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Restructuring Human Resources, Reemphasizing Customer Service

By Colin Bane

As FBOs struggle to meet the demands of trying economic times, business leaders say they are taking the opportunity to develop leaner operations from a human resources standpoint, but they are also working to hang on to their talented staff.

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Banyan Air Services Rises from Modest Roots

By Paul Seidenman and David J. Spanovich

In the highly competitive South Florida general aviation market, few companies can grow from a one-man business, providing maintenance services to a single client to a multi-service enterprise employing 150 people. Fewer still would be celebrating 30 years in business, as Banyan Air Services is doing this year.

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Safety Tools You Can Use

By Lindsey McFarren

There are many risk-assessment and other safety tools available to aircraft operators that will immediately improve the safety of their operation and reduce their risk profile. This article discusses some of them.

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Wanted: A Plan to Save Aviation

It's Time to Turn Your Anger into Action

By James K. Coyne

Over the past three months I've been speaking to NATA members at meetings across the country, from Billings, Montana, to Mobile, Ala., to Teterboro, N.J., to Des Moines, Iowa, and beyond. At each gathering, it's clear that the events of the last six months have left us all confused, anxious, and most of all, angry. How could so many people be so wrong about the role that general aviation plays in our economy? How could our leaders in Washington be so scornful of a great American achievement? How did the symbol of corporate success, the private aircraft, suddenly become the symbol of corporate excess? And why doesn't anyone out there give a damn?

It's like suddenly awakening and finding yourself in a totally different alien culture where no one knows who you are, what you do, or even understands the words you speak. Any day now, I expect our passports to be withdrawn, and then each of us will be forced to wear a scarlet "A" to signify our collective shame for being in love with aviation.

What was our sin? We simply gave America the finest form of transportation known to mankind. But now, somehow, we are charged with the crime of aiding and abetting affluence by hypocritical inquisitors who pose as pseudo-puritans before a clamoring mob of envious, self-righteous populists.

Simply put, what we have spent a lifetime creating has been slashed, sullied, slandered, and almost destroyed. The edifice of our industry's reputation has been vandalized and then ignited by political arsonists. The damage has been done. It is time to rebuild.

But we need to rebuild general aviation on a strong, secure foundation—a foundation of broad public support, understanding, and collective benefit. We cannot be perceived as exclusive, selfish, secretive, or arrogant. We must reestablish general aviation as an essential part of America, serving in one way or another almost every citizen, and as fundamental to our nation's economic strength as interstate highways, international trade, and the internet.



NATA has an important role to play in rebuilding general aviation's reputation and public acceptance, and we are reaching out to other organizations and partners to develop a plan that NATA members can support. We are especially encouraged by the bold, new initiative undertaken by the Aircraft Owners and Pilots Association, under the leadership of their new president, Craig Fuller. Their General Aviation Serves America campaign will establish an industry-wide fund to finance advertising and other public communications that tell the story of general aviation in the way we all know it—as an integral part of America's history, economy, and record of individual accomplishment. I strongly encourage you to visit www.gaservesamerica.com for a wealth of information on this important initiative, including ways that you and your company can help.

There are thousands of wonderful aviation stories that need to be told, not just among ourselves, as we normally do, but to the much wider audience of aviation illiterates. These are the innocent folks who notice only stories about small planes when they crash or get trashed on TV as an unworthy executive perk. But to reach out to all these millions will take more than just a campaign—we need a whole network of local aviation ambassadors who are willing to take our message and translate it into words and actions that everyone can understand.

As I mentioned above, we are like aliens in a

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FAA Standardization *Can* Become a Reality

By Eric R. Byer

Tired of spending oodles of your organization's dollars, resources, and time changing your operational or maintenance manuals to reflect the whims of your local Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) inspector? Yeah, I thought so. For years I have heard from our members about how the continuing lack of standardization on FAA regulatory interpretations is slowly bleeding their businesses dry. Whether it is a new inspector taking over the FSDO and wanting a company's manuals to reflect his or her interpretation of the FARs or frustration with an existing inspector who simply says it's "my way or the highway," the lack of standardization by FAA inspectors on the FARs is bleeding the entire aviation industry dry.

Last year, I was confronted by a number of NATA board members at our FBO Leadership Conference in Dallas, Tex., who wanted the association to address this critical issue head-on. Since that time, NATA has aggressively worked with the leadership at the FAA Flight Standards Office and on Capitol Hill to identify ways to eliminate this enormous industry burden.

As a result of NATA's efforts working with key congressional leaders and staff, the Government Accountability Office (GAO) will soon conduct a comprehensive review of the impact that the lack of standardization on regulatory interpretations has on the entire aviation industry. The GAO is commonly referred to as the "Congressional Watchdog" of Capitol Hill and is tasked with investigating how federal taxpayer dollars are spent. According to its website, the GAO's mission is to support the "Congress in meeting its constitutional responsibilities and to help improve the performance and ensure the accountability of the federal government for the benefit of the American people. We provide Congress with timely information that is objective, fact-based, nonpartisan, nonideological, fair, and balanced." Put simply, the GAO identifies problems with programs being paid for by Uncle Sam and frequently proposes solutions to resolve those

problems. For those not familiar with the GAO, I strongly encourage you to check out www.gao.gov.

The review on standardization, which Capitol Hill staff anticipate commencing this spring, will likely include interviews with aviation industry alphabet groups and GAO site visits to all facets of the aviation industry, including our members' facilities. During these visits our members will be able to showcase first-hand how the lack of standardization is crippling their companies financially. NATA-member companies can demonstrate how complying with local inspectors' regulatory interpretations of the FARs drains their existing resources. They can also show the GAO that spending time, resources, and funding to meet these local regulatory interpretations prevents them from pursuing new business in a timely fashion, thereby hampering financial growth and expansion.

Following this review, the GAO will submit its findings to Congress. The association hopes that the appropriate congressional panels will hold hearings reviewing the GAO's findings, with the endgame being legislation that results in a more standardized process on regulatory interpretations. NATA will, of course, work very closely with the GAO and Capitol Hill every step of the way to ensure that the report and legislation reflect, address, and provide solutions to the current problem.

While many have every right to be cynical that FAA standardization is just a figment of our imagination, it can become a reality with your help.

While efforts are just gearing up toward the launch of this review, NATA members are still strongly encouraged to weigh in on the lack of FAA standardization on regulatory interpretations



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Inside Washington

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by writing letters to their members of Congress via the association's Legislative Action Center. The link is www.congressweb.com/cweb4/index.cfm?orgcode=nata&issue=18.

Take a moment to send these letters. The more political pressure we put on Capitol Hill to get the FAA to address this issue, the more quickly we achieve this reality that so many doubt!



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President's Message


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foreign country, surrounded by people who don't seem to understand us. So perhaps we need a "foreign policy" of our own, building embassies across America to introduce these "foreigners" once again to general aviation and the wonders and achievements of our "culture." Perhaps your business can be one of these "embassies," and you can be the local aviation ambassador in your community.

It's easier, perhaps, just to be angry and rail at the ignorance of the aviation illiterates who torment us. The wiser course is, I think, to create a plan to bridge the chasm of ignorance with information, education, humor, and persuasive argument. At a national level, the General Aviation Serves America campaign will tell our story with a carefully honed professional message, but at the local level, we need hundreds of friendly ambassadors like you to show the human side of general aviation—the local benefits, the jobs, and the acts of compassion and community assistance that have long been part of aviation's proud tradition and once-bright reputation.

By telling our stories once again, to the right people, we can get that reputation back.





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Restructuring Human Resources, Reemphasizing Customer Service

How FBOs Across the Country Are Responding to Current Economic Realities

By Colin Bane

As FBOs struggle to meet the demands of trying economic times, business leaders say they are taking the opportunity to develop leaner operations from a human resources standpoint, but they are also working to hang on to their talented staff.

"We've been very reluctant to make any cuts that would lower our service capability," said Phil Botana, president of Tampa International Jet Center. "We're a really small company with 35 employees, and we've got a good group of people here. We are endeavoring to not have any layoffs. Instead, we've cut back on some outside service providers, utilizing our own people to pitch in on everything we might have contracted out when we were busier and times were flush. It's become a real team effort, with everybody pitching in to keep our place looking nice and keep our customer service up."

Like other business leaders in the aviation community, Botana understands that customer service is key to his business, whether the economy is weak or strong. In a recession, he said, it becomes even more important to retain and support the key staff who make that level of service possible.

"We've enjoyed being able to hire the pick of the litter over the years in terms of highly experienced people, and we have a very high-end clientele that comes through here," he said. Tampa Jet operates out of Tampa International Airport and strives to offer the highest level of service at a fair price. "We've worked hard to hire a lot of the most talented people in the business—the best personalities, the most service-minded people we could find—and we've invested in training them to do what we need them to do. And more importantly, we've built a great team here, so that when there is a slowdown of any kind, they all appreciate being part of something. There's an understanding that the business fluctuates and a sense that we're all in this together. Our people do such a good job, they get rated quite highly from *AIN* and *Pro Pilot* each year, they get a very favorable response from our customers, and they take a great deal of pride in that. It's really set us up very well for the current economy and helps us stand apart from the competition now that folks

are making the tough decisions about who to continue doing business with."

Botana's taking the opportunity to emphasize customer service more than ever. Tampa Jet is an Air BP fuel dealer, and the company gives out \$100 BP gift cards to employees who've been specifically recognized through its customer feedback program. He's ramped up his company's concierge services and amenities and expanded his aircraft support and pilot services.

"Recession or no, our business is exceeding the expectations of the most discriminating flyers," Botana said. "I believe that the aviation industry is going to be a key component in rebuilding a strong economy. As FBOs we'll survive and thrive by providing the very best service possible to our business travelers, and here at Tampa Jet we've got the whole team on board with that mission. I'm fortunate to have a very good owner who appreciates the quality of the people that we have and appreciates that there are ups and downs in this business, so I don't get any pressure to consider cutting payroll."



"We've been very reluctant to make any cuts that would lower our service capability."

— Phil Botana

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Making Difficult HR Decisions

Despite Botana's optimism for an economic rebound, the recession has hit hard at FBOs like Bridgeford Flying Services in California's Napa Valley, where Mark Willey reported business has dropped off by as much as 50 percent in the first months of 2009. Willey echoed Botana's sentiments about the importance of retaining key staff and maintaining maximum service capability. Still, he admits he's had to make some difficult human resources cuts.

"We saw it dropping off at the end of last year so we knew this was coming, but it's always hard," Willey said. "We've eliminated part-time positions in the company and had to let a few junior people go,



"We've eliminated part-time positions in the company and had to let a few junior people go, but we've kept all of our team's skills and service capability intact."

— Mark Willey

but we've kept all of our team's skills and service capability intact. We put much of the staff on 35-hour work weeks to try to weather this storm, and then the senior team took 30 percent pay cuts. We communicated that to everybody: These are unprecedented times and none of us have that crystal ball, but we felt these adjustments will help take us where we need to be in order to be lean and yet continue to exceed the customers' expectations."

