

SUMMER 2021

# BUSINESS AVIATION MAGAZINE

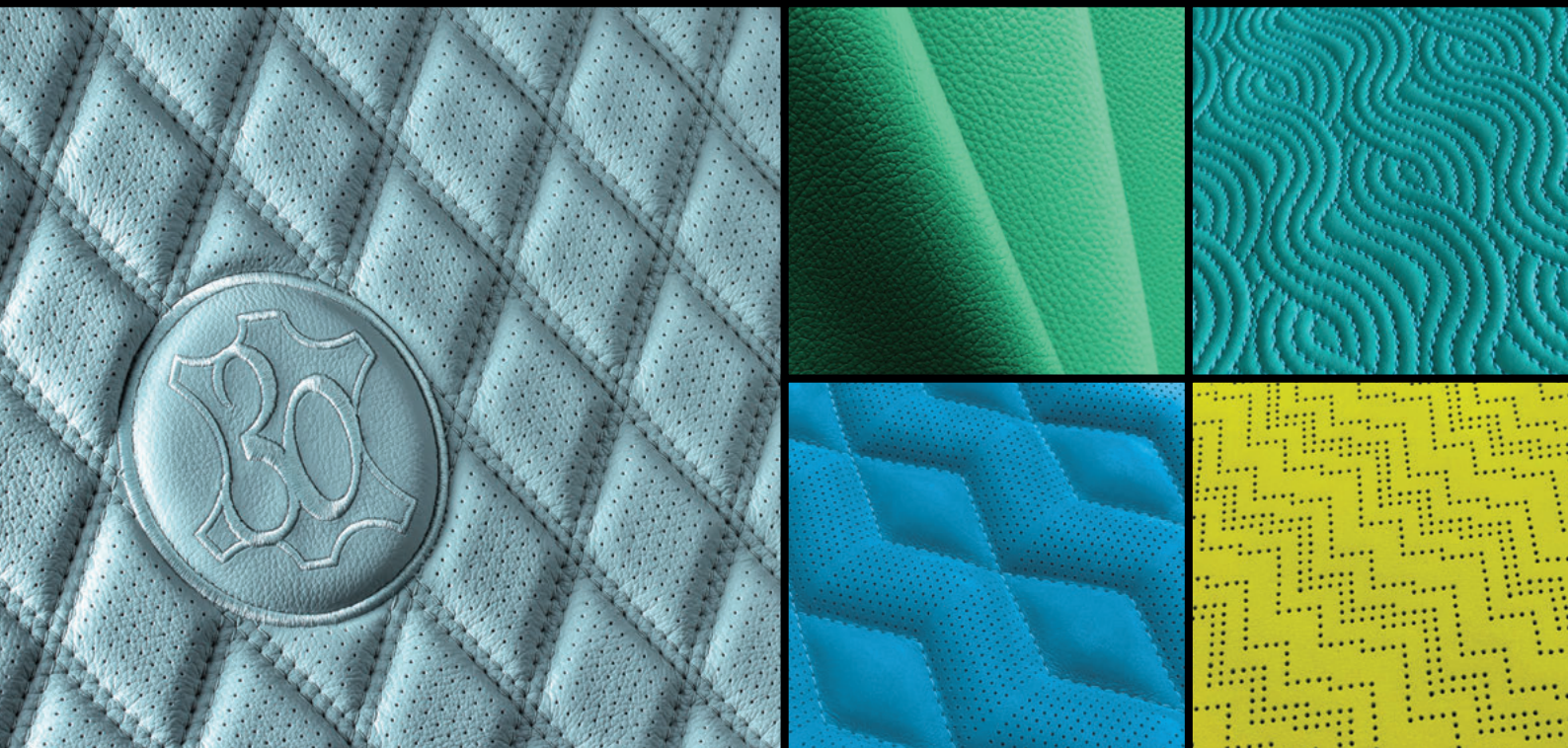


Keeping it  
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SIMPLE**

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# BLUE SKIES AHEAD?

Well, it looks like Summer is going to see the COVID threat continuing to diminish while business activity ramps up to new heights. The UK has already bounced back to beyond 2019 levels, buoyed by consumer spending, and the US is also surging ahead.

All this is, of course, great news for business aviation, which, as everyone in the industry now knows, has benefitted greatly through the later stages of the pandemic. It seems like all those who could afford it, and there are many, have decided to fly private to avoid all the risky touch-points associated with flying on commercial airlines.

This trend has been accelerated by the fact that many commercial airlines cut back drastically on the number of routes they were prepared to fly during the pandemic.

According to WingX, by the third week in June, business aviation traffic globally was trending 12 percent up on pre-COVID levels, which is tremendous news. This is particularly so when one realises that in April 2020, just a year and two months ago, business jet flight levels had stabilised some 80 percent below pre-pandemic levels.

However that was then, back at the start of the pandemic crisis, and this is now, with much of the developed world having more than half their populations vaccinated. The vaccine rollout in the US has been tremendous in most states, and as a result, NBAA looks certain to take place as planned from 12 to 14 October.

That is far enough ahead for us to expect to see the improvements in the fight against COVID make further positive strides before October comes along. Of course, some countries are still experiencing surges in infection rates, so we're not out the woods yet. However, the signs are very positive.

One thing is for sure, it is going to be tremendous for the industry to be able to get together once again at NBAA. The organisers are almost certainly correct when they claim that this is going to be the greatest NBAA Conference and Exhibition ever. We at BAM, like everyone else, can't wait to see all our friends again!

ANTHONY HARRINGTON

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# THE ART OF AIRCRAFT

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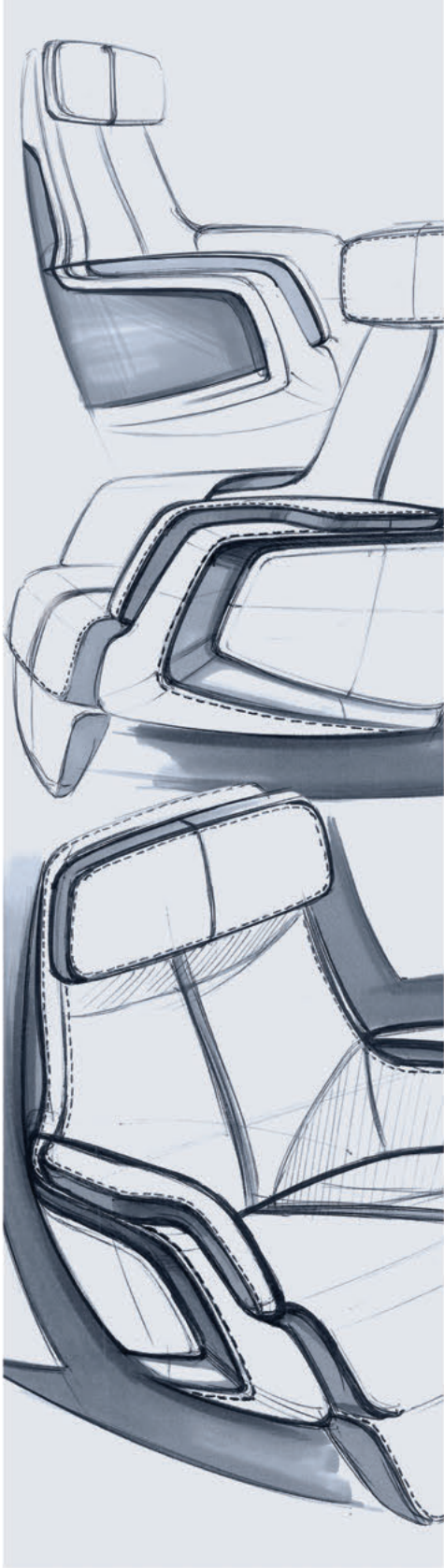
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# DESIGN Q

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# KEEPING IT PLANE SIMPLE

Jim Jensen, Founder & CEO, SD, talks to Anthony Harrington about growing through the pandemic and preparing new breakthroughs

**AH: Jim let's start with the pandemic. How much did that affect SD, and what did you have to do by way of protective measures?**

JJ: For a while, in Florida, all the restrictions were in place with everything shut, then we started returning to normal. However, all the way through we stayed focused on keeping our customers connected and continuing with our research and development projects.

**AH: How have revenues held up through what has been quite a slow period for many in the industry, particularly with all the country-to-country flight restrictions through the last 20 months or so?**

JJ: We are fortunate that we have a great mix of services, hardware, and software that we provide. With all our infrastructure and connectivity services we weathered the storm extremely well.

We are fortunate too that our military business experienced increased demand. The great thing about business aviation is that this industry really comes together in a crisis. This is

a niche business, looked at on the global stage, and people really reach out to help each other. The partnerships we have with a whole range of organisations have really strengthened through this difficult period.

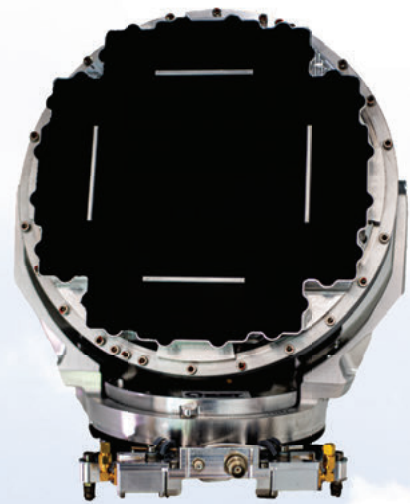
All in all, I think we have done a really good job through the pandemic in focusing our efforts and we have come out of this a lot stronger as an organisation. We've continued developing our Plane Simple™ antenna series. Software development and R&D moved forward at a good pace, and we worked well with our partners. So now, with the market on a slow upward trajectory again, I feel we can say we have an even better understanding of our customers and what needs to be done to give them the best possible connectivity experience.

**AH: We saw some absolutely shocking cyberattacks on the USA through the pandemic. Did you see a general rise in cybercrime as bad actors sought to take advantage of increased internet activity?**

JJ: We definitely saw a sharp increase in cyberattacks, not just in our industry, but across the broader cyber-security arena.



SD Modem Unit



Plane Simple™ TMA Antenna

“ This is huge for us, and we believe ground-breaking for the industry. The [Plane Simple](#) series consists of only two LRUs, an antenna and a modem, rather than the normal four or five. It is also the first time in business aviation that the modem is located in the unpressurised part of the aircraft.”

Antenna installed

PLANE SIMPLE™  
Satcom Antenna Systems

There was a marked increase, for example, in ransomware attacks. Everyone was communicating long-range and using the Internet to stay in touch, and the ratio of attacks went up and up.

We have a very strong set of security products across our networks, which have been designed for aviation security from the bottom up. Everything we offer is extremely robust, as like everything SD supplies, it has been designed to meet the very particular requirements of business aviation by business aviators. But yes, we saw a strong increase in bad actors trying to manipulate the situation.

On the plus side, this has prompted a corresponding increase in client awareness of the importance of cyber-security. This is true of both individual owners and corporate flight departments. We now have more corporations than ever before co-locating their servers in our data centres so that their networks are entirely insulated from the public internet.

**AH: SD moved into the flight ops support arena some time ago. How has that prospered over the last two years?**

JJ: Over the last 14 months or so Flight Ops Departments have really been under pressure to maximise their effectiveness, often with fewer staff actually in the office. That has been great for our PreFlight, PostFlight, and in-cabin products. We saw a rise in subscriptions for SD Pro®, and around 6,500 unique logins every month, which is fantastic.

On the ops side, we are adding more clients to the system every month, with a lot of interest in our scheduling (PreFlight) application. Customers are really interested in getting the most out of the aircraft when it is in the air.

**SD Data Centre**



SD Pro digital dashboard synchronises flight department and crew

So, again, we have used the last 14 months with our customers extremely well, I feel, and our whole team has performed fantastically. We are assisting our customers to become more efficient and to maximise the return on their flying assets.

**AH: So, what would you say were the key milestones for SD over this period?**

JJ: The really big milestones for us had to do with the traction our operational software offerings are getting with corporate and private flight departments. Our routers, of course, are the solid backbone of our business and they have done very well. We completed the next phase of our global terrestrial network upgrade as we enhanced our Asia Pacific presence by building out our point-of-presence in Australia to complement existing PoPs in Europe and North America.

“We now have more corporations than ever before co-locating their servers in our data centres so that their networks are entirely insulated from the public internet.”



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**DUNCAN**  
AVIATION

We've started to optimize the open architecture design of our systems by enabling customers to "plug-in" third-party software to support operations. For example, as the aircraft generates data during flight, this is transmitted via our SD Pro digital dashboard to third-party maintenance tracking software. This gives the ops teams real-time, validated information about how the aircraft is performing and creates efficiencies by delivering data directly to the third-party software. We don't create, analyse, or use this data, we're just enabling customers to use our infrastructure to more effectively manage and use their data.

Our Plane Simple antenna development project is also going extremely well with our first tail mounted antenna, supporting Ku-band with Intelsat FlexExec, currently in the flight-testing phase on board our G350.

**AH: Can you explain a little more about the Plane Simple antenna project?**

JJ: This is huge for us, and we believe ground-breaking for the industry. The Plane Simple series consists of only two LRUs, an antenna and a modem, rather than the normal four or five. It is also the first time in business aviation that the modem is located in the unpressurised part of the aircraft. Any aircraft with a tail that can support a 12-inch antenna will be able to benefit from high-speed data transmission. And, as an added bonus, we are giving the customer back the aircraft's baggage space.

Both the modem and the antenna are easy to get at from a maintenance standpoint, yet they are completely invisible to the customer and do not take up useful pressurised space.

