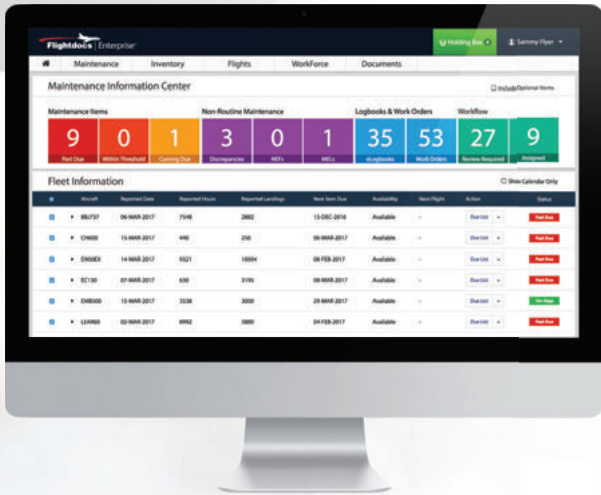
AH: Lets start at the beginning...

RH: We began back in 2003 with the launch of Flightdocs 1.0 Maintenance Tracking Software. At that time, we were the first fully online, cloud-based offering in this space, and that was the unique selling point that we used to win our first customers in the industry.

Of course, at the time, we knew that CAMP had a significant share of the market and that it would be very difficult to compete with them on a like-for-like basis. Our advantage was that high speed internet services were just arriving on airports and we saw that by delivering a purely web-based service we would have a completely different appeal and one that offered significant advantages over existing systems.

We wanted an easy-to-use product that leveraged new technology, backed by an extremely responsive, 24 / 7 live analyst support team. If one of our

Greg Heine President, Flightdocs



customers was picking up the phone to call us, we knew they needed something, and they needed it quickly, and we wanted to make sure we delivered.

We began from the get-go with our “all-calls-answered-within-two-rings” approach, and this continues to be our policy to this day. It’s a metric that we measure every day, and it is rare that we don’t hit our 100 per cent target.

A key differentiator for us is that we don’t have voicemail. Customers’ calls get answered immediately, they don’t have to leave messages and wait for someone to call them back. The analysts on the front-line are experts on both our platform and our customers’ aircraft. They are able to help them with just about any topic in a matter of minutes.

GH: Back in the early 2000’s, maintenance tracking was a heavy paper-based process. Even though operators may have used a maintenance tracking software package, the updates to the system were often taking 30 to 60 days to turn around.

With our 1.0 platform, users were able to fill out their documents, fax or email them to our

analysts, and the records were updated in less than 24 hours. They could log in and see the current status of their aircraft.

That story won us a number of early customers.

RH: What we did to start with, was to go to several very well known and respected corporate flight departments and convince them of the benefits of using Flightdocs. They began using the system and saw it

Rick Heine Chairman and CEO, Flightdocs



as a great step forward, and they told the people they knew about it. So, the momentum began to build.

The timing of our launch was very fortunate. At the time, high speed internet was making its way to the hangars. Operators were beginning to request things in real time. We began with a very simple, easy to use approach, with just four buttons on a screen that let our users manage their aircraft maintenance status. From there the product has evolved several times over.

AH: What was the background to launching Flightdocs Operations, the latest incarnation of your system?

GH: Around 2014 we realised that if we wanted to continue to build our market share, we had to bring new products to the industry that would help automate our customers' workflow. While many within the industry believed the business would remain paper-based, we saw it differently.



The cloud and mobile applications were already making a tremendous difference in the way things were done, in other industries and within aviation. We made a heavy investment into the development of Flightdocs Enterprise, our current flagship product, which launched in 2016. Enterprise focused on Maintenance and Inventory and has effectively transformed our customers' operations, going from paper to 100 per cent digital. Using Flightdocs, technicians can walk out to the aircraft, view instructions for the completion of tasks, update compliance, sign off electronically and create a logbook entry, all without a single sheet of paper.

RH: After the launch of Enterprise, we had substantial feedback from the market that there was a need for an end-to-end solution that could do everything from maintenance and flight scheduling to crew management. Really, a platform that could run an entire flight department.

GH: Typically, when you look at a flight department, maintenance and flight operations will run in separate silos. There is key data and processes in each department that is needed in the other department, but the flow of data is manual or non-existent. This results in a lag in synchronising



“After the launch of Enterprise, we had substantial feedback from the market that there was a need for an end-to-end solution that could do everything from maintenance and flight scheduling to crew management.”
Rick Heine



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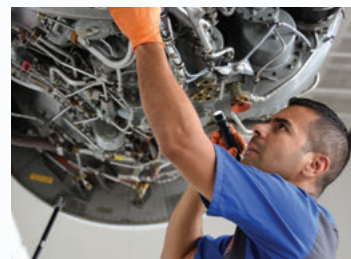
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the data, and creates the need for duplicate entries. This introduces major opportunities for errors. None of this is good. So, a single, integrated system brings immediate benefits in terms of real-time access to data and in data accuracy.

In order to solve these issues, we began developing Fd | Operations™ in Q2 of 2018. Over the last year, we have worked with 25 flight departments from R&D to Beta and we launched the new product in September 2019. The structure of our product development team has a lot to do with why we were able to get to market so quickly. The team is 100 percent US-based and in-house. As a result, we are able to collaborate effectively to create powerful and easy to use products.

Fd | Operations will deliver key features such as drag-and-

drop flight scheduling, leg-based trip planning, intuitive crew management, fully customisable flight logs, native mobile applications and real-time communication tools.

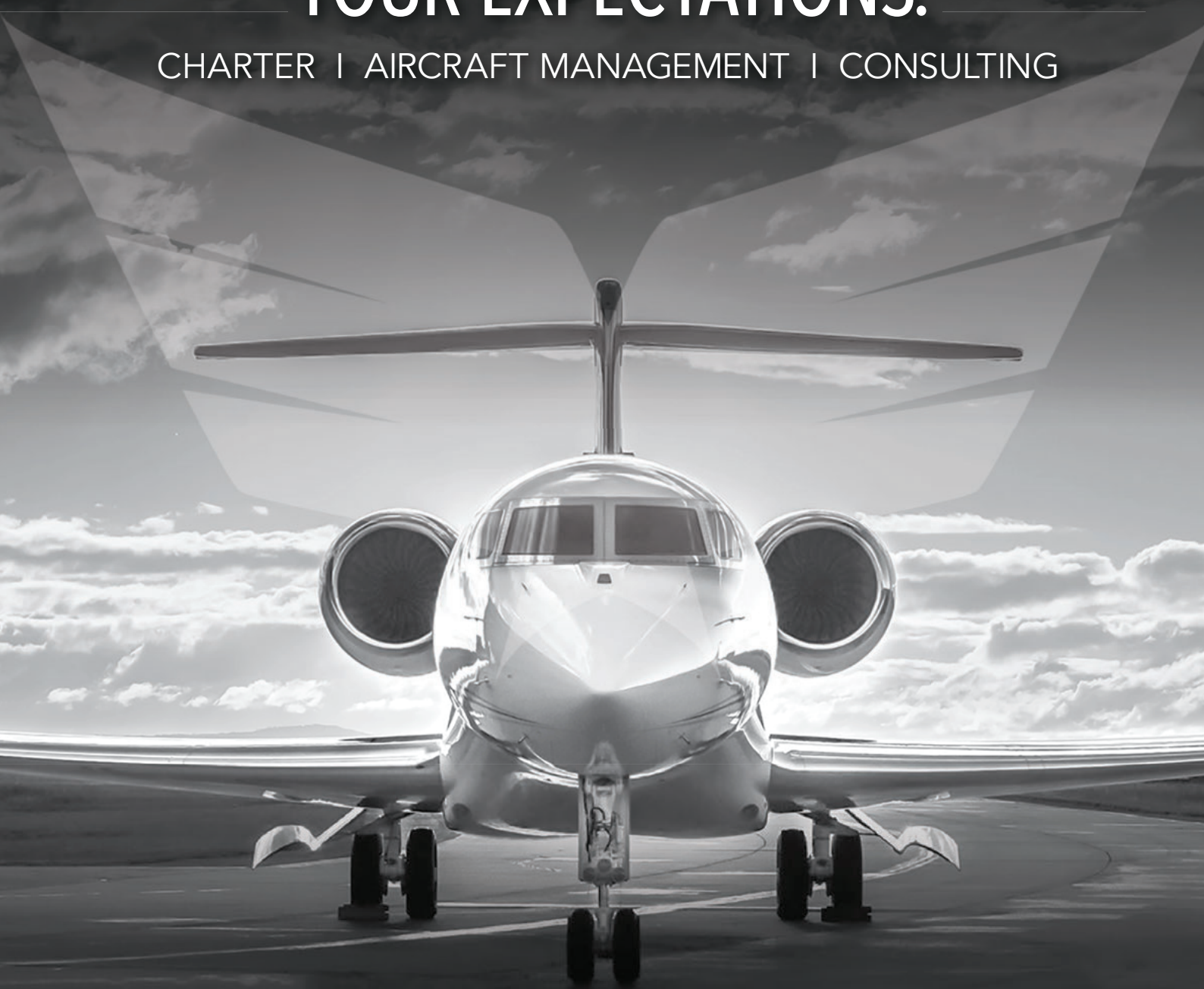
RH: One of the key communication features is called Fd | Connect™. This is a mobile, secure, encrypted messaging platform. This allows for communication between crew, schedulers, dispatchers and maintenance to live within the platform. It eliminates the common headaches that go with long email threads, multiple text messages and phone calls.

So far, the feedback on Flight Operations has been excellent, and we will continue to innovate the product to meet evolving market demand. We will be doing live product demonstrations at NBAA BACE this year in Las Vegas. Stop by our booth, N4409 to have a look for yourself. **|BAM**



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KEEPING THEM FLYING

Derek Zimmerman, President, Customer Support, Gulfstream, talks to Anthony Harrington about what it takes to keep the global fleet flying

AH: After-market revenues have become something that all the OEMs seem to be very tightly focused on. Right now, senior management in the OEMs seem concentrated on year-on-year growth in these revenues as a key metric. How is it playing for Gulfstream?

DZ: We had a great year for after-market last year, in 2018, and we are seeing very solid growth again this year. We have been focused on this market now for well over 50 years. Our focus has been both on designing and building aircraft and on servicing them, and this goes back to the days of the GII.

AH: I am sure other OEMs would say that too, or something similar. But arguably, it wasn't their main game plan, as it were.

DZ: Sure, but our approach has always been somewhat different. We have always looked to invest in, and provide, the complete after-market ecosystem as the first party, rather than delegating to third parties. As a result, probably around 75 per cent of the Gulfstream fleet, irrespective of the age of the aircraft, comes back to a Gulfstream or Jet Aviation service centre. Jet Aviation, of course, is our sister company.

The end customer expects this, and they routinely have all their scheduled maintenance and upgrades done with us, or with Jet Aviation, depending on where the most convenient service centre is for them.

Another important point is that we are much less reliant than other OEMs on using third-party maintenance shops to provide support around the world, outside of North America. We have established service centres wherever our global fleet is located, and have done it ourselves.

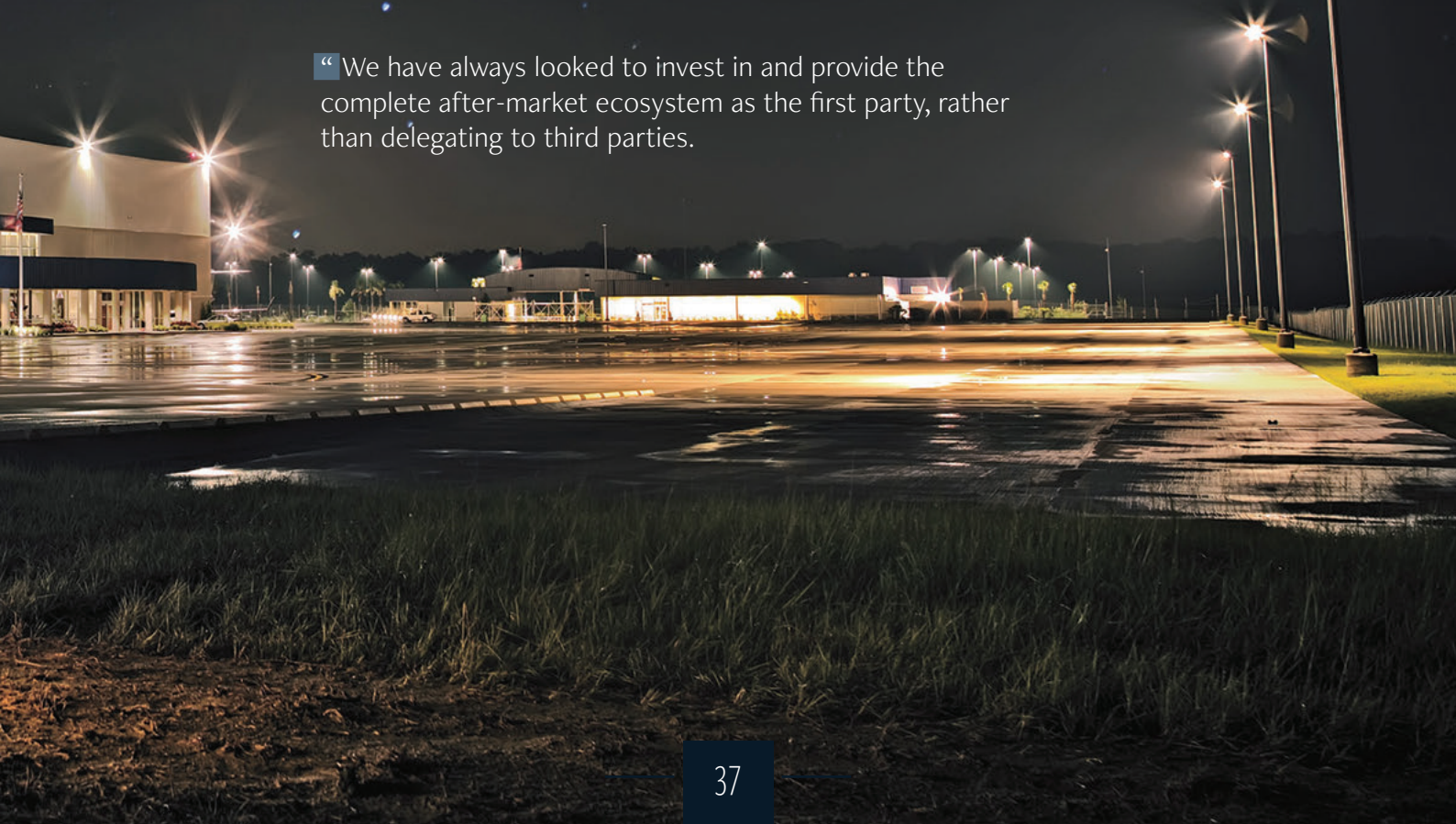
AH: What about refurbishments and completions. You don't ship out green aircraft, but what about cabin refurbishments?