After seeing big drops in the business in January

and February, Willey said he's already starting to see a rebound and has been able to bring some of his hourly employees back to 40-hour work weeks. Still, there are some harsh realities on the ramp. In addition to its FBO services, Bridgeford has been affiliated with the Cessna Aircraft Company since 1946, and its aircraft sales have always been a critical piece of the business. Willey said he has seven new aircraft sitting on his ramp, so far with little to no interest, and he has also seen drops in business at Bridgeford's flight school and rental center.

"There is no easy answer. Unemployment in California is darn close to 10 percent," Willey said. "These are interesting times, for sure. I would say it's an opportunity to improve your processes, believe it or not. If you do have weak employees, make the tough decision, without a doubt. Don't hesitate, because there are a lot of very good people out of work, and you can find good people now if you do have weak links."

Willey's strategy of asking his company's senior management to share the burden of the downturn has helped keep morale up on the line and helped engender a team spirit. Willey said that sense of teamwork is key to his strategy for weathering the recession, maintaining peak service capability for his customers, and ensuring his business will be poised to take advantage of all opportunities on the horizon.

"When we communicated to our staff that we were taking 30 percent cuts as the senior team, I didn't necessarily expect anybody to come and shake my hand for it, but a few people did, quite honestly," Willey said. "When you have good people working for you and you communicate the realities of the business clearly to them, they understand. They see the activity on the ramp compared to how busy we usually are around this time of year, so they understand. When employees see the senior leadership taking a pay cut, they see that you're committed to making this work and sharing the burden. I think they do see it and they do appreciate it."

Willey has also taken the opportunity to pursue new revenue sources, partly to keep his existing line technicians busy and to prevent having to make additional layoffs and partly to increase, rather than decrease, the level of service for his loyal customers.

"For example, we've recently added aircraft detailing," he said. "It's not a big deal, but it allows us to have one extra line technician, and that's one employee we don't have to lay off. That's kind of

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“The basis for our customer service training is Ritz-Carlton. That level of first-class, executive service is key to what we can provide as an FBO and executive terminal service.”

— Reed Pigman

Restructuring Human Resources

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an easy one, and it comes with some additional care for our customers’ airplanes. I think a downturn like this is also a great time to work with your vendors and discuss reduced pricing and payment plans and to work with airport authorities. They understand that our revenue’s down, which means their revenue’s down, and we’ve been very successful at that because companies are focusing on their cash flow across the board. It’s also a good time to build, if you can afford it, because construction costs are much lower now than they were a year ago.”

Backing Business Aviation

In a recent *New York Times* op-ed titled “The Mile-High Office,” *Business and Commercial Aviation* Editor-in-Chief William Garvey declared “Business jets are a force for good. Really.”

Refuting the public and Congressional outrage that has stigmatized the business aircraft industry, Garvey wrote, “The General Aviation Manufacturers Association estimates that more than one million people are employed manufacturing, maintaining, flying, and managing business aircraft. In addition to keeping legions at work in top-paying jobs, business aircraft facilitate and expand commerce for their users and contribute \$150 billion

to the American economy annually. With that in mind, it’s astounding to see members of Congress, the very people doling out hundreds of billions of taxpayer dollars to failed companies, disparaging and even actively trying to curtail this industry, which is already reeling from the economic and credit crises. The business jet is merely a tool—one that, employed correctly, could help those same struggling institutions soar again and start paying back the money owed, with interest.”

Garvey’s points are critical and have helped reframe the value of FBOs in the current economy. It’s an important reminder for business leaders in the aviation industry, too: FBOs can play a key role in rebuilding the American economy and American businesses.

“If you truly need to be there and there and there and back by seven, business aircraft may provide the only way,” Garvey concluded. “This is an industry that helps further the country’s commerce and interests—and it deserves a bright future, not a public drubbing.”

Banking on Customer Service and Safety

An economic recession is felt differently in different parts of the country and different markets, but some common themes and business principles emerge across markets as different aviation business leaders respond to the current business realities. Customer service and safety are the absolute keys to success for FBOs.

Just ask Texas Jet, Inc. founder and president, Reed Pigman, Jr. Texas Jet operates out of Fort Worth Meacham International Airport and has seen some of the same challenges as other FBOs—reduced fuel sales, slower traffic on the ramp—but is also facing some unexpected new challenges and opportunities for growth.

“Fort Worth is very conservative and very diversified so I think we’re less prone to the market’s swings, both up and down,” Pigman said. “I’ve actually got calls for hangar space that I wonder if I can fill so in some ways we’re busier than ever. The recession will definitely be felt here, and we’re seeing it in some aspects of our business, but it’s not like other parts of the country. If anything, we’re seeing opportunities for growth in the current economy.”

Pigman said he’s also seeing opportunity in the current economy from a human resources standpoint. “For one thing, we’re not having trouble hanging on to good people—there’s nowhere for them to go!” Pigman joked. “Texas Jet has been a lean and mean operation for 31 years, so there’s never been any excess here in terms of personnel.

We're about as lean as can be, and the fact is that I simply can't afford to reduce the staff to the point where we don't give excellent service."

That's not to say there haven't been adjustments. Pigman noticed that on some days there was absolutely nothing going, while other days his staff could barely keep up. To make the most of his personnel, Pigman said he's been experimenting with restructuring his line shifts and even paying out overtime when necessary rather than hiring on an additional shift.

"I know at some FBOs when times are slow they just send people home and have them punch out, but I prefer not to have to do that because I know everyone here needs a full paycheck and needs to be able to rely on a full work week," Pigman said. "Overall we're working to maximize our shifts better."

Pigman's been working to assure his staff and customers that there will be no personnel cuts and no cutbacks in the level of service offered.

"It's been a period of adjustment for us, but we haven't had to make any personnel cuts, and I don't anticipate having to make any," Pigman said. "I gave our folks a letter last week saying, essentially, 'Yes we have challenges—fuel volume is down, we may lose some hangar tenants before this whole thing shakes out—but we have no plans to furlough or lay off anybody.' They can tell that we're not as busy. It's obvious, and it's across the board. But I don't want my people wondering all the time if cuts are around the corner. I want my people working and focusing on taking care of customers. I can't afford to let our level of service diminish or decrease, or I'll start losing customers. I can't afford to have my employees not be happy and smiling when they're working. So my policy has been to be completely honest: 'Here's what we're facing, here's how we're facing it, and as long as we can do that and keep our customers happy, we're all going to have jobs.'"

Pigman acknowledged that the economy is hitting different companies and different regions in different ways but said one

common concern should unite all FBOs: Customer service is key. It has become his company's mantra and its key selling point. Pilots voted Texas Jet the fourth-best U.S. FBO in 2008, and Customer Service Manager Holly Hopkins was voted number two in the Best Customer Service Representative category on the same survey.

"The basis for our customer service training is Ritz-Carlton," Pigman said. "That level of first-class, executive service is key to what we can provide as an FBO and executive terminal service. We do these trainings twice a year with our entire staff to reinforce to everyone that this is our goal. There's an old saying, and I wish I could take credit for it: 'What we tolerate, we teach.' If our shift supervisors tolerate anything less than exceptional service, then they have taught that unfortunate lesson to everyone working for them. I think, above all, that the recession and current economy is an opportunity to teach the opposite lesson more forcefully: We can't slack off. You just simply can't get by with anything less than excellent service. And to provide excellent service, you need the best team possible." ■

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Banyan Air Services

Rises From Modest Roots



By Paul Seidenman and David J. Spanovich

In the highly competitive South Florida general aviation market, few companies can grow from a one-man business, providing maintenance services to a single client to a multi-service enterprise employing 150 people. Fewer still would be celebrating 30 years in business, as Banyan Air Services is doing this year. But as the Ft. Lauderdale-based company's president and self-described "head coach" Don Champion explained, he saw an opportunity to stake out a unique niche and acted upon it.

The son of missionary parents, Champion was introduced to general aviation while growing up in Nigeria. As a child, he routinely flew aboard Cessna and Piper aircraft to attend boarding school. Later, he enrolled at Seneca College, in Toronto, Canada, where he was trained as a pilot and an A&P mechanic under the school's four-year aviation program.

After graduation, Champion, who spent several spring breaks in the Miami-Fort Lauderdale area, moved there in the 1970s for a job flying Piper

Aztecs and Cessna 402Bs for Miami Airways, a small charter operator based at Miami International Airport.

"Miami Airways outsourced all its maintenance, so I inquired about providing their maintenance, as well as flying the airplanes, if I could lease a hangar at a reasonable price," Champion said. "My boss agreed, and in 1979 John Price (a long-time friend) and I leased a 4,500-square-foot hangar at Fort Lauderdale Executive Airport (FXE). John, who was a local aircraft dealer, used the hangar to store aircraft he had for sale, and I used it to carry out maintenance services, which I incorporated as Banyan Air Services, Inc."

Champion said that the company takes its name from the tropical Banyan tree, which is "magnificent and gives shade up to an acre when fully grown."

While the company began as Miami Airways' de facto maintenance department, Champion soon saw a need to provide the same services to other small

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Banyan Air Services

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charter operators, particularly those with one to three aircraft that were typically flown throughout Florida and the Caribbean.

“These carriers were founded by pilots who struggled with maintenance because they could not do it themselves and had to absorb the high prices charged by the brand name repair stations and larger FBOs,” Champion said. “I told them that I would maintain their aircraft in accordance with their FAR Part 135 manuals and at less cost.”

Campion, who still flies a Cessna 206 for fun, offered an on-call, 24/7 maintenance service, subcontracting any work he could not do in his own hangar. Within a year after receiving FAA repair certification in 1984, he had five charter companies as customers and was building a reputation as an operator of a highly regarded maintenance facility. By the mid-1980s, a good 25 percent of Banyan’s business had grown to include turbine-powered equipment, especially in the King Air turboprop family and early generation Learjets, such as the Learjet 25.

“Within our first six years, we began to move away from our exclusive focus on the small, one- to three-aircraft charter operator and toward a broader customer base,” Champion said.

By 1986, as Banyan’s aircraft maintenance business was taking off, Champion was approached by Jerry Holland, owner of Fort Lauderdale-based Holland Builders, with a proposition that would change the course of his business from a general aviation maintenance specialist to a full-service FBO.

“Holland Builders wanted to develop a large hangar complex at FXE that could be leased to individual operators, charter companies, and corporate flight departments,” Champion explained. “But

Holland said that in order for that to be successful, he would need an FBO as the retail storefront for the complex. Since he did not want to be in the FBO business, we reached an agreement to be the FBO operation for his hangar development. That was the beginning of our transition to a complete FBO and maintenance organization.”

Banyan established a terminal facility within an existing building that had originally been a flight school and worked with Holland Builders over the next year to complete the complex and fill the hangars. “Today, we have about 20 aviation-related businesses in the complex, including flight schools, charter operators, air ambulance companies, as well as helicopter operators, aircraft sales firms, some corporate flight departments, and even an aerial photography company.”

What developed was a symbiotic relationship between the developer and Banyan Air Services. Bottom line: more tenants in the Holland hangars translated into more business for Banyan, and vice-versa.