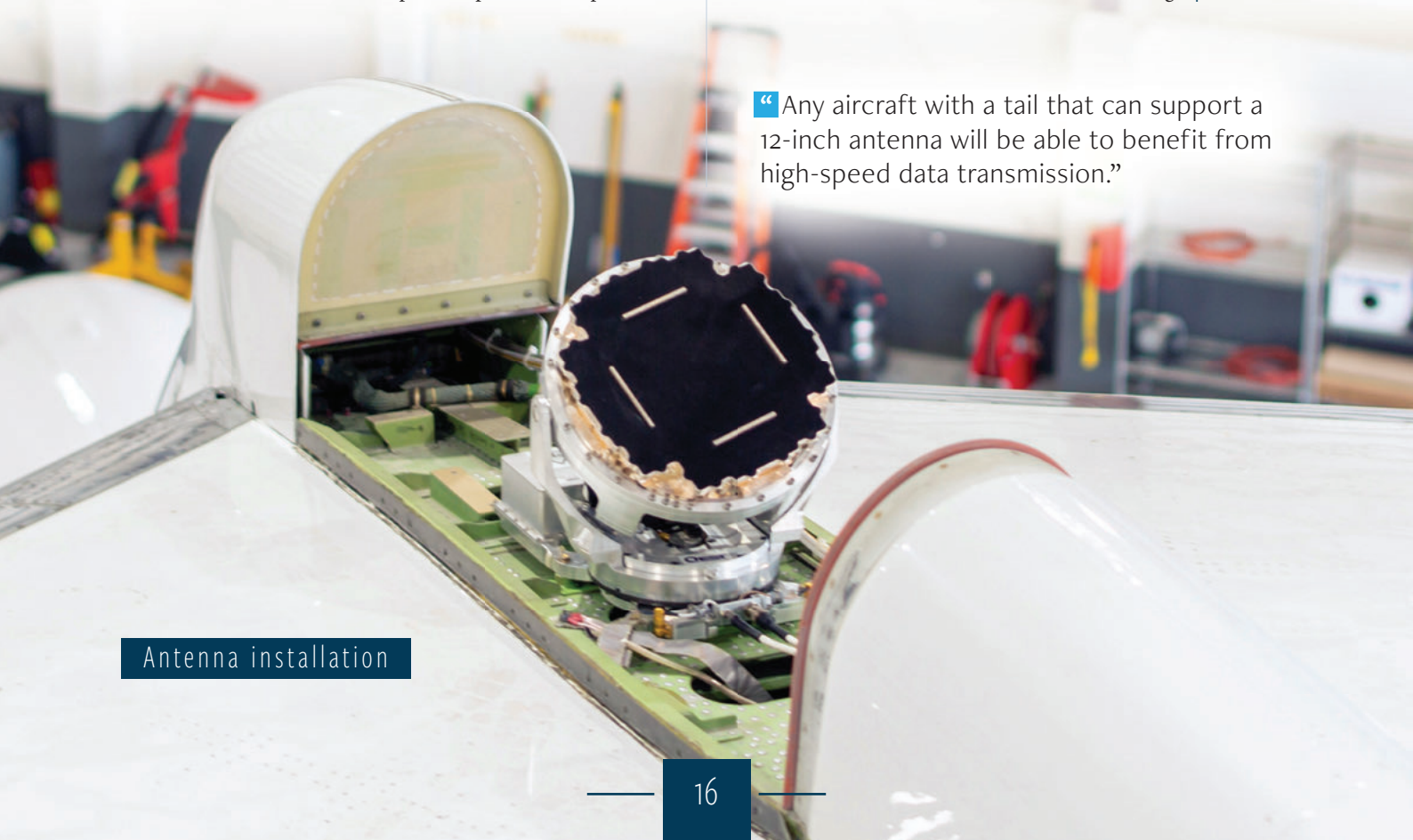
Even more exciting is the fact that we will have our flat panel antenna on the market by the end of 2023. Again, designed by business aviators for business aviation this will broaden the number of aircraft types that can access high-speed data. We will be able to put the flat panel on small and mid-size jets giving owners a high-speed connectivity experience that is just not available to them today.

Right now, we are able to serve the larger Embraer, Dassault, Gulfstream, and Bombardier aircraft and soon even the smaller jets will be able to enjoy a multi-megabit experience, plus streaming. There will also be more capacity for the pilots to run apps and other services. The Plane Simple antenna series will enable us to double our subscriber base, and that is really significant for the business. We are really excited about that. This is what SD is all about, leading the industry from a technology standpoint and providing our customers with game-changing technology to enhance their ownership experience.

**AH: How confident are you in the timelines you have set out?**

JJ: We think those timelines are realistic and we already have the satellite network to support it. When we launch a new product, we only do so after it has been thoroughly validated on an aircraft. We are looking forward to our next Connecting-with-Customers (CWC) appreciation event planned for February 2022, where we will be able to showcase our trialled and tested Plane Simple tail mounted Ku-band antenna. In the meantime, we are keeping customers up to speed with everything that we are doing with our quarterly CWC newsletter, webinars, and virtual meetings. |BAM

“Any aircraft with a tail that can support a 12-inch antenna will be able to benefit from high-speed data transmission.”



Antenna installation

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# SCHOOL'S *IN*

Paul Sallach, President of All In Aviation, a Cirrus Platinum Training Centre, talks to Anthony Harrington about combining pilot training with aircraft sales

**AH: How did you come to be in aviation, Paul?**

**PS:** I went to the University of North Dakota, a highly regarded aviation school, with the aim of becoming an airline pilot. I chose that career because I did not want to find myself in an office job. And here I am, 20 years later, with an office job and 21 employees.

My day job is all about managing flight instructors and coordinating sales. However, I try to spend a lot of my time selling aircraft and I now have people to help me run the flight school, manage our hangars, and liaise with tenants.

As to how all this came about, I originally worked as an instructor pilot for Cirrus Aircraft, for new aircraft owners. That job evolved into acting as a demo pilot for new prospects and developing a sales support role. That in turn led me to the path that I am now on. We teach people how to fly Cirrus SF50 jets and SR22 piston aircraft, and I sell prospective owners new and pre-owned Cirrus Aircraft.

**AH: The hangar part of things is probably the least exciting and the most stable part of your business revenue stream is it not?**

**PS:** We built 26 hangars at Henderson Executive Airport. One of these is our maintenance hangar, with 9,000 square feet of office space, which houses our flight school. The others are all storage hangars for our tenants, plus some bigger box hangars for mid-size business jets. That amounts to some five acres of real estate space.

It generates a very steady income so long as tenants are paying their rent. It was a great help to us through the pandemic and the lockdowns. We received our certificate of occupancy in April 2020, just as COVID really started to bite. We were concerned at first that the pandemic would mean people wouldn't show up to take rental space. In fact, people have been buying aircraft like crazy and they need somewhere to store them, so that has played well for us. With the hangars, we are literally just the landlord. We give them the keys and they come and go as they please.



Basically, in normal times we run the hangars as a break-even operation. We need office space to run our operating companies out of, and so we now have this at no cost to ourselves.

AH: Do you want to build more hangars and office space?

PS: Absolutely. This particular airport is in the middle of an FAA master planning session. So we have to wait for

the FAA to come up with its projection of what will happen in the future. Then they will grant land releases that are in accordance with the master plan. I am hopeful we can get a very reasonable chunk of that. We are tenants in good standing as far as the County is concerned, so I am hopeful they will look favorably on any application we make. The land, of course, is owned by the County.

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“Cirrus awarded us the title of Training Centre the Year for 2020.”

**AH:** How severely did COVID affect your operations?

**PS:** Initially with COVID, no one knew what to expect. The airport was a ghost town with everyone locked up in their houses. However, personal travel was one of the first activities to come out of the weeds, and I began hiring flight instructors right in the middle of the pandemic.

What we saw were people who had always wanted to learn to fly but who never had the time. Now they had nothing but time on their hands so they could get started on that long held ambition. We saw a surge in demand for aircraft rentals and flight instructors. I now have seven full time flight instructors. In addition, we have three admin staff and five between our retail pilot shop and line-service for our flight school. We clean the aircraft for the owners, it is pulled onto the ramp for them and everything is ready to go.

**AH:** How do you allocate flight times for lessons?

**PS:** The actual in-the-air time for most pupils is probably just over an hour, but this typically involves a three-hour block, with pre-flight planning and a debrief after the flight. The lessons learned in the air are worked through on the ground. We use eleven Cirrus aircraft in our operation and a couple of Cessnas to provide a lower, entry-level price point for folks.

**AH:** Of course, there is a tremendous synergy between teaching people to fly and selling them relatively low cost aircraft (by comparison with a mid-range business jet, for example).

**PS:** Absolutely, every client we teach is a great potential future buyer. And of course, we work very closely with Cirrus itself. I was only recently at the factory, holding several meetings with them. One of their senior people mentioned



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that they only wished that every flight school made the investment in their aircraft that we have made. That wasn't just a chance remark. Cirrus awarded us the title of Training Centre the Year for 2020, which was tremendous for us.

“As an agent or broker, I have to ensure I get paid, and having a title company like AIC Title handling all the funds gives me peace of mind. It's also a great confidence boost to the buyer.”

From my point of view, just having a title company that you can get hold of is huge. Communication is absolutely key when people are buying an aircraft. They want to know the status of their transaction at all times. With AIC's Document Closing Room, everyone can log in and see

**AH: How important is the aircraft sales side of things to your business?**

**PS:** It is very important. I have been doing pre-owned aircraft sales for twelve years now with Lone Mountain Aircraft Sales. My day job is selling aircraft and I'd say that the flight school and the hangar rental business are sideshows to that. We use Clay Healey's AIC Title Service as our preferred provider on the escrow and registration side.

which of the checks and milestones have been reached and where we are with the transaction. With a lot of other title companies, you are scrambling around trying to get people on the phone to find out the status.

I was in Duluth a few weeks back closing a transaction on an SF50 and we handled that through AIC's online document room. It really does help to facilitate the closing process. Everyone can see that they are ready, that all the documentation is in place, all liens have been released and you are in a great position to close.

**AH: What about escrow?**

**PS:** Escrow is vital for us. I will not do a transaction without escrow. As an agent or broker, I have to ensure I get paid, and having a title company like AIC Title handling all the funds gives me peace of mind. It's also a great confidence boost to the buyer. They can see that they are getting a clean, properly documented title, and that the registration process with the FAA is good. |BAM





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## MAINTENANCE/MODIFICATIONS? NO PROBLEM

Chris Haight, General Manager, Straight Flight Inc., on running Centennial Airport's top structural repair, maintenance, and major modification facility

**Q: Chris, how long has Straight Flight been in the MRO field?**

CH: The company was founded in 1986 and has developed into Centennial Airport's top structural repair, maintenance, and major modification facility using the aircraft industry's newest innovative techniques. The way we service, repair, and modify aircraft has moved us ahead of our competitors.

Having over 25 years of extensive aircraft experience that ranges from commercial airliners to small commuter

aircraft, my personal idealism revolves around a more profound customer interaction coupled with a team building mentality. Our distinctive presence at Centennial affords operators a centralized location that's paired with holiday retreats capable of supporting our entire client base.

Our founder, Ernest Smith, a licensed mechanic and pilot, understands all too well the importance of ensuring that the work performed on your aircraft is both safe and affordable. He is well aware that dedication to each customer is paramount in maintaining and growing any business.

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HONDA AIRCRAFT COMPANY – HA-420

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LEARJET – 25, 31, 35, 36, 45, 55, 60 Series

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TEXTRON AVIATION – MU-300, 400, 400A, 400T, 400XPR (Beechjet Series), 390 Premier Jet

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Straight Flight was created to meet the demands of KAPA's aviation arena and has performed numerous structural repairs and modifications to both general aviation as well as military aircraft of domestic and international origin. Straight Flight has an exceptional group of technicians coupled with our well-equipped locations. This allows us to be extremely proficient in minimizing downtime and lowering repair costs.

In February 2007, Straight Flight, Inc., was acquired by Sierra Nevada Corporation (SNC). SNC is a world-class prime systems integrator and electronic systems provider known for its rapid, innovative, and agile technology solutions. Fast-growing and widely diversified, SNC is a high-tech electronics, engineering, and manufacturing corporation that continues to expand its impressive portfolio of capabilities, products and services.

Successfully working as a team to meet the needs of our customers has allowed us to grow and expand our capabilities, and in the process, we have taken on a more diverse range of general and corporate aircraft.

Performance and integrity are key components for ensuring the success of our customers. Without that success, Straight Flight would not be where we are today. We have been working with the Federal Aviation Administration and its designees for nearly 30 years through our certified repair station and the development of custom modifications.

Straight Flight is intimately familiar with the requirements and processes of Supplemental Type Certificates since we have developed several over the last 30 years.



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**Q: What is the main focus of the MRO operation?**

CH: Our main focus is Government Aircraft Maintenance, corporate jet and turboprop markets.

**Q: What are the basic requirements for a high-quality MRO operation?**

CH: Having a quality management system in place is key. Straight Flight's expert staff delivers the best possible value in aircraft maintenance. Our commitment to earning and keeping the confidence of our customers is demonstrated through expert maintenance, outstanding service, innovative thinking, and solution-oriented processes. It sets us apart from the competition, thus ensuring maximum value for our customers.

**Q: How do you keep up quality assurance?**

CH: Straight Flight was created to meet the demands of general aviation and has performed countless heavy maintenance events, structural repairs, and modifications to include Non-

“With 30 years of profound craftsmanship and a customer base in the thousands, Straight Flight maintains quality levels that align with our customers' core values.”

Standard Air Vehicles for the U.S. Military, both domestically and abroad. With 30 years of profound craftsmanship and a customer base in the thousands, Straight Flight maintains quality levels that align with our customers' core values.

We are staffed with over 50 highly skilled and licensed technicians to include sheet metal, composites, and avionics skill sets.

**Q: Do you look to multi-skill your engineers across a variety of aircraft types or do you have some specialist sections?**

CH: Straight Flight utilizes multiple engineering skill sets ranging from major structural repairs, engineers certified in damage tolerance, to avionics and electrical Designated Engineering Representatives. So, we are able to provide our customer with a wide array of unique and diversified capabilities.

**Q: MRO is a very competitive market. How do you retain the loyalty of your customer base?**

CH: Loyalty comes in many forms, ranging from customer appreciation discounts to on-time delivery schedules. Straight Flight has been in business for over 30 years. We know absolutely that the respect and devotion we pay to our patrons is the catalyst for who we are today.

**Q: What about the paint and interior refurbishment side?**

CH: We have been painting aircraft and aircraft components since the onset of our FAA-Approved 145 Repair Station. With our ETL-approved paint booth and custom spray space, we have the ability to paint almost any component and/or large portion of nearly any aircraft. As a certified PPG and Sherwin Williams Service Center, our mixing banks have a wide array of colours to match nearly any exterior coating.