DZ: Twenty or more years ago we concentrated on becoming very vertically integrated and we do all the completions ourselves. So, from start to finish, Gulfstream is involved across the lifecycle of the aircraft.





“We have always looked to invest in and provide the complete after-market ecosystem as the first party, rather than delegating to third parties.”





We are very integrated with our customer base to make sure they get what they want.

AH: Looking at the one quarter of the fleet that opts to go to third party MRO shops, do you have a sense of what underlies that decision on the part of owners or operators?

DZ: Often it will be simply that there is an MRO supplier that the customer feels comfortable with, that is very conveniently located for them. Other times it can be a multi-fleet operator, with a range of aircraft types. They may have an MRO shop who can service much of that fleet, despite the mix of OEM models. In those instances, the main driver is often that the operator wants a consistent service experience across the mixed fleet. At this point in time we are solely focused on providing services to Gulfstream aircraft.

Where it is not a mixed fleet, but is just a matter of convenience for the owner, we are very interested in extending our reach

into that market by putting more of our people out into the world. To accomplish this, we are building and establishing more service centres. We are on as ambitious an expansion plan in this area as we have ever rolled out as an organisation.

Outside the bricks and mortar of the facilities, we are highly focused on growing more of our own Gulfstream technicians and engineers, so we can answer the call when the customer needs something.

AH: Is that growth predominantly focused on the AOG response?

DZ: A lot of it is, but we are also concentrating on figuring out how to do more than just AOG support with the additional resources that we are putting into that area. So, if you have an aircraft that is on the ground in a hangar for some problem, but you also have some checks coming up, there are ways that we can support that on the road, away from service centres, as well.





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“ We can move a team to an airplane, or we can have teams already based at high density airports.

That is an important and interesting additional service dimension for us and enables us to better leverage the resources we are putting into our mobile AOG response teams. A lot of that work is, obviously, still better done in a major service centre. It has all the necessary equipment and personnel that can surround the aircraft and provide whatever is needed, but often there are checks that can be done when our technicians are on the client's site for other reasons.

AH: To what extent is it a viable strategy to partner with one of the established MROs, and second a number of your technicians to work at their site?

DZ: We have done it, but only under very limited circumstances. This would usually be in a part of the world, or a marketplace, that does not yet have a significant Gulfstream fleet presence, or perhaps even of business aircraft, period.

This is a great example of where Jet Aviation has enabled us to fill in some gaps in our service portfolio. They are a multi-line MRO provider, so they can be focused with us on Gulfstreams and they can also blend in some work from other OEM markets, where the Gulfstream aircraft density is just not there.

We have very heavy densities of Gulfstream aircraft in North America, and similar densities in Europe, so between Gulfstream and Jet Aviation we really cover those regions. But there are emerging markets and some mature markets where the density is too low to make it an economic proposition. We want to tailor our portfolio to the spread of the fleet around the world, and not try to force the same approach in every single place.

If you look at our major service centres in the US, they are all 10,000 square metres and upwards and they typically would have 150 to 250 employees, plus they would carry a significant spares investment. So that is appropriate with a significant flow of aircraft through that space. If not, if you can't get that, then you need to be more flexible and creative, and you need to try some different solutions.

Our FAST network field teams are a good example of that. We can move a team to an airplane, or we can have teams already based at high density airports. So, when someone is transient, or is already based at that airport, well, we have people there to help them.





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AH: From your standpoint, this is a hugely complicated web to manage. I imagine you are constantly monitoring spreadsheets and KPIs.

DZ: That's absolutely right. There is a huge amount of data that pours in from our global operations. But because our business has always been different from everyone else's business, we have a lot of that data first-hand. If we were more reliant on third parties, we would not have access or visibility to the same degree, or at least, not in a timely fashion.

However, because we are doing the lion's share of the maintenance, we know which aircraft are in which locations and what it is they need doing. So, we can feed all that information back into our materials functions to do planning and inventory placement. We can use that data to think about capital plans, where we need to build hangars, or add additional space.

It helps us to build workforce capabilities. It enables us to answer questions like: how many people do we need, and with what skill sets and in what locations. It is a rich dataset for us to use to run our business.

AH: All of this demands considerable HR skills as well, doesn't it?

DZ: Yes, we are really a business within a business. We have the entire length and breadth of a business inside our customer support function. But workforce development is particularly key for us.

There are two or three key aspects to workforce development. One of these is a tremendous amount of outreach. We want



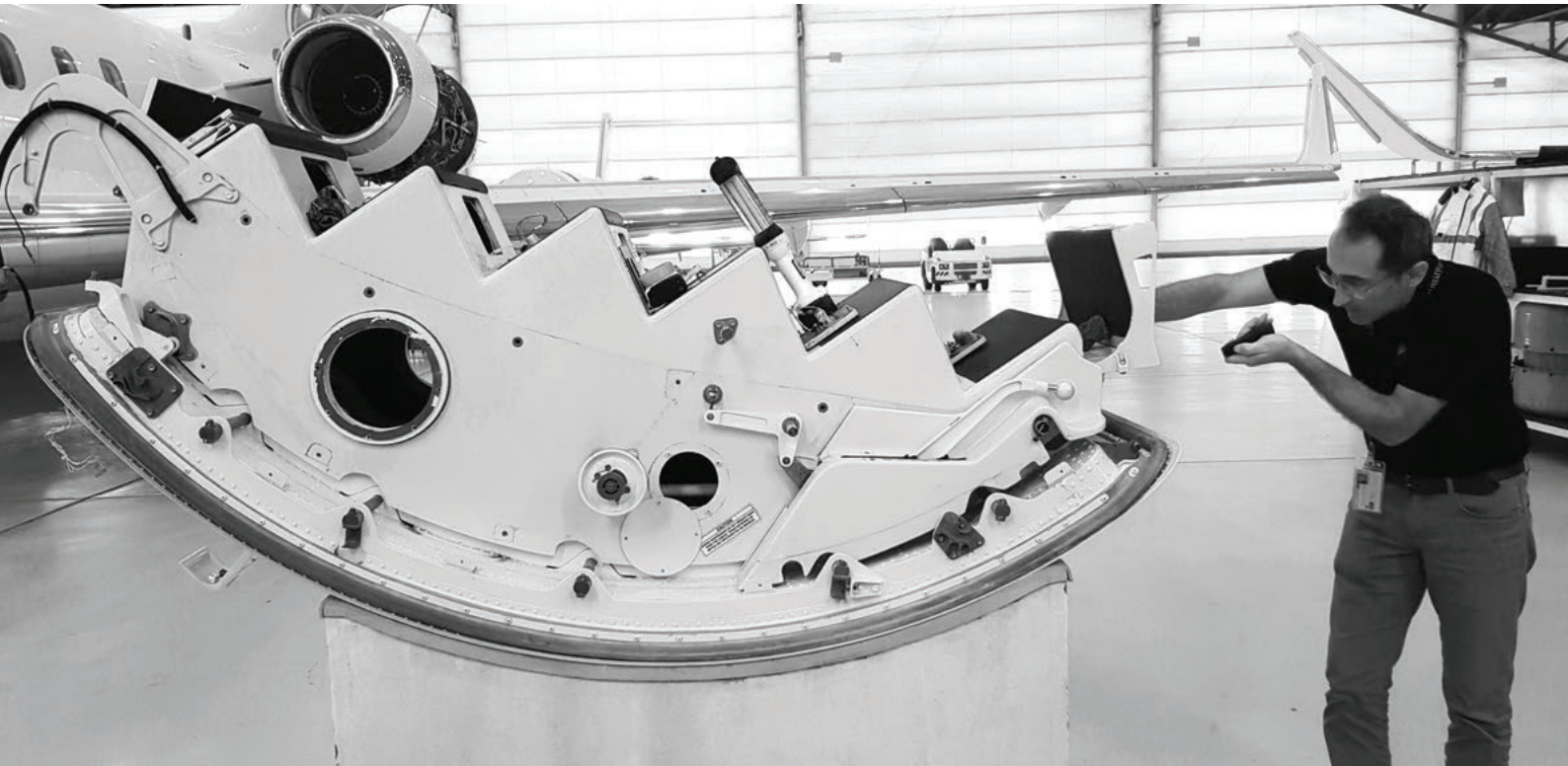
to make sure that future employees are open to the notion of careers and developing skill sets that are appropriate for business aviation. We start this process really early, going out to schools and colleges.

In the US, we will start in middle schools with students that are between ten and fourteen years of age. Our aim is to give them a feeling for what the different careers look like in aviation, which is something that the vast majority of them will have never thought of. We stress how technical these roles are, and the importance of a technical background as preparation for those careers. Subjects like science, math and ultimately, engineering, are so important. Hopefully, this gives some of them a renewed desire to get to grips with those subjects since they can open really fruitful and rewarding careers for them. |BAM



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OPTIMISING CONNECTIVITY

Claudio D'Amico, Business Area Director for Business Aviation at Viasat talks to Anthony Harrington about the way the company is changing in-flight broadband services to bring optimal connectivity to business jet passengers and crew

“Passengers who fly on business jets naturally want to connect whatever device they are using, to a broadband service that parallels the experience they would enjoy at home or at work.”

AH: The search for more and more capacity seems to go on and on. How much capacity do business jets need?

CD: Passengers who fly on business jets naturally want to connect whatever device they are using, to a broadband service that parallels the experience they would enjoy at home or at work.

They want the ability to stream content or continue with office work much as they would if they were on the ground. More and more, business jets are simply a productivity tool, an office in the sky.

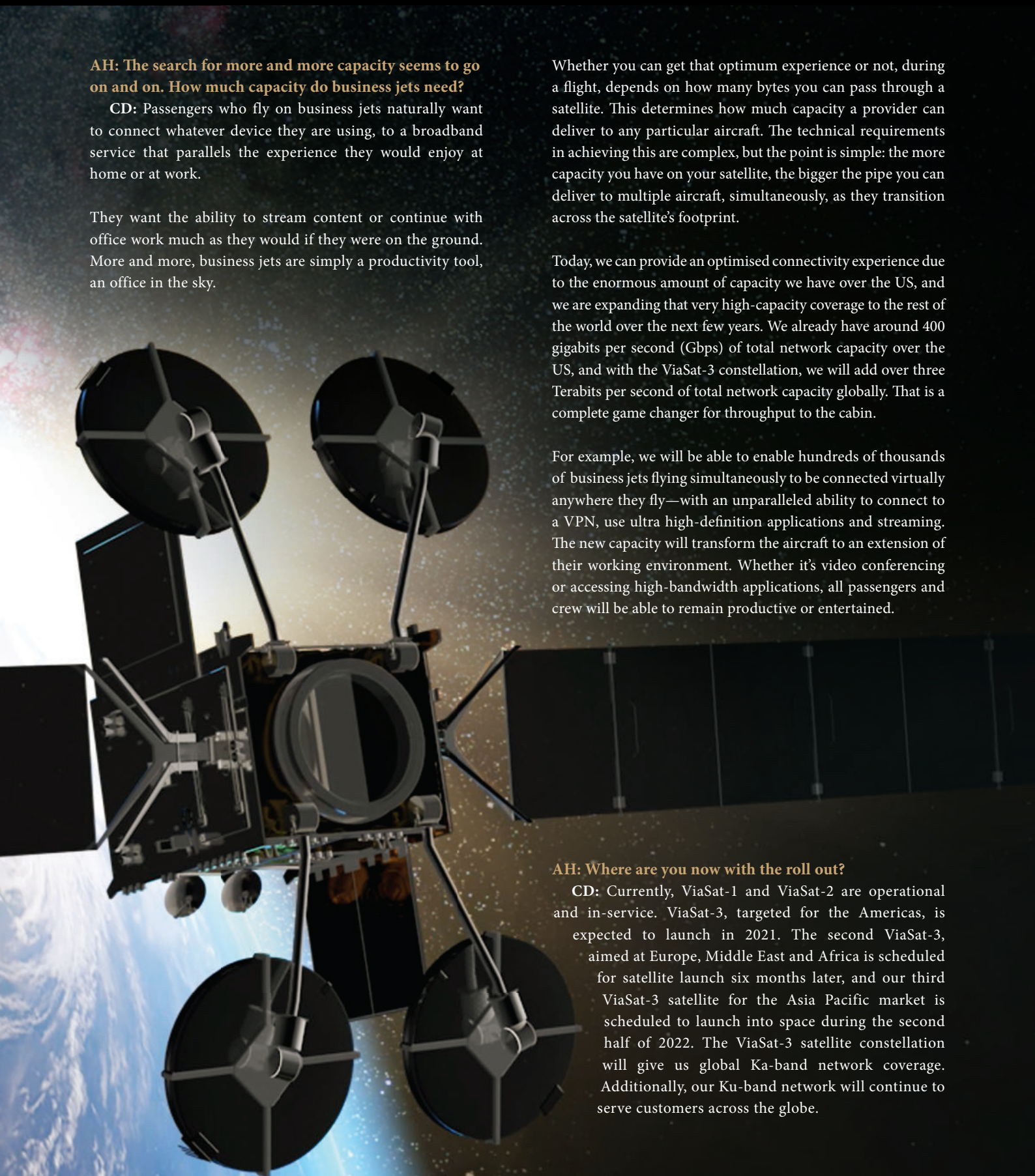
Whether you can get that optimum experience or not, during a flight, depends on how many bytes you can pass through a satellite. This determines how much capacity a provider can deliver to any particular aircraft. The technical requirements in achieving this are complex, but the point is simple: the more capacity you have on your satellite, the bigger the pipe you can deliver to multiple aircraft, simultaneously, as they transition across the satellite's footprint.