“As our customer base grew, Holland would build or acquire more hangars,” Champion said. “In fact, they took over hangar leases at FXE for three other FBOs, and we worked deals with FBOs to purchase their operations.”

Banyan is the largest of six FBOs at FXE, with 85 acres of property and more than one million square feet of hangar, office, and tenant space. Of that, about 90 percent is devoted to hangar facilities.

“We have made a substantial investment in Banyan Air Services’ operations, while Holland Builders has made the investment in the facilities, ramps, and infrastructure,” Champion said. “Even in today’s economy, our hangar occupancy rate is running nearly 100 percent.”

Banyan Air Services’ operation reflects the major transition that has taken place in the South Florida economy over the past 30 years and the way it has impacted general aviation. “Fort Lauderdale has shifted from the spring break capital of the world, attracting a college crowd, to a high-end business and leisure market, prompting developers to build luxury hotels and condominiums,” Champion said. “Now we’re a destination for well-healed European, Latin American, and Caribbean tourists, as well as Americans who have second homes or yachts based here. As a result, we have seen a transition



from recreational to more business aircraft, and we have tailored our FBO and maintenance services to serve the business customer.”

In that regard, Banyan’s operation is divided into six departments. In addition to the FBO, departments include a turbine maintenance service center, an avionics service center (for installations and sales), an aircraft parts distribution facility, an aircraft acquisitions and sales division, and what Campion referred to as “a unique pilot shop selling aviation products unlike any other store.”

The FBO is Banyan’s most visually striking, and newest feature. Opened as a brand-new facility in 2006, the 26,000-square-foot, two-level, luxury terminal has already gained a reputation for superior customer services. Readers of *Professional Pilot* magazine voted it the best independent U.S. FBO in 2008. In the same survey, the readers selected it as the second best of all U.S. FBOs, including both independent and chain locations.

Banyan’s FBO, which is open 24/7, provides such customer amenities as a 3,000-square-foot lobby, multiple conference rooms and pilot lounges, an executive business center, concierge service, which can arrange catering and hotel reservations as well as travel assistance to Bahamian and other Caribbean destinations. The FBO also has a large, on-site Hertz car rental facility and includes more than 100 hangars, ranging from small T-types to large corporate facilities. Campion said that the adjacent ramp can accommodate any size corporate aircraft and that Banyan just added Jet Runway Café, a restaurant located close to the terminal affording views of arriving and departing aircraft on the ramp.

A branded AvFuel dealer, the FBO is equipped with four 20,000-gallon capacity underground fuel tanks, three for Jet A storage and one for 100 low-lead avgas. All the fuel is dispensed directly into the airplanes from a fleet of nine refuelers. Campion said that of the 800 aircraft based at FXE, 400 are Banyan tenants, and of that group, 175 are turbine types.

Banyan’s maintenance service center has come a long way from its initial focus on twin pistons. “We are an authorized Hawker Beechcraft Service Center for the King Air, as well as for the (piston) Bonanza and Baron. We refer most other piston aircraft work to Schmidt Aviation, another vendor on the field,” Campion said. “Our focus is turbine-



powered aircraft, specifically Learjets, Citations, and Hawkers, as well as Pilatus turboprops. Under our FAR Part 145 certificate, we are authorized to service anything from a midsize corporate aircraft on down.”

Campion said the company is “heavily involved with airframe maintenance,” with engine work mostly done at line level, as hot section inspections and heavy engine overhauls are contracted out. The maintenance, which also includes propeller overhauls and repairs, is carried out in a 50,000-square-foot hangar by a staff of 28 A&P technicians and 22 others including inspectors, service managers and administrators. Six of the A&P technicians specialize in airframe modifications, including heavy structural repairs and winglet installations. All interior work and painting is outsourced.

Campion said that along with U.S. FAA repair station authority, the company holds maintenance authorization from the governments of Brazil, Venezuela, and Argentina as well as the European EASA.

In addition to maintenance at FXE, Banyan offers an Aircraft On Ground (AOG) service to customers throughout Florida and the Caribbean. “If a shop indicates it is not qualified to work on the airplane, the operator can request that they call Banyan Air Service, and we will work with that shop to repair the aircraft,” Campion said. “In some cases, we can do this over the phone, or with their permission, we will send a team of technicians to their ramp to work on the airplane. We have a Cessna 206 on standby to transport technicians to where they are needed in the event of an AOG.”

The company’s avionics service center specializes in installations, engineering, and upgrades, which are done in a 20,000-square-foot hangar. Fifteen technicians are employed, along with eight staff

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Banyan Air Services

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members, including inspectors, managers, and administrators. “We are an approved repair station for all the major avionics OEMs and will work on any size aircraft,” Campion said.

Banyan’s aircraft parts distribution facility employs ten people and caters to a wide customer base, including on-demand charter operators, flight schools, corporate operators and small repair stations, mainly for aircraft ranging from single-engine pistons to mid-size business jets. The aircraft acquisitions and sales division concentrates exclusively on turboprops and light to medium jets. “Here, our focus is on pre-owned King Air, Pilatus, Learjet, Hawker, and Citation models, for which we are a broker and have several in inventory,” Campion said.

Another service provided by Banyan involves retail sales of pilot supplies and aviation-related merchandise. That business includes the Hangar 63 Banyan Aviation store, a 4,500-square-foot facility located next to the FBO terminal. Along with that is Tropic Aero, an on-line store specializing in electronics.

Even though the global recession continues to buffet the commercial and general aviation industry, Campion reported that Banyan will pursue expansion planning. Starting in June, the company will offer heavy airframe maintenance on the Dassault Falcon family of jets for the first time, initially on the Falcon 50 and 900. Campion said the decision to do this was based on the significant number of those aircraft transiting through South Florida, especially from Latin America.

“Central and South American operators currently generate about 50 percent of our avionics and maintenance work, and we are now just beginning to build a clientele that is based in Mexico,” he said. “To serve this growing market, we are acquiring more test and shop equipment, Level III nondestructive testing equipment, and doing additional

training.”

To support the expanded maintenance operation, Banyan plans to add another 20,000 square feet of shop space this year through the lease on an existing hangar at FXE. Under current planning, the company will add five technicians to its staff.

Campion said that Banyan also sees opportunities for a growing amount of maintenance oversight

and engineering consulting services offshore, given the company’s expertise in avionics and electronics. In 2008, for instance, technicians were sent to Dublin, Ireland, to help oversee the installation of a wireless, high-speed data system and DirectTV on a corporate configured 747SP.

“Some 80 percent of the work is electronics related,” he said. “We have also done this in Columbia, Brazil, and Mexico and have helped the management at these facilities to establish the standard of quality they would require to do the work on their own.”

Campion feels that the growing cross-border work, especially in Latin America, has helped the company weather today’s economic turbulence. “In our observation, the Latin American economy has held up better than the U.S. [economy], and this has helped to offset much of the slack that we have seen from our U.S.-based customers,” he said.

As a result, the company has not had to layoff any employees. “We have simply not filled some jobs that have been vacated due to natural attrition,” Campion said. “Since we have expanded in other areas of the company, we still have the same number of people on our payroll, 150, that we did at this time last year.”

Yet, Banyan has not been completely immune to the impact of the current economic storm. For instance, Campion said the 2008 spike in fuel prices, coupled with the overall reduction in business flying, resulted in a 12 percent reduction in gallons of fuel sold by the FBO compared to 2007. An additional 10 percent drop is predicted for 2009 due to decreased demand from based and transient customers.

“We saw some of the larger charter operators experience as much as a 50 percent falloff in their business last year,” he said. “Even though fuel prices have come down significantly, people are still flying less. That is especially true for aircraft operators from the construction, real estate, and banking industries.”

As for the rest of this year, Campion predicted that the aircraft sales division will face the biggest battle due to financing issues. "Until the credit markets ease up a bit, moving pre-owned aircraft will be a challenge," he said.


Still, he reported that the company has been solidly positioned to compete in today's environment, as the housing market meltdown, which triggered the current recession, became evident to him more than a year ago.

"We began to see a falloff in real estate activity in Florida in 2007, and by June and July of last year, many developers were either selling their aircraft or flying them a lot less," he said. "But rather than tighten our belts, we have invested in growing our market share by adding sales staff, who are especially promoting Banyan to the still-strong Latin American and Caribbean trade. There are still a lot of airplanes flying into the U.S. from South America via the South Florida gateway, and we felt that we needed to work harder to get those aircraft operators to choose Banyan Air Services over our competition."

In addition to stepping up its marketing efforts, Banyan is also investing in information technology (IT). "Our entire (internet) infrastructure is being

rebuilt at this time to make information more accessible to our customers, especially in maintenance," Campion said. "More customers today want to bypass the front desk and communicate directly with the maintenance department using the internet. We now have four fulltime IT staff members, and two new technical sales people have been hired who are successfully building market share and maintaining our visibility among potential customers."

Campion is confident that these measures will better position Banyan to take advantage of what he predicts will be an increase in charter and fractional ownership flying. "There is a lot of pent-up demand for charter flying, and it will rebound very quickly," he said. "You have to understand that there are still some companies out there that are strong and profitable, and they will want to do more charter or consider fractional plans." He said that Banyan is a preferred FBO for all the major fractional operations.

And while no definite plans have been announced, expansion of the company to additional locations is not out of the question. "For now, however, we will continue to work diligently to make sure that Banyan Air Services continues to offer a unique customer experience," he said. 





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Safety Tools You Can Use

By Lindsey McFarren

The recent 2009 Air Charter Safety Symposium drew nearly 100 industry leaders to the National Transportation Safety Board Training Center just outside of Washington, D.C. Presenters discussed Safety Management Systems (SMS), including the basic elements of an SMS, promoting SMS to corporate leadership, and upcoming FAA SMS requirements. The conference also focused on family assistance planning, Aviation Safety Action Program (ASAP) implementation, and the hazards of unstable approaches.

Attendees gained knowledge on the concepts and philosophies of these crucial topics, but how do you implement the sometimes daunting lessons learned at the symposium? Rome wasn't built in a day, and neither is a successful aviation safety program. There are many risk-assessment and other safety tools available to aircraft operators that will immediately improve the safety of their operation and reduce their risk profile. A few are discussed below, and each can be found in its entirety by visiting www.acsf.aero/tools.

Flight Risk Assessment Tool

The Turbine Aircraft Operations Subgroup (TAOS), a component of the FAA/Industry General Aviation Joint Steering Committee, developed a risk-analysis tool in 2007 for use in flight operations. This tool is a must for all turbine aircraft operators. Unlike some other risk-analysis tools available to aviators, this tool wasn't developed based on intuition and lucky guesses or a general review of all aircraft accidents. This tool (affectionately called the "RAT" by the TAOS) was drafted by carefully analyzing years of Part 91 and 135 turbine aircraft accident data, identifying common hazards, factors, and probable causes, and then appropriately weighting the commonalities. The resulting tool accounts for the probability and severity of an accident or incident due to a particular factor (i.e., single-pilot flight or pop-up trip) and then assigns that factor a weighted value.