As it pertains to interior refurbishment, this is accomplished utilising one of our approved vendors right here at KAPA, and in most cases, completed during standard routine maintenance events, minimising any additional downtime. [|BAM](#)





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Boeing Demonstrator

Courtesy of Boeing



# DESIGNING DREAM INTERIORS

Warja Borges, CEO, Unique Aircraft, on designing dream jet interiors

**Q** : Warja, how did you get started in this industry?

WB: I applied for a job as an architectural project assistant in Munich with a company called Reiner Heim Design. This was in January 2000, and the company just happened to also be doing aircraft interior designs for all sizes and types of business aviation aircraft.

So that was my fortuitous and fortunate introduction to business aviation. We were doing all kinds of aircraft interiors, mainly in association with Lufthansa Technik. At that time they did not have their own inhouse design team and were collaborating with our design studio.

Then Reiner decided he was going to retire and that left me wondering what I was going to do. There was no other studio like his in Germany that I could apply to and my skillsets by then were so specialised to designing business aviation interiors.



I went to the Hamburg show that year, it was 2009, and literally sat on the stairs there with a good friend of mine whose aircraft I had worked on, talking about futures. I asked him what I should do and he said, "Why not just keep on doing what you've been doing, but do it for yourself? You were the one who made our aircraft UNIQUE."

The phrase stuck with me so I called my new business UNIQUE AIRCRAFT. With Reiner, I was project manager but in reality I did everything. Besides working on all projects as part of the team, I did all the calculations and backoffice work for Reiner as well.

I learned a lot about aviation specifications and requirements and about materials management. So I was actually well equipped to launch out on my own.

**Q: How hard was it to start a design business of your own?**

**WB:** Starting any business when you have never run your own business before has its challenges. We have classes in Germany provided by the Government that a new entrepreneur can attend and that gives you the basics. I attended these, but almost before I'd opened the doors of my new business, in 2010, I had my first commission.

**Boeing Demonstrator**

Courtesy of Boeing



This was a VIP interior for a BBJ3, which was a tremendous way to start the new business. Fortunately, I was not entirely on my own for this project. I partnered up with the company who had asked me to do the design for them. The customer was very happy with the result.

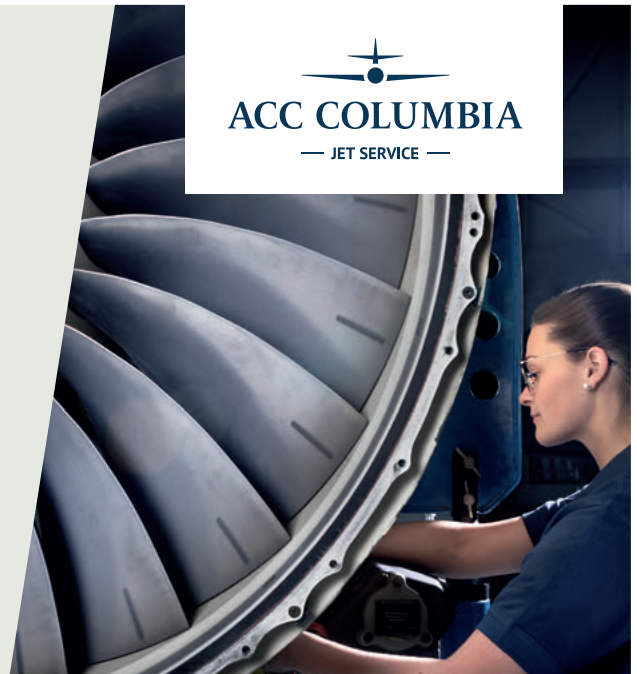
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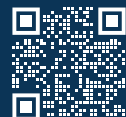
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Boeing Demonstrator

Courtesy of Boeing



“ I was asked to work on the Boeing Demonstrator Project. That is undoubtedly my flagship project so far.”

That was my first project. Then I started going to all the shows and networking like crazy. I went for quite a while with no orders, just building up contacts. To widen my circle, I spent a lot of time calling on people and introducing myself, showing them what I'd done and what my designs looked like.

Then, in 2011, someone introduced me to Sabena Technics. They had a project that they were tendering on for an A330 refit and asked me to help. We didn't win that one, but it got me started with them. It became a really good relationship and we did several projects together.

Then the second big project I became involved with was a BBJ turnkey project in 2014. That got me involved with the whole BBJ team. That project led to others and finally I was asked to work on the Boeing Demonstrator Project. That is undoubtedly my flagship project so far. It started in 2015 and it was delivered to the customer and presented to the public at EBACE in 2017. It became an award winner of the Yacht&Aviation award 2018 and I won the Designer of the Year award.

That project was extremely well received and the client was super-satisfied. The two years I spent working on that project were so dynamic and really interesting for me. AMAC Aerospace did the completion work on that project. They are a tremendous team and very innovative.

Their fresh approach was so important since we had some significant weight issues to overcome with the design. They developed really fantastic solutions. For me, it was a designer's dream. I could invent things. The customer, represented by Larry Hinebaugh and AMAC, were both really open to ideas, and we had a great time.

Then we hit the problems with the Boeing 737 Max, which was grounded from March 2019 through to November last year. That quietened things down, but luckily I had a project ongoing at the time. I had a second, smaller project towards the end of 2020 that is now almost complete. So, I have stayed busy.

**Q: How is demand now, as we start coming out of lockdown across Europe and the US?**

WB: Last year at times it seemed as if everyone was either asleep or in shock. But now there is a real feeling of people starting to get busy again.

One of my key projects this year is to take the colourful and original designs I have produced for larger VVIP aircraft and to introduce them to the wider business jets world, like Globals and Challengers. I am very optimistic that the best is yet to come as the business aviation world gets back on track. |BAM





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# DEDICATED TO *ROTORS*

Mike Renz, President and CEO, Analar Corporation, on the challenges in providing helicopter charter, maintenance and management services, and running a unique, dedicated helicopter FBO

**AH: Mike, I was hugely impressed to hear that Analar Corporation has been around for over 40 years. How did it all begin?**

**MR:** Analar was incorporated back in 1978 so, yes, we've been operating for over four decades now, though of course there have been some huge changes.

Analar began as the corporate flight department for a major Fortune 500 company, Church & Dwight, a major household goods company. Probably the product they are best known for in the US is their Arm & Hammer baking soda. Analar was set up as the group's corporate flight department in 1978.

To reflect a bit on my history and career, I got my start in aviation as a young man with a passion for aviation, especially helicopters in the late 1970's, early 80's. I started out as a maintenance technician and then shortly after obtained my commercial pilot license. I was working for a company called Ramapo Helicopters. We were one of the largest helicopter maintenance MRO shops in the Northeast US where we maintained the Arm & Hammer helicopters. The company (Arm & Hammer) were interested in my unique ability to be a pilot but also maintain their helicopters.

In 1986, because I was dual rated as a helicopter technician and a commercial rated pilot with an Instrument rating, Arm & Hammer interviewed me for the position of Director of Maintenance and Helicopter Captain. I made the jump and moved from the MRO business to the corporate aviation side. It was shortly after that I expressed interest in also flying their fixed wing plane, a Cheyenne turboprop. I went to Flight Safety International for the

training and soon became a pilot for the fixed wing as well. We had a great run from 1986 to 1993.

Things started to unfold a bit and in 1993, the CFO decided that the company could do without the helicopters and the aviation department and decided to downsize the flight department. They kept me on because I was dual rated and let the other pilots and staff go. So I ran things in what remained of the flight department for another two years. Since 1979 we had been certified as a Part 135 operation, so we could always do charters for the general public when Arm & Hammer weren't using the aircraft. This helped generate revenue for the company.

In 1995, the CFO convinced the Board to scrap what remained of the flight department and I was about to be terminated. They offered me a very attractive severance package, but I saw another side of the situation that most would shy away from. I was thinking that because we already had a steady book of charter business and I was able to maintain and fly the aircraft, why not purchase the Analar name, the company and its aircraft and give it a shot on my own.

So, we worked out a deal which gave me the company and the aircraft, and I started off on my own that same year (1995). I had been doing maintenance on the side



for a number of folks so we started with a reasonable amount of maintenance business already in the company.

**AH: How did you get from there to building the largest public-use heliport in the US at Kearny, New Jersey?**

**MR:** We soon had quite a reasonable charter and helicopter maintenance business. In 1997, I started an

operation in the Bahamas called Paradise Island Helicopters, which was the exclusive carrier for the Atlantis Hotel and Ocean Club. We flew high-rollers to and from Miami and Fort Lauderdale to the casino at the Hotel Atlantis. We were running a substantial charter and maintenance business in Princeton as well but found the time being away from my core business not so productive.

Then, in 2003, I decided that what the market really needed in the New York area was a helicopter-only FBO. Helicopters tend to be treated as

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second-class citizens at business jet FBOs. They take on 50 to 100 litres of fuel where a G650 will take on 4,000 litres. You have to remember that corporate New York has one of the highest concentrations of helicopters in the world!

We first had the idea to start a helicopter airline and I started the process and built a business plan with the help of two experienced aviation professionals to help pave the way. One of my colleagues was an expert in airline travel and the other an expert in marketing. We started looking for some land to build what would be our base of operations for our airline. We needed a fair amount of acreage in order to build the right size hangar. We found a parcel of land which was ideal for our heliport, so we began construction. Kearny is a great location. By helicopter, it is only minutes out of New York, which is where all the action is. So we could give the customer a really well-priced charter rate. As soon as we could, we transferred all our Analar Charter helicopters from Princeton to Kearny and we built an initial 30,000 square feet of hangar space. Later we built Phase II with additional ramp space, a 10,000 sq ft office complex, and an additional 44,000 sq ft of hangar space.

We now have around 35 helicopters based at our FBO, with eight of those being operated by Analar. The heliport has sight-seeing ops and charter, and we have a booming JetA fuel

base there. The other advantage is that we can hot-refuel, which means the pilots can keep their rotors turning. That is a really big benefit on a helicopter, because you don't want to run up the cycles by having to stop and start on a bunch of short trips. This benefits the economics and keeps maintenance costs down for the aircraft.

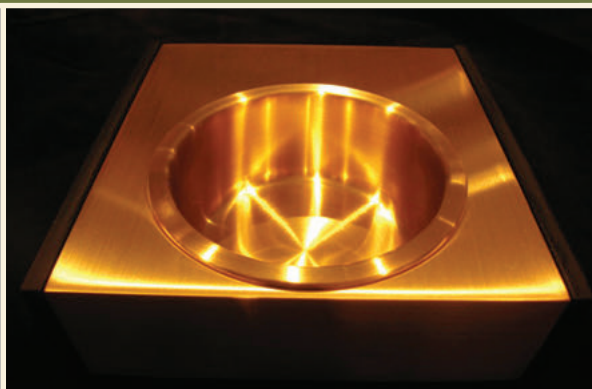
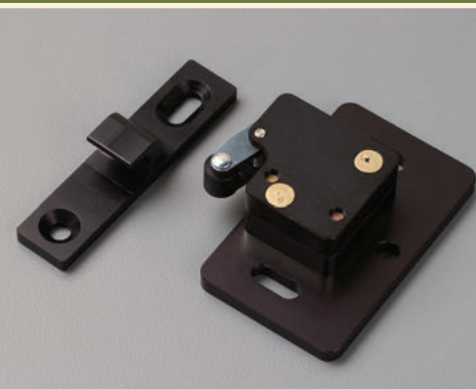
That can add up to a lot of savings for the owner in terms of maintenance costs, and helps to avoid a huge amount of wear and tear on the engines. Again, this significantly lowers the direct operating cost.

**AH: How difficult was it to find the property at Kearny?**

**MR:** It was a battle and quite troublesome. As I mentioned earlier, we were originally planning to start a helicopter-based airline, so that was dictating what size property we needed. The idea was to use larger helicopters to fly from Manhattan to JFK, EWR and LaGuardia.

“Kearny is a great location. By helicopter, it is only minutes out of New York, which is where all the action is. So we could give the customer a really well-priced charter rate.”





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“ We maintain all of our aircraft inhouse, and also a fair amount of aircraft outside of our own fleet.”

We spent a couple of years building a business plan, but the more we looked at it, the less the economics worked out. It would have been break-even at best. So we shifted gears and focused instead on a public-use heliport where we could offer hangar space, sell jet fuel at a retail level and offer maintenance services and crew amenities.

Around 2003, we located a parcel of property that we could have used, but it did not work out. Too close to a school and the local community wasn't having it. However, a client of ours had a parcel of land he was willing to lease us that was part of a heavy industrial/warehouse type of environment. That gave us approximately nine acres to build the type of facility we needed. The process took a few years and we had to make many land improvements.

One of our biggest challenges was that to meet the 100-year flood plan, we had to raise the entire property by 13 feet. It was a huge effort but it really paid off when Hurricane Sandy blew through in 2012. If we hadn't raised the property we would have suffered some serious flood issues. As it was, we came out unscathed with very little damage, if any.