Today, we can provide an optimised connectivity experience due to the enormous amount of capacity we have over the US, and we are expanding that very high-capacity coverage to the rest of the world over the next few years. We already have around 400 gigabits per second (Gbps) of total network capacity over the US, and with the ViaSat-3 constellation, we will add over three Terabits per second of total network capacity globally. That is a complete game changer for throughput to the cabin.

For example, we will be able to enable hundreds of thousands of business jets flying simultaneously to be connected virtually anywhere they fly—with an unparalleled ability to connect to a VPN, use ultra high-definition applications and streaming. The new capacity will transform the aircraft to an extension of their working environment. Whether it's video conferencing or accessing high-bandwidth applications, all passengers and crew will be able to remain productive or entertained.

AH: Where are you now with the roll out?

CD: Currently, ViaSat-1 and ViaSat-2 are operational and in-service. ViaSat-3, targeted for the Americas, is expected to launch in 2021. The second ViaSat-3, aimed at Europe, Middle East and Africa is scheduled for satellite launch six months later, and our third ViaSat-3 satellite for the Asia Pacific market is scheduled to launch into space during the second half of 2022. The ViaSat-3 satellite constellation will give us global Ka-band network coverage. Additionally, our Ku-band network will continue to serve customers across the globe.





AH: How are things going with your Ku-band services?

CD: We are pioneers in delivering Ku-band services on business jets. We launched our services about a decade ago and continue to see demand. We are in the process of upgrading the whole Ku-band service. In particular, we are launching our new Ku Advanced service plan, which doubles the speeds for most of our existing Ku-band customers.

This is a very unique experience for Ku-band customers and there is a good deal of flexibility within the business plans that we are offering. As a result, current and future Viasat business aviation customers are now able to take advantage of Ku Advanced increased speeds with near global coverage and an easy migration path to Viasat's higher speed, higher-performing Ka-band system through use of existing aircraft wiring.

This is an exciting time for our customers on our Ku-band network, and we'll be highlighting the advancements to our Ku Advanced network and discussing the new package offerings at NBAA in Las Vegas.

AH: What happens to your Ku-band services when the Ka-band services, based on ViaSat-3, come into play?

CD: Currently, we have several Ku-networks that are utilised by both private and government customers. We see this service continuing for a long time to come. It is a strategic network for us, and we will be running it in parallel to the Ka-band services. As you know, we also offer a Ka-band only service, and now we can offer a hybrid Ku-/Ka-band service, which allows aircraft to leverage Ku-band coverage when they are out of range from Ka-band services.

We are finalising STCs with major OEMs right now for our dual-band solution.



So as we like to say at Viasat: we have two networks and three solutions—all from one trusted source.

AH: How far down into the mid-sized jet space can your solutions go?

CD: We have a 12-inch parabolic antenna and another for the Ka-band. These antenna need radomes that can operate with the frequencies required, and that can pass the STCs. As we innovate, we will continue to shrink the size of the antenna and radome, which will enable us to service smaller business jets.

There is also a lot of discussion right now about phased-array antennae. These will enable some of the smaller jet platforms to be equipped and will open up new markets for us and for our resellers. We have made some public announcements about our interest in the flat panel phased array space and remain optimistic about our ability to bring technical innovation to both fixed and mobile markets.

AH: How do you think the competition will react to what you are doing?

CD: We know the industry, and our competition is watching our development. In fact, we were recently awarded the Global Satellite Business of the Year award at Euroconsult's 16th Annual Awards for Excellence in Satellite Communications and on top of that, we were listed in Fortune Magazine's Change the World table. We're proud of these accomplishments and for being recognised for having a leadership position in spacecraft design, innovation and global business initiatives.

We believe our technical innovations are helping to move the global connectivity market forward—spurring competition and others to innovate as well—which in the end, just means all of our end-users have an opportunity to gain tremendous value. |BAM



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STAYING THE BEST

Christian Sasfai, President, Stevens Aerospace, talks to Anthony Harrington about the challenges of running one of the US's top MRO businesses

AH: Christian, you had a long history with Stevens Aerospace earlier in your career, joining the company in 1995 and leaving as Director of Business Development and Financial Planning, in 2002. Now you've returned as President. What can you tell us about that journey?

CS: I left Stevens Aerospace after eight very good years there, to become general manager of Piedmont Hawthorne's Greensboro, NC operation, which became Landmark Aviation. Then, in 2006, I joined Truman Arnold Companies and became Vice President and Chief Operating Officer of the aviation division, TAC Air and Keystone Aviation, shortly thereafter. However, I have always got on extremely well with Tom Foley, the Owner and CEO of Stevens Aerospace and we stayed in touch over the years. My wife and I have always considered South Carolina as home. We wanted to move back here, and returning to Stevens as President was an excellent fit on

both the career and personal levels. I had already made the decision to come back to South Carolina before the opportunity to rejoin Stevens crystallised.

AH: How do you see your present role?

CS: I think the office of President in a corporation or private company, is primarily a leadership role, helping the company to define and achieve its objectives. The individuals here at Stevens, many of whom have been with the company for 15, 20, even 30 years or more, are outstanding. These are not folks you need to





“The individuals here at Stevens, many of whom have been with the company for 15, 20, even 30 years or more, are outstanding. These are not folks you need to hand-hold through the ordinary business of the day. They are technical experts and love what they do.”



“When I re-joined Stevens, there were probably at least 25 people on the staff that I knew from when I worked here 15 years earlier. The culture and spirit in this company is fantastic, as is the growth that I’m seeing.

hand-hold through the ordinary business of the day. They are technical experts and love what they do. When I re-joined Stevens, there were probably at least 25 people on the staff that I knew from when I worked here 15 years earlier. The culture and spirit in this company is fantastic, as is the growth that I’m seeing.

When I left Stevens 15 years ago, the company was just starting out on its first government MRO contract. Today, we have a tremendous amount of government work. Right now, one half of our facility in Greenville is dedicated to government work, and we continue to bid for more and more government contracts.

AH: Do you have a sense of how that compares to the big OEMs or other MRO houses?

CS: I don’t exactly know the level of interest OEMs have in government work. Obviously, they are keen on servicing their own sales of new aircraft, but it is unclear how interested they are in winning contracts on aircraft that have some age on them and require major overhauls and refurbishments. We love these kinds of jobs and we also get quite a few, shall we say, very unique one-off modification projects to do for government.

These mods might only be for one or two aircraft, so they would be something of a distraction from normal business

for an OEM. By way of contrast, we have a tremendous skill set in this area and we have won and continue to win a number of these ‘one-off’ contracts. We are very happy to do extensive modification work for clients, government or private, and we do them to a very high standard.

AH: Clearly, like any business, you have to keep an eye on working capital. How much of an issue is holding inventory when it comes to tying up cash?

CS: These days, with just-in-time ordering being so well served, no organisation keeps a huge inventory on hand. It is so easy to use overnight air freight to bring in the larger, bigger ticket parts, as they are needed. Of course, we keep a full range of the most common parts, but managing inventory is something we have done for years and we’re very good at it.

Developing the skill sets across all our technicians is a far more complex proposition. The philosophy we employ is that although we work across a wide range of aircraft, we specialise in certain types, certain makes and models. By recognising our limitations and focusing on the airframes where we have a well developed expertise, we can deliver very high quality work for our customers.

At our Nashville, Tennessee site, a customer came in with an air conditioning problem in his aircraft on a hot July day. Not only did our team accommodate the drop-in work, but they





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had it diagnosed in thirty minutes. Our team did a partial fix and told the customer that they’d do the full fix when he brought the aircraft back, since it needed parts. Now he’s brought his aircraft back to us for a heavy inspection and he’s told the team that he’ll be using Stevens forever. That’s the way you build customer relationships and win market share in this business.

We don’t try to be all things to all people. We would much rather be experts on a select group of aircraft.

I can’t give enough credit to our technicians and our management team on the floor and in the field, in the way this philosophy has been applied and is working out day to day. Very often we will have a full hangar of scheduled inspections and a customer will pull onto the ramp with a broken airplane. The team will find the time to go and look at his airplane, and sort out what needs to be done to get it flying again. There is a tremendous can-do attitude here.

Our approach is that we are technical experts with a personal touch. This is what sets us apart.

AH: In your “other lives” in the industry you have been involved in managing across a wide range of activities, from FBOs to charter to MRO. Are you sometimes tempted to build additional dimensions to the current MRO focus at Stevens?

CS: We have looked at, and talked about, other services and dimensions, but what we always come down to is that business works best when you focus on what you do best, and develop partnering relationships where there is a different need.

When I was on the FBO side of things, we recognised that we were not great at maintenance, so we partnered with organisations that were. That served the customer best. Our strength at Stevens is MRO, it’s what we’re great at. I will not say we will never get into other areas, but the best plan, it seems to me, is always to partner up with proven expertise if



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you find the business needs to develop in new areas.

AH: How much do customers rely on Stevens for advice when it comes to them considering upgrades to their aircraft, or purchasing a different model of aircraft?

CS: Because we've been maintaining and upgrading a wide range of aircraft for a very long time, customers frequently ask us for advice in this area. Customers want to know the problems common to a particular aircraft model and the general maintainability of an aircraft that has been upgraded or modified. With our experience, we can provide them with those types of insights.

AH: One final question, what is your take on the coming wave of electrically powered aircraft? These days there seems to be a new start-up with a new design and build project for an electric aircraft, every other day.

CS: The way I see it, aircraft powered with Jet-A and Avgas will be around for a very long time. Of course, we can expect the slow introduction of short range electric aircraft. Any aircraft, however it is powered, is going to need maintenance, and that is our business. As the electric aircraft industry evolves, we will probably expand our capabilities and skills in this area, but it is still several years off.

What I find interesting is the larger unmanned (drone) aircraft. Take for example, an unmanned aircraft like the Reaper. It is a turboprop aircraft, just without the pilot. There's no reason we couldn't take our years of experience and apply it to this segment of aviation. Further, all the work we have done in avionics upgrades and installations over the years, gives us a tremendous skill set to bring to bear on the complex control systems and interfaces drones require. This industry never stands still, and neither do we! |BAM



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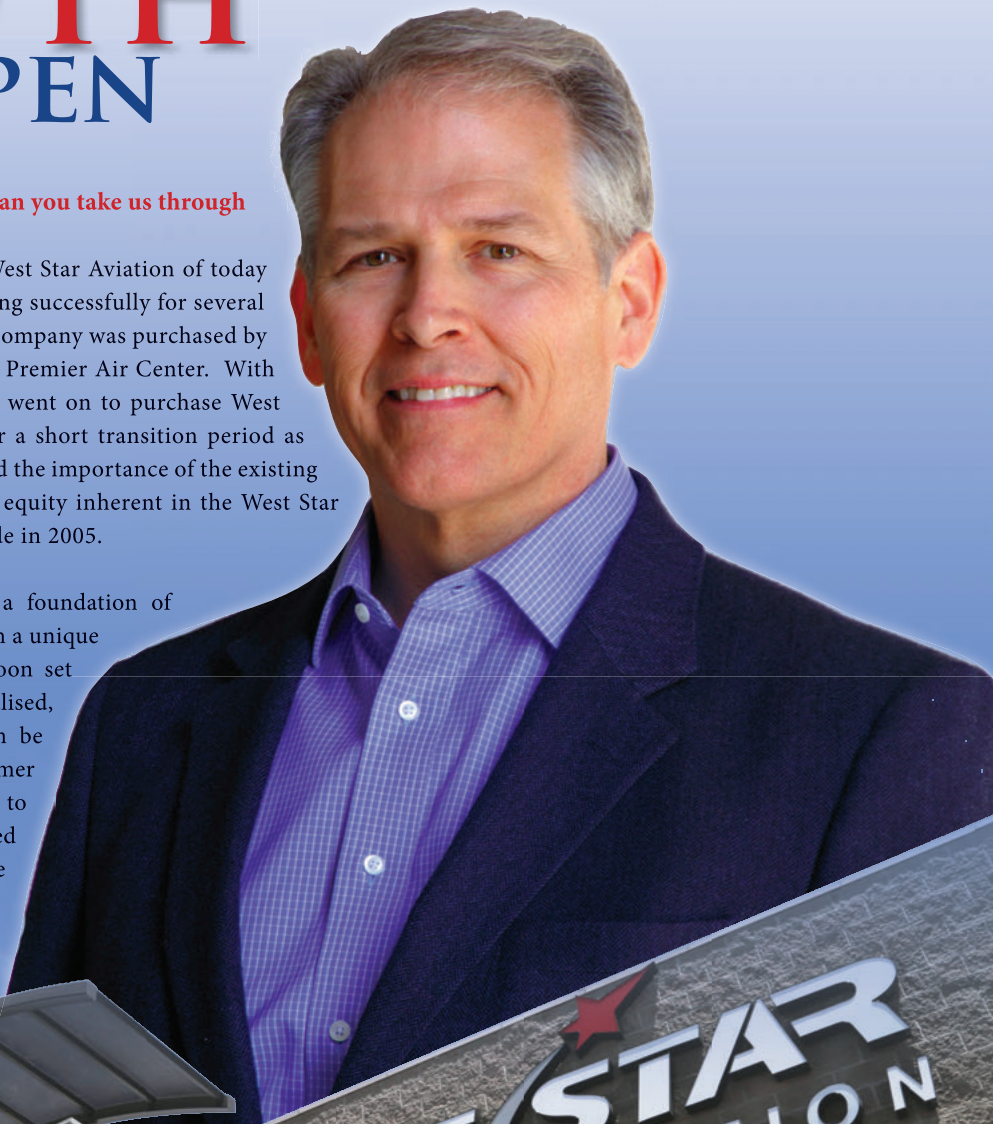
MAKING GROWTH HAPPEN

