A NEW STANDARD IN BUSINESS JETS

The Citation Longitude, a business jet model, too! The new Citation Longitude’s cargo door, with better performance, provides access to new destinations. It features a new landing gear system and has more range than the Citation Latitude. It is equipped with Honeywell’s latest avionics system and offers a state-of-the-art in-flight entertainment system. The Citation Longitude provides a comfortable and luxurious cabin experience, allowing for efficient and productive travel. The Citation Longitude is the future of business aviation, setting new standards for performance, comfort, and reliability.
November 18, NBAA 2015

New Aircraft at the Show
Part 1 ran in Day 1. There are more here than you think. PAGE 6

Morphing Wing Is Coming
Winglet specialist API plans to market a morphing wing. PAGE 14

P&W Boosts Turboshaft
New PT6-140 variant adds more muscle, life, versatility. PAGE 14

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Certification is imminent, but it’s not quite that simple. PAGE 54

FBO News Roundup
Latest news and developments at the nation’s major FBOs. PAGE 57

Bizjets the Way They Were
Dee Howard thought he could take on Gulfstream. PAGE 64

Aerion Wins Fleet Order From Flexjet
Breaking all known barriers, supersonic business jet developer Aerion has secured its first fleet order with a $2.4 billion sale of 20 AS2 supersonic jets to Flexjet.

Flexjet will use the supersonic aircraft on international flights, said Flexjet chairman Kenn Ricci. He noted that Flexjet placed the order after talking with 30 to 40 customers who spent at least $5 million a year with the fractional ownership company. Flexjet won’t sell fractions of the $120 million aircraft; instead, customers will be able to buy access to the aircraft.

The 20 aircraft are expected to be delivered over five or six years. First delivery is expected in 2023. —Page 10

Flexjet Orders 20 Challenger 350s
Bombardier and Flexjet yesterday signed an MoU for 20 Challenger 350s, bringing to 40 the number of orders Flexjet has placed for the super-mid. The transaction is valued at approximately $544 million, based on the current list price for standard-equipped aircraft.

“We are experiencing growing demand in the super-midsize segment, where owners are seeking more spacious and luxurious cabins, coupled with greater speed and range,” said Flexjet CEO Michael Silvestro.
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A diverse group of business aviation companies continue to support the Corporate Angel Network, as evidenced by the pledge of $20,000 here yesterday to support CAN’s work in transporting child cancer patients for treatment on business aircraft.

From left to right, Dassault Falcon Jet customer service VP Geoff Chick and Dassault corporate secretary and general counsel Peter Rothwell, Penton Business Aviation managing director Frank Craven, Phillips 66 general aviation manager Greg Hart, Corporate Angel Network executive director emeritus Peter Fleiss, Safe Flight Instrument Corp. president and CEO Randel Greene, and MassMutual Financial Group assistant aviation VP Sean Lee.

CAN (Booth N1129) is based in White Plains, New York, where it occupies an office donated by Westchester County Airport. Fifty part-time volunteers and a paid staff of six work with patients, physicians, corporate flight departments and leading treatment centers to arrange more than 3,000 flights per year.

The Corporate Angel Network has coordinated more than 45,000 flights since its founding in 1981.

American Aero $20K to SEAL Foundation

American Aero FTW, a fixed base operator located at Meacham International in Fort Worth, presented a $20,000 check to the Navy SEAL Foundation here yesterday – doubling the contribution made at the convention last year. The Navy SEAL Foundation provides critical support to the Naval Special Warfare community and its families during times of illness, injury and loss.

American Aero FTW’s “Red, White and Blue” program enables customers to contribute 10 cents from every gallon of fuel purchased to the Navy SEAL Foundation – and American Aero FTW matches those donations dollar for dollar. “A number of our employees are current or former members of the military, and we have the highest regard for this nation’s servicemen and women,” said American Aero FTW general manager Riggs Brown.”This donation is part of our ongoing commitment to honor those heroes and support the important work of the Navy SEAL Foundation.”

Navy SEAL Foundation CEO Robin King said the nonprofit is committed to the well-being of the U.S. Navy SEAL community and aligns itself with patriotic businesses that demonstrate equal integrity and concern.
AMAZING THINGS HAPPEN WHEN YOU’RE BOUND ONLY BY PHYSICS.