**AH: What do you do when clients want to undertake longer charters?**

**MR:** At present we broker out all our fixed-wing charter



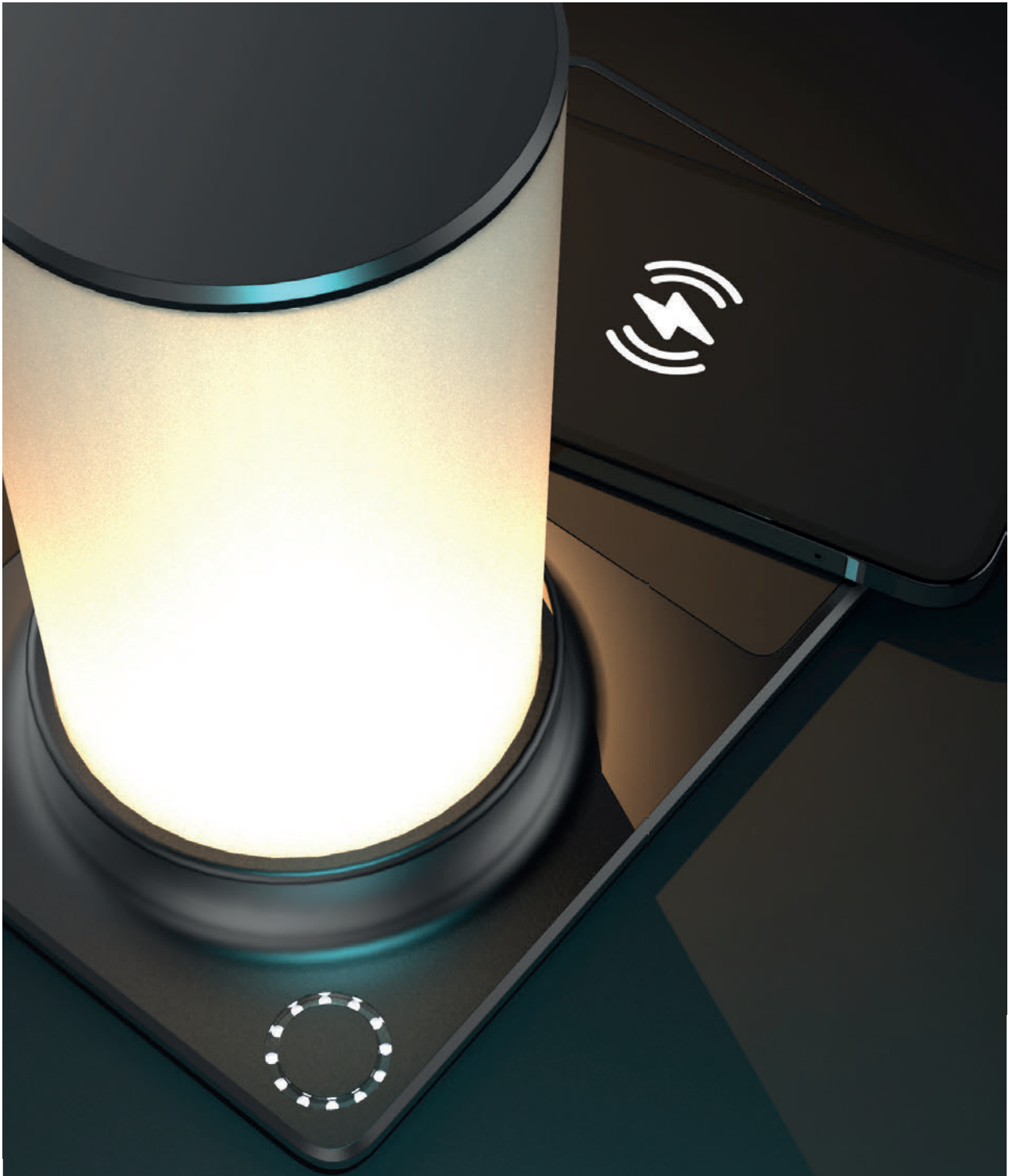
requirements and a lot of people source fixed-wing charter through us. Our goal is to extend our certification to a full jet capability charter certification, but we are probably a few months away from that. Having a full complement of fixed-wing and helicopter aircraft will generate significantly more revenue, so it is an attractive growth path for us.

**AH: And you are still strong on the maintenance side?**

**MR:** We maintain all of our aircraft inhouse, and also a fair amount of aircraft outside of our own fleet, which also brings us considerable extra revenue. The unique ability for us to maintain our own aircraft and not have to rely on outside vendors and maintenance facilities affords us complete control over the quality, safety, and workmanship of our MRO operations. We have our own in-house inspectors including myself to closely monitor the safety of our operation. We also house a huge stock of spares, avionics, and consumables to support our fleet and to keep maintenance down time to a minimum. Routine inspections can be turned around in days. That makes us very popular with outside owners and our managed aircraft clients.

**AH: Do you still have the same passion for the business after four decades in business aviation?**

**MR:** Absolutely, I'm in my low 60s now and I still eat, sleep and drink business aviation. I think the large diversity we have as a company makes it an ongoing challenge and I welcome challenges. I think that's what makes for a stronger, more robust company and does the same for me as a person. So I guess I would have to say, yes, I am still passionate about our industry. It's exciting to see the new technology and to be a part of its growth and participate where we can. There are so many new plans we'll be putting into place over the next few years. These are very exciting times. **BAM**



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# WINNING WITH *ACTIVE WINGLETS*

Nick Guida, Founder and CEO of Tamarack Aerospace, on revolutionising winglets

**Q** : Nick, let's begin by looking at how you got started in this business in the first place.

**NG:** As an aerospace engineer, I worked at a lot of places around the world before founding Tamarack. For many years I held a Designated Engineering Representative (DER) appointment from the Federal Aviation Administration.

My skillsets included being authorised to show compliance in four separate areas of engineering, namely: Structures, Loads, Damage Tolerance, and Fatigue. I was delegated by the FAA to create and review engineering for new and aftermarket aeroplane products, including aftermarket passive winglets.

My experience came from occupying positions of increasing responsibility with several major OEMs including Boeing,

Pilatus, Aviat, Eclipse, and Quest Aircraft. I founded my own consulting company in 2004 where I brought my expertise and DER certifications to projects with API, Spectrum, Raytheon, SNC, API, Falcon, Hawker Beech, and others. Tamarack came out of all this, in 2010, based on the invention of the Active Winglet.

**Q:** So, well before launching Tamarack you had a lot of experience with passive winglets?

**NG:** Absolutely. What people do not realise sufficiently is that passive winglets put huge stress on an aircraft's wings and what you end up with is a big compromise between weight and efficiency. You must put additional reinforcing metal into an aircraft's wings to take the loads imposed by the passive winglets. More weight goes directly to less range, while the winglets themselves lessen drag and improve



range. So, you are kind of going around and around in a not very promising circle.




So, I spent a good part of my early career beefing up aircraft wings and/or doing damage tolerance calculations. What I saw quite frequently was a reduction in wing life, that instead of an aircraft's wing having a 20,000 flight-hour life, as an example, with winglets that came down to 14,000 or so hours because of the stresses on the wing.

By 2009 this was really bugging me as an engineering problem. How do we fix this? A lot of people love the idea of winglets. For a while, I mulled over a cheeky answer. What about inflatable winglets? They would at least be light and would not hurt the wing and the customers could get the looks they want

It's a huge problem. On a Boeing 767, a winglet could add a thousand additional pounds of structure into the wing. I had the idea of creating a winglet where you could aerodynamically 'turn off' the winglet in specific conditions. This would allow you to dump a lot of the additional loading on the wing. So, you could get a substantial increase in the wing's aspect ratio without the need for wing reinforcement, with all that added weight.





Once I had the idea worked out, my wife and I used all our savings and launched the company. We had our Active Winglet technology certified in 2015 and started selling them. What it meant was a huge increase in range for aircraft that had them installed. An aircraft with a normal flight time of three hours became a four-hour aircraft, capable of doing 1300+ miles rather than 900 miles of a flat wing aircraft on

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a no-wind day. I have very recently seen a customer of ours flying 1610 nm, which was close to our record of 1853 nm.

**Q: What is involved in the installation?**

**NG:** For the current product, we extend the wing by about 2.5 feet on both sides, then we add the winglets. This is very valuable, aerodynamically. It means that the aircraft can climb like crazy, which gets it to its most favourable cruise altitude that much faster.

Remember, every aircraft is a compromise between various goals. The aerodynamicists say: go for really long wings – they’re much more efficient. The structure guy says: no - you’re going to pile on the weight required to keep the wings attached to the fuselage. The stress guy says: the more you go down that road, the heavier you’re making the aircraft.

Now, what we are doing is enabling a profound modification to take place with a major performance boost, with no structural compromises. That is a very good story to take to any aircraft owner.

**Q: How quickly did revenues start to roll in once you launched?**

**NG:** We had a fair bit of pent-up demand for them. We were working with Textron, and they were really keen on getting the Active Winglets. However, both the FAA and EASA thought that what we were doing was so novel they

needed to reassure themselves on several counts. So, we had to do a lot of work satisfying their concerns.

We got the STC in the EU first after 4 years of rigorous certification, then in 2016 we started selling the product in the US, and we now have 137+ aircraft flying.

We are also getting a lot of attention from the military. Active winglets will enable an aircraft to ‘loiter’ over a target area for much longer. The Unmanned Aerial Vehicle market is also very interested.

Active Winglets are also excellent at overcoming hot high-altitude issues. Where military aircraft might have to stay on the ground due to unfavourable high/hot temperatures (because they legally can’t make the climb gradients), with Active Winglets they could take off safely. So, where a hot, high-altitude temperature of 25 degrees Celsius would have kept an aircraft on the ground, they can now execute their mission.

If you take a CJ flying out of Telluride, CO, for example, which is at 9026 feet MSL, you can legally take off 1000 lbs. heavier with Active Winglets than with a flat wing. The military likes this feature because with their aircraft loaded with sensors and equipment, they are right at the limits of their operating weight. So, on a high/hot day, they would either have to change up the mission or just get grounded.

“For the current product, we extend the wing by about 2.5 feet on both sides, then we add the winglets. This is very valuable, aerodynamically. It means that the aircraft can climb like crazy, which gets it to its most favourable cruise altitude that much faster.”

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If you take a CJ as costing around \$1 million and spend \$200,000 putting on Active Winglets, you get more capability from that aircraft than you would get from a CJ2. In other words, you have spent one-tenth of what the step-up price would be for a CJ2, and the fuel savings alone would repay the investment in a few years. It really is a no brainer.

There are all sorts of other benefits: ride smoothing, stability etc. For example, if the airport you are flying to is out of reach of your CJ, fuel-wise, and you must do a stop, that is going to be expensive due to landing fees, not to mention the trip fuel. If you have Active Winglets, your additional range saves you having to stop and you avoid that expense. This goes on and on. You can get to your certified ceiling in half an hour, instead of in two hours, which saves you a lot of fuel. At 35,000 feet you are burning much more fuel per hour than at 41,000 ft.

**Q: What can you tell us about moving up to larger aircraft?**

**NG:** We are moving up to larger aircraft. Our mission is to help business aviation make the world a more sustainable place. We can get Active Winglets onto commercial aircraft. It is a lot more complicated but yes, we can do it, just as they do with little passive winglets. So, on the Boeing 737s for example, we would just take their passive winglets off and put ours on and get 3 times the benefit of the passive winglets. We are really excited about this opportunity to make aviation more sustainable! [BAM](#)



“If you take a CJ as costing around \$1 million and spend \$200,000 putting on Active Winglets, you get more capability from that aircraft than you would get from a CJ2.”



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# TAKING ENTERTAINMENT SERVICES TO THE NEXT LEVEL

Gogo Director of Product Management, Todd Krawczyk, on Gogo's Vision 360 and what makes it different



Premium 3D moving map

Gogo Vision 360

**G**ogo Business Aviation is recognized as the only air-to-ground (ATG) inflight connectivity provider in North America. The company also provides a robust inflight entertainment (IFE) experience through its Gogo Vision service. Gogo's claim is that no other connectivity provider offers a similar entertainment service with the breadth of content that it delivers.

In December, the company announced Gogo Vision 360 which takes the service to new heights with a premium 3D moving map, eMagazines, and other new enhancements. Gogo also focused on helping the people responsible for managing the entire inflight connectivity and entertainment system to make it easy to use and to keep content current.

To learn more about the service and what drove Gogo to develop Vision 360, BAM caught up with Todd Krawczyk, Gogo's director of product management, who led the initiative.

**BAM: Tell us about Gogo Vision 360 and what led you to develop the new service.**

**TK:** What led us to develop Gogo Vision 360 was feedback we received from our customers. While they liked the initial version of Gogo Vision, it was clear they wanted more,



Gogo Cloudport

especially an improved moving map, and they wanted more packages to choose from.

I would describe Gogo Vision 360 as a premium IFE service that features a comprehensive suite of services, including unlimited streaming of on-demand movies, TV programming and news, along with digital magazines and a state-of-the-art 3D moving map.

One of the most important aspects of Gogo Vision is that it is offered at a fixed monthly price which eliminates the unpredictability and often high costs associated with inflight streaming video and audio.

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**BAM: What are the differences between the various Gogo Vision packages?**

TK: There are three packages: Gogo Vision Standard, Vision+, and Vision 360. Gogo Vision Standard is offered at no cost to any customer with an AVANCE system onboard, while Gogo Vision+ is available at \$500 per month, and Vision 360 costs \$849 per month. Users must have an AVANCE system installed.

Gogo Vision has become an essential part of the inflight experience for many of our passengers and operators. Passengers want to be productive during their flights, but they also need downtime, especially on longer flights.

For those who fly internationally and primarily use satellite for connectivity, with Gogo AVANCE SCS all the Gogo Vision capabilities are available and SCS easily integrates with a satellite system. Vision 360 is configurable in a variety of languages including Arabic, English, French, German, Italian, Russian, and Spanish. Audio tracks for movies and TV episodes are offered in English, French, German, Italian, Russian, Spanish, and Swedish.

**BAM: How can someone get any of the Gogo Vision packages on their business aircraft?**

TK: It is available with the newly released AVANCE 4.2 software update and activation requires a call to Gogo customer care. It is offered as a new service or as a free upgrade for existing Gogo Vision customers with a Gogo AVANCE L5, L3, or SCS system installed on their aircraft. Activation will occur automatically over the air with no downtime required.

One of the most unique features of Gogo Vision is that all the content is updated automatically each month over the air via Gogo Cloudport, either in a customer's own hangar or at Gogo Cloud locations throughout the U.S. and in Europe. Gogo Vision is the only IFE service that delivers content updates over-the-air.

There's a lot of value in all three packages and the automatic updating of content with Gogo Cloudport and the AVANCE platform is so critical. It just makes everything so simple. It was important for us to be able to keep the content up to date and make the update process simple so users didn't have to give it a second thought. Today, they choose a package, they pay for the value, and then they forget about it because the content remains updated. It just works.

**BAM: What more can you tell us about Cloudport and what it provides?**

TK: Gogo Cloudport is a critical piece for Gogo Vision because it is the mechanism by which content is updated. It is not much bigger than a home router, but it's been built for more industrial use in a hangar. The driver for the development of Cloudport was to make it simple and easy to install and use, first and foremost. But we also thought through how to position it in the marketplace, and we needed to describe how it worked and what it was for. With Cloudport's predecessor, there was some confusion about what it did and how it worked, so we wanted to be very clear about all those aspects.