Jim Rankin, CEO, West Star Aviation,
talks about the company's growth strategy

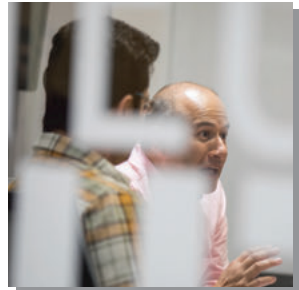
Q: West Star Aviation has a long history. Can you take us through this?

JR: With a deep aviation heritage, the West Star Aviation of today originally got its start back in 1947. Operating successfully for several decades under various brand situations, the company was purchased by a group of investors in 2002 and renamed as Premier Air Center. With a strong growth plan in hand, the investors went on to purchase West Star Aviation in Grand Junction, CO. After a short transition period as Premier/West Star, the company soon realised the importance of the existing history of longevity and the industry brand equity inherent in the West Star Aviation name, and adopted it, company-wide in 2005.

The next 10 years were spent developing a foundation of unprecedented technical capability, along with a unique approach to customer service that would soon set the company apart. We created a personalised, elegant atmosphere in an industry that can be overwhelmed by procedures instead of customer service. Our internal culture has grown to provide our customers with the specialised service they are looking for, while making the overall maintenance process easier and less complicated.



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In 2014, West Star Aviation was purchased by equity investment group Norwest Equity Partners. The fit was exceptional since NEP shared West Star's view of the opportunity for growth in the MRO segment. West Star quickly expanded their footprint from their main locations in East Alton, IL and Grand Junction, CO, with the recent additions of full-service locations in Chattanooga, TN and Perryville, MO, all while building a strong nationwide satellite support network.

Q: Successful growth through acquisition is very demanding, both in terms of picking the right targets and implementing a successful post acquisition merger strategy. What are the key ingredients for success in this kind of strategy?

JR: Successful growth through acquisition is not possible without strong technical capability and a strong dedication to customer service. A clear understanding of your market and customers' needs, as well as the ability to communicate with your customers are all important factors in this environment. This transparency with current, potential and past customers is critical in eliminating potential confusion during growth, and reinforcing why West Star is different.

Q: What is the importance of retaining original branding, and how does the company project its own, overarching brand?

JR: A strong foundation is required when building anything of substance - a building, a company or a brand. We realised the value and industry recognition that the

West Star brand had. However, we also understood that these benefits would be short-lived if we did not continue to evolve the company and keep it relevant to our customers. While the name is still West Star Aviation and there are certain heritage traits present in our day to day operation, the company continues to adapt to modern needs and objectives. The modern West Star Aviation brand stands for creativity, individuality and teamwork between our technicians and our customers.

Q: What are the challenges in providing MRO, and what is the state of demand in the aircraft refurbishment market

JR: The biggest challenges within MRO are the continuously changing customer needs, followed by the ever-evolving technology on which we work. Compound that with regulatory issues that touch every aspect of our industry, and you get a pretty daunting task. Further, the competition and potential commoditisation of certain services provides an additional layer of complexity..

This is why it is so critical to continually remind customers of how we are meeting these challenges on both a short and long term basis. This comes back to maintaining an open channel of communication with your customers.

The refurbishment market is no different. Certainly, when the economy is strong, as it is right now, demand for refurbishment services is high. But, what happens when the economy softens? It magnifies the importance of communicating that we are a world-class provider of these services, and a provider that delivers unparalleled quality and creativity in the refurbishment areas. In the end, it comes back to understanding your customers.

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Q: What does sales and marketing mean in an MRO context? Are there pro-active things to be done or do you have to wait until a scheduled maintenance comes around for an aircraft, or the owner puts it in for an upgrade, or has an AOG situation?

JR: Sales and marketing efforts are critical in the MRO industry. We value the longstanding relationships that we have built with our customers, and these relationships often start with a simple introductory meeting. We strive to understand a customer's needs before we ever start talking about West Star. Scheduled maintenance is a perfect time to have upgrades or refurbishments done. This allows the customer to complete all the service in one place at the same time, which is a saving in terms of cost and time. Because we place such a high priority on reducing our customers' Turn-Around-Time, we often do upgrades and modifications even if the aircraft isn't due for a scheduled event. We also help many of our customers when they are purchasing an aircraft. We will often perform the pre-purchase inspection, coupled with upgrades to the aircraft's paint, interior or cockpit.

If an AOG issue arises, we have the capability to provide service anywhere the customer needs.

As with any of our capabilities and expertise, we need to be sure that our customers know that we are a leader in MRT and AOG services. If they don't know to call West Star in an

AOG situation, we view this as a missed opportunity to help one of our existing, or potentially new, customers.

Q: What differentiates a really good MRO from a run-of-the-mill operation?

JR: Two words - Relationships and Experience. We strongly believe that our customer service and relationships make us who we are and why we have a high rate of return customers. Our relationships evolve and grow long-term because of our quality workmanship, ease of communication and the genuine care that our team members provide to each customer. This also extends to relationships with OEMs, vendors and other resources that are necessary in order to meet our customers' expectations.

Experience is equally as important, from the experience of our technical staff all the way through to the experience of our billing and customer service representatives. Having experience in all of these areas ensure that we continually treat each customer as an individual, with specific needs and expectations. This is what sets West Star Aviation apart from other MROs today.

Q: What does the next year or two hold for the company?

JR: With our recent growth, our customer service will be elevated to new heights. You will see exciting new capabilities, products and services introduced. And you will see West Star Aviation continue to build and expand our family of quality employees by actively seeking a strong, educated workforce in all locations, and all disciplines. |BAM



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SOLVING THE RECRUITMENT CHALLENGE

Shannon Gill, Managing Director of MSB Aerospace LLC, the US-division of MSB Group explains to Jane Stanbury how MSB Global Resources, the aerospace recruitment, contractors and work package placement division, is helping with company recruitment

JS: How long has MSB Global Resources been operating in Wichita and what are your plans?

SG: We have been operating for four years. This year we are recruiting a 30-strong team to join our Wichita-based engineering department. This is phase one of an ambitious, long-term growth plan. We've extended our building infrastructure footprint by 4,500 square feet giving us ample space for future colleagues. We already have a team of 350 at our Montreal headquarters, and 1500 more through Sogclair, our parent company. We're looking to target those kinds of numbers in the United States in the future. It really is a very exciting time for us.



MSB Global Resources office begins phase one of Wichita expansion plans

“The MSB Global Resources team is highly experienced at delivering creative, tailored solutions that resolve workforce issues for international aerospace companies.



JS: What is MSB Global Resources doing to support the sector’s recruitment needs?

SG: The MSB Global Resources team is highly experienced at delivering creative, tailored solutions that resolve workforce issues for international aerospace companies. We approach the challenge from a number of different perspectives. We recruit specific employees that work on behalf of our clients, train teams, or place work packages for specific long or short-term mandates, and we seek out individuals for specific roles. We support OEMs, maintenance, refurbishment and completion centres by providing a wide range of specialised and general aerospace engineering services.

JS: What do you do differently?

SG: We implement our own specific methodology which sees us partnering with each customer to make sure we fully understand not just the work-scope, but also the company culture, the management style, and the business challenges. We go one step further than most, by facilitating seamless integration into the company. Once placements are made, we apply performance indicators and conduct regular follow ups to ensure we’re meeting client expectations.

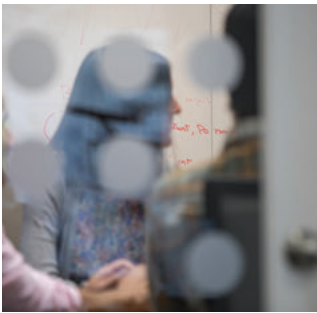
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This collaborative approach helps MSB GR place contractors that meet the client's job requirements and are likely to stay and grow with the business. We often become mentors for our customers helping them to better define their business by asking what they really have to offer a candidate. Long term this saves time and resources.

We're also using social media more as that is where the new talent goes for information. It is also without geographical borders. Millennials seek interesting and varied job opportunities and want to optimise their professional development and continuous learning. We need to develop our approach to meet the changing expectations.

JS: What is driving this growth?

SG: The growth in aerospace, and the seemingly diminishing number of engineers are driving factors. The recent signing of a major interiors contract for an undisclosed North American customer has been the catalyst for our current

expansion. The primary recruitment focus is on sourcing precision design engineers, although other specialties, including electrical and stress expertise, will also be required. The new team will service this latest contract and it will also complement the existing MGR workforce in various locations throughout the United States including Indiana, Washington and California.

We've also widened our focus and are serving clients in aerospace, special missions, and government sectors, as well as business aviation. This was stimulated when we became part of Sogclair Aerospace and has given us a great springboard to dive into new sectors.

JS: Why has recruitment become such an issue for the industry?

SG: There is a growing divide between supply and demand. The average age in the engineering sector is rising and currently it doesn't look like there are enough new engineers being trained to fulfil future needs. At a macro-



level we are facing all sorts of challenges. For example, in countries with stronger economies, candidates often receive offers from a range of sectors and the better candidates pick and choose the best offer.

This might include higher salaries, greater benefits, longer vacations, and international opportunities. The emerging aviation and aerospace sectors, such as India, China and Africa, also strain supply. There is a finite number of candidates available with the right skill sets at any one time, and we anticipate the industry is going to hit crisis-point imminently.

JS: What can the industry do to change the situation?

SG: The industry needs to become more aware of all its needs. We spend significant time monitoring trends, gathering information and understanding where the next shortfalls will be. I'm not sure that the industry in general does that. It has traditionally been successful at attracting new talent but that has changed as the digital age has created a whole slew of seemingly more attractive options. We all need to think smarter and more laterally about recruitment and retention strategies, from stimulating initial interest in the sector, through to making it an attractive industry to be associated with.

We must also encourage students towards STEM subjects from an early age. In addition, the maintenance and engineering sectors are predominantly male dominated with women still under represented. We are seeing more female colleagues, but it's a slow process.

JS: How involved is MSB in training?

SG: We train candidates in areas where clients have severe shortages. It is one of our functions to source candidates from, say, the automotive industry and help them transfer their skills across to aviation. We are building multiple partnerships with schools and non-profit associations to support job seekers who may not realise that aerospace offers such variety in terms of career possibilities.

JS: What does the future hold for MSB GR?

SG: We will continue to grow and build on our strong foundations. What makes us successful is that we speak engineering, which means we can analyse the real needs and make recommendations based on genuine understanding. Our intention is to continue focusing on aerospace as we maximise our deep engineering connections worldwide. |BAM



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A WINNING TRAINING FORMULA

Andy Trincherro, Academy 147's Co-Founder and Managing Director, talks to Anthony Harrington about the company's five years in the training sphere and the challenges to growth



AH: Andy, you've had a stellar record in the training sector, going from "zero to hero" in just five years. What's your take on where you are now?

AT: After 5 years, Academy 147 has become an established brand as a boutique business aviation maintenance training academy. The training services we provide have been well received by the industry. It is now abundantly clear that we've passed the start-up phase and are now well into the growth phase.

I think that our success is built on strong values and on offering a value-added service to the industry. This wouldn't be possible without our unique company culture and the synergy of our team. We've expanded our facilities and team which has also contributed to our success.

For the 5 next years, we plan to continue doing what we do best, meeting the on-client-site maintenance training requirements for business jets. We have plans to broaden our portfolio of course offerings and to expand our capabilities to new regions.

AH: What led to the idea of founding an on-location training academy, based in Malta?

AT: We knew there was a future in training. As the current baby boomer generation begins to retire, there will be a growing need for know-how in aircraft maintenance. Our training aims to bridge that gap and help one generation hand down their knowledge to the next.

As for the starting of Academy 147, it began as something small and grew beyond what we had originally expected. We originally intended to focus on the European market, but we quickly saw that the industry was global in nature and our services were being requested from all corners of the globe.