Barring the immutable laws of science, Embraer designers and engineers enjoy a unique freedom to create our executive aircraft. To reshape a fuselage that slips through the air while providing unrivaled cabin roominess. Or tweak the delicate balance of lift and thrust to increase efficiency. Or create control systems that help pilots always perform at their very best. All are a product of unconventional thinking at its finest. With all deference to pioneers like Newton, Galileo and Einstein—we simply don’t think their good work is finished.

Rethink Convention.  

Embraer Executive Jets
Aircraft Industries L 410
It first flew in 1969, when the Czech Republic, its current home country, was well behind the Iron Curtain. About 1,200 have followed for service in diverse lands, the current incarnation being the L 410 UVP-E20 with Walter M 601F engines. While it is that variant which is being shown here, the underlying message is very much L 410 NG: the just-flown upgrade with greater baggage volume in an extended nose; General Electric H85 turboprops; Garmin G3000 avionics; double the internal fuel in a wet wing, despite deletion of the wingtip tanks; and double the service lifetime (to 30,000 hr.).

Howard 500
Who will admit to being old enough to remember an earlier NBAA showing by this purpose-built, late-1950s business aircraft – even if there was one? For most attendees, however, this will be a first sighting. Only two of the 17 Howard 500s built remain in flying condition, the aircraft having inopportunely appeared on the executive airplane market just as more modern turboprop and jet designs were taking hold. It looks like one of the Lockheed Lodestars or Venturas that Howard Aero Inc. had previously been converting from military use, but in detail it was, essentially, new-build. And it retains sea-level cabin pressure up to 16,000 ft.; beat that, you young whippersnappers!

Icon A5
Emboldened by the handover of its first production aircraft to the Young Eagles youth flying movement at the EAA AirVenture Oshkosh on July 20, Icon Aircraft (Booth N4510) is showing its two-seat amphibian against a backdrop of somewhat more costly business aircraft. Perhaps the sales pitch is more “and” than “or.” Powered by a 100-hp Rotax flat-four, the spin-resistant design has had to apply for a weight exemption from the FAA so, at present, it is flying at below the design weight, achieving Special-LSA approval as such this June. So far, only one completed production airplane is on the N-register.

Piper M600
When Piper (Booth C8509) revealed a facelift of its M-series back in April, the M600 was introduced as the new top-of-the-range, partnering the Matrix, M350 and M500. Delegates to this year’s convention will have to be content with a mock-up in the static display for an idea of how the aircraft will look with its Garmin G3000 avionics. Other extras on the forthcoming real article include additional range, anti-icing and the option of a five-blade propeller. Deliveries begin “in 2016.”

SyberJet SJ30i
Two for the price of one. SyberJet Aircraft is showing a demonstrator SJ30 in its new, promotional paint scheme, although it may be of more interest to examine the new cabin interior that will go into the SJ30i, together with a SyberVision avionics suite. The nWorX Technologies cabin demonstrator will be found at Static Space 300 and will also provide an impression of the up-engined SJ30x, which will follow after an unspecified interval. SyberJet would welcome your feedback on the new interior before it is set in stone (in a manner of speaking).
It happens. Especially when you’re flying in the Bombardier Global 6000 offered by NetJets. That’s because it’s the largest business jet capable of accessing the world’s most difficult-to-reach airports, like Aspen and London City. Offering unparalleled luxury and uncompromising performance, the Global 6000 truly rises above the rest. To learn more, visit aworldabove.com

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Supersonic speed creates life-changing possibilities. With an AS2 fueled and at the ready, you will travel in new and more productive ways. Make Paris to New York a day trip. Save up to six and a half flight hours across the Pacific. Save as many as 200 flight hours a year. Aerion, in collaboration with Airbus Group, is incorporating advanced aerodynamic concepts into the engineering design of the AS2 business jet. This Mach 1.5 jet will make its first flight in 2021.

IT’S TIME TO GET ON BOARD.
Aerion Wins Fleet Order From Flexjet

The first-ever fleet order for a supersonic business jet was placed here yesterday by Flexjet, which plans to operate at least 20 Aerion AS2s.