The crew completes the

RAT prior to each flight and receives a total factor score. A relatively low score indicates a relatively low risk profile for the given flight. A higher score indicates a higher risk profile, and the flight should be scrutinized according to the company's safety policies or actions should be taken to mitigate the identified risk factors.

To use the tool, an operator must establish an acceptable level of risk for its flights, which would result in a total factor score threshold. When the total factor score exceeds that threshold, or series of thresholds, the crew is not permitted to complete the flight without further action to reduce the risk profile.

Let's look at an example. Assume McFarren Air's safety policies prevent any flight with a total factor score over 25 points, and the score for a particular flight is 30. Further, let's assume two of the many factors that lead to this score are that the assigned first officer has fewer than 200 hours in type (a whopping 5-point penalty) and the flight is scheduled to be a twilight operation (a 2-point penalty). The risk score can be lowered by substituting the assigned first officer with a more experienced one and moving the flight an hour or so earlier to become a day operation. These steps would lower the score by 7 points to 23, mitigating some of the risk of the flight.

But now the risk threshold is 23. Do those 2 points really make that big of a difference? Some operators think such a minor change does mitigate enough risk to make the flight acceptable. The threshold has to be some specific number, or our planes would never leave the ground. Other operators think the thresholds should be tiered. For

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Risk	High Gain	Medium Gain	Low Gain
Low Risk	Accept the mission. Continue to monitor risk factors, if conditions or mission changes.	Accept the mission. Continue to monitor risk factors, if conditions or mission changes.	Accept the mission. Reevaluate risk vs. gain, should risk factors change.
Medium Risk	Contact Air Station for guidance. Continue to monitor risk factors and employ control options when available.	Contact Air Station for guidance. Continue to monitor risk factors and employ control options when available.	Do not accept the mission.
High Risk	Do NOT accept high-risk missions.		

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Safety Tools You Can Use

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example, a score of 15 or fewer points allows a crew to accept and complete a flight with no further action needed. A score of 20 or fewer points requires the crew to contact the chief pilot or director of operations for guidance or permission to take the flight. A score of 25 or more points prevents the crew from accepting or completing the flight.

Of course, any score can be reduced by mitigating some of the factors (changing a destination airport to one with lower crosswinds, a longer runway, or better available approaches or any other combination of factors), which could eliminate the need for intervention from the chief pilot or director of operations. In fact, crews should attempt to reduce the risk factors first, before contacting leadership for a “go” call. The goal of the RAT should not be to squeak under a specified number, but rather to reduce risk in a meaningful way to an acceptable level.

Operators can begin using this tool today and experience immediate reduction in risk and increase in safety. You might wonder what total factor score is appropriate for your particular operation. As with most things in general aviation, one size does not fit all. You might begin by reviewing the

details of several recent flights. Plug the applicable factors into the RAT, and see how you score for typical flights. Use those scores as a basis for your threshold. Or have your crews begin using the RAT on a test basis, and gather data for a few weeks or months to determine your threshold. Most importantly, don't be afraid to change your threshold total factor scores if you find them to be too high or too low. Although you don't want crews to be completing flights with a high score because the threshold has been set too high, you also want crews to be empowered to complete flights with a reasonable level of risk without intervention from leadership.

I'M SAFE

Remember this one? In my experience, this simple mnemonic, I'M SAFE, is used frequently by private “non-professional” pilots, yet all but forgotten by commercial “professional” pilots. Are paid pilots any less susceptible to fatigue, stress, or the knock-out effects of Benadryl? Of course not! So why is this simple little tool quickly discarded once we hit a certain number of flight hours or have a cockpit for an office?

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I llness?	Do I have any symptoms?
M edication?	Am I using any kind of prescription or drugs?
S tress?	Am I under psychological pressure from the job or home? Any worries about financial, health, or family problems?
A lcohol?	Have I been drinking within eight hours? Within 24 hours?
F atigue?	Am I tired and not adequately rested?
E ating?	Have I not been eating and drinking adequately?

Consider adding this short table to flight itineraries, dispatch sheets, and other documents your crews see just prior to a flight. Include it in your next safety newsletter or post it on your safety bulletin board. Discuss it one-on-one with any crewmember you know to be experiencing a particularly stressful event like divorce or family health problems or a crewmember with recurrent but not disqualifying medical issues.

Most importantly, look at your corporate culture. Do you have a just safety culture that allows a

crewmember to decline a flight based on fatigue or illness, even a minor illness like allergies or headache, without fear of retribution? Obviously repeated call-offs due to fatigue might lead to a human resources issue, but a fatigued pilot should never be allowed to become a safety issue.

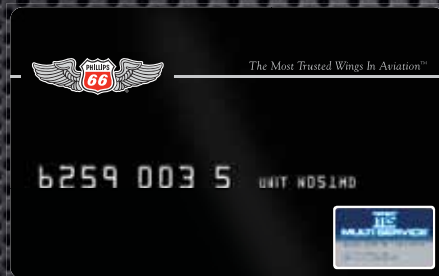
Examine your culture, and be absolutely certain that any pilot who cannot successfully answer these questions before a flight is permitted to decline the flight without retaliation or penalty.

Site Survey

In these days of global commerce and expanding borders, the term “on demand” has never been more accurate. Canada and the Bahamas used to be some of the most common international destinations, but now Part 135 operators are flying to Africa, the Middle East, and Asia with increasing frequency. Does your operation have a process for assessing risk at new airports, particularly those in inherently high-risk locales?

The United States Navy utilizes a site survey tool to assess any new airfield or reassess one that has

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Safety Tools You Can Use

Continued from page 29

undergone major construction or survived significant disaster or war. The tool looks at some obvious factors like available approaches and weather reporting, runway surfaces, and fueling capabilities, but it also takes into account crash, fire, and rescue facilities, foreign object debris prevention activities, and other important criteria. This tool has been modified from the Navy's version (unless you really need arresting gear for your Lear 60) and can be found on the Air Charter Safety Foundation's website.

It might not seem advantageous to send a representative of your company ahead to assess an airport before you accept a flight there, but much of the information for the assessment can be found online or by asking pilots who have already flown to that airport. There are also aviation firms, like mine, with staff and experts worldwide that can complete on-site assessments, not only of the basic items on this survey, but also of safety and security factors specific to an airport and region. Consider these services for unique airports or high-risk locations.

CFIT Checklist

The Flight Safety Foundation's (FSF) international CFIT (controlled flight into terrain) Task Force concluded in 1995, but not before producing several excellent tools aimed at preventing CFIT accidents. One of these tools, the FSF CFIT Checklist, is particularly relevant to operators who conduct international flights. Similar in concept to the RAT, except in the CFIT Checklist a lower score means higher risk, the CFIT Checklist also takes into account the departure and destination region (i.e., fewer points

for Africa than Europe), time-zone considerations, and pilot/controller language skills. The CFIT Checklist includes a basic assessment of corporate culture, asking questions about just culture (no retribution for reporting safety concerns), communication of hazards, and even if the company insists "you fly the way you train."

The CFIT Task Force identified a range of risk thresholds for this assessment: a score of 300-335 indicates the company is "Tops in CFIT flight standards," while a score of fewer than 200 points indicates a high CFIT risk. This checklist is extremely thorough, but it is also a long assessment and might not be reasonable before each flight.

Consider using this checklist to determine your company's general CFIT risk profile by looking at some recent flights to complete the assessment. Or use the checklist to create a profile for each route you fly on a recurring basis. Even if you decide not to complete the CFIT Checklist before each flight, it is a very valuable tool for raising awareness of CFIT risks to your crews and highlighting any unnecessary CFIT risks within your operation.

The CFIT Checklist is just one product in a suite of tools available through the FSF to help prevent CFIT accidents. The suite includes a video training aid, electronic CFIT Checklist, and other great publications.

Helicopter Emergency Medical Services Risk Assessment

No discussion of risk assessment and reduction would be complete without discussing helicopter emergency medical services (HEMS) operations.

Part II: CFIT Risk-reduction Factors

Section 1 – Company Culture

Corporate/company management:	Value	Score
Places safety before schedule	20	_____
CEO signs off on flight operations manual	20	_____
Maintains a centralized safety function	20	_____
Fosters reporting of all CFIT incidents without threat of discipline	20	_____
Fosters communication of hazards to others	15	_____
Requires standards for IFR currency and CRM training	15	_____
Places no negative connotation on a diversion or missed approach	20	_____
115-130 points	Tops in company culture	Company Culture Total (+) _____
105-115 points	Good, but not the best	
80-105 points	Improvement needed	
Less than 80 points	High CFIT risk	

HEMS operators provide an invaluable service but can also face extraordinary pressure, either internally within the flight department or pilot or externally from a medical facility or other source. In 2005, the FAA published Notice 8000.301, which included several risk-assessment matrices and a mission assessment.

One risk-assessment matrix identified factors for day operations, while its complementary assessment considered night operations. Another chart looked at the risks associated with hospital transfers, and a companion chart looked at risks associated with on-scene procedures. The final tool in this notice is a mission assessment, covering basic factors like weather, fuel status, terrain, and route.

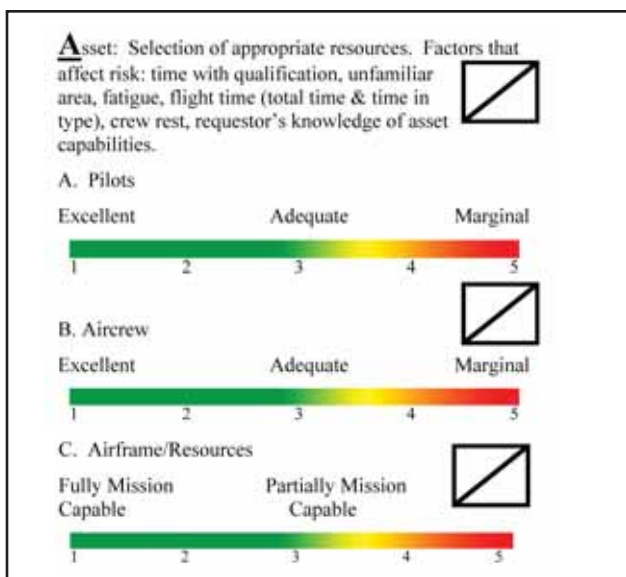
The FAA has published more HEMS-related documents since 2005, but this notice, with its relatively simple, efficient tools, is worth digging out of the history file and reviewing.

High-Risk Mission Assessment

The United States Coast Guard Auxiliary (USCG AUXAIR) published a risk assessment matrix in 2004. The publication acknowledges the variety of environments in which the USCG AUXAIR supports a number of unique missions. The risk-assessment matrix is different from the others discussed here, except perhaps the HEMS tools, in that it is most appropriate for high-risk, high-gain missions, like law enforcement, fire control, and search and rescue.

The tool is simple to use and can be completed quickly. It looks at planning, mission complexity, assets (pilots and aircraft), communications, and

USCG AUXAIR Aviation Risk Assessment



environment. It then suggests the crew manage risk by dispersing, transferring, avoiding, accepting, or reducing risk factors. The assessment also leads the crew to consider the possible gain of a mission—a low-gain mission could be routine passenger transport, while a high-gain mission could result in loss of life.