Aviation is a small world and Business Aviation is even smaller, so our ‘good deeds’ and the successes we chalked up, didn’t go unnoticed. One thing led to another and here we are. Academy 147 is truly a global company with staff based on 4 different continents.

AH: What were the major challenges on start-up and how did you overcome them? Which were the easiest to solve, which the toughest? What challenges still persist today?

AT: Any business has its share of challenges to start up. We have faced our fair share of obstacles, which we’ve had to overcome, over the years. Working in multiple countries and time zones, the logistics involved get pretty complex. So it is important to have a well-structured operation. The industry moves fast, and we need to be nimble to keep up with it.

AH: How did you overcome the natural bias in the industry towards equating age with experience? A lot of the MRO heads will be in their 50s or 60s and you would seem very young to them. So you’d have hit a lot of the: “What can this youth possibly know?” syndrome.

AT: Definitely. That’s a problem I used to experience a lot more in





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the beginning. Nowadays, I'm somewhat older and I'm seeing more of my generation coming into management roles, so things are easier on that front.

AH: How did you go about building up your network of trainers, while at the same time ensuring they had the skills to do the job? Your company's reputation is in their hands when they are on the client site. How do you control that side of things?

AT: As a school, one of our most important elements is our trainers and their level of knowledge on the topics they are teaching. We look for senior level maintenance staff that are at the pinnacle of their career, and are ready to pass on their knowledge to the next generation. We find that using practical, hands-on trainers, adds a lot of depth to the training. Instructors are able to share their experiences with students and give them tips and tricks that only a seasoned veteran would know.

AH: Take me through the kinds of growth versus risk decisions you had to make along the way. How does one get a start-up like yours to the point where it is a global operation?

AT: There were many difficult decisions to make along the way. We try to be smart, and to learn from our mistakes. We work hard at having the right data available to make the most educated decisions. In the last year, we have adopted lean methodology in many areas

“ We originally intended to focus on the European market, but we quickly saw that the industry was global in nature and our services were being requested from all corners of the globe.



of our business. This has made us a lot more efficient. It is only natural to expect that some overhauling will be required after five years.

AH: What is the current climate like? Do you see it as a continued growth environment for your company or do you feel it is time to get a bit defensive?

AT: I think there is plenty of room to grow. After five years, in my view, we are only now starting to scratch the surface. We have several new products in the pipeline which, once launched, will create markets of their own. These will be unique to the industry.

AH: What innovations have you introduced into the training process and what are your plans in this area?

AT: The future of training for us lies in combining our instructors' vast knowledge with more synthetic training aids. We plan to build simulation products of our own which will assist in the delivery of our courses and complement our instructors' capabilities.

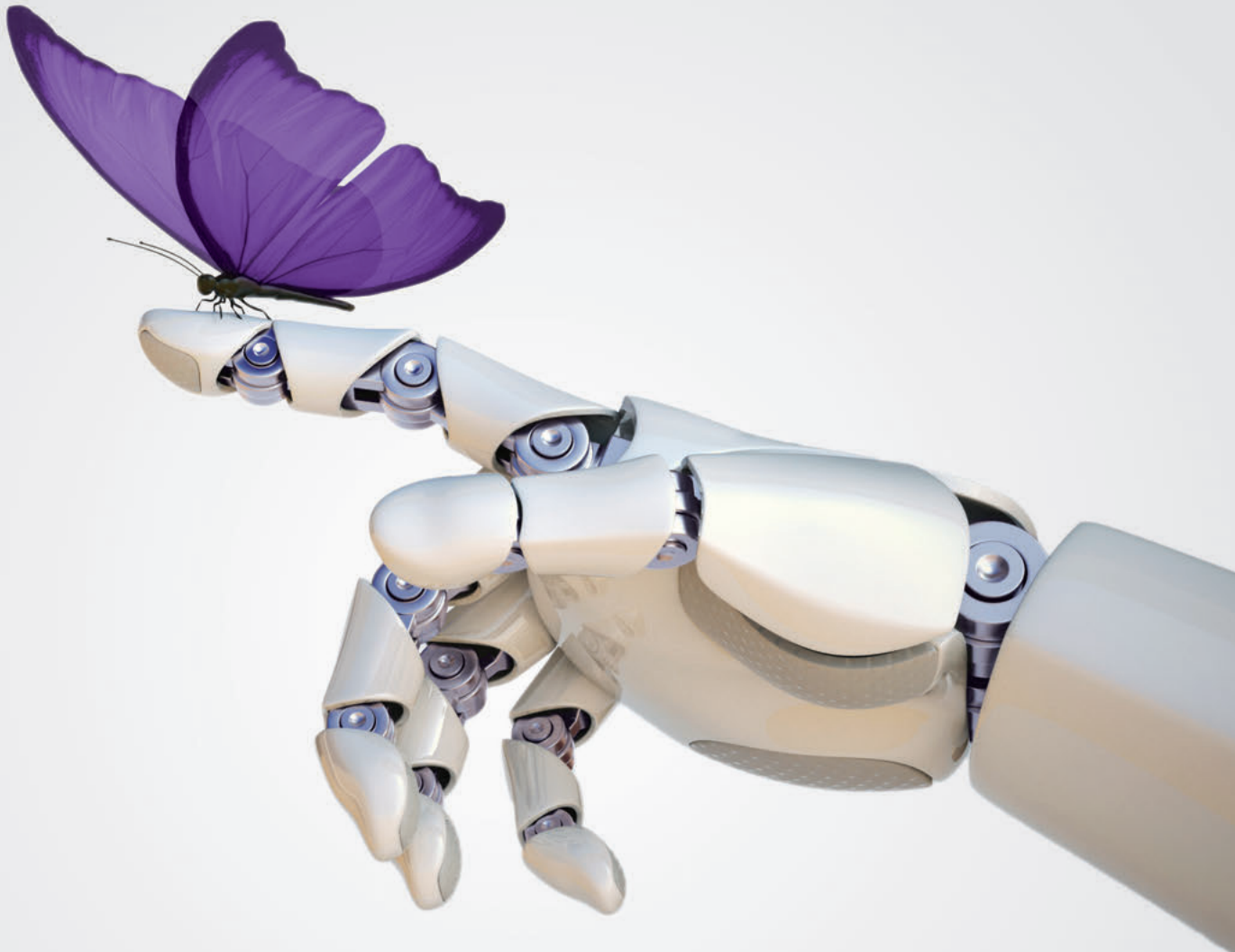
AH: What are your thoughts now that the company is heading for its sixth anniversary?

AT: We plan to stay the course and keep moving along. We feel that we have a recipe for success, and we have no intention to change that. The strategy is to keep scaling it up whilst ensuring that we keep the same level of service to our customers. |BAM



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SOUND VISION, STRONG STRATEGY

Dave Paddock, President, Jet Aviation, talks to Anthony Harrington about the company's strategic vision under his leadership

AH: Dave, you replaced Rob Smith as President on 1st July, with Rob going on to head up General Dynamics' Marine Systems business unit. You were SVP in charge of regional operations for the USA, now you have a global responsibility. Is it a big leap?

DP: Sure. I now have all of Jet Aviation's businesses around the world reporting into me. However, what makes this an easier transition for me, is that I have really great people heading up our operations around the world. On top of this, I have a long history with the company I can draw on, and the experience gained from over 20 years in the industry.

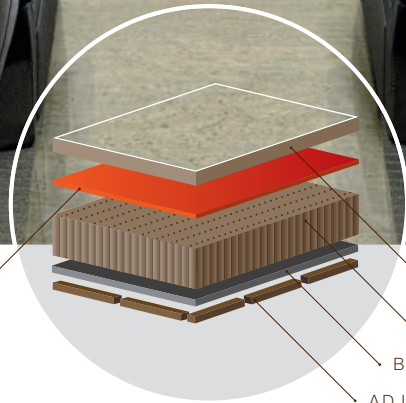
My affiliation with Jet Aviation in fact goes back to 1999. I was working for a consulting firm in New York and we were doing some start-up work for a company based in the Middle East that Jet was involved with. I started consulting for Jet Aviation in 2005 and joined the company in 2007.

AH: You are now permanently based in Basel? Is this your first permanent move outside the US?

DP: I've travelled a lot and will continue to do so in my present role. This, however, is the first time my family has been based outside the US, though. My son is in High School here and will probably be proficient

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in German soon. My wife and I will be starting German lessons and I'd like to at least be fluent to the point where I can readily engage in conversations.

AH: Should we be looking for any change in strategy now, with you at the helm?

DP: The way we articulate strategy at Jet Aviation will continue as before. Our Basel site is our largest by far, and our most historic site. We're doing some things here with our Basel facility to expand our presence, and to improve the overall customer experience, and that will continue.

Clearly, one of our major activities at present continues to be managing the integration of Hawker Pacific into the Jet Aviation family. We acquired Hawker Pacific in the late Spring last year and we have had a tremendous first year of ownership. We now want to focus on how we expand on the portfolio that Hawker Pacific has developed over the years.

One of the key areas is their strength in government fleet services. They fly and maintain aircraft for a number of Asia Pacific governments and defence forces. With the backing of

our parent company, General Dynamics, and its very strong presence in the defence market, there is clearly much there for us to build on.

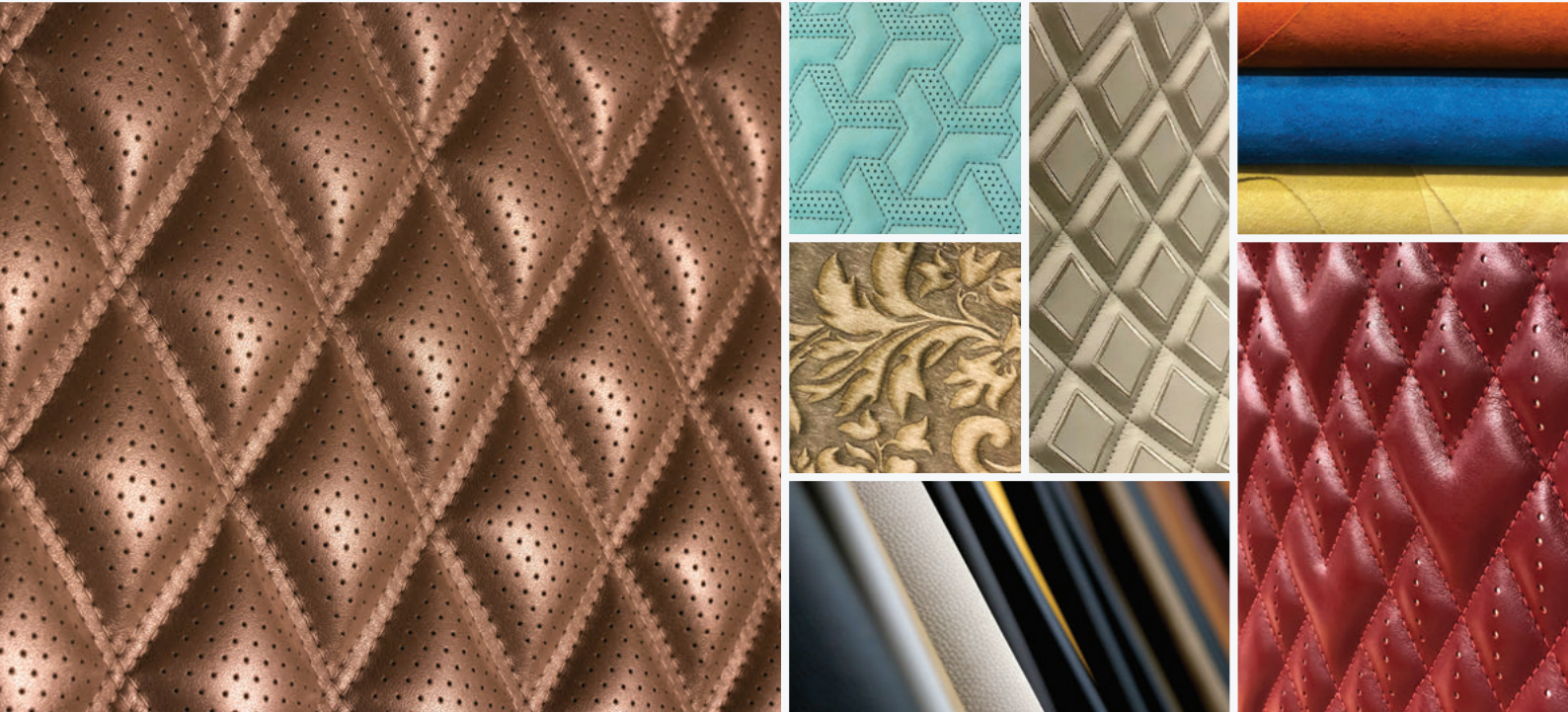
We are one of the largest global aircraft management organisations and that too, looks like a very fruitful area for cooperation and expansion.

At the same time as we look at growth opportunities, however, we also have to have one eye on the state of the market. The on-again, off-again tariff disagreements between the US and China are disturbing the markets. We seem to be in uncertain territory as far as overall market sentiment is concerned and we will have to manage through this dynamic, as will everyone in the sector.

Uncertainty is never good for markets. However, I have been through three full market cycles in my working career in aviation. It does not seem to be very likely, even if the market does turn down, that we will see anything as precipitous as the crash in 2008. I expect that if the market does decline, it will do so moderately and recover moderately. We would expect to manage our way through that better than most.



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AH: What would you say were the factors that would help Jet Aviation manage any downturn better than the average player in the business aviation space?