Flexjet CEO Kenn Ricci said the company will use the Aerion AS2 supersonic jet for overseas flights and also in China and Asia, which does not have restrictions on sonic booms.

Flexjet has placed a firm order for 20 AS2 supersonic jets, with delivery to begin in 2023. First flight is expected in 2021. The order is worth $2.4 billion.

Aerion has other firm orders from individuals, but this is the first for a fleet.

Ricci said customers are already excited about the jet. They immediately began citing city pairs where they would like to fly. But no one wants to fly it subsonically, he added.

The AS2 can fly subsonically over land in the U.S., Europe and areas where the boom is restricted. But it won’t be cost-effective to do so. The three-engine jet will burn a high amount of fuel, roughly 1,000 gal. per hr., and its long length will restrict its use at some airports, Ricci said.

“It’s still going to be an expensive plane to operate,” he said.

Still, with the aircraft traveling at Mach 1.2, its boom will not touch the ground, Ricci said. Because of that, regulators may be able to be convinced to allow the jet to fly supersonically across the country, he said.

Even so, the aircraft can be based at points on the Atlantic and Pacific for international travel.

Flexjet placed a down payment with the order. As the program progresses and milestones are met, it will put more money down.

The aircraft will carry eight to 12 passengers and have a top speed of Mach 1.5, which is 67% faster than the top cruise speeds of current or anticipated long-range subsonic jets, Aerion said.

It will have a range of 4,750 nm at supersonic speeds, which will save 3 hr. flying across the Atlantic versus subsonic aircraft and more than 6 hr. on longer transpacific flights.

The jet is under development by Aerion in collaboration with Airbus Group.

Flexjet’s firm order for 20 AS2 supersonic jets now will certainly create industry buzz for the program, helping both Aerion and Flexjet, said Ricci. Aerion is at Booth C9429.

—Molly McMillin

Embraer Teams With DHL on Logistics

EMBRAER SAID YESTERDAY that it will team with DHL on a new global logistics model to optimize worldwide parts distribution for the Embraer fleet: more than 930 executive jets operating in more than 60 countries.

“We have been continuously improving our customers’ experience in all aspects, thanks to relevant actions taken in process quality and support infrastructure,” said worldwide customer support and services SVP Waldir Gonçalves.

“I’m glad that DHL will join us for this unparalleled new global logistics model for business aviation to keep Embraer among the highest-ranked companies in customer support and class logistics service, offering overnight deliveries even when an order comes in late in the day,” Embraer said, noting that an integrated IT solution will offer real-time visibility and improved tracking.

“Our strategic partnership reinforces our expertise and offering for the aviation and aerospace industry, where we recognize the importance of a truly responsive service logistics solution,” said DHL global supply chain business development VP Peter Bonte. “Our flexible global network allowed us to locate facilities where Embraer needs them, ensuring the right parts are in the right place at all times.” Embraer is at Booth N3932.
Welcome to the next level of success. The Gulfstream G550™ offers every aspect of exquisite interior design to maximize the comfort of ultralong-range travel. Flexible interior layouts with crew rest areas and stateroom privacy, numerous wireless options and an ultraquiet cabin mean you can handle business even as the G550 cruises at Mach 0.87.

CABIN ALTITUDE: 3,845 FT*  ·  PASSENGERS: UP TO 19  ·  SIGNATURE OVAL WINDOWS: 14
Standing in for Bruce Rose, chairman of the Carrington Charitable Foundation, NBAA president Ed Bolen on Tuesday presented a check for $500,000 from the organization to Walt Fricke, “Air Boss” of the Veterans Airlift Command (VAC) in front of the VAC bus in the central hall.

The Carrington organization has raised more than $2 million for the group, whose volunteer aircraft owners carry wounded veterans to treatment centers and events around the country. Rose, an experienced Falcon pilot, was in Europe on business and asked Bolen to do the honors.