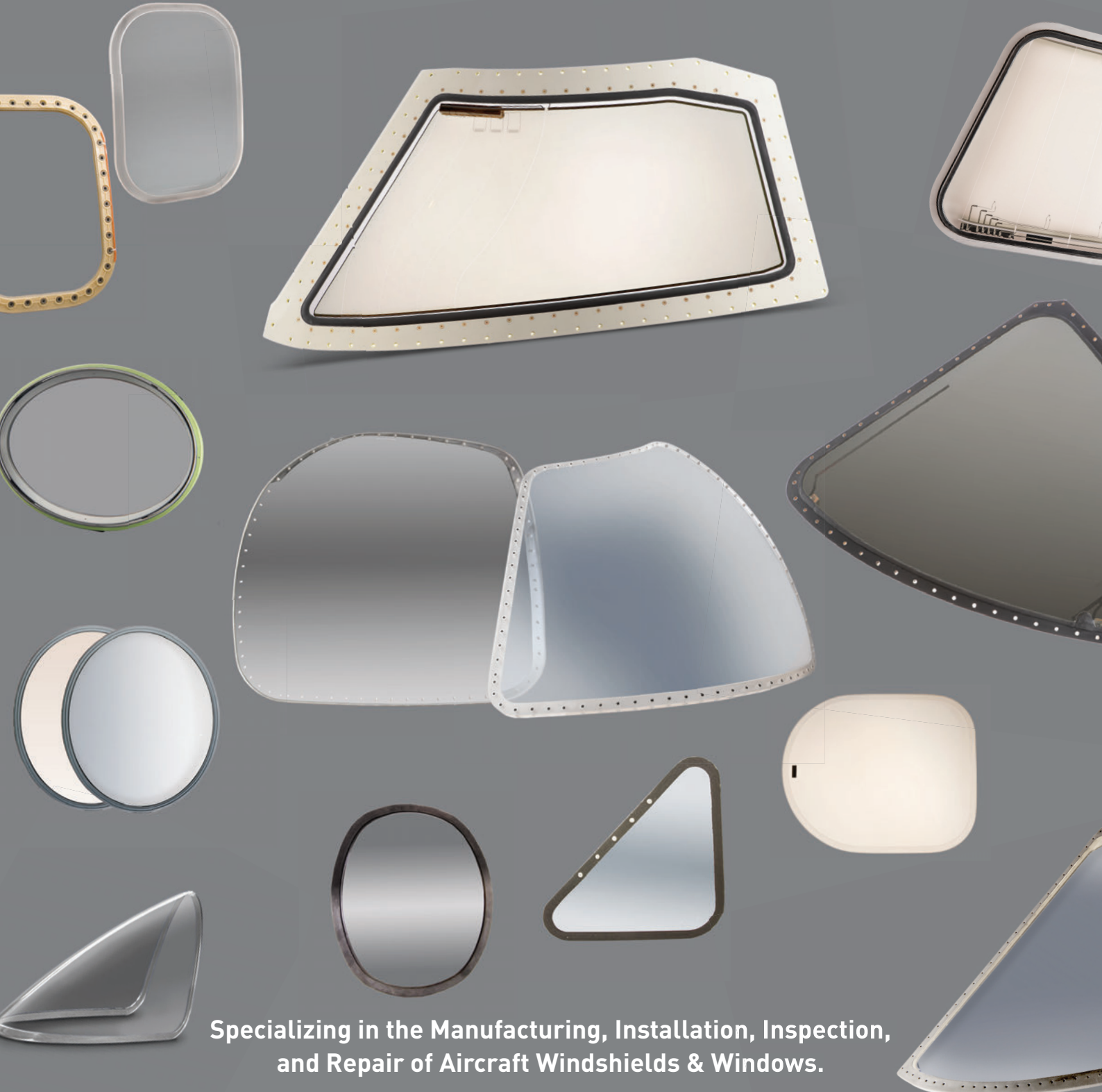
We really dug into the nuts and bolts of what we needed to provide to our customers. We did a lot of beta testing before we launched it and did a significant amount of work on the installation process to ensure it could be a self-installed. That was really important, especially for smaller operators. Based on the feedback that we've been receiving, we accomplished that goal. By almost all accounts, it's been a breeze to install and it's







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“The Cloudport program is one of the programs I’m most proud of and we’re ecstatic to see how well it has been received and what the impacts have been for our customers.”



been working as advertised – so all that work we did upfront has paid off. Cloudport is a little box with big capabilities.

The Cloudport program is one of the programs I’m most proud of and we’re ecstatic to see how well it has been received and what the impacts have been for our customers. They not only love it but it’s driving all kinds of efficiencies

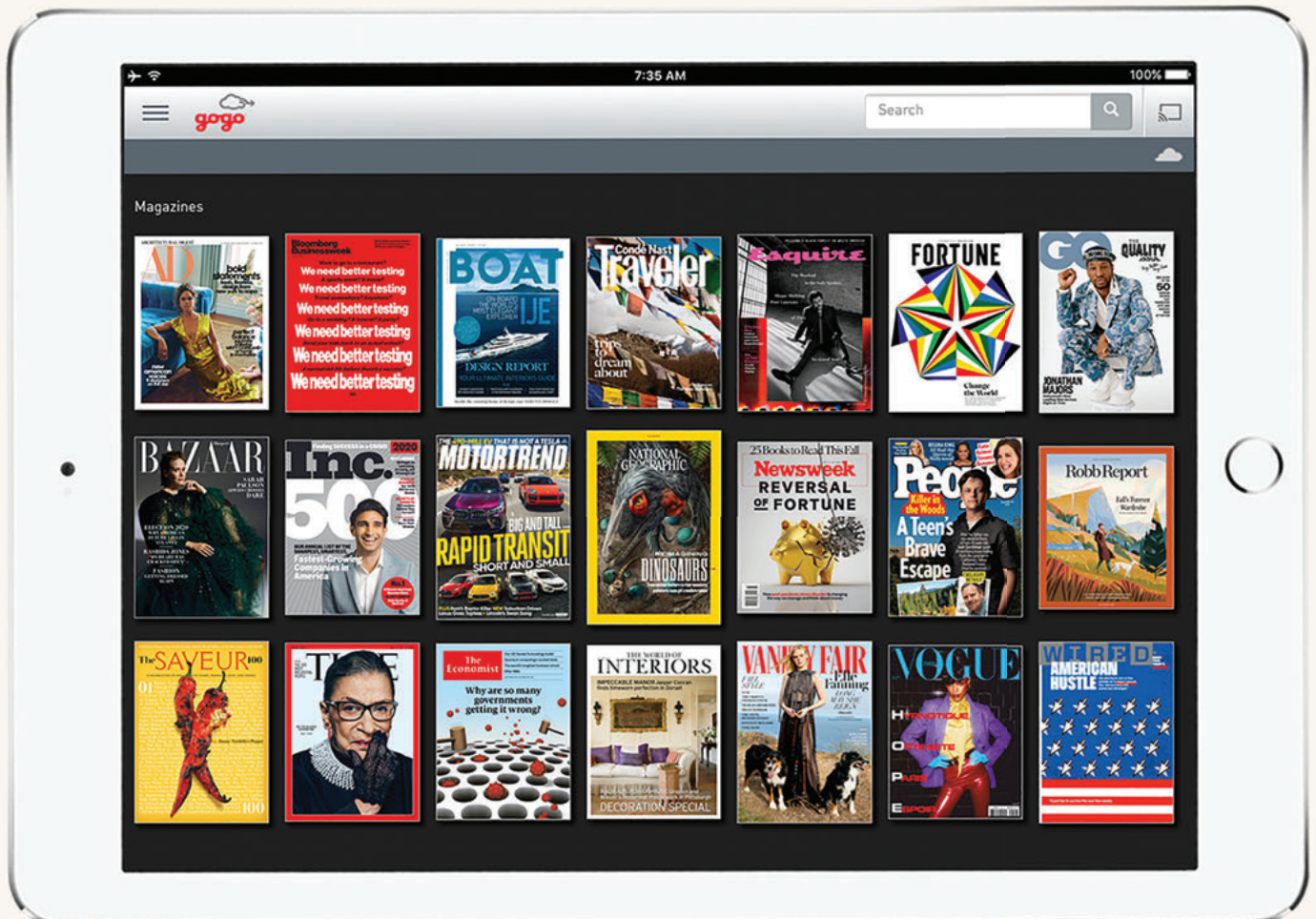
– both cost and time efficiencies due to the fact that once it’s installed and working, the customer doesn’t have to schedule or even think about updating the onboard content.

**BAM: You’ve mentioned AVANCE several times throughout this interview. Can you touch on the importance of AVANCE to your overall inflight connectivity and entertainment offerings?**

TK: Four years ago we didn’t have AVANCE, which we launched in late-August 2017. We didn’t have Gogo DASH mobile and we didn’t have the Gogo DASH ground portal. We didn’t have Gogo MIX. We didn’t have Cloudport, and Gogo Vision was a shell of what it is today.

Gogo now has an offering that is so much more than connectivity, and that adds a ton of value for relatively low incremental costs. Our customers today are not just buying connectivity. Today they are buying an experience and convenience via a suite of Gogo support tools in addition to a compelling connectivity service. They’re buying a wireless hotspot in their hangar. They’re buying inflight entertainment. They’re buying the ability to customize, tailor, and manage their inflight experience.

It’s not just about connecting to the Internet and have the ability to email and surf the web. What we offer with AVANCE is much more robust and is the digital engine that drives the entire



onboard experience. AVANCE does all those things. With AVANCE we've taken a rack of servers and put them into one system. Eventually, it will enable even more – data aggregation and offload types of CAS (Connected Aircraft) services. Whatever equipment uses software onboard that aircraft, AVANCE could eventually become the hub that runs all of it.

**BAM: What types of content are you seeing that are most popular on Gogo Vision 360?**

TK: Yeah, certainly TV and movie views are the most popular. We're also seeing more and more eMagazine views and usage, particularly because of the pandemic. People want to get rid of physical media and paper onboard the aircraft.

Frankly, everything gets well used. I think that's one of the things that sets us apart. We have such a rich mix of content, and there's no doubt that's one of the reasons we have so many Gogo Vision users. We offer something for everyone.

Because we offer both popular TV episodes and the latest movies, we give customers more choices. Some flights aren't always long enough to watch a movie. That's why we offer TV and that's where news clips come into favor or where the magazines can fill that gap. If you're a one trick pony from an IFE perspective, you may not get the customers across the board like we do, and so the fact that we've got such a broad array of

content from the moving map to the eMagazines to news clips to TV and movies – and much of it in multiple languages – I think we have really hit on the right mix of content.

We also are exclusive in business aviation with Disney content, which has proven to be incredibly popular.

**BAM: What else can you say about what differentiates Gogo from other IFE systems?**

TK: We're using our LRU processor for storage. What that does is it eliminates the need for a second box onboard. So many inflight entertainment systems still today require the operator or passenger to carry something onboard, whether that be the content storage or something that's a combination of content storage and a processor. We don't have any of that, Vision comes embedded in the LRU and uses our AVANCE platform.

One of the other things that makes us unique is the fact that we can use terrestrial modems on the ground. We can use ATG in the air. We can use Cloudport in the hangar. We can use any bearer to make changes. Other IFE providers struggle with the fact that they can't update or push configurations or digital rights management certificates in all the different ways that we can. Many big-name competitors have come and gone in the IFE space because it's difficult to do, and do well, but we believe we're doing that. |BAM



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# TAILORED TRAINING

Eric Hinson, President & CEO, SIMCOM International, talks about the challenges involved in growing the business

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**Q** : Can you take us back to the early days of SIMCOM and its development as a major training provider?

**EH:** SIMCOM is now in its 32nd year of operation. SIMCOM's founder, Wally David, started SIMCOM when he saw an opportunity to better address the training needs of the owner pilot market. In the late 80's, FlightSafety was really the only choice for general aviation simulator-based training and they tended to focus on professional pilots rather than owner pilots. By personalizing training through smaller class sizes and tailoring training to meet the needs of the individual pilot, SIMCOM carved out its own successful niche in the training market.

The company started operations in Orlando, FL using a Cessna 421 and Piper Navajo simulator. To

keep the price point affordable for owner pilots, SIMCOM elected to use less costly fixed base simulators. A large field of view visual system and actual aircraft cockpits ensured the training experience was still very realistic.

In the early 90's, SIMCOM expanded its training options by adding Beech King Air and Baron FTD's as well as the Piper Cheyenne and Cessna Conquest. The first big break for SIMCOM occurred in the early 90's when Pilatus began looking for a training partner for their new PC-12 aircraft that was in development.

**Q: You had a really big win with Pilatus. How did that come about?**

EH: Pilatus believed that owner pilots and small companies would be an important customer segment for the PC-12. SIMCOM's growing reputation in the owner pilot market was a significant factor. Also, at that time FSI had a very strong relationship with Beechcraft and the PC-12 was viewed as a competitive product to the King Air.

SIMCOM manufactured its first PC-12 simulator in 1995. We now have four PC-12 simulators, included our newest addition, the PC-12NGx, which is based in our Scottsdale, Arizona training centre. We have trained thousands of PC-12

pilots over the past 25 plus years and are very proud of the fact that we are still Pilatus's exclusive training provider for the Americas on the PC-12.

**Q: Do you have other OEM relationships besides Pilatus?**

EH: Yes. Shortly after the Pilatus relationship was established, SOCATA approached SIMCOM as they were looking for a training partner for the TBM-700. That agreement was finalized in 1999. We now have four TBM simulators, three in Orlando and one in our Scottsdale centre. We train every version of the TBM from the original 700 model to the newest TBM-940.

We are also the exclusive training provider for Eclipse. When the company emerged from its first bankruptcy, the new owners wanted a training provider that focused on the owner pilot market. SIMCOM was the logical choice. We have the only FAA approved level D full flight Eclipse simulator.

We are also the exclusive factory authorised training provider for Mitsubishi on the MU-2.