The USCG AUXAIR suggests a risk threshold of greater than 20 points requires re-evaluation and leadership approval before launch, but the threshold can be raised or lowered based on your operational needs. The final risk score is weighted as low, medium, or high, similar to the gain score. A table directs the pilot to accept or decline the mission. For example, a medium-risk, high-gain outcome directs the pilot to contact leadership for guidance. A low-gain, low-risk outcome allows the pilot to accept the mission without additional actions but to re-evaluate the situation if risk factors change. The table directs the pilot to decline all high risk missions.

What's Good for the Goose ... Might Not Work for You

The old saying “what’s good for the goose is good for the gander” is not appropriate when it comes to choosing risk assessment and mitigation tools for your operation. As you can see, there are several risk-management tools available to aircraft operators, and finding the one that works best for your operation might take some time. Involve your crewmembers. Discuss the goal of these tools (identifying and reducing risk factors to improve safety), and let them be participants in the process. It might be best to try a few of these tools out for a month or two or even a year. Although you might find one is more efficient for your operation, any one of them is guaranteed to improve the safety of your company just by increasing awareness of risk factors, so don't be afraid to take your time trying them out. You will immediately reduce risk and increase safety, regardless of the tool you decide to use.

But remember, the most effective risk-assessment tool is the one your crewmembers *actually use*. A pretty table in a binder on your shelf is not effective for risk reduction. Include your crewmembers in the decision-making process early, request their feedback regularly, and review completed risk assessments to help choose the best tools for your operation.

Lindsey C. McFarren is manager, safety and security systems for SH&E, an ICF International Company. She can be reached at (202) 572-9427 or lmcfarren@icfi.com.



NATA's Sustaining Members

These special members have made a commitment to help develop programs and initiatives throughout the year. This membership class includes participation, sponsorship and recognition in all major NATA events and publications.

Air BP Aviation Services

Avfuel Corporation

Chevron Global Aviation

ConocoPhillips Company

ExxonMobil Aviation

FltPlan.com

Midcoast Aviation, Inc.

NetJets

Sabre Flight Explorer

Signature Flight Support

Universal Weather and Aviation, Inc.

USAIG

Founded in 1940, the National Air Transportation Association aggressively promotes aviation safety and the success of aviation service businesses through its advocacy efforts before government, the media and the public, and by providing valuable programs and forums to further its members' prosperity.



Air Charter Safety Symposium

A Resounding Success

In early March, the Air Charter Safety Foundation (ACSF) hosted its 2009 Air Charter Safety Symposium, a unique event for the on-demand and shared aircraft ownership industry.


Nearly 100 industry leaders devoted two days to learning how to implement, achieve, and maintain a healthy safety culture. The symposium was held in cooperation with the National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) at its training center.

"This year's symposium included outstanding presentations by this country's most influential safety leaders," said ACSF President James K. Coyne.

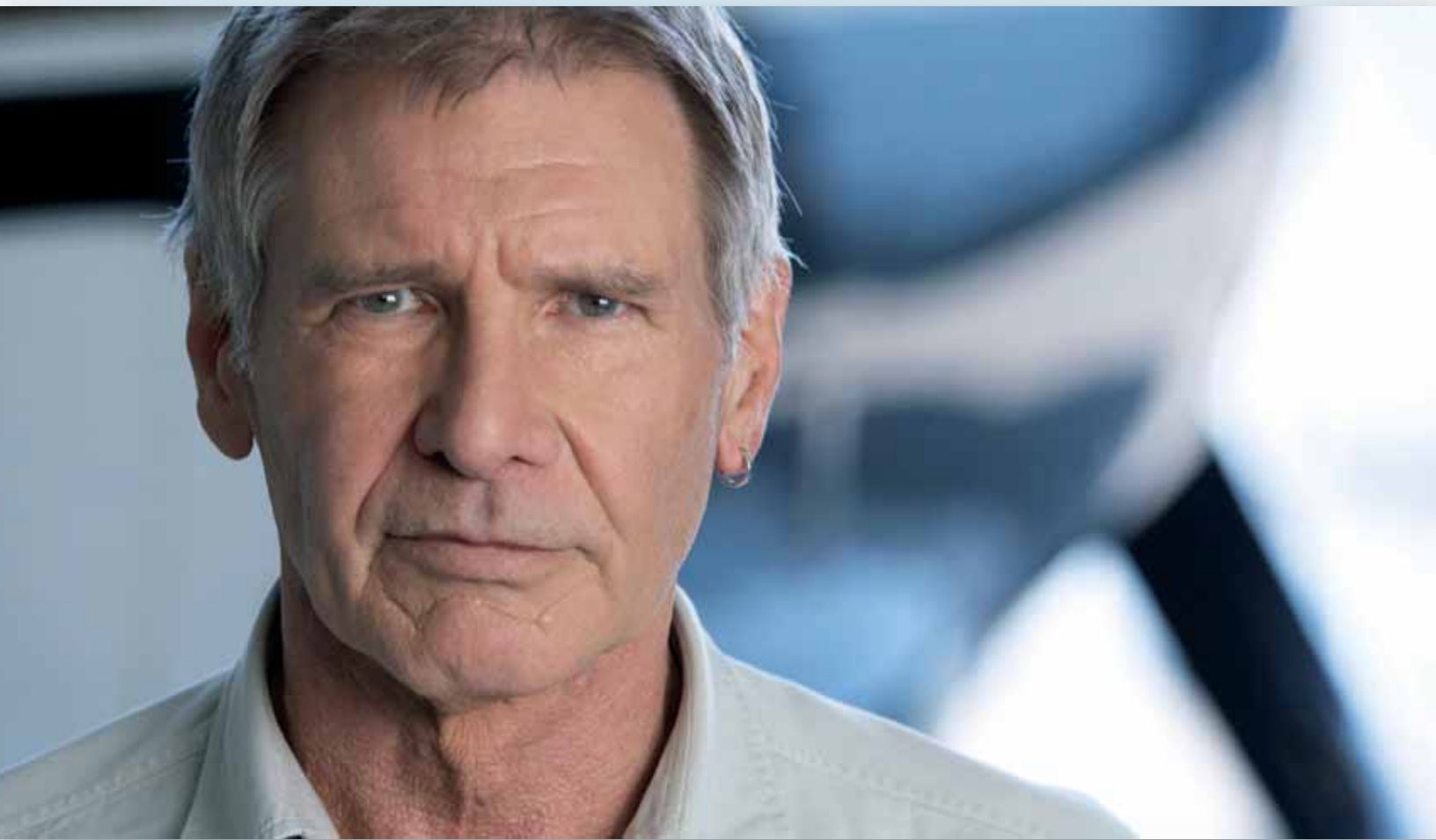
"Considering the current state of the economy, the impressive turnout is a clear indication that the industry remains committed to safe operations and that the ACSF continues to fulfill the needs of our industry."

During the symposium, the ACSF announced its Top 10 Safety Action Items, focusing on areas that need safety improvement, increased study, and/or specific action to implement existing concepts shown to improve safety. The top three action items, which were each highlighted in separate sessions, are

1. Implementation of Safety Management Systems,
2. Industry Use of Risk Assessment Tools, and
3. Addressing the Risks of Unstable Approaches.

NTSB Board Members Robert Sumwalt and Deborah Hersman delivered presentations focusing on safety management systems and current aviation safety issues. Other presentations highlighted security, Aviation Safety Action Programs, and family disaster assistance planning for small businesses. 





WE NEED YOUR HELP.

I'm Harrison Ford and I'm a longtime AOPA member who's committed to supporting the GA Serves America campaign during this critical time for general aviation. Our industry is under threat and we need your help fighting a costly and misguided Federal budget proposal that would create crippling new fees on general aviation. If enacted, the proposal would not only hurt our industry, it would also impact millions of Americans

and devastate thousands of communities across our country. More than 1.2 million jobs and billions of dollars that our industry pumps into our economy are in peril.

If you are as passionate as I am about general aviation, please join us in this fight. Contribute to the GA Serves America Fund today.

Visit us at: www.GAServesAmerica.com



GENERAL AVIATION
SERVES AMERICA

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The Importance of Training

By Lee Meadows

"Once you've made a good selection decision, everything else is training." This quote came from the wisdom of a veteran corporate education and training director during my years at General Motors.

He believed the statement could be applied across a variety of situations, both professional and personal. He also believed the opposite of that statement is also true, in that once you've trained someone to the best of their ability, if it doesn't work out, then it was a bad selection decision. While there was no sitting at the feet of this wise guru, I couldn't help but think how insightful the comment was and still is. The current competitive atmosphere has a number of companies trying to balance their restructuring and retention needs. In the midst of all that expanding and contracting decision-making is one sure truth about remaining competitive. Maintaining a well-trained, multi-skilled workforce is more than just an overhead cost consideration, but the recognition that without appropriate knowledge and skills, a company, irrespective of size, can lose its competitive and distinctive edge.

The unfortunate trend in short-term cost cutting is to reduce, or in some cases completely eliminate, the training budget. Embedded in that budget are skill training, knowledge acquisition, and tuition reimbursement. It's usually the easiest place to look because training is viewed as overhead costs. The quick slash-and-burn approach to help bring up the numbers typically results in a return to the hands-on, learn-as-you-go, scattergun approach to skill competence. The organization is then left with those individuals who are willing to learn in order to survive as opposed to a skilled workforce that wants to grow. What makes this strategy particularly dangerous is the unprecedented labor shortage unfolding in the United States and the "free agent" approach to career development as seen among the current crop of full-time employees. All conventional wisdom supports the notion that training is critical to the efficient functioning of an organization, but the link between conventional wisdom and practical reality gets lost when the idea is to keep the ship afloat. This often translates into organizations having a bunch of highly skilled employees who are proficient in bailing water, but once the waters are calm and stability has been established, no one knows how to row the boat.

Training is not a recreational luxury to be implemented when times are good, but is an essential survival tool when times are pretty rough. It is important to maintain an ongoing assessment of the internal training needs of the organization while anticipating the changes in the external environment that will dictate new skills and knowledge. The corporate world has seen the emergence of e-learning, online training, and distance education as expanding complements to traditional in-class learning. These new approaches to training have helped to take some of the expense out of training (i.e., travel, hotel accommodations), but they also represent the continuing education and training

The quick slash-and-burn approach to help bring up the numbers typically results in a return to the hands-on, learn-as-you-go, scattergun approach to skill competence. The organization is then left with those individuals who are willing to learn in order to survive as opposed to a skilled workforce that wants to grow.

opportunities that are consistent with the lifelong learner philosophy that is a guiding beacon for contemporary organizations. In fact, the growth of the internet has helped take a lot of the sting out of costly training by allowing access to training websites and online certification programs.

As the economic cycle continues to spin toward its next step in the process, many organizations are weighing the importance of training in lieu of other seemingly pressing concerns. The doubts are probably tied to an inability to measure the true impact of the training experience and, consequently, its true worth. When all else fails, perhaps some reflective thought on the next quote and its corporate interpretation might shed some light. "If you think education is expensive, try ignorance." In the business setting, that quote is taken to mean, "If you think training is expensive, try incompetence." ■

To learn more about Lee Meadows, visit www.leemeadows.biz.