DP: One thing we certainly benefit from is the fact that there are many parts to our business. When one line of business, such as FBOs, is slowing, another, like completions, or MRO, can be experiencing growth. So that helps to balance performance over time.

Another factor is that uncertain markets have at least one up-side. They open up possibilities for players that are nimble, with strong balance sheets. The strength of our parent company is a huge advantage for us and for our sister company, Gulfstream. There are many possibilities that might open up in those circumstances, ranging from airport hangars and expansion projects to aircraft management wins and company acquisitions. And, of course, there would be the opportunity to benefit from signing talent via strategic hire opportunities that might arise from other companies downsizing or leaving a sector. It is all about how you respond to these market challenges.



AH: How does Jet Aviation's business divide up, regionally, around the world?

DP: I would say that we are fairly well balanced between the major markets. Our revenues are split roughly into thirds between North America, EMEA and Asia Pacific. The Hawker acquisition has certainly helped on the Asia Pacific side.

In the US, the key location for us and our largest FBO location globally, is Teterboro, followed by Washington and sites like West Palm Beach and Boston. We're very excited about our expansion in the Los Angeles market. It's a \$50 million investment on 17 acres, and will be the newest location at Van Nuys Airport.

“ One thing we certainly benefit from is the fact that there are many parts to our business.





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Our aim, globally, is to be relevant in the major markets, those to which our customers travel frequently. We do not see a need to invest in lots of small markets, but we absolutely want to have a strong presence in the right markets. There is still work for us to do in that direction. There are markets in the US, Europe and Asia that are strategic to us and where we would like to increase or establish a presence.

AH: How does the relationship with your sister company, Gulfstream, work?

DP: We have a good working relationship with Gulfstream which dates back to the early GIV days in the 1990s, long before our parent company, General Dynamics, acquired us. We are a key part of their service network and our relationship today gives us the opportunity to cooperate on large strategic investments, such as the Van Nuys project, that benefit our joint customers.

We also provide maintenance to other aircraft types including, for example, Embraer and Dassault, and we pride ourselves on our ability to deliver a premium service and continually strive to expand both our service portfolio and global reach.

AH: Being multi-line is pretty key for Jet Aviation, I imagine?

DP: Absolutely. The MRO business has its ups and downs. We are planning to close this year on some 1.7 million man hours of maintenance across all our facilities. So, this means we can balance out work across all our facilities. And with different product lines at different sites, with areas of expertise in wide body and in narrow body, the ups and downs even themselves out.

We're adding to our capabilities all the time, with hangar expansions and acquisitions. We have just acquired 100 per cent interest, for example, in Vienna, which will handle business jets up to a G650 or a Bombardier Global 7500.

AH: You also have charter and aircraft management. How are those lines going?

DP: They are going very well and add significantly to our diversification. We have 50 locations around the world, with four locations focused on aircraft management and charter, and we also have a staffing business, providing air crews to operators. So, from the time you buy an aircraft to the time you sell it, we are there for the full life cycle of your operational requirements. |BAM





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FBOs AND THE DRIVE TO BE THE BEST

By Kirstie Pickering

Selecting the right FBO can make or break a successful private jet arrival and departure. Business Aviation Magazine speaks to four highly rated US FBOs about what it takes to be the best.

APP JET CENTER

Established in 2009, APP Jet Center is an aviation company operating airport real estate and FBOs at Florida's Treasure Coast International Airport, Hayward Executive Airport in California and Virginia's Manassas Regional Airport. It also owns and operates 65,000ft² of aircraft hangars at Denver's Centennial Airport.

APP Jet Center is no stranger to accolades. In 2013, it became the first FBO in the US to complete NATA's Safety 1st Ground Audit program, achieved Stage 1 IS-BAH status in 2017 to 2018, and even had its Manassas FBO being named the best in the world for line service in 2018. What does it take to maintain this level of success?

"Our consistency is a major selling point," says Chris Hambleton, Vice President of Operations at APP Jet Center. "We work hard to be at least as good and as safe as we were the day before. Additionally, we recognise talent within our team and foster it to manage our client relationships and maintain our consistently top-notch operations. As a continually adapting organisation, we do not shy away from the costs and effort we need to put forth in order to grow.





“As a continually adapting organization, we do not shy away from the costs and effort we need to put forth in order to grow.

Chris Hambleton, Vice President of Operations, APP Jet Center

These unique selling points enable us to deliver excellence and value to our customers.”

With more than 350 tenants across the company’s locations, APP Jet Center is always busy. In Manassas, for example, it fuels approximately 1,500 aircraft every month. Overall, APP Jet Center handles an average of 750 transient aircraft per month.

“Our locations are strategically located in busy markets but at less crowded, general aviation or corporate airports than the nearby larger mainstream airports,” says Hambleton.

“This allows us to offer lower operating costs and convenient ground distances to our clients’ destinations. For example, at our Manassas and Hayward FBOs, our clients enjoy friendly, professional services while avoiding the congestion and high pricing at nearby Washington Dulles and Oakland International Airports.

“In a diversified FBO such as ours where there is a combination of fuel services and property leasing, the more successful operations are, from a client’s perspective, the stronger the tenant relationships grow. This enables them, in turn, to evolve further opportunities,” he adds.

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MILLION AIR

Million Air was founded in 1984 by the Mary Kay Cosmetics family as a single site FBO located in Dallas, Texas. It has evolved into a business with 31 FBOs situated around the world including sites in China, Colombia and Canada. The majority of its FBOs remain in the US, with Million Air Dallas consistently being voted the best FBO in the city.

“Our people are the heart and soul of the Million Air operation,” says Roger Woolsey, CEO at Million Air. “The first step is to hire extremely talented individuals. We don’t hire a resume. We create a career and then inspire and empower our employees. They go on to create that customer magic for pilots, owners and guests that travel in and out of our facilities for their business and family journeys.”

Million Air has a combination of business centric and destination location FBOs. The company handles over 100,000 aircraft a year under the Million Air brand and prides itself in being available to customers 365 days per year.

Million Air White Plains recently had a complete renovation, which includes the installation of six fireplaces throughout the facility. The company is now implementing fully fitted Starbucks outlets with baristas into its newer locations, with beverages and snacks complementary to all customers.

“Million Air is a place our customers can call home and we are proud of having a legacy that continuously exceeds our customers’ expectations,” comments Lauren

Rones-Payne, White Plains General Manager at Million Air. “I am most proud of our team and consistently amazed by their dedication to living the Million Air brand. Our team members are proud to wear the Million Air logo and carry that pride into their roles each and every day.”

“ Million Air is a place our customers can call home and we are proud of having a legacy that continuously exceeds our customers’ expectations.

Lauren Rones-Payne, White Plains General Manager, Million Air



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STUART JET CENTER

Stuart Jet Center is a long-time independent FBO that has been family owned and operated for more than 40 years. The company offers a full range of specialised services at its facility at Witham Field in Stuart, Florida. A private executive office space, hangars that accommodate Global 8000/G-650 class aircraft, and an executive terminal with state-of-the-art amenities including conference rooms, a customer lounge, crew lounge, and sleep rooms, are just some of its offerings.

In 2019, Stuart Jet Center was voted the best FBO in line service, and number three FBO in customer service, in the country. Such prestigious accolades aren't easy to obtain, and the company is proud of its achievements to date.

"Brilliant customer service means our team members taking great personal pride in their duties to offer the highest quality of services and amenities to all our valued guests," says Dan Capen, President at Stuart Jet Center.



“ Brilliant customer service means our team members taking great personal pride in their duties to offer the highest quality of services and amenities to all our valued guests.”
Dan Capen, President, Stuart Jet Center

“Our team members excel at treating each other and our customers like family in a friendly, professional atmosphere. It's this personal approach that has enabled us to develop long-term relationships and a reputation for going above and beyond with first-class, red carpet services. At Stuart Jet Center, we're committed to making every guest that walks through the door feel like a VIP.”

The company's busiest period is South Florida's winter season, which runs from October through May.

“With low turnover and a personalised approach to service, the team at Stuart Jet Center knows its customers on a first-name basis. They're more than just a number coming through our door and they feel that difference, which is why they continue to return to us time and time again,” adds Capen.





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MCKINNEY AIR CENTER

McKinney Air Center at McKinney National Airport was voted the best FBO in the US in the 2018 Pilots' Choice Awards for the third year running. The company prides itself in its service, staff and location as the airport is positioned on the fringe of the Class B airspace, meaning it is easy for pilots to fly in and out.

"It all starts with hiring the best people," says Ken Carley, Airport Director at McKinney National Airport. "Once we have the right people in the organisation, we maximise attention to detail with a focus on safety and service. We love making McKinney the only choice for all your aviation needs. Additionally, we offer flexibility in the form of before and after hours for those flights that need service outside of our normal operating hours."

The airport is on track to exceed well over 160,000 operations this year, with approximately 1,000 private jet arrivals and departures taking place per month from the FBO. The busiest period for McKinney Jet Center is typically from May through September each year.

"We are fully prepared to invest in new and additional equipment, facilities, infrastructure and personnel to accommodate the growing demand for such services.

Ken Carley, Airport Director, McKinney National Airport

McKinney is also building on its future, with a new 17,000ft² executive terminal currently under construction. Carley believes these investments are what make the airport stand out from competitors.

"We are fully prepared to invest in new and additional equipment, facilities, infrastructure and personnel to accommodate the growing demand for such services," he says.

"We additionally plan to become more technologically advanced with both our customer reservation system and aircraft tracking. Also, as everything at the airport continues to trend up, we will consider increasing the number of hours that we are open throughout the day." |BAM



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THE POWER OF ADDED VALUE

Clay Healey, the Owner of AIC Title Service, talks to BAM about the company's title services and its expansion plans

Q: When did you become involved with AIC Title Services?

CH: We bought AIC in 2003. The firm itself started in 1989 and only had 4 employees. Today, we have some 50 employees, and we handle transactions for our clients around the world.

Q: One of your major services to clients is the provision of aircraft closing services. What does this do for the clients?

CH: The Aircraft Closing Room™ is part of our overall service. We hold all the documents relevant to the transaction on behalf of both buyer and seller inside the Aircraft Closing Room™. This is where our state-of-the-art IT services come into their own. We're holding everything on our servers here but we can restrict views, so that the buyer can keep material confidential from the seller, and vice versa. Each party to the transaction has their own real time window with respect to the transaction documents that concern them. We also do all the necessary filing of titles at the FAA or at the relevant international registries.

Q: How much business are you doing annually?

CH: Last year, we did about 4,000 - 5,000 closing, and the total value involved was some \$3.9 billion. Most of these were US-based deals, but we also had transactions taking place in 127 different countries through 2018. Typically these were deals where our clients were either exporting or importing aircraft.

We also carry out a range of other activities, such as document filing on behalf of banks, or OEMs, or any party that needs documents placed with the FAA. This include liens on aircraft, for example, of the type that an MRO shop might assert to protect themselves in the case of heavy maintenance work on the aircraft. Holding all the documents makes it very easy for our clients to make adjustments. For example, an OEM might want to change the tail numbers on some aircraft.

Q: What sets AIC Title Service apart from the competition?

CH: What really distinguishes us from our competition is our own proprietary software. All service providers in this industry go through pretty much the same processes. Our software, however, helps our clients to get through transactions much faster than they would with the competition.

Key for us is our proprietary Aircraft Closing Room™. This holds all the relevant documents. Buyers and sellers can complete the deal and do digital signing of documents and contracts in that online space, and have the signing recognised as valid by any court that accepts



“All service providers in this industry go through pretty much the same processes. Our software, however, helps our clients to get through transactions much faster than they would with the competition.

digital signatures. We've really designed the Aircraft Closing Room™ to help everyone get things done with ease and speed. Key documents such as the bill of sale and the application to register title, can all be digitally signed, without anyone touching a piece of paper.

One of the key things about the Aircraft Closing Room™ is that it adds a great deal of value to our title service. The procedures for filing a title are common to everyone. That is the easy part and experienced title agents can get that part done relatively quickly. The Aircraft Closing Room™ adds a great deal more. It is very specific to the aircraft being handled in it, and it helps all to coordinate with each other in a very straightforward and coherent way.

We have a large airframe OEM, for example, who, after looking at our Aircraft Closing Room™, wants to set up a version of it in their offices to help speed up their processes for the sale of new and pre-owned aircraft.



It is easy to see why. The thing that really slows down the buying and selling of aircraft is all the paperwork involved. There's always somewhere in the process where things are sticking, and no one really has a grip on what is holding things up. The wheel that isn't getting greased slows the whole transaction down. With our Aircraft Closing Room™, if someone is sitting on something that they should be resolving or signing off on, everyone can see who's slowing things down.

Q: You use blockchain at the heart of this process. How does that work?

CH: Blockchain protects the integrity of every step in the process. No one can remove a document, add a document, or alter a completed document. It helps everyone to have confidence in the process.

Q: Is your business model based on modest fees and high volume, or vice versa?

CH: The fee we charge is appropriate and fair. At current volumes, it keeps our business healthy and permits us to maintain the staff size.

We will do some 4,000 - 5,000 closings throughout a year, and 15,000 title searches. We are one of the largest title filers each year and have been for a decade. We are one of the FAA's largest clients and are well known to the international registries. So, we are extremely active in this space. Our volume supports the hefty investment we make each year into our software and IT systems.

Q: What about expansion? Where do you see growth coming from?