**Q: SIMCOM ownership has changed over the years. Can you elaborate?**

EH: In 2000 the founders of SIMCOM were looking for



more capital to grow the business. A private equity firm, JW Childs, had recently invested in the Pan Am Flight Academy, and they were interested in adding to their aviation training portfolio. Wally sold the business to JW Childs but stayed on to manage and grow the business.

At the time of the acquisition, Pan Am was predominately a commercial airline training provider but they did have a Cessna Citation II and Lear 35 simulator. The companies agreed it would make more sense to relocate those devices to SIMCOM and that is when SIMCOM entered the business jet pilot training market. In 2006 JW Childs sold the Pan Am Flight Academy but retained its ownership of SIMCOM.

I joined the company at the end of 2012. I met Wally in 2011 while I was an executive at FSI. We had closed our Lakeland, FL training centre and had decided to exit some of the older programs. SIMCOM ended up purchasing 14 simulators from FSI including Twin Commanders, King Airs, a Cheyenne, and a Saab 2000. Shortly after the acquisition, JW Childs convinced me to join SIMCOM as President and CEO.

When I first joined SIMCOM, the company was experiencing some significant operational issues. The company had grown quickly and had not yet developed the necessary processes to properly manage an FAA Part 142 training operation. After sorting out the operational issues, we started focusing on growth and an eventual exit strategy for Childs. In 2016, we added a new Citation XLS simulator followed by a Citation Mustang and an additional TBM. With a strong foundation and the company, once again, growing we initiated a sales process. In 2018, SIMCOM was sold to an investor group led by Kenn Ricci's Directional Aviation, parent of Flexjet, Sentient, and FX Air. The synergy between the second largest business jet operator in the world and SIMCOM made it a compelling proposition.

Our first order of business, after the acquisition, was to build out training capability to support the Flexjet operation. We put out an RFP for Challenger 350, Phenom 300, Praetor 600, and Gulfstream G650 simulators. CAE, one of the RFP respondents, was so intrigued with our business plan they asked if they could invest in the company. In November of 2019, we sold 50% of our investment in SIMCOM to CAE.



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SIMCOM still operates as an independent company but we now have a great partnership with CAE that allows us to leverage their technical expertise. Between the two companies, we can now provide comprehensive training solutions across virtually all business and general aviation aircraft types.

**Q: This is not an easy industry for an outsider to get into, is it?**

**EH:** The barriers to entry in the simulator training market, particularly business aviation, are formidable. First, there is the upfront cost. Full flight simulators cost millions of dollars. In addition, you must make a significant investment in infrastructure and people; instructors, sim techs, etc. before you can collect one dollar of training revenue. Another major hurdle is acquiring the licenses and intellectual property which are necessary to support training on the various OEM aircraft. Relationships with OEM's are a critical component of the business aviation training equation.

What attracted me to SIMCOM was the fact that it was the only independently owned business aviation training provider of significant size remaining in the market. And it took SIMCOM 30 plus years to get where it is today. As we discussed, SIMCOM had carved out a nice niche for owner pilot training, but its share of the larger, higher dollar business jet training market was small. Expanding business jet training, particularly to the super-mid-size and large cabin aircraft was an untapped opportunity. The relationship

with Flexjet provided the OEM relationships necessary to build out new training capability. With more than 800 pilots, Flexjet also provided immediate demand for training across all the new jet training programs.

**Q: What does the future hold for SIMCOM?**

**EH:** We are extremely excited for what the future holds for SIMCOM. Over the past few years, we have assembled an extremely talented team that knows our primary mission is to deliver training that leads to safer, more proficient pilots. Later this year we plan to break ground on a new training centre in Lake Nona, Florida, just southeast of the Orlando International Airport. The new facility will be in the heart of downtown Lake Nona. Hotels, restaurants, recreation, entertainment, and shopping will all be within walking distance of the centre. We are also planning a new training centre for our Scottsdale location.

We will build out training to support Flexjet as their business continues to grow. Our Gulfstream G650 simulator goes into operation in August and the Praetor 600 in September. We will continue to serve the owner pilot training market building and add new programs as the market evolves. There is also a great deal of optimism for the advanced air mobility market. While a pilotless vehicle is the long-term goal, virtually all participants in this exciting new market acknowledge that pilots will be required for the foreseeable future. We are working with our partner CAE to develop training solutions that will meet this future pilot demand. |BAM



“ Full flight simulators cost millions of dollars. In addition, you must make a significant investment in infrastructure and people; instructors, sim techs, etc. before you can collect one dollar of training revenue.”



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# TRANSFORMATION IN JET CARDS

Andrew Collins, President and CEO of Sentient Jet, on taking Jet Cards to new heights

**Q** : Andrew, where did the idea of starting a novel Jet Card business come from and what were the challenges involved in launching the company?

AC: Sentient Jet was founded in 1999 and is now an integral part of Directional Aviation with headquarters in Boston, Cleveland, and London. Sentient Jet is the inventor of the Jet Card and global leader of the product, which is now widely used throughout the industry. Unlike any other private aviation options available at the time, Sentient Jet created an entirely new industry segment, one that offered unheard-of flexibility and convenience for personal and business travel in private aircraft at all-inclusive fixed rates, with guaranteed availability, seamless booking, and industry-leading value.



Sentient Jet Jet App



Sentient Jet Jet Card



**Q: How did you come to join the company?**

AC: I received my BA from Union College of Schenectady, NY, and my Master's Degree from the Sloan School of Management at MIT. My time with Sentient Jet began in 2004 as the Director of Product Management and Web Marketing. From 2006 until 2012 I served as Vice President, tackling a

variety of responsibilities including Sales Operations and Revenue Management. In 2018, during my time at OneSky, I coordinated the acquisition of the international, digital charter provider PrivateFly in London. The aim was to help establish an on-demand, global platform with a network of 20 localized websites.

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As President and CEO of Sentient Jet, I am proud to have worked with our team to elevate the business, which has flourished over the last several years. I saw the opportunity to support both a digital transformation and a business model transformation for Sentient Jet. This included repositioning the brand, integrating a full suite of retail and wholesale technology applications.

Most recently, I led the acquisition of Halo Aviation Ltd, helping to drive the Vertical Lift Strategy for our parent company. On May 5, we launched our Transatlantic Program, utilizing charter supply chains to offer guaranteed fixed rates on flights to London for our Jet Card Owners.

“ We provide all-inclusive fixed rates with guaranteed availability, seamless booking, and industry-leading value.”

**Q: How have sales grown over time and what was the ‘go-to-market’ strategy?**

AC: At the end of 2020, we saw \$450M in sales, representing a 60% year over year growth with a majority of these jet cards to be used in 2021. We are also projected to hit \$150 million in mobile transactions by June as more fliers utilize our mobile app to book flights easily. It’s become clear that the consumer’s commitment to private aviation as a utility for travel is holding strong and will do so for the foreseeable future.

**Q: What are the advantages of the Sentient Jet approach?**

AC: We provide all-inclusive fixed rates with guaranteed availability, seamless booking, and industry-leading value. We do this by working with world-class independent jet operators who must complete an extensive certification process to ensure the highest level of safety and service for clients while affording access to a fleet of quality aircraft to deliver the utmost flexibility. Our team provides private jet service 24/7, 365 days a year, to destinations virtually anywhere in the world.



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Additionally, our Jet Card owners can access several private jet services, including a comprehensive selection of exclusive offerings made possible through partnerships with leading, world-class luxury and lifestyles brands. A few examples include our long-standing partnership with the Kentucky Derby, our recent acquisition of Halo Aviation Ltd to offer more options for Jet Card Owners, and our Transatlantic flight program.

We also launched our jet card owner benefits guide in 2013 that offers special rewards, including unique services and amenities at hotels and resorts from over 40 company partners, as well as access to discounts, exclusive tastings, and more.

**Q: How did the pandemic affect the company? What are things like now?**

**AC:** Prior to the pandemic, the ratio of business in terms of card purchases, was that one-third of purchases came from first-time clients and two-thirds of purchases came from existing clients. From April 2020 onwards we saw a shift for about 4-5 months where two-thirds of jet card purchases were coming from new clients and one-third were coming from existing clients. This influx of new interest was predominantly driven by the pandemic and the shift in

consumer habits, from using private aviation as a lifestyle amenity to using it as a utility to travel. Many travellers who could afford private aviation were not utilizing private aviation prior to the pandemic, but with significantly fewer touchpoints and more control, the desire to fly private increased.

Now we are seeing a rise in mobile transactions. We have reached \$100M in total mobile transactions with over \$50M of those purchases taking place in 2020. In 2021 we are projecting that 25% of total sales will come from mobile transactions. All of this signals that more people than ever before are booking private air travel on mobile devices, which has helped make private aviation easier to navigate and more accessible. Our customer is becoming more tech-savvy and relying on their mobile device to quickly confirm bookings.

Despite the rise in vaccinations in the United States and travel starting to make a comeback, we are still seeing a high demand for private aviation. This shows that consumers are continuing to take advantage of private aviation, seeing it as a utility for travel rather than just a luxury -- a trend we expect to continue. In fact, we are projecting that 2021 Memorial Day will exceed pre-pandemic flight volume for that same weekend by 30-40%. |BAM



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# MAKING THE BEST *BETTER*

Simon Geere, CEO,  
Farnborough Airport, on  
leading the airport to an  
even brighter future

**Q: Simon, you were with Macquarie Infrastructure and Real Assets (MIRA) for a while before you took up the CEO position at Farnborough. What led to the change in roles?**

**SG:** I was with MIRA for 18 years. MIRA is a long-term global investor in infrastructure assets and has invested significantly in airports around the world including many airports in the UK. The acquisition of Farnborough Airport by MIRA in 2019 was a logical progression of that investment strategy. I joined Farnborough in July 2020 as CEO. Everything about the role at Farnborough felt right. For my part, it has been fantastic to be back in an operational role again. I still support MIRA in terms of their wider business and continue as a non-executive director for their other UK airport investment in AGS Limited. AGS Limited is the company that owns Aberdeen, Glasgow, and Southampton Airports.

**Q: Did you join MIRA from the finance side or from business aviation?**

**SG:** I came from the aviation side. I started my career at BAA plc in 1994 where I undertook a number of planning and property roles before joining London Luton Airport in 2000. I was Business Development Director at Luton before joining MIRA in 2002. As Managing Director in MIRA's London based transport team, I was responsible for the operational and investment performance of several European airports including Bristol Airport, Brussels Airport, and Copenhagen Airport.

**Q: You have quite a challenge ahead of you, given how well Farnborough Airport has done in various global rankings.**

**SG:** That is very true. We have topped the rankings for a while now but we never take this for granted. We were delighted to receive the top-rated FBO outside the Americas, by AIN and the No. 1 in Europe from Professional Pilot Magazine again this year. My focus is to continue this legacy however I also want to set new standards in terms of our overall FBO product and experience.

**Q: You joined right in the middle of the COVID pandemic's first major lockdown. Was that by choice?**

**SG:** Well I sort of knew what we were in for, so it was eyes wide open really. That said, I could never have predicted how long it has gone on for nor quite how devastating it has been. MIRA was obviously working with management on the performance of the business for some time. When I joined we were already materially down on air traffic movements. For the year-ending 2020, we were around 40% down against 2019, which relatively speaking was quite a resilient performance.

**Q: What do you put that relatively strong performance down to?**

**SG:** I think it was a range of factors. We have Gulfstream's largest MRO facility outside of their Savannah base here at Farnborough. Maintenance flights continued and then once we got beyond the first lockdown, people were able to travel again subject to UK government guidelines.





As a business aviation airport, many of our customers are travelling to and from the UK for business reasons or to manage their business affairs. With the type of customer we serve, business aviation is the only practical way of travelling, especially when time and efficiency become the imperative for making international connections.

Of course, what we and other business aviation airports did see last Summer was increased activity in the charter market, especially for leisure destinations. I would anticipate this could be similar this Summer although again it depends on the travel restrictions that are in place.



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**Q: One of the things you have done since your arrival has been to forge a partnership with On Air Dining to revamp your restaurant at the airport. What was the thinking there?**

SG: On Air Dining have been a trusted service provider to our customers for several years. We were looking at opportunities to re-energise and improve our on-site café and they were the obvious choice. It is a real plus for the airport to have a partner like On Air Dining operating at Farnborough Airport.

**Q: Are you optimistic about business aviation levels for the rest of 2021 and into 2022?**

SG: Yes I am, although one thing we have learned is to expect the unexpected. What is clear is that international connectivity depends on travel restrictions across the world and not just those that might apply in the UK. |BAM

“ On Air Dining have been a trusted service provider to our customers for several years. We were looking at opportunities to re-energise and improve our on-site café and they were the obvious choice. It is a real plus for the airport to have a partner like On Air Dining operating at Farnborough Airport.”

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“ We had the equipment and the procedures in place so we just moved up to another gear to deal with the COVID crisis.”

# NORTHERN LIGHTS

Elina Karjalainen, Managing Director of Jetflite, on the challenges involved in managing and operating business jets in the Nordics

**Q: What can you tell us about the history of Jetflite, its founding, and how the company has grown?**

**EK:** Jetflite was established in 1969, so we have been around now for over 52 years. We were one of the very first operators to fly in the former Soviet Union and the CIS. Our older employees have some amazing and very cool stories to tell of those times! They really were very different and special.

Jetflite became part of our company, Wihuri, in 1996. The Wihuri Group is a large, global industrial conglomerate, but is still very much a family company. Jetflite is like a small family inside the family. We have been managing and operating business jets of different sizes for decades. As well as being an operator, we are experts in providing charter services to a broad range of clients and we have a number of loyal group charter clients who are regular users of our charter services. Plus we have a thriving air cargo business as well.

**Q: What was your entry into the business aviation sector, Elina?**

**EK:** I have been with Jetflite for some 12 years now. When I joined the company, I knew next to nothing about aviation. However, I now regard myself as a seasoned business aviation person and not much surprises me anymore.

Our business, as everyone in this sector knows, is very challenging. Clients can arrive from anywhere at any time and schedules can change from moment to moment. Sometimes this has its frustrations, but the upside is that this business is never boring.