NATA's 139 Fire Safety Training Options

NATA's Safety 1st Program offers an online fire safety training course that is certified by the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) in accordance with 14 CFR Part 139 Section 321 (139.321). This training is required for all aviation fuel handlers every 24 months. The certification is offered as a stand-alone fire safety training course or as one module of an in-depth eight-module line service training program.



Why did we take just one module from NATA's dynamic Safety 1st Professional Line Service Training (PLST Online)? The stand-alone 139 site was built to meet the fire safety training needs for attendees of NATA's Line Service Supervisor Training (LSST), Advanced Line Service Supervisor Training, and NATA's Line Service Technician Boot Camp Seminars. Many companies that provide services to the airlines or want refresher fire training also take advantage of this FAA-approved fire safety training course.

In addition to the vast fire training on NATA's 139 site, students share comments and experiences on forums so that lessons may be learned about what happens on other ramps. Here is some of what is being shared on the 139 forums.

"A military aircraft had just started his #2 engine. Fire shot out of his exhaust (30 feet), which ignited fuel from weep tubes at the rear of the aircraft. The

lineman signaled the pilot (figure eight [marshaling signal]). They shut the engines down. The fire in the exhaust went out, but the ramp was burning from the dripping fuel (weep tubes). The lineman was near an extinguisher and put the fire out."

"A fire can happen at any time when dealing with fuel, if [your staff is] not properly trained. All of our guys have to go through NATA safety courses before they can work on the flight line."

"Luckily there are not too many occurrences like what happened in Denver. It is great to have the training but don't really want the experience. I didn't get into this industry to fight fires, but I do want to prevent them and protect the lives of the workers."

"Unfortunately, fire is a real threat we have to deal with on a daily basis in this industry. Fortunately, we have never had a fire, but the threat is always there in aircraft fueling and aircraft maintenance. All anyone can do, if faced with an unexpected fire, is rely on his or her proper and recurrent training received from a course like this or similar, along with live training exercises."

What ever your fire safety training needs, NATA strives to meet them through various options. For a stand-alone training program, go to www.139firesafetytraining.com. For in-depth line service training as well as fire safety training, go to www.nata.aero/plst.



How to Build a More Successful FBO

Running and managing an FBO is demanding enough without the addition of today's unprecedented economic conditions. So what are you going to do? Open the window and yell, "I'm mad as hell, and I'm not going to take it any more!" You may feel better, but what you are left with is reality and a dire need to take care of business.

NATA provides the assistance you need with its popular How to Build a More Successful FBO seminars, May 14-15 in Windsor Locks, Conn., and October 23-24 in Baja, Mexico.

Come join industry experts who've been there, done that and have nearly 100 years of combined experience in the FBO business. You'll benefit from the wisdom of what to do during tough times, how to decrease credit card rates, lower insurance premiums, find and retain top talent, strengthen your fuel provider relationship, negotiate favorable lease agreements with your airport authority, build long-term profitable customer relations, plus many more ideas that will put your business on track for future success.

You will spend time networking with your comrades during the popular round table discussion of best practices. You'll walk away amazed by what others are doing and go home with some great ideas to put into action. As Dan Montgomery with Montgomery Aviation said of last year's FBO Success seminar, "We have attended other FBO programs in the past, but this was by far the best. The interaction with the other FBOs went beyond amazing. As all of us face times of uncertainty in the year ahead, this program benefited many facets of FBO concerns."

Following is a sneak peek of one of the many great topics that you'll experience during this unsurpassed seminar.

Building Long-term Profitable Customer Relationships

The process of building long-term profitable customer relationships necessitates an investment of time and hands-on management. It requires a commitment to understand your customers' needs, requests, and desires and exemplary leadership and

empowerment of employees from the bottom up.

We'll break down the various elements that will make customers your best friend and illustrate that FBOs of any size can get their share of business.

Part I: Making the Customer Your Best Friend

Building long-term profitable customer relationships is the lifeblood of an FBO. We'll show you ways to add value without lowering fuel prices.


- Take care of your current customers first. Replacing an existing customer takes not only time, but money.
- Manage your brand. What do you do to make sure your brand image is strong and represents a good value?
- What's your Social Quotient? Learn the one question to ask customers that will tell you if they are going to be a long-term profitable customer or just a flash in the pan.

Part II: Marketing and Communications for Any Size FBO

There are many ways to "shake hands with the customer." You don't have to be a large FBO to get your share of business.

- What's your Buzz Quotient? Are you on the radar? Does your next new customer even know you exist?
- There are many cost-effective ways to communicate or "shake hands" with your customer. We'll discuss various channels of communications that won't break your budget.
- Develop a communications checklist. We'll discuss what's most important and what's least important to build your FBO image and awareness.

A Bargain!

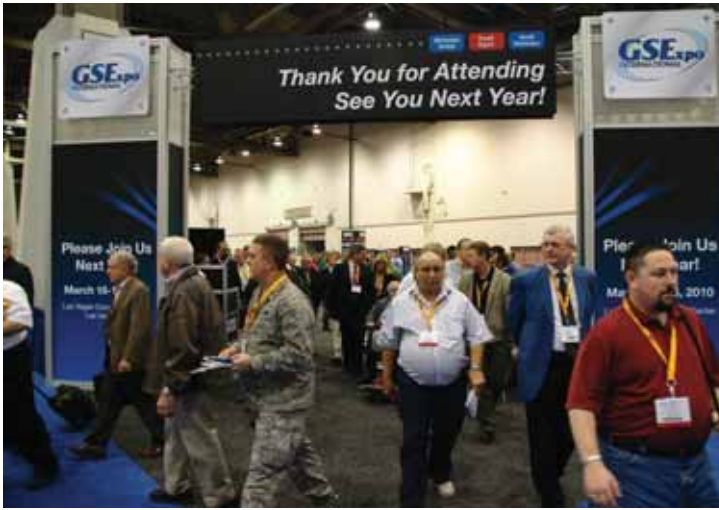
Whether you join us in Windsor Locks at the mesmerizing New England Air Museum on May 14-15 or on an unbeatable cruise in Baja, Mexico, October 23-24, you'll get your money's worth and then some. Look into the details at www.nata.aero by clicking on the Events Calendar. This will be one investment that will continue to pay dividends throughout your FBO's journey to further success. 

WELCOME TO AVIATION INDUSTRY EXPO

FBO/Aviation Services

Ground Support

Aircraft Maintenance



2009 Aviation Industry Expo, March 10-12 in Las Vegas, Nev., drew more than 3,500 aviation professionals from around the globe. It was also the site of NATA's Education Week, a full slate of informative workshops and training seminars. Above and right, this year's expo offered the latest ground service technology, products, and services as well as hands-on equipment demonstrations.



Below, Stephen Hopson, the first deaf instrument-rated pilot, delivers an inspirational keynote address on overcoming obstacles in the pursuit of success.





Top left, Reed Fuller leads a full house of line service professionals through a segment of NATA's newly revamped LSST Seminar. Above, (from left) Adam Coulby, Walter Chartrand, and George Lehmann discuss the value of technology during the Aviation Management—Innovation through Technology Workshop.

Top right, Dan Souders provides guidance to aviation safety professionals at the OSHA 10-Hour Course. Middle right, David Cannington (right) from Sensear, the keynote address sponsor, demonstrates one of the company's smart hearing protection devices.

Right, happy and well trained line service staff equal satisfied customers. LSST participants visit NATA's booth for a PLST-Online drawing and photo op.



NATA Announces New Leadership and Board Members

NATA President James K. Coyne recently announced the association's new chairman, vice chairman, and three new board members. Kurt Sutterer, president, Midcoast Aviation, Inc., assumed the NATA chairmanship during the association's March 11 Board of Directors meeting.

Sutterer was appointed president of Jet Aviation's new maintenance and completions organization in North America in 2006, when Midcoast Aviation was acquired by the Jet Aviation Group. He joined Midcoast Aviation in 1981 and has served as the company's president since November 2004.

Sutterer started his career at the St. Louis-based maintenance and completions company and held various positions of increasing responsibility, ranging from inspector to manager of technical services to vice president and general manager of Midcoast Aviation operations before his promotion to president.

He is a Graduate of Linn State Technical College and a licensed A&P mechanic.



Kurt Sutterer

Smoother Sailing Ahead

James Miller, executive vice president from Flight Options, is now NATA's vice chairman. Miller oversees the management of the Flight Options fleet, Aircraft Management, Whole Aircraft Sales & Acquisitions, and Aircraft Completion & Refurbishment.

Miller started his career as an engineer and programmer with IBM Federal Systems Division, having responsibilities for various avionics and ship-board systems design and development efforts.



James Miller

In 1968, he founded Miller Aviation and later Miller Avionics and Miller Information Technologies, serving as their president and CEO.

"The last 12 months have been an incredibly volatile time for the general aviation industry," NATA's Coyne said. "We were extremely fortunate to have had Dennis Keith as our chairman to help us navigate through these rocky waters. We now look forward to having Kurt, with Jim as our vice chairman, do the same as the general aviation industry looks to rebound from a dismal 2008."

Three New Board Members

In addition to announcing the new leadership, the association also elected three new members to its board of directors. Those three new members are Todd Duncan, chairman, Duncan Aviation; Kenneth Forester, CEO, Meridian Air Charter; and Mark Willey, CEO, Bridgeford Flying Services.

Todd Duncan has a life-long association with Duncan Aviation and has worked at the company since 1989 when he started in aircraft sales. Since then, he has served the company in various capacities, most notably as president of the component services department and as vice-chairman of Duncan Aviation's Advisory Board. He is currently chairman of Duncan Aviation.

Duncan began his flying career in 1987, becoming a licensed private pilot in 1988. He then achieved his instrument rating and his multi-engine rating.

Duncan has served on the board of directors for several local nonprofit organizations, including NATA's Air Charter Safety Foundation. He is a member of the Nebraska Chapter of the Young President's Organization and the Aircraft Owners and Pilots Association.

Kenneth Forester is the CEO of Meridian Teterboro/Meridian Air Charter, companies with more than 50 years of experience in the general aviation industry. He is currently

qualified in the Cessna Citation. His other type ratings include the Learjet and Gulfstream IV. Forester graduated from the U.S. Air Force Academy and served in the U.S. Air Force flying the F102.

Mark Willey is managing partner of Corporate Airpark, and CEO of Bridgeford Flying Services and Actus Aviation. Willey has led the growth of Bridgeford to a world-class FBO, aircraft management, sales and charter provider, and premium quality flight school and repair station.

Prior to Bridgeford, Willey was with the DuPont family-owned Atlantic Aviation for 17 years, the last seven as vice president and general manager of their Wilmington, Del., headquarters.

Willey's affiliations include serving in various civic and community organizations. He is a past member of an Aviation Executive Roundtable and a past member of the NBAA Business Committee. Willey currently chairs the Business Management Committee for NATA and is a member of the Society of Aerospace Engineers. He is on the Napa Chamber of Commerce Board and the Napa Airport Security Committee, and is a member of the aviation industry renowned FBO 1 peer group.