Meanwhile, at the VAC’s annual fundraiser, held last week in Austin, Texas, a group of sponsors, including Signature Flight Support, Landmark Aviation, Gulfstream, Textron Aviation, Citation Jet Pilots association, Teton Aviation Center, Wilson Aviation, Castle Aviation, AOPA, GAMA and the NBAA, raised an additional $500,000.

Fricke says the combined funds will cover the VAC’s operating expenses, plus pay for airline tickets for veterans and their families when volunteer aircraft are unavailable.

Dassault Aviation Renews CAE Training Contract

Dassault Aviation and CAE announced that after “a rigorous audit” the airplane manufacturer has renewed CAE’s certificate of approval as an authorized training provider for Falcon jets.

This, CAE notes, is the highest level of certification attainable by a flight training organization. The audit is part of Dassault’s Authorized Training Provider program designed to assure quality training services for all Falcon-affiliated personnel.

CAE currently provides training for all in-production Falcon aircraft.

Dassault Aviation presented CAE with a plaque to mark the reauthorization. Camille Mariamo, CAE vice president and general manager business aviation, helicopter and maintenance training is pictured (left) with Frédéric Leboeuf, vice president, Falcon Operational Support.
FOR THOSE WHO HAVE ARRIVED

Experience the HondaJet at our static display at Henderson Airport. And visit exhibit C11524 to meet one-on-one with the HondaJet team and learn about the innovations that went into making this the world’s most advanced light jet.

hondajet.com
Winglet wizard Aviation Partners (Booth C8113) is forming a partnership with FlexSys to certify and commercialize wing-morphing adaptive-control surfaces that have the potential to boost airfoil performance over a wide range of angles of attack, indicated airspeeds and Mach numbers.

“Aviation Partners has a few press conferences,” says Joe Clark, API founder and CEO. “But this truly is the next big disruptive technology. It enables us to morph the shape of the wing to get peak wing performance over the entire mission profile.” Clark envisions both forward-fit and retrofit applications.

Dr. Sridhar Kota, FlexSys founder, says his systems eliminate dozens of moving parts, fairings and air gap seals used in conventional flap and slat systems, while saving weight. They also can improve aero performance over a wide range of lift coefficients (0.1 to 1.2) and they reduce airframe-generated external noise by as much as 40%.

A FlexSys patented “FlexFoil” wing-morphing system, with 19-ft.-long panels, recently was installed in place of the trailing edge flaps of a Gulfstream III. NASA supervised 50 hr. of flight tests of the system. The remarkable flexibility of the surfaces allowed them to move from 9 deg. up to 40 deg. down, along span-wise twisting of the panel at up to 30 deg. per second. While the FlexFoils on the GIII test bed were hydraulically actuated, they also can be powered by electric actuators.

Clark says that there are dozens of applications for the technology, but he wants Aviation Partners FlexSys to focus on winglets and ice-protection systems. “We believe we can get another 1.7% drag reduction over our existing split scimitar winglet” by adding FlexFoil morphing to winglets and trailing edge surfaces outboard of the ailerons. FlexFoils could even change the camber, as well as airfoil shape, of winglets to optimize performance for takeoff, climb, cruise, descent and landing. An active load alleviation function may also be incorporated.

Hank Thompson, API’s COO, also says FlexFoils have the potential to replace pneumatic boots as leading-edge de-ice systems. Twisting and morphing the leading edge surface fitted with a FlexFoil system could remove ice accretion more effectively than boots. Thompson cited the Bombardier Q400 and ATR 42/72 as two aircraft that potentially could have improved deicing performance with FlexFoils.

Clark pointed out that “the technology is not inexpensive to develop.” FAA-certified production actuators will have to be designed, built and approved. STCs will have to be developed. But Dr. Kota notes that ground test articles already have been tested to 5x the life of airliners with no resulting fatigue issues. Loads are distributed throughout the entire structure, resulting in very small stress concentrations.

Aviation Partners FlexSys intends to bring its first FAA-certified product to market within 18 to 24 months, according to Clark. Aviation Partners Boeing winglets are installed on more than 5,400 Boeing jetliners, and they’ve saved more than 5 billion gallons of jet fuel in the process. Squeezing another 1.7% more fuel efficiency out of those aircraft would be quite an accomplishment.