I have an incredible team here at Jetflite. A number of our older employees have been with the company for 20 years or more and we have no difficulty in hiring talented people. I feel incredibly lucky to be supported by such a competent team. They know exactly what they are doing and everyone shares the same goal, to ensure that all our customers are happy. I



do not have to spend my day putting out fires. Instead, I can focus on helping my people to do our job better and better.

**Q: What has charter demand been like through the pandemic, and what is it like today?**

**EK:** There is no doubt that charter slowed down during the peaks of the pandemic, which we put at Spring 2020 and Winter 2020/21. However, we saw a surge in ambulance flights which meant that, in real terms, our flight movement

numbers stayed fairly constant. We just had different kinds of flights to deal with.

Flying, of course, has been very complicated because of all the various national flight and entry restrictions. However, we were more or less geared up for a pandemic anyway because of all the various scares over ebola, swine flu and H1N1 in our destination areas. We had the equipment and the procedures in place so we just moved up to another gear to deal with the COVID crisis.



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“After working in the business aviation sector for over 10 years I am now very proud to be part of the Jetflite family.”

**Sami Simola**

Ground Handling Manager, Jetflite



**Q: What can you tell us about your Antarctic flights? That's not something a lot of business aviation companies have to deal with.**

**EK:** We are very good at long distance, challenging flights that very few operators do. We have been nearly everywhere in the world for our clients and we have flown into and out of Antarctica dozens of times. We have a great video on Youtube on this.

**Q: What have the challenges been in growing the managed aircraft side of the business?**

**EK:** We have been in business for decades, as I said, so our fleet has changed many times over the years. Sometimes we have more aircraft under management, sometimes less. The Russian market has always been important to us, but the geopolitical situation with sanctions and the like is very complicated.

As a result, our managed fleet has shrunk in recent years. We have been focusing more of our energies on complex operations and taking on projects that other operators are not so keen on and either don't know how to handle or don't want to get involved. We are very good at handling these kinds of projects and generating a good deal of client satisfaction in the process.

**Q: How do you keep the right culture and spirit going in an organisation of over 60 staff?**

**EK:** Company culture is a strange thing. You cannot get it ready-made anywhere and once it's in place it doesn't change easily. A great company culture evolves slowly over time. It is partly a function of what you expect from your team, the kind of example you provide, and the way people's personal traits and preferences all knit together.

If a team has a strong, positive culture it creates a virtuous circle that is self-supporting. Your teams end up doing the right things instinctively. New employees get absorbed into the culture without anyone having to do magic tricks! If they don't fit in, they notice it very fast and go somewhere else, which again, is part of the self-sustaining process that a great culture creates.

**Q: How has business in general been in the region?**

**EK:** Business flights or aviation in general in Finland or the Nordics is a niche market rather than a volume market. The Russian market is right next door, as it were, and is very close and dear to us. I would, of course, like to see these unstable times come to an end.

**Q: Turning now to your new ground handling manager, Sami Simola. Sami, what can you tell us of Jetflite's ground handling and FBO operations?**

**SS:** After working in the business aviation sector for over 10 years I am now very proud to be part of the Jetflite family. It has been the leading company in the sector in Finland for decades. I was absolutely thrilled that Elina and the management team here wanted me to be Jetflite's first-ever ground handling manager.

We began the FBO/ground handling project in May and we have been pushing hard to build up the service and the organisation. Even though there are a lot of things to do on the agenda, things have been going well thanks to the professionalism of the Jetflite family. We're recruiting a few more aviation experts to our team and after that, we'll be good to go.



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I have been attending business aviation events around the world from ABACE Shanghai to D&S in San Jose. I have met many aviation professionals and we talked at length about the kinds of services that they value. Our target is to create a unique service combination that provides an easy and cost-efficient service to any aircraft visiting Finland, be it for business, leisure, maintenance, or for a tech stop.

We believe that being able to provide all these services under one roof is what business aviation customers really appreciate. With our FBO and ground handling services, hangar facilities, and technical support, we believe that we can offer our clients the best overall service in the Nordic region.

We benefit too from the fact that our charter services has taken us to many different FBOs around the world. We're in a great position to establish the best FBO ever right here in Finland. We understand the challenges that an air charter company may have during the course of their operations and we can provide solutions that are equal to those challenges.

Our FBO staff and technical staff are very experienced and very well trained. They will leave no stone unturned to get our customers what they need. We also have an excellent chain of third party suppliers, and no aircraft is too small or too big for us to handle.

We have great relations with the hotels in the region for customers who need accommodation, and this year we will also start providing support when customers need to fly to other airports in Finland. Many of the Finnish airports have very limited opening hours and it can be challenging to request handling and other services.

We are all very excited about this project. It will take Jetflite to a whole new level in the business aviation industry.

**Q: The aviation sector is under a lot of pressure to do its bit in the fight against Climate Change. What is your view, Elina?**

**EK:** Sustainability is THE thing this industry needs to fix and fast. Thankfully it is finally being taken seriously in business aviation which was really not the case a couple of years ago. Our Nordic clients use business flights very rationally, not for fun but when they really have to. This is not so much a matter of money but of perception. People are very conscious of public opinion and what private flying looks like.

Jetflite is trying hard to improve this image. All our electricity and heating requirements are 100 percent based on renewable energy. We have also just launched a big SAF project with Neste in Helsinki and nearly 25 percent of our kerosene consumption is made from renewables this year.

We do not get a dime of profit out of this. We took a conscious risk without knowing if our clients would be willing to pay extra to fuel their flights with more expensive SAF. After a month, I have to say that it is looking very promising. This is not about compensation by planting trees. This means that our clients' emissions really are reduced by 35 percent. I am really proud to have our small company taking a pioneering position in this important area. |BAM

“With our FBO and ground handling services, hangar facilities, and technical support, we believe that we can offer our clients the best overall service in the Nordic region.”







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# SHARPENING THE STRATEGY

Benjamin Murray, President and CEO of Skyservice Business Aviation, talks to Anthony Harrington about taking the company to new heights



**AH:** Benjamin, how did you get started in business aviation?

**BM:** I've been in business aviation for close to 25 years. I started out as a pilot with the ambition of being a professional pilot. However, I quickly transitioned into sales and business development. I had a mentor at the time who owned his own aircraft and we talked a lot about business and the private aviation industry.

He was the one who told me that I probably had skills that would allow me to transition from being a pilot to someone who rode in the back of the aircraft. That was an attractive proposition!

We started a company in Chicago at what is now Chicago Executive Airport and built an aircraft management company called Peak Air Charter. I was in my early 20s at the time. I did everything in the company, all the roles, and ended up being President, having started as Director of Charter Sales.

I scheduled and quoted on trips and bought and sold aircraft. It was a huge education and I am still incredibly grateful to have been given that kind of grounding in the business.

That lasted for five years and took me from 1996 to 2001. My first son was born in 2000. That was the time when Netjets was building out its charter business. They came to us and

said we'd like to take the managed aircraft you have and some of your charter clients. They proposed handing our aircraft to Executive Jet Management, their operations arm.

So we transferred some of the managed aircraft and I negotiated a regional vice president role at Executive Jet Management which is a wholly owned aircraft management division at Netjets. That turned into quite a long career move and ended with me becoming the CEO at EJM and then the President and Chief Operating Officer of Netjets.

In 2010 there was a leadership change at the top of the organisation. Richard Santulli and his partner Jim Jacobs left and a new leadership took over. That was when I decided that there were better opportunities for me outside the Netjets stable.

My next role gave me my first taste of Private Equity. I stepped in to help TPG manage its \$363 million financing of Xojet. This involved reorganising and transforming Xojet. Then I joined the Carlyle Equity Group. They purchased Landmark Aviation and I went with them as one of the principal leaders in the company and a shareholder.

We exited Landmark with a sale in 2016, after which I was involved with a few projects with the Carlyle group, as for example, when they bought the Global Jet Capital business. After



© Janet Kimber

that, I was buying and selling aircraft until last Summer, when I was contacted by Skyservice and recruited as their next CEO.

**AH:** How well did you know Skyservice as a company at that time?

**BM:** I have been a customer of theirs for about 20 years, so I knew them fairly well. I don't know if they knew me

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that well. However, they are Canadian-based and my wife is Canadian. So we travel a lot to Canada to see her family and friends. I've always had my eye on the Canadian market and I have helped clients to buy and sell aircraft in Canada.

So, basically, I had a very clear idea of the high-quality MRO services that Skyservice provides, plus, whenever I had a choice, we always used their Canadian FBOs. When clients bought aircraft in the Canadian market and asked us who we'd recommend managing the aircraft, we always pointed them at Skyservice.

I was not looking for a job when Skyservice approached me but the idea excited me and I was happy to throw my hat into the ring.

**AH: What can you tell me of Skyservice's history?**

**BM:** The company has been in business in Canada for some 35 years. It started as a small FBO in Montreal and gradually transitioned into being the thought leader in Canada in private aviation. Today we have FBOs in

**“We are authorised with all the major engine OEMs and we are the authorised service centre for Bombardier, Dassault, Gulfstream, and HondaJet. We are also the exclusive dealer for new Honda Jets in Canada.”**

Montreal, Calgary, Ottawa, and Toronto, plus a large presence for maintenance, including heavy overhauls, with a primary focus on general aviation. We are authorised with all the major engine OEMs and we are the authorised service centre for Bombardier, Dassault, Gulfstream, and

HondaJet. We are also the exclusive dealer for new Honda Jets in Canada.

**AH: How much success have you had with the Honda Jet?**

**BM:** We have had some really good successes selling the aircraft. The value it provides and the quality of the manufacturing have resonated well with our light jet buyers. We have had some nice successes too, selling pre-owned Honda Jets and we have been able to retain these customers as aircraft management clients post the sale, which is very pleasing.

**AH: What was your experience at Skyservice through the pandemic?**

**BM:** The most remarkable thing, coming into this business, is how our 550 employees have been able to pivot into remote working and the new social distancing regime.

**“Today we have FBOs in Montreal, Calgary, Ottawa, and Toronto.”**





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From last Spring, many of our employees moved to a “work from home” construct, those who weren’t a necessity to maintaining FBO operations or needed on the shop floor for MRO work.

“ I was particularly pleased with the fact that we used the time to put in place a sharpened strategy and vision. We implemented changes and modernised our business.”

I was particularly pleased with the fact that we used the time to put in place a sharpened strategy and vision. We implemented changes and modernised our business. So this quieter time enabled us to put some great pillars in place so that we are

really well-positioned for growth in the year ahead.

We had to make some investment to enable that, from a technology standpoint. But in reality, we did not miss a beat, either from the standpoint of providing services or in terms of the excellence of our operation.

There is an enormous amount of pent-up demand in the market, with aircraft and business owners wanting to get back into the normal business cycle. I feel extremely confident that we will see a much higher velocity of activity in the coming months as things return to normal.

It was, of course, a difficult time for many of our customers who were not able to use their aircraft because of the restrictions coming out of Canada, and some of the stay at home orders that were in place. So it has been difficult in terms of aircraft utilisation. Our charter business was down a bit at the height of the pandemic, but we continued to be busy on the maintenance front and our hangarage business did well.

We have a very strong and very loyal customer base. They understand that this quieter time for them as far as personal and business travel is concerned, has allowed us to regroup and rebuild, so we are exiting this COVID-era as a stronger and even more efficient company. |BAM



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# LET THE BUYER BEWARE

Natascha Rode, Managing Director, AAL, on the company's history and services, with a special focus on PPI for aircraft buyers

**Q:** Natascha, I believe AAL's history goes back a long way. What can you tell us about its origins and development?

**NR:** In a way, in few years we could claim that AAL will be celebrating its 100th anniversary. It goes back 95 years, to when Claude Dornier founded Dornier Flugzeugwerke at Altenrhein Airport.

The famous flying boat, Dornier X, was built and launched in Altenrhein. The company was renamed after the Second World War to FFA. Then, in 2003, Pilatus bought FFA and renamed the company Altenrhein Aviation Limited. Pilatus sold it in 2015 to the current private owner. We shortened the name to AAL and that is where we are today.

**Q:** One of the services you offer is a pre-purchase inspection (PPI) for buyers right at the start of a transaction. How important do you regard a pre-buy as being?

**NR:** Buyers run a huge risk if they buy an aircraft without calling on the services of a professional and experienced organisation to carry out a thorough pre-purchase inspection. This will take probably at most a couple of days for a piston aircraft, but it could be a two to three-week process for a business jet.

There is a lot to work through and just checking and verifying all the relevant documentation could take a significant amount of time. Just because a seller has a maintenance file to hand over to the buyer does not mean that all is well.



Managing AAL together with John van Emden

©Photos compliments of Timo Dietsche & Lisa Duenser





In particular, a buyer should not agree to forgo a PPI in return for a discount on the sales price. With COVID and flight restrictions prompting some sellers to look for quick sales, buyers may well encounter such offers. In reality, they risk discovering that there are very expensive maintenance, repairs or certification issues that a PPI would have turned up, but which the buyer is confronted with.

The combined cost of items missed or not done, and required by an authority or the manufacturer, could end up making the discount completely irrelevant and the purchase could turn into a financial and time-consuming calamity for the buyer.

Similarly, you need a professional eye looking over logbooks and maintenance records. Has the aircraft been on the ground for extended periods, perhaps with no preservation being done? Has it had periods where it was flown extensively with minimum maintenance?

If the aircraft was always maintained by the same MRO, it is a good idea to ask a different MRO to perform the PPI. There are very simple things that someone experienced in carrying out PPI will focus on.

Having an FAA approval for something does not mean that EASA has signed off on it. Modifications done by using an STC for avionics, interior etc. might only be approved by EASA or FAA. Not necessary by both.

We also advise the buyer to check the date of the aircraft's last paint job. The exterior might look fine now, but if the last paint job was done ten years ago, you can expect the paint to start cracking soon.

It is always valuable to have an authorised service centre carry out the PPI. They will be in a good position to include

engine and APU borescope inspections as part of the PPI. Hidden corrosion is also something to have a specific look for in order to avoid unexpected trouble.

Check the interior too. When was the last refresh? If it was eight to ten years ago, you are probably going to have to factor the cost of refurbishment into the sales price or negotiate an appropriate discount from the seller.