"We are delighted to have such an outstanding and talented new class of NATA board

members," Coyne said. "It is critical that the NATA Board of Directors guide the association, ensuring continued economic growth and financial viability while reinforcing that safety is the highest priority for all of its members. Todd, Ken, and Mark clearly recognize these core values and will guide our association accordingly."



Surviving and even thriving in today's economy requires:

- Highly skilled and well trained staff
- Valuable tools and techniques for understanding and properly managing your company's finances
- Safe and secure operation – free from insurance and lawsuit risk and claims
- Understanding of what lies ahead for our industry
- Contact with leading industry experts and regulatory officials
- Opportunities to connect with your business associates and customers
- New ideas and sometimes even a return to basics for marketing and business plans



Get a Great Deal on Flight's ACAS

NATA has negotiated an agreement with information provider and magazine publisher, Flight, to offer its members Flight's ACAS Business Aviation information service at a 20 percent discount. ACAS is the world's leading fleet database. The Windows-based system is updated monthly and is used by major manufacturers, MROs, finance companies, and service providers for market analysis and sales support.

Flight recently launched a business aviation version that covers all the business aircraft in the world, from turboprops like the King Air through business jets such as the BBJ. ACAS Business Aviation details each aircraft to tail number level (including history) and each operator (often with contact details), and it comes with a state of the art software interface.

ACAS Business Aviation is an ideal marketing tool, helping target aircraft and customers, win new business, and analyze market trends," said ACAS publisher Tim Fuller.

ACAS Business Aviation can assist with service marketing by providing many types of data:

- Who operates Learjet 45s in the United States? How many? Let's call them.
- How many midsize jets were delivered by type over the last five years?
- How many Citation jets have been produced?
- What's the engine OEM market share for Bombardier jets?
- Who operates tail number NXXXX? How old is the aircraft?
- How many business jets are on backlog by type?
- How many business jets are parked or retired? Have these numbers increased?

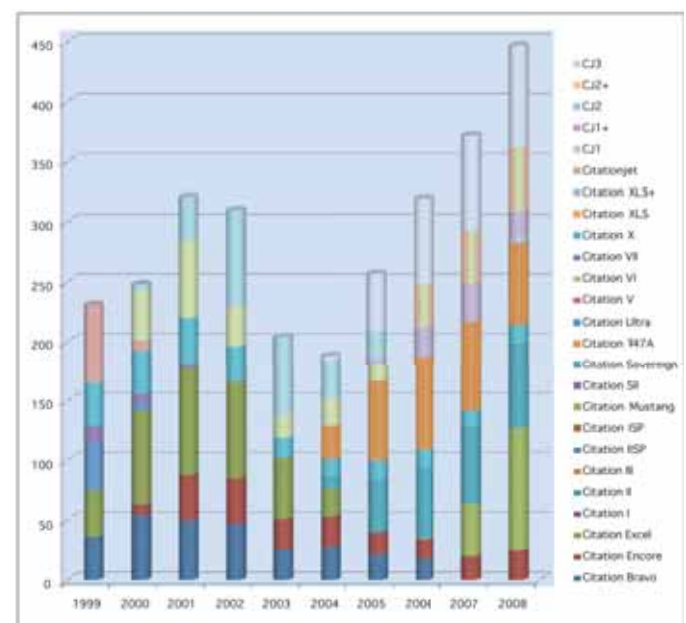
The ACAS user interface (pictured below), coupled with the fully relational database, enables

users to answer these questions in seconds. The results may be viewed in a grid for further manipulation/drill down or as a printable report or exported to Excel.

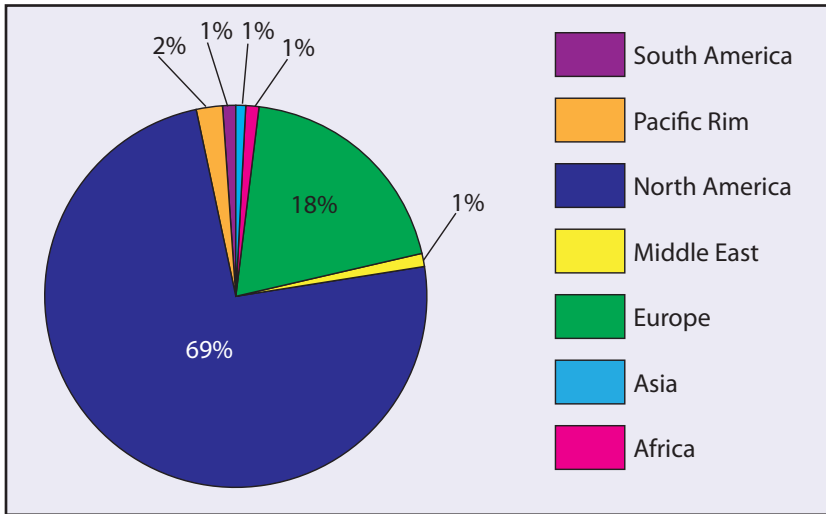
As an example, below is the output for the question on the number of Citations, by model produced by year:

A/C Model	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
Citation Bravo	26	34	50	47	26	28	22	18	0	0
Citation Encore	0	9	38	38	25	25	18	16	20	28
Citation Excel	39	79	89	81	51	23	1	0	0	0
Citation I	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0
Citation II	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0
Citation III	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0
Citation GSP	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0
Citation GSP	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0
Citation Mustang	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	44	102
Citation SII	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Citation Sovereign	0	0	0	0	0	11	4	39	64	72
Citation T-47A	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0
Citation Ultra	40	6	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0
Citation V	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0
Citation VI	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0
Citation VII	14	8	4	0	0	0	1	0	0	0
Citation X	26	26	39	30	17	14	26	15	14	13
Citation XLS	0	0	0	0	0	28	17	76	75	68
Citation XLS+	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	5
Citationjet	55	9	0	0	0	0	5	0	0	0
CJ1	0	43	65	34	19	23	14	0	0	0
CJ1+	0	0	0	0	0	0	4	25	52	21
CJ2	0	4	36	80	66	32	24	1	0	0
CJ2+	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	35	44	53
CJ3	0	0	0	0	0	4	46	72	79	88

The same data in a chart:



Citations by world region:



A company search is also available.

Because ACAS Business Aviation covers complete production, users can be confident that their analysis will be exhaustive. (ACAS Business Aviation covers complete production for business-designed aircraft. For other types, like commercial airliners, the full ACAS system is required.)

ACAS is compiled by Flight's 20-person data-research team at the Rugby, U.K., data-research center and is part of the Flight portfolio of data services, including HeliCAS helicopter and MiliCAS military aircraft database. Flight also publishes *Flight International* and *Airline Business* magazines.

For more information about ACAS Business Aviation or to arrange a free demonstration go to www.flightglobal.com/acasbusinessaviation or call Ron Hargis, in Flight's Alexandria, Va., office at (703) 706-9470. ACAS is an annual subscription service. Be sure to mention NATA to claim your 20 percent discount.

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“Lookout”

NATA's most important work involves protecting our members from regulatory and legislative mischief.

Often, we can see it before it happens, and block it. Sometimes, we need to work after the fact to correct it.

We always keep our heads-up for any issue that could adversely affect aviation businesses like yours.



Founded in 1940, the National Air Transportation Association aggressively promotes safety and the success of aviation businesses through its advocacy efforts before government, the media and the public.

If you work in an aviation business, NATA is your association. Get involved. Get assistance. Benefit from valuable programs and forums designed just for you.

Give us a call at 800-808-NATA or visit us at www.nata.aero anytime.



The Voice of Aviation Business

If You're in Aviation to Turn a Profit, We're in Business for You.

SACjet Opens Corporate Aviation Center

SACjet President and Chairman Scott Powell recently announced the completion of the state-of-the-art SACjet corporate aviation center in Sacramento, Calif. The grand opening for the corporate hangar and jet center is on May 1.

"Sacramento has never had a truly five-star business aviation headquarters and gateway to the world," Powell said. "The new Sacramento International Jet Center now offers that in spades."

With more than 300 days of visual approaches annually, SACjet presents first-class facilities, including a Cessna Citation service center, Air BP-branded fuel, 24-hour maintenance, customs, convenient long runways, and commercial airline access. The center also boasts custom, resort-like interior reception and lounge areas and top-notch amenities.

"Our desire is to ensure that both our based tenants and transient customers receive the same value on the ground that they expect in the air," Powell said. "We want our customers to know that Sacramento truly provides a nice landing."

Prior to SACjet constructing the new facility, only small Citations could be housed at SMF in two small, private hangars. This is no longer an issue. The aviation center can now house aircraft as large as a Gulfstream 550. Due to its location in the valley, west-bound aircraft remain at 20,000 feet often until they are 60 miles out with virtually no vectoring due to traffic. This saves time and fuel on every flight.

Powell foresees a bright and growing future for Sacramento. It is his goal to help enhance the community by building and maintaining a corporate aviation facility that will be within the top 5 percent for fit and finish in national FBOs. This accomplishment will increase based tenants and bring new business and employment opportunities to the region.

BP Details Financial Strategies

BP last year added 1.7 billion barrels of new oil and gas to its reserves base, a replacement ratio of 121 percent, excluding acquisitions and divestments. It was the 15th successive year in which BP has reported the replenishment of reserves by more than annual output.

The company said that it expected to be able

to grow production through to 2013 from existing projects. With year-end 2008 reserves of 18.2 billion barrels and a resource base of 43.4 billion barrels, this growth could be maintained until 2020 without any further discoveries.

At a total of 61.6 billion barrels of oil equivalent, BP's combined reserves and non-proved resources were sufficient for 43 years of production at the same rates as last year.

Previewing BP's annual strategy presentation by the executive management team to the financial community in London, Chief Executive Tony Hayward said the turnaround the company had achieved in the last 18 months gave it strong financial and operational momentum to face what will be a tough year in 2009.

"We intend to meet the challenges of 2009 head on and, where possible, to turn them to our advantage," he said. "Our strategy is an enduring one. We are delivering upstream growth and making good progress turning around our downstream business. The future has not been cancelled."

Predicting real opportunities for companies able and prepared to invest in readiness for the eventual economic upturn, Hayward said BP planned to keep this year's capital spend broadly in line with 2008, at between \$20 billion and \$21 billion, with lower spending in Refining & Marketing and Alternative Energy and maintaining investment in Exploration & Production.

Highlighting the main areas of ongoing performance improvement, he said the downstream business had boosted its underlying profitability by some \$2 billion in 2008, though this strong progress had been masked by the biggest decline in U.S. refining margins relative to the rest of the world in more than 20 years.

Cutter Names New Sales Managers for Tech Services

As part of its effort to respond to the expanding maintenance needs of aircraft owners and operators, Cutter Aviation recently announced the appointments of David Harsay and Michael Hedding as regional sales managers for aircraft technical services throughout the Cutter Aviation network of FBOs covering the Southwestern United States. The positions were developed by Cutter recently, as the company identified the need for customer consultants to guide owners

and operators through complex aircraft maintenance schedules and assist in making decisions on airframe, powerplant, and avionics upgrades and replacements.