—Fred George
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See how GE is bringing proven innovation to the industry at Booth #N2304.

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Honeywell to Acquire Satcom1

Honeywell has agreed to acquire Copenhagen-based Satcom1, positioning it to offer operators “a seamless experience with an all-in-one connectivity solution spanning routing software, airtime, hardware equipment, avionics, flight support services and applications.”

Satcom1 revenues for 2015 are expected to be approximately $25 million, Honeywell said yesterday, stating that it expects the acquisition to close by year-end.

“Satcom1 will strengthen Honeywell’s position as a complete provider and integrator of satellite communications equipment, software applications and global airtime services,” said Honeywell Aerospace president and CEO Tim Mahoney.

“Honeywell is already uniquely placed across the entire value chain of a thriving $8 billion inflight connectivity segment, making the acquisition of Satcom1 an excellent fit with our business,” he said.

“Our customers will benefit from our ability to now offer a complete suite of connectivity solutions, with a much greater global reach.”

Satcom1 is the leading provider of routing software that optimizes the inflight connectivity experience and is already an existing distribution partner for Honeywell’s JetWave terminals and Inmarsat’s GX Aviation program. The company provides inflight airtime, satellite communications services and software for private business aircraft, and government and head-of-state aircraft and helicopters.

Satcom1’s high-speed solutions provide real-time, reliable Internet and Wi-Fi cockpit communications that help pilots fly more safely and efficiently, and keep passengers connected in the air, Honeywell says. It also provides consulting services and develops specialized software and networks.

Honeywell is at Booth C7807. Satcom1 is at N1528.

Hartzell Propeller has delivered more than 150 of its advanced high-performance swept airfoil five-blade propellers for Daher TBM 700/850/900 turboprop singles in the 18 months since receiving FAA type certificate approval.

“Hartzell’s new high-performance structural composite propellers are flying on more than 20% of the entire Daher TBM fleet after less than two years on the market,” said company president Joe Brown. “That is a true testament to its performance, with shorter takeoff rolls, faster climb, quieter cabins, smoother rides and shorter stopping distances. And it looks sweet on the ramp.”

The propeller is available for retrofit on the 700/850 fleet and comes as standard on new TBM 900s. For new TBM 900s and retrofits Hartzell expects deliveries to total more than 200 during the first quarter of 2016, Brown added, noting that the company has now received approvals for retrofitting TBM 700s and 850s from the FAA, EASA and the Chinese authorities.

Hartzell (Booth C7629) offers the new propeller with a Plus 3 warranty, which covers it for three years or 1,000 hr., and a 3,600-hr./six-year TBO. It is available directly through Hartzell’s Top Prop conversion program or via Daher’s distributor network.

True Blue Power, a division of Mid-Continent Instruments, announced that Burt Rutan has selected its new lithium-ion battery modules, developed in partnership with Regan Designs, for its recent project, the SkiGull. The SkiGull is a seaplane developed by Rutan and Regan Designs. It’s intended to land on a variety of surfaces, including water, snow and unimproved land, which will allow access to remote areas.

True Blue Power’s battery will power the aircraft’s auxiliary, electrical propulsion system, used for docking and beaching in winds, engine-out safety and takeoff thrust boost.

The company also announced that R1 Airlines is the first commercial operator to use an aircraft equipped with its lithium-ion main aircraft batteries in revenue service. The on-demand charter service installed the battery on a Bombardier DHC-8-100 (Dash 8) aircraft.

In addition, True Blue Power has received Transport Canada Civil Aviation Part 23 supplemental type certification for the installation of the TB17 (17 amp-hr.) lithium-ion aircraft battery on the Beechcraft A36 Bonanza and has applied for FAA bilateral acceptance of the same STC for use on U.S.-based aircraft. True Blue is at Booth C9639.
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Boeing’s Bizjet Business Blooms

With the caveat that the year is by no means over yet, Boeing Business Jets presented its near end-of-term sales and delivery figures as the convention opened. Overall, the year has seen seven net sales (one BBJ, five BBJ MAX and one 787) and 10 deliveries (two 737, three BBJs, one 777 and four 787s), with seven aircraft (four BBJs and three 747s) entering service at the end of their outfitting process.