CH: Eric Lewin and I have formed the Global Closing Room, a new company based in Ireland designed to handle all global transactions outside the US. Eric will be managing the Europe-wide operation. We will have the Global Closing Room up and running by NBAA in October. Now anyone in Europe involved in aircraft deals will have the ability to have access to AIC's Aircraft Closing Room™ during European business hours

The Global Closing Room will be using AIC's Aircraft Closing Room™ on a SAS (Software-as-a-Service) basis. It will be much more convenient for Europe than doing deals during Oklahoma City business hours. It will be just like using a title service firm in Oklahoma City, but in Ireland and during Irish business hours.

This was a direct response to the number of European aircraft brokers who have said to us over time that they would really like to see AIC setting up an office in Europe. Bank of America, in Ireland, will be the banker for the Global Closing Room.

An additional advantage for users is that they will be dealing with a firm that is used to handling 4,000 - 5,000 closings a year. It won't be quite as fast as our service here in the US, since there are a number of different Registries in Europe. But we certainly can help them move the transaction along far faster than was traditionally the case. Instead of documentation, signing, and funding taking four weeks and involving complicated logistics, we should be able to simplify the workstreams to cut that time in half, or better.

An important point is that in the US, AIC Title Service can act as a third party representing both buyer and seller in a transaction. European law requires that Global Closing Room can act for only one side of the transaction. For example, Global Closing Room could represent only the buyer, or the seller, in the transaction. The Global Closing Room can handle all transactions anywhere outside of the US. Inside the US, AIC Title Service will handle the transaction.

Q: One final question, what are your feelings going forward? Will the good times persist through 2020?

CH: There are always cycles. Truthfully, I expected 2019 to see a bit of a backward move on our tremendous results for 2018. That hasn't happened, despite the fact that 2018 was the biggest year we have ever had. So far, 2019 is outpacing 2018. Not only has the market grown, we have also grown our market share. Personally, I do not see the business aviation market backing up until around 2021 or even 2022. [BAM](#)



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GOOD TIMES OR NO?

Jay Mesinger, CEO/President of Mesinger Jet Sales reflects on 2019



Q: How has 2019 been for your business and how optimistic are you for the rest of the year?

JM: I would say I'm cautiously optimistic right now. All of us in this industry are watching the horizon, trying to spot any squalls that may be brooding up. There is nothing easy about keeping trades at record highs in this market. We're a bit ahead of last year, which is good, but there are a few less buyers now, and a few more aircraft.

That combination is not in itself bad. It brings more balance to the market and a little less zeal and zest. On the plus side too, there are still first time buyers in the market. That means that people still have confidence in the overall economy and that is very positive for us.

Clearly though, there are several factors that are entirely unrelated to business aviation, but that have the potential to have a significant negative impact. The on-again, off-again tariff struggles with China are doing no one any good. There are significant tensions between North Korea and Japan, and the Middle East continues to be volatile, particularly with US Iran relations. And we have Brexit to work through.

So there are things going on out there that could be catastrophic for some or many sectors of the economy. On top of all this we

have a Presidential Election year coming up and that always creates uncertainty in the markets.

These factors provide a lot of reasons for people to sit on the fence, and when enough people do that, you get a slowdown in transaction activity. So, everything we are seeing that is positive right now, could change on a dime if things go badly on one or more of these fronts. Right now, however, I remain positive.

Q: How bad do you think things are likely to get if some of the things that can go wrong, do go wrong?

JM: Unless there is a really significant geopolitical problem, the US intervening in a military way in Iran, for example, I do not think we are talking about a rerun of the crash of 2008. It is always possible that we could see some massive global disruption, that wasn't about the global economy to start with, but which rapidly has an impact on the economy. But that aside, I think we are in much better shape now, as an industry, than we were when the crash hit.

At that time there were two factors that made things worse, that are not in the mix this time round. The first was the excessive price premiums on aircraft that were prevalent at

the time. Those premiums were entirely due to very strong demand and under-supply based on the emerging markets coming alive. The OEMs couldn't ramp up their facilities quickly enough to build enough business jets to satisfy demand and things got out of hand.

You could easily end up paying a 20 per cent premium on top of what was already a rich price for a new and like new aircraft. Emerging markets were clamouring for new jets. So when the downturn hit, after the collapse of Lehman Brothers and other economic calamities, values fell off a cliff overnight. Owners found their aircraft shedding between 50 per cent and 70 per cent of their value in no time at all.

First they lost the premium valuation, then they got hit by the return to reality of residual values. From 2003 to 2007 the business jet market defied the logic that drives residual values. You had airplanes increasing in value over time, instead of depreciating. By way of contrast, for years now, aircraft have been depreciating at a normal, healthy rate of around 1 per cent to 2 per cent a quarter.



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“ I’ve been doing aircraft transactions for 45 years and even in the worst of times, we have always managed to win our share of whatever business was going on.

People buying new jets will want to sell their existing jet, for the most part, so we will see more 5 to 10 year old aircraft coming to market, which boosts supply. It spurs the spending of dollars in many sectors of the business aviation industry, which is great.

Q: Final question: you are fortunate in having your family well integrated into your business, how is that going?

JM: It is wonderful. It adds another kind of complexity to things and it is another joy. We work every day to be good to each other and to merge our skills and our passions, to be better for the industry. At the end of the day, my legacy will be more about how the business is sustained, and its longevity, than it will be about what I’m doing today or what I sold last week. When I finally leave this business, I want to know that I am leaving a legacy for my children and for the industry. |BAM

So, for these reasons, even if we saw a sharp downturn in the markets, I do not think we would see the same catastrophic loss of value hitting business jets. What you would see is first time buyers pulling in their horns and waiting to see how the dust settles. That would take some demand out the market and some sectors of the business aviation space would be more affected than others.

Some businesses and owners might be motivated to sell, to turn an expensive asset into cash, so there would be more supply and less demand. But business aircraft will still be flying. They are a key business tool and are seen as such.

I’ve been doing aircraft transactions for 45 years and even in the worst of times, we have always managed to win our share of whatever business was going on. We survived that levelling process, as did many of my colleagues in the industry, and I suspect we always will!

Q: How much of a positive impact on the market do you think we’ll see from the new models from the various airframe manufacturers?

JM: I think they are going to make a tremendous difference. The OEMs have new technology to sell and the opportunity to bring people in who otherwise would hold onto their present aircraft for longer. The lifecycle costs on the new jets look lower and people may find they have a better fit with their evolving missions. So, all this is good, and the industry as a whole is a real beneficiary of the process.



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Straube's Aircraft Services on what it takes to run a top class coast-to-coast aircraft painting service from multiple locations.

Straube's Aircraft Services started with one man's vision back in 1985. Today, this family owned business has locations stretching from coast to coast. Each location is strategically placed to better serve the customer and their custom aircraft painting needs. Straube's belief in Teamwork – Together Everyone Achieves More, and their ongoing commitment to delivering high quality paint and refinishing services, has stood the test of time. Straube's has always operated under the simple motto: "Our guarantee is your satisfaction and we take pride in the fact that the job is not finished until the customer is satisfied."

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Straube's Arizona location was established in 1994 and occupies a 10,000 sq. ft. hangar, specializing in GA and corporate aircraft. The Arizona location has been delivering high quality paint services for more than 25 years. Our Arizona location has provided services to Red Bull, Cal Fire, Papillon, and Grand Canyon Airlines, and has even painted a presidential aircraft for the Lyndon B. Johnson Historical Park.

Straube's newest facility located at the Falcon Field Airport in Peachtree City, Georgia, will be focusing on providing the very best in custom fixed-wing and rotor wing aircraft painting services, as well as interior, maintenance, repair and avionics capabilities. The new facility features a three-bay open floor hangar configuration, measuring a full 98 feet by 101 feet and 8 inches, and a door height of 30 feet. An additional 26,500 square feet of space will be reserved for interior and avionics work. Straube's Georgia location is becoming very well known in the aircraft industry for delivering high quality aircraft paint services through their teamwork, honesty and commitment to excellence.

A black luxury sedan is parked on a paved road in a forest. The trees are bare, and the ground is covered in fallen leaves, suggesting an autumn setting. The car's license plate reads "GOLDTREE".

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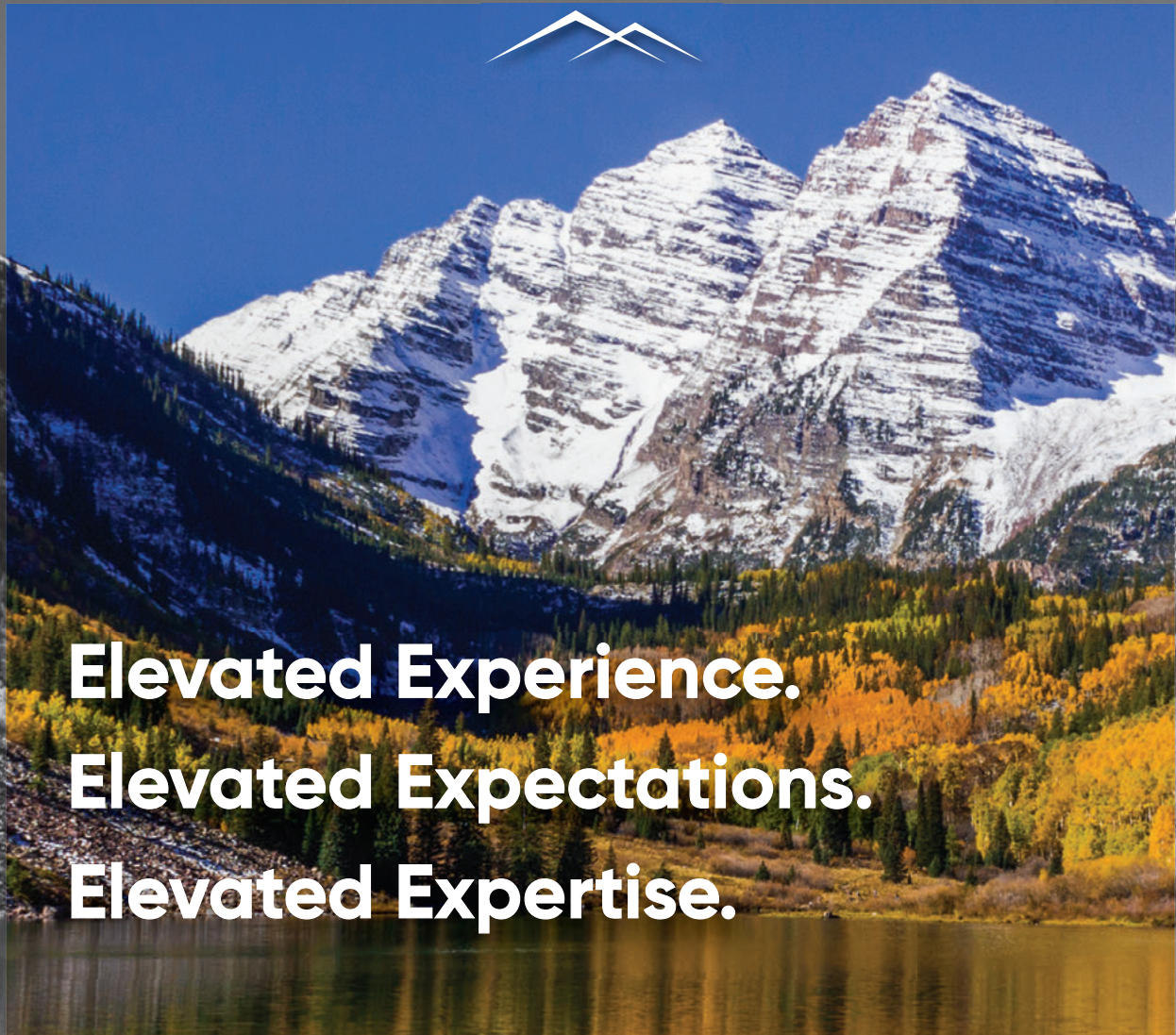
Straube's Hawaii location is located in Kapolei, Hawaii, on the island of Oahu, and also occupies a 10,000 sq. ft. hangar. Our Hawaii location offers complete aircraft painting services as well as full service detailing. In 2013, Straube's Aircraft Services, Hawaii, won the bid to paint the massive spaceship, Virgin Galactic, and with a 7-member crew completed the entire paint job in less than two weeks. Our Hawaii location also serves as home office for our Mobile crew and operations. Straube's mobile is available worldwide, and specialises in painting live and static aircrafts.

Straube's Pennsylvania location serves as Leonardo Helicopters in-house paint contractor. In 2013 our Philadelphia location received their Part 145 repair station

certification. The Philadelphia crew has more than 30 employees and has painted dozens of high profile helicopters that operate in countries all over the world.

What started out as one man's vision has grown into one of the country's top rated Aircraft Painting and Refinishing Companies. The Straube's belief in Teamwork "Together Everyone Achieves More", and their ongoing commitment to delivering high quality paint and refinishing services, has stood the test of time, and they will continue to "Paint the Skies" for years to come. |BAM

For more information contact Jeremiah Straube, Business Development, Sales and Marketing Director/Straube's Aircraft Services at 808-228-7841 or sallassas@airstraube.com or visit www.airstraube.com



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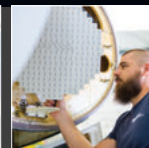
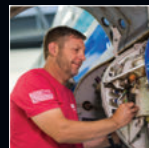
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Dawit Lemma, founder and CEO of Krimson, begins a series of columns talking about business challenges in Africa. Here he talks to Jane Stanbury about the complexity of permits

AFRICA AND BEYOND

Krimson is an aviation services company with offices in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia and Geneva, Switzerland. The company supports international, regional and national business aviation operations in Africa and elsewhere.