**Q: What are some of the disasters you have seen befall unwary buyers who did not insist on a full PPI?**

**NR:** There was a case where a poor or rushed review of the documentation resulted in the buyer not spotting a hidden accident record. During the subsequent resale, he lost a lot of money. The buyer in that instance appointed a professional inspector and they found two previous accident records, which severely impacted the aircraft's resale value.

In another instance, a poor review of the documents failed to turn up the fact that SBs were not performed. Buyer had to invest over 100,000 Euro to bring the aircraft up to date.

We also know of an instance where a poorly carried out borescope inspection missed the fact that the engines needed a major overhaul, which happened just weeks after the sale. The loss to the buyer in that instance was in excess of 200,000 euros.

AAL has invested a lot of money in buying new tooling especially for PPIs, including a state-of-the-art borescope. It provides great information for both the seller and buyer. For example, a chipped coating found on an engine casing was measured in detail with a high-quality borescope. Pictures sent to the engine manufacturer revealed that the damage was within limits and it was up to the new owner to decide if a repair was necessary.

**“Buyers run a huge risk if they buy an aircraft without calling on the services of a professional and experienced organisation to carry out a thorough pre-purchase inspection.”**



The worst thing about these incidents is that they are so obviously avoidable if the buyer has the PPI carried out by a professional, competent and experienced organisation with experience of that aircraft type.

**Q: What is the main focus of AAL's MRO operation?**

**NR:** For years, our main focus has been on mid-size cabin Gulfstream G150, G200 and G280 aircraft, as well as Embraer jets, starting from the Phenom 100 and 300, and including the Legacy 450/500 and the Praetor series.



We are an Authorized Service Centre for Gulfstream, Embraer and TBM. We are also Warranty Center for all major engine OEMs: Pratt & Whitney, Honeywell and Williams.

We also maintain the Cessna CJs and our aim is to add the Cessna XLS to our work scope. We support our neighbours with their PC12s and other aircraft.

**Q: What are the basic requirements for a high-quality MRO operation?**

**NR:** Having the right people in place is at the top of the list. We need highly skilled professionals, both in the hangar and on the admin side. MRO is all about teamwork.

Technicians, technical planners, project managers and logistic personnel all work together to assure that a maintenance project is successful. High-quality maintenance also means high-quality paperwork. The documentation has to be right.

**Q: Do you look to multi-skill your engineers across a variety of aircraft types or do you have some specialist sections?**

**NR:** It is very important for us to train technicians on various aircraft types. We want to avoid stagnation, all people want to progress in life. Most of our technicians are type rated on two or three types.

We, of course, look for commonalities. Often engineers will be trained on similar types for which they are already approved.

**Q: What about owner/operator relationships?**

**NR:** We mostly deal with Operators and CAMOs, and these are technical people. However, we like to invite owners to our facility, especially when their aircraft undergo a major maintenance event. They get a better understanding when they see their aircraft with each panel opened.

The owners understand that maintenance is not cheap, but we do not take shortcuts, we don't do "paper maintenance". Each task is performed as per aircraft manual.

We are one of the few MROs who are very privileged to have excellent partners and neighbours, who can provide high-quality aircraft paint and interior refurbishment.

We can assist with a paint touch up or a full paint job. We can do small repairs on a carpet and a full interior design change. When an aircraft comes to us for a 12-year inspection, during which all the seats, panels and carpets are removed, there is no better time to upgrade the interior. **|BAM**



La Fouly, Riedereralp, Nendaz, Ovronnaz, Nax, Nendaz, Eischoll, Morgins, Staldenried, Zinal, Rosswald, Torgon, Unterbäch, Aletsch Arena, Riedereralp, St Bernard, Anzère, Grimmentz, Champéry, Saas-Tal, St Luc, Blatten, Nendaz, Rosswald, Visperterminen, Vallorcine, Nax, Veysonnaz, Vercorin, Morgins, Saas-Balen, La Tzoumaz, Visperterminen, Belalp, Visperterminen, Vallorcine, Saas-tal, Eischoll, Lauchernalp, Verbier, Unterbäch, St Luc, Champex-lac, Zinal, Les Portes du Soleil, Veysonnaz, Grächen, Zinal, Vercorin, Leukerbad, Verbier, Aletsch Arena, Eischoll, Vallorcine, Ovronnaz, Saas-fee, Willer, Zermatt, Unterbäch, Grächen, Eischoll, Fiesch, St Bernard, Zermatt, Belalp, Bürchen, Thyon, Mont-Noble, Fiesch, Champex-lac, Jeizinen, Zinal, Les 4 Vallées, Grimmentz, Les 4 Vallées, Evolène, Nax, Mont-Noble, Visperterminen, Grimentz, Bürchen, Willer, Fiesch, Anzère, St Bernard, Rosswald, Nendaz, Les Portes Du Soleil, Bruson, Nax, Gspon, Les Crozets, Mont-Noble, Chandolin, Blatten, Rothwald, Champoussin, Chandolin, Les Marécottes, Zermatt, Arolla, Lauchernalp, Gspon, Anzère, Champoussin, Nax, Bruson, Rothwald, Torgon, Zinal, Torgon, Törbel, Vercorin, Nax, Bruson, Vercorin, Torgon, Riedereralp, Chandolin, Les Crozets, Mont-Noble, Fiesch, Gspon, Evolène, Saas-tal, Saas-balen, La Fouly, Rosswald, Nax, Champéry, Vallorcine, Veysonnaz, La Fouly, Staldenried, Leukerbad, Törbel, Arolla, Gspon, Crans-montana, Saas-balen, St Luc, Saas-Grund, Vallorcine, Chamonix, Les Portes Du Soleil, Crans-montana, Saas-balen, Morgins, Torgon, Saas-almagell, Crans-montana, Champoussin, St Luc, Chamonix, Törbel, Bellwald, Bruson, Saas-Almagell, Zermatt, Leukerbad, Chamonix, Saas-Grund, Saas-Grund, Willer, La Tzoumaz, Willer, Les 4 Vallées, Bettmeralp, Rothwald, Zermatt, Saas-Grund, Bettmeralp, Mont-Noble, Bürchen, Les 4 Vallées, Chandolin, Bellwald, Les Crozets, Thyon, Blatten, La Tzoumaz, Grimmentz, Evolène, St Niklaus, Saas-balen, Eischoll, Veysonnaz, Les Crozets, Jeizinen, Jeizinen, Crans-Montana, Torgon, Saas-Fee, Saas-fee, Willer, Champex-lac, St Luc, Chamonix, Fiesch, Grächen, Evolène, Saas-fee, Staldenried, Nendaz, Veysonnaz, Ovronnaz, St Luc, Veysonnaz, La Fouly, Verbier, Gspon, Les Marécottes, Bettmeralp, Grächen,


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# SIGNS ARE UPBEAT,



## SHAME ABOUT THE DEBT

By Anthony Harrington

If the global economy was a household, we'd all be sitting on the bare flooring with blank patches on the walls where the paintings and the TV used to be. That said, we're back on a roll, as irrepressible as ever, as the big economies bounce back to pre-COVID levels.

Never mind the pawned furniture or the debts we racked up through an 18 month global pandemic with all its shutdowns and no-entry barriers. The big point is, things are moving again. So what if the UK now has a two trillion pound debt and the US debt passed \$28 trillion back in March? We need to stay focused on the big picture, namely, global trade is set to sky-rocket once again.

Developed economies are swarming with folks who have been denied the right to wine, dine and play nicely with others

for long enough to make them frothing mad. Now we're all released to go about our lives again, consumer spending is set to go through the roof, much to the relief of our indebted governments, who've been handing out cash like water to keep everything afloat through the pandemic.

In its 2nd quarter ruminations on the state of the US economy, accountants Deloitte reckon that US GDP in 2022 will surpass the levels it was expected to achieve prior to the pandemic. The downside, if there is one, is that Deloitte expects the recovery to be a tad lumpy, with some sectors not as quick as others to play catchup.

"It's beginning to look as though we've not only avoided the 'scarring' that many economists feared at the beginning of the pandemic, we've also accelerated technological change. This

means that productivity growth and GDP are likely to remain above pre-pandemic levels,” the Deloitte report states.

Their optimism is reflected in Global Jet Capital’s forecast for the way the business jets market is likely to grow through the next five years. In the words of GJC’s 2021 to 2025 report: “We forecast that the business jet market will grow as the global economy emerges from COVID-19 associated lockdowns. Overall, total new and pre-owned business jet transaction unit volume will increase 5.5 percent through 2021,” it says. Moreover, GJC reckons that in dollar volume terms, the market will grow even faster, at around 15.5 percent. This will be driven by the increasing sales of heavier aircraft in both the new and the pre-owned segments,” it claims.

GJC expects growth in new deliveries to be driven by an increasingly active market as buyers and sellers restart their activities. As we can see from the comments from leading CEOs in this Summer issue of BAM, this expectation is already being borne out, with companies reporting sharp increases in both sales of new and pre-owned aircraft and in charter sales.

GJC expects deliveries to grow at 11.8 percent while dollar volumes will increase 13.9 percent this year by comparison with last. This prediction is probably going to be eclipsed by actual delivery figures for 2021.



Interestingly, pre-owned transactions did not decline at all in 2020 and have seen real increases already in 2021. Unsurprisingly, the North American market is expected to continue to be the largest market for both new and pre-owned aircraft, with Europe and Asia Pacific doing well in new aircraft sales.

All in all, things appear to be shaping up nicely. Here at BAM, we’ve had two great issues already this year and are looking forward to seeing all our friends again at NBAA in October! |BAM

## ANTHONY HARRINGTON

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## BETTER THAN FRACTIONAL RECOVERY

Patrick Gallagher, President,  
NetJets, on the fractional jet  
market post-COVID

“ Today we are consistently operating well beyond pre-pandemic flight volumes.”

**Q : How has demand been through COVID, and what is it like now that we seem to be emerging from the pandemic?**

**PG:** The pandemic has obviously had a unique impact on the private aviation industry. With reduced commercial airline schedules and the prioritization of health and safety around COVID-19, many people are considering private flying for the first time. There is actually a large untapped market of people who can afford to fly privately but historically hadn't, and that's where we're seeing a lot of new interest.

Regarding flight volumes, at the start of the pandemic, NetJets experienced flight volumes dropping to about 10% of normal volumes. Today we are consistently operating well beyond pre-pandemic flight volumes. In fact, May 2021 is up 20% from May 2019. This is a clear indication that Owners are ready to travel again and that they are confident in our ability to get them safely to their destination.



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**Q: How has NetJets coped through it all, what were the measures taken and staff responses to the pandemic?**

**PG:** Our response to the pandemic was swift and thorough. It includes cleaning and disinfecting every cabin after each flight with a product that is EPA-registered for efficacy against the virus that causes COVID-19. At a minimum of every 90 days, all aircraft interiors are also treated with an antimicrobial barrier that bonds to surfaces, thereby further protecting our passengers and crewmembers from various bacteria, germs, and viruses like the coronavirus.

These critical new safety steps require a global investment of \$16M a year—which is just another example of the investments we’re making in safety across the business.

**Q: What has demand been like in Europe?**

**PG:** In 2021, Europe has seen an increase in demand returning to 2019 levels in addition to new interest from discerning travellers who are interested in flying privately with NetJets due

to changing needs and ongoing uncertainty around the future of commercial flights. Despite stringent travel restrictions and lockdowns in much of Europe, particularly in the UK, NetJets Europe continues to see growth in the market with an increase of more than 300% in new Owners YTD vs. last year.

**Q: Any expansion plans as we head into the second half of 2021 and 2022 or is it all about making up lost ground?**

**PG:** In terms of expansion, we are adding more than 50 factory-new aircraft in 2021, all representing incremental growth to the fleet rather than replacements. Today we operate by far the largest fleet of private jets in the world and, measured by the number of aircraft, we operate the second largest fleet of jets in the world. In this, we are second only to American Airlines in terms of operational aircraft in our fleet.

NetJets has two new, large-scale flagship West Coast hangars at Norman Y. Mineta San Jose International Airport in California (SJC) and Centennial Airport (APA) in the

“Today we operate by far the largest fleet of private jets in the world and, measured by the number of aircraft, we operate the second largest fleet of jets in the world.”







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Denver-Aurora metropolitan area. Our footprint expansion also includes the opening and operation of a hangar in Dallas, Texas (KDAL) which is home to the second largest number of private jets of any airport in the United States.

In addition to housing the NetJets fleets, these hangars also offer premiere services to NetJets Owners and to customers of NetJets Inc. subsidiary, Executive Jet Management (EJM), a leader in aircraft management and private jet charter programs.

**Q: What of the fractional market generally? How are things developing?**

**PG:** Fractional ownership remains our bread and butter and the 50+ aircraft delivered this year are fully sold to fractional owners upon delivery.

We're feeling cautiously optimistic for the state of the industry in 2021. Given the untapped market of people who can afford to fly private but haven't pre-pandemic, we expect to see more people turning to private aviation for their travel needs.

People and companies who owned their own jets before the pandemic may find that the expense and effort of doing so aren't currently worthwhile. And when they see the ease and value provided by fractional jet ownership, they might

find it better suited for them than full ownership – and that isn't even to mention the lesser impact that a fractional jet ownership has on the environment when compared to full jet ownership.

With NetJets' long history as the largest company in the space; our safety record and our financial stability and reputation as a Berkshire Hathaway company, we think many consumers now making the decision to fly private will turn to us. In a market that is awash with very young brands, our 56 years of flying really differentiate us from the competition.

I would also like to point out that in October 2020, NetJets launched its official Global Sustainability Program: a worldwide commitment to reducing the environmental footprint of the brand and its owners. Through our partnership with WasteFuel, NetJets has invested in biorefineries to convert municipal waste into sustainable aviation fuel and we are the first private aviation company to buy a stake in SAF production.

**Q: How do you see the coming urban mobility VTOL fad playing into the NJ model?**

**PG:** As the world's largest on-demand unscheduled air carrier, you can imagine that we are watching this space closely. That "last mile" is very important to our customers and we are eager to see this market unfold. |BAM

“ In a market that is awash with very young brands, our 56 years of flying really differentiate us from the competition.”





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