"We are extremely pleased to have both David and Michael on our team," said Dennis Constantine, director of technical services at Cutter Aviation. "Both bring an enormous level of experience, energy, and a commitment to customer satisfaction that will benefit our clients for many years to come."

Harsay will work customers at Cutter service facilities at Phoenix Sky Harbor (PHX), Phoenix Deer Valley (DVT), and Albuquerque International Sunport (ABQ). Hedding will focus on meeting customer needs at Dallas Executive Airport (RBD) and San Antonio International (SAT).

XOJET Reports Increases in Revenue, Flight Hours, and Customers

Even in the face of a recessionary economy, XOJET has maintained its momentum as one of the world's fastest-growing private aviation companies, reporting strong year-over-year increases in revenue, flight hours, and customers.

In addition to securing more than \$2 billion in financing and financing commitments in 2008, XOJET experienced a 66 percent increase in revenue and 60 percent increase in flight hours over 2007. The company ended the year with more than 1,500 customers, up from 1,000 last year, and flew charter and guaranteed availability customers to 52 countries, up from 34.

"XOJET has continued to increase market share in the face of a challenging economy," said David Siegel, CEO of XOJET. "Companies as well as individual travelers are becoming much more sophisticated about their private aviation options and are increasingly looking for cost-effective, flexible solutions that also enable them to preserve capital. At the same time, they are not willing to sacrifice service or reliability."

XOJET recently announced two new offerings. The company's Fleet Exchange Membership program enables clients to create a customized solution to deliver the best value for their specific travel profile and does not require the purchase of an aircraft or share.

XOJET also introduced a new tool that allows both businesses and individuals to determine if they have been overpaying for private jet travel. Available at no cost, XOJET's proprietary Flight Program Analyzer produces a custom report show-

ing a detailed side-by-side cost comparison for any private jet travel option in the market.

Gulfstream Inspector Earns FAA Master Mechanic Award

Richard Thrasher, a senior airworthiness inspector with Gulfstream Aerospace, recently received the Charles Taylor Master Mechanic Award from the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA). Thrasher is the first Gulfstream employee to receive the award, which recognizes the lifetime accomplishments of senior mechanics.

Thrasher has been a senior airworthiness inspector at Gulfstream since February 2000. He began his aviation career in 1956 as a jet mechanic with the U.S. Marine Corps. Following his retirement from the Marines, Thrasher worked for Gulfstream as a mechanic, crew chief, and assistant foreman. He then worked for Raytheon as a mechanic, maintenance chief, and senior flight engineer. Before returning to Gulfstream in 2000, Thrasher was a self-employed aircraft consultant.

"Richard Thrasher is a credit to the industry and to Gulfstream Product Support," said Mark Burns, president, Product Support, Gulfstream. "We value the contributions he has made not only to aviation maintenance but to the younger generations of mechanics he has mentored over his extensive career. He's a true role model for the team here at Gulfstream."

To commemorate the award, Thrasher received a lapel pin and certificate from Michael J. Mullaney, the Atlanta-based FAA Safety Team representative, during a ceremony at the new Gulfstream Service Center. Thrasher's name has also been added to the Roll of Honor at FAA headquarters in Washington, D.C.

Embry-Riddle and Frasca Develop New Training Device

Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University, a world leader in aviation and aerospace education, and Frasca International, a top manufacturer of flight training simulation equipment for all aircraft, recently unveiled the first integrated flight training device (FTD) with virtual air traffic control commands that will give student pilots more realistic training. Designed specifically for general aviation pilot training, the product is called SAFTE (Synthetic Automated Flight Training Environment) with Virtual Air Traffic (VAT).

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SAFTE/VAT incorporates simulated flight plans with voice recognition technology to deliver a real-world flight experience, allowing the student pilot to “fly” in a particular situation or air space and receive specific commands from the virtual air traffic controller. The technology enables the flight instructor to focus on teaching rather than role-playing and better trains the student through repetitive, learned behaviors in scenario-based situations.

“Embry-Riddle is proud to collaborate with Frasca to advance the state-of-the-art in-flight simulation,” said Dr. Dan Macchiarella, associate professor of aeronautical science at Embry-Riddle and project manager for the university. “Our research shows that students learn more and much faster in a virtual simulation environment, thereby increasing the cost efficiency of our training programs.”

Duncan Aviation Completes Collins Pro Line 4 to 21 Upgrade

Duncan Aviation’s extensive Glass Box Project solution list recently grew by one. With the installation and certification of the Rockwell Collins Pro Line 4 to 21 upgrade, Duncan Aviation is the first to certify a full Pro Line 21 solution for the Falcon 50EX. This solution uses existing equipment to upgrade the Pro Line system to full Pro Line 21 functionality.

The upgrade interfaces with the existing Pro Line 4 avionics package, utilizing existing sensors, radios, and autopilots. The upgrade provides full Pro Line 21 functionality, including high-resolution Liquid Crystal Displays (LCDs); graphical weather; electronic charting with SIDs, STARs, NOTAMs, approaches, and airport diagrams; enhanced maps of geographical and political boundaries, airspace restrictions, and terrain features; WAAS capable and LPV ready; and display capability for TAWS, radar, TCAS, EVS, and Airshow.

Duncan Aviation has certified Pro Line systems in the following aircraft models: Falcon 50, Hawker 800A, Hawker 800XP, and Astra 1125. Duncan Aviation also plans to complete the Pro Line 4 to 21 upgrade package on a Falcon 2000 this year.

Duncan Aviation’s Glass Box Project is a focused program to evaluate, install, and certify the best of the emerging Glass Cockpit retrofit technologies in select airframes. Duncan Aviation is the leader in the Glass Cockpit upgrade market with 13 solutions available. Other Glass Box Project upgrades include solutions from Honeywell, Rockwell Collins, and Universal Avionics products.

Midcoast Aviation Earns First Cayman Islands Certificate

Midcoast Aviation recently announced that its Teterboro satellite received Cayman Islands Certification. This makes the company the first and only Cayman Islands-certified Aviation Maintenance Organization (AMO) in the United States.

The AMO certification authorizes Midcoast Aviation Teterboro to support Cayman CAA-registered aircraft with enhanced responsiveness for maintenance projects. Without the AMO certification, a service center is required to obtain short-term Cayman approval specific to an aircraft before work can be performed. The one-off approval requires payment of a fee and is only available during working hours, which can result in flight delays, especially when AOG service has to be performed.

“If we needed to assist a customer on a weekend, at night, or during a Cayman holiday, our hands were tied,” said David Smith, vice president MRO satellite operations for Midcoast Aviation. “We currently support 19 maintenance events on Cayman-registered aircraft annually, and we expect this number to grow significantly.”

Midcoast Aviation worked closely with the Cayman CAA to obtain the certification and is subject to annual audits.

StandardAero Highlights First Year under DAE Ownership

Moving past a year since the sale of Standard Aero, Landmark Aviation, Associated Air Center, and TSS Aviation to Dubai Aerospace Enterprise (DAE), the new StandardAero has rapidly transformed itself into one of the premier, tip-to-tail maintenance repair and overhaul (MRO) facilities.

“Our first year under DAE ownership has been a very busy year indeed,” said StandardAero President and CEO Rob Mionis. “Our financial performance has been robust, and we have made a number of investments in the business, including a \$20 million expansion at our Winnipeg, Canada, facility; an engine shop redesign at Los Angeles; a new PW600 test cell in Maryville, Tenn.; and new cabinet fabrication and upholstery shops at Associated Air Center in Dallas, Tex.”

Helicopter MRO sales for 2008 were up 4 percent over 2007 and are forecasted to increase another 4 percent in 2009. Helping operators to control costs, StandardAero has frozen prices on engine exchange accessories for the year.

Dassault Launches Falcon E-Forum Online Seminar Series

In an effort to enhance communication between Dassault and its Falcon operators, Dassault Falcon recently hosted the first Falcon E-Forum. The forum is a regular internet-based seminar designed to provide an exchange of information and best practices with Falcon operators. Thirty-two Falcon 7X customers from the United States, France, Mexico, Brazil, Switzerland, and the United Kingdom took part in the first session.

“Falcon’s E-Forum program is a cost-effective tool that’s flexible and interactive and improves our responsiveness to customer feedback and information-sharing techniques,” said Frank Youngkin, vice president of customer service in the western hemisphere. “Our customers demand and deserve these innovative tools to help ensure that their Falcons are always ready to go so they can stay ahead of their competition.”

The seminars last approximately one hour and focus on one specific topic of interest (or model series) per session. Participating in the forums requires only a computer with an internet connection and Microsoft Live Meeting and a phone to listen to the audio portion of the presentation. Attendees can listen to the presenter while simultaneously viewing presentation slides and other materials. They can submit questions that can be answered by subject matter experts from Dassault Falcon.

Flightline Opens New Facility at Lakefront

Flightline First opened a new FBO facility at Lakefront Airport in New Orleans, La. The \$1.5 million renovation includes a 20,000-square-foot hangar and a complete facility providing high-end FBO services.

“Since Katrina, Lakefront has not had a new facility for customers, so it was important to Flightline First to get this renovation finished as it is the only facility on the field for patrons that is not in a trailer,” said Pierre Villere, company president.

The structure, which is directly adjacent to Lakefront’s main terminal building, was originally built in the late 1920s as a hangar. Heavily damaged by Katrina, the building has undergone a major transformation. The historic nature of the façade has maintained its Art Deco style, while the interior marries this style with a contemporary, aerodynamic flair.



The new facility boasts a 10-seat, multi-purpose/conference room with a back-painted glass table, chrome and mesh chairs, a distinctive contemporary chandelier, and a 42-inch monitor for both computer presentations and video/HDTV viewing.

The lobby features a 52-inch TV and a hospital-ity bar. The pilot’s lounge with three semi-private reclining TV chairs, each with headphones and a 14-inch flat screen with Direct TV. The flight planning room has 32-inch monitors for WSI and flight planning computers.

Signature Celebrates Opening of the Hub Of Hope

Signature Flight Support recently joined with the staff of Give Kids the World to celebrate the grand opening of the Hub of Hope, located at Give Kids the World Village, a 70-acre resort in Central Florida that creates magical memories for children with life-threatening illnesses.

Since 1986, more than 93,000 families have visited the village, coming from all 50 states and more than 65 countries. In need of additional space to house families on site, Give Kids the World began expansion plans in 2006. Funds raised by Signature have gone toward a part of that expansion, a group of ten villas called the Hub of Hope.

At the official ribbon-cutting ceremony, Give Kids the World President Pamela Landwirth noted that the Hub of Hope will provide onsite housing for more than 600 additional families per year, enabling them to have the full experience of Give Kids the World Village.

Signature Flight Support’s 2008 “Cultivate and Celebrate” campaign raised more than \$180,000 thousand for the charity, and since 2001, employees, customers, and friends of Signature have raised more than \$1 million for the organization.

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