Q: You've been in business for four years now, and are heavily involved with the African Business Aviation Association - what do you see as the biggest challenges facing the sector's development in Africa?

DL: As with any developing region there are many challenges around finance, infrastructure, regulation, and ground operations. The task of sourcing permits epitomises the diverse nature of these challenges. Africa consists of 54 different nations, each with their own way of doing business and generating permits. The process is often bewildering with so much variation. Some CAAs support online permit applications and take an hour to process, others require substantial administrative information. Sometimes permits can take at least three days to process and only if you know the right person in the right department and who really has the authority to sign the paperwork.



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Q: What makes sourcing permits such a challenge?

DL: There are a few reasons. First of all, the open skies concept doesn't really exist in Africa. It is changing slowly but for a trip from north to south Africa you will take in an average of six different airspaces. Routing regulations are strict, even for airlines who have limited freedom-of-flight rights across the continent. Ironically these regulations stimulate business aviation growth. Travelling around Africa on commercial airlines can be extremely tedious due to inflexible schedules. For example, a trip from Angola to Nigeria may require a connection in Johannesburg. Airlines just can't serve the multi-leg journeys often required by passengers, whereas business aviation can, if it has the permissions.

Air traffic service departments are often limited by their own inflexible internal structures as regulatory bureaucracy stifles administrative progression. Take humanitarian or medevac flights. Many authorities don't recognise the urgency or that

flights can be a matter of life or death. In some cases obtaining permits only results in further requests for documentation, such as the clinician's certificate. This makes seeking permissions incredibly complicated.

Q: So, what do you see as the solution to these issues?

DL: Krimson's approach is multi-layered. We always advise clients to ensure that all aircraft and operator documents are up to date. The last thing you need is to have to refresh documentation while trying to source a permit. Make sure you are in good standing with the local CAA in terms of settlement of fees from previous flights. Planning and preparation underpin successful operations in Africa.

Q: How important is it to have a representative in the country you are flying to?

DL: It is vital. It really is a case of not what you know, but who you know. Companies with a local presence and established connections with CAAs understand the local

“ Krimson’s approach is multi-layered. We always advise clients to ensure that all aircraft and operator documents are up to date. The last thing you need is to have to refresh documentation while trying to source a permit”



nuances, the language, the cultural gestures, and how business aviation operates in the region. Permits are sourced in a much shorter time.

It also helps to visit the CAAs where you regularly operate as good relationships rely heavily on face to face meetings – personal visits are extremely valuable in building respect and trust and are really worth the investment if you plan to operate long term in a specific country or region.

Q: How do you see the permit issue improving in the future?

DL: Africa is making progress in modernising its air traffic management networks which will improve the process. In countries where online permit applications have been introduced, operations have already become more efficient. As the sector continues to develop and the value of business aviation to economic development is recognised, then the underlying administration will continue to improve. |BAM

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RE-IMAGINED BLAST FROM THE PAST

BAM has been following the story of the Ecurie Ecosse LM69 since the car began to take shape back in 2018. The idea back then was to create a beautifully innovative 1960s race car that Ecurie Ecosse, a racing team with over 60 years of racing history behind it, might have taken to Le Mans in 1969.

In early 2018, Neville Swales, an engineer with a passion for 1960s racing cars, built a prototype inspired by Jaguar's 1966 XJ13 Le Mans Prototype. Jaguar's own prototype, sadly, never made it to the track. Swales turned to Howard Guy, CEO at Design Q, an internationally recognised, multi-award winning automotive & aviation design consultancy, for help in conceptualising the re-imagined car's design.

One of the best known aircraft interior designers in the industry, Guy is himself a former Principal Designer at Jaguar, having been with the car firm from 1987 to 1997. He took up the project with enthusiasm and introduced Swales to the Ecurie Ecosse team and its managing director, Alasdair McCaig.

Initially the major design challenge was trying to imagine what the XJ13 would have looked like, if it had been developed for the Ecurie Ecosse team to race at Le Mans back in 1969. This was a period when some of the most beautiful cars ever, were being designed. Guy and his team found the 1969 race book and went to work.

Dealing with a car of unquestionable beauty has to be done carefully, just like a restoration. The re-design requires



Howard Guy, CEO at Design Q, with the LM69



responsibility. The designers had a duty to preserve those things that were worth preserving, while questioning pretty much everything.

The aim was to produce a car that could both be driven on the road for pleasure, and that would do close to 200 mph on the racetrack. The original XJ13 did not have a roof. To put a roof on an XJ13 and make it look good, the driver would have to be no taller than a hair over five foot. Not exactly a practical state of affairs.

“We produced a number of designs for the car with several of our designers having a go, including our designer and manager, Greg Shilton and our senior designer, Patrick McCalion. Greg produced a compelling proposal that was beautiful, functional and clearly derived from the XJ13,” Guy recalls.

However, Paddy McCalion’s theme was elegant and well proportioned and the team began swaying towards Paddy’s sketches. 3D models were built for both proposals, and super high resolution renderings were produced to show just how the cars would look.

It was important for the car to be more stable than the old XJ13. The XJ13 was aerodynamic, but there was no attempt at the time to give the car any downforce at high speed. The faster it went, the lighter and more difficult to control it became.

However, by the 1969 reference date for the reimagined car, more knowledge was emerging of how to induce down force. Rear wings on some race cars had appeared as early as 1965. One of these was done by the same Petr Brock who had put the cam tail on the Cobra Daytona in 1964. He continued his experimentation on the De Tomaso P70. That seemed like the perfect solution to the LM69, so a wing was placed across the increased rear haunches to create a nicely integrated look.

With the design now well advanced, Guy took the decision to build the car as an enthusiast’s model.



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“The aim, if we succeeded in making a great car, was to make a limited edition of 25 models, with a high six figure price tag. Alistair invited me and Neville Swales to present the concept car to the Ecosse clan and forty guest classic car collectors. We knew they would be bringing some of the most glorious machinery on the planet to the event. It was unmissable, but it gave us just ninety days to build the car,” he recalls.

The Design Q workshop became a hive of activity. The design buck, made by Swales, looked great on the XJ13 chassis but issues quickly emerged. “We soon found that even with our redesign, anyone over five foot ten wouldn’t fit. The rear bulkhead got nibbled and the engine had to move. We pushed the front cross-member forward too, creating more headroom in the cabin. At that point, the chassis really started to come alive,” Guy comments.

The design team handed off to Design Q’s surface engineer, Naqi Saskar. He lowered the nose and produced a significantly higher tail, and the car started to grow into its new identity.

“We signed off on the car’s shape, and the work began to take moulds and formers off the master

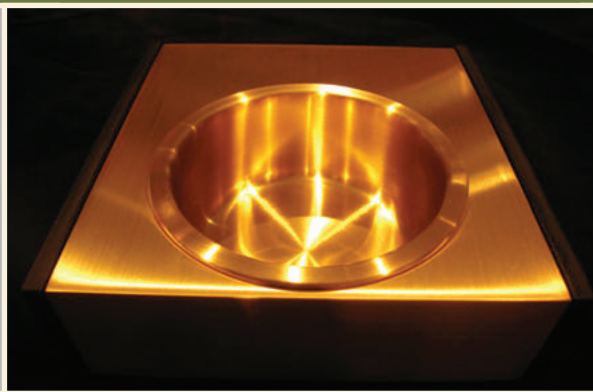
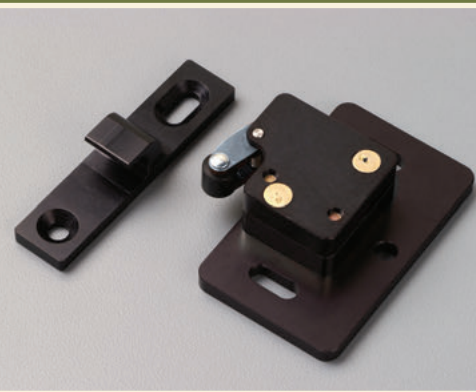


design ready to build the first prototype. The team headed by Terry Meher, a genius in his field of making and inventing, laboured night and day until the Transporter arrived at midnight to take the LM69 to the ball – the Ecurie Ecosse event,” Guy comments.

Completed and painted, the car is truly a stunning beast. Its graceful, unique shapes and lines are perfectly matched by the menacing, but equally beautiful, Quad Cam V12, designed just for this car.

“There is an overriding logic to everything on the car, and the method of manufacture is easy to see. There is no hint of any modern substance, such as injection mouldings or carbon fibre, no hint of mass production. This is a celebration of a car made with hands. It is a car that will develop further over time, as owners are free to tweak, improve and experiment just as they did back in 1969,” Guy sums up. “It is a work of Art, a beautiful thing to look at, and enormously exciting to drive.” |BAM





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A GREAT FIRST YEAR

Anthony Harrington talks with the leadership of Citadel Completions, based in Lake Charles, Louisiana. Citadel's Managing Director Joe Bonita reflects on the company's first year as business aviation's newest VVIP completions centre

Our Fall 2018 edition focused on Citadel Completions, and its founder, Las Vegas entrepreneur Sheldon G. Adelson.

Mr. Adelson, and the Adelson family, established Citadel to achieve Mr. Adelson's vision of transforming the completions business. As a major customer in the market, Mr. Adelson came to the conclusion that there was a clear opening in the market for a company that could do the job better, faster, and to a higher standard. When it came to Citadel, Mr. Adelson had a considerable level of confidence that by putting a stellar leadership team in place, hiring the best technicians and craftsmen, and investing in a great location, equipped with the most modern facilities, the business could deliver an outstanding VVIP completion in significantly less time without sacrificing quality.

AH: Let's begin with a recap of Citadel's entry into the completions and MRO markets. What was your initial involvement, Joe?

JB: I was fortunate to have been part of the leadership team who managed the completion of Mr. Adelson's ACJ 340 project, which was the impetus for beginning operations under Citadel Completions.

AH: Joe, obviously, you have had to build up the team from scratch over the last year. How has the hiring gone? Both completions and MRO are highly demanding and technical fields, demanding a wide range of skills.

JB: Hiring has been steady for us. As you mention, seeking folks with the right skills is vitally important for us. We have received tremendous interest and support from the local community and have on-boarded strong local labour. We do, however, continue to recruit nationally to add depth and to strengthen the team.

Our recruiting efforts, of course, highlight Citadel's vision

and mission, but also, all of the wonderful things the City of Lake Charles, and State of Louisiana offer to employees and their families.

AH: How is Citadel fitting in to both the Louisiana region and the Chennault Airport community?

JB: Chennault International Airport is a great partner for Citadel. I believe their development and growth plans are a great compliment to Citadel's business objectives. We have a great partnering relationship with the City of Lake Charles and we continue to look for opportunities to engage in community support.

AH: Clearly, the award of the FAA Part 145 Certificate in early December last year, was a key milestone. Let's talk about that and how things have gone on the MRO side. Adding the EASA Part 145 certificate in March builds on this, of course.

JB: Under our FAA Part 145 Repair Station Certificate, Citadel has now delivered four projects, with a fifth underway. These have been a mix of traditional MRO maintenance and full scope VVIP interior refurbishments. Our second project was a Boeing 737 BBJ, which needed comprehensive maintenance work done, as well as a full interior refresh. This was a great project to exercise the operation, test the mission and vision, and satisfy customer expectations... and we hit a home run!

We continue to expand both capabilities and International certifications. In addition to the EASA Part 145, Citadel currently holds Bermuda and United Arab Emirates GCAA Part 145 certificates...and we are pursuing additional international capabilities to support potential customer needs.

AH: Your second attendance at the Monaco Yacht show will be happening shortly, what are the expectations from this?

A professional portrait of a middle-aged man with short, graying hair, wearing a dark navy blue suit jacket, a white dress shirt, and a red tie with small white polka dots. He is standing in front of a wall featuring the Citadel Completions logo, which includes a stylized blue and yellow graphic above the word "CITADEL" in large blue letters and "COMPLETIONS" in smaller blue letters below it. The man has his hands clasped in front of him, wearing a gold ring on his left hand and a black watch with a silver dial on his left wrist.

“ Under our FAA Part 145 Repair Station Certificate, Citadel has now delivered four projects, with a fifth underway. These have been a mix of traditional MRO maintenance and full scope VVIP interior refurbishments.

JB: We are planning a presence at Monaco 2019. Essentially we will again partner with the one of the world's most prominent yacht companies, and will have a presence in their chalet. We enjoyed a great partnership at last year's show, and are looking forward to working with them again to showcase our achievements over the past year.

Generally, our major trade show plan for the remainder of 2019 is the NBAA in Las Vegas, with an exhibit at the show. We will be hosting a major event the first night in a beautiful hangar setting at McCarren airport. We will also be showing the A340 ACJ at the Dubai Airshow in November.

For 2020 we are planning to exhibit at EBACE and NBAA, and will have some presence at events such as MRO America's and the Corporate Jet Inventor events in London, Dubai, and Singapore. We are also planning to have a presence at MEBAA Dubai.

AH: How did the local Chennault Air Show go?

JB: Citadel was proud to be a major sponsor of the 2019 Chennault International Airport Air Show this past May. As a top tier sponsor, Citadel not only financially supported the show and community, but also provided a VVIP Boeing 747SP for the static display. This allowed us to showcase this beautiful aircraft and Citadel's capabilities to the community.

AH: Any closing thoughts on Citadel's first year, and what lies ahead?

JB: I'm extremely proud of the entire team's effort and progress during this first full year of operation. We've solidified the foundation of our business and production processes, successfully delivered several projects and have postured ourselves to take on bigger programs. We are excited to continue to grow the operation and provide great customer service and quality. |BAM





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