Leading in overall numbers, of course, is the BBJ, of which 173 have been ordered, including nine of the forthcoming MAX version. Deliveries are 160, with 149 in service.

The 787 is now up to 15 VIP sales, with nine delivered and just one so far in service. For the similarly new 747-8, figures are nine sold, eight delivered and three currently flying.

Counting all executive Boeings since 1996 - for example 737, 757, 767, 777 and older 747s – sales total 235, with 213 delivered and 185 in service. This, stresses Boeing, only includes military aircraft if their role is personnel transport.

And don’t believe all you hear about doom and gloom in China, says BBJ president David Longridge. All five secondhand BBJs recently resold have gone into Asia, the Chinese bizjet fleet now including 22 BBJs. A conflicting China Syndrome, perhaps?

—Paul Jackson

20 Years Later, Flexjet Still Accelerating

With the court decision in October to recognize fractional operator Flexjet and sister company Flight Options as a single carrier under parent company Directional Aviation, Flexjet is growing fast as it adds pilots and planes under its own brands and service offerings.

Twenty years after its launch, and with the backing of Directional Aviation, Flexjet is making an $8 billion investment in its fleet, which numbers firm orders for 207 new airplanes and additional options.

Flexjet is on track to expand from 152 aircraft in its fleet at the end of 2015 to 180 by the end of 2016. That expansion includes part of an order for up to 50 large-cabin Gulfstream G450s. The first was delivered in June this year and a total of six were expected to be operational by year-end.

“The response to these new long-range G450s has been so robust that we have asked Gulfstream to move up delivery of our next two G450s to this fall, rather than mid-2016,” said Flexjet CEO Michael Silvestro. “With the accelerated delivery schedule, six G450s will be flying in the Flexjet fleet by the end of this year. And we will continue deliveries throughout 2016. Those deliveries will also include the G650.”

Deliveries of the new Embraer Legacy 500 began in September, adding a super-midsize business jet to the Flexjet fleet. “We know that current and prospective owners are seeking cabins that are larger and more luxurious than those typically found in this category, complemented by the newest technology and optimized performance,” said Silvestro.

Adding still more to the fleet, Flexjet will begin taking deliveries of the Legacy 450 midsize jet from Embraer in 2016. The airplane offers features “never before seen in midsize aircraft,” including a marble floor entry, a seven-layer acoustic barrier and fully reclining, lie-flat seats. The Legacy 450 will be the principal aircraft in Flexjet’s midsize fleet.

In September, Flexjet adopted the “Red Label” enhancement of the “One Flight Crew, One Aircraft” model. It assigns one crew to fly a single aircraft, “a new take on the fractional model” that Flexjet CEO Kenn Ricci said will bring a higher level of confidence and consistency.

Other Red Label enhancements include artisan interiors in a young fractional fleet, such as hand-stitched leather, suede seating and customized seating configurations. The Red Label fleet includes the Learjet

We know that current and prospective owners are seeking cabins that are larger and more luxurious than those typically found in this category, complemented by the newest technology and optimized performance.”

—Flexjet CEO Michael Silvestro

—Kirby Harrison

Flexjet CEO Michael Silvestro

75LXi, Challenger 350, Legacy 450 and Gulfstream’s G450, G500 and G650.

According to Silvestro, the company has also grown to the point that it has worked through its list of furloughed pilots, laid off during the downturn in 2008, and is now hiring new pilots. Said Silvestro, “We just cleared the furlough list from seven years ago and are now hiring off the street.”

Looking outside North America, Flexjet’s expansion plans will likely start with Western Europe, Silvestro said. “It provides a great launching pad for additional global operations and it is a region with which we already are quite familiar.”

The long-range G450, G650 and Bombardier Global Express figure in establishing a greater Flexjet presence in the Middle East. “These aircraft can fly nonstop direct from North America to the major business centers in the Middle East, and elsewhere around the globe,” Silvestro explained.

The initiatives recently undertaken and brought to market have Flexjet positioned as the most forward-looking fractional provider of private jet travel, declared Ricci.

—Kirby Harrison
PC-12 Flight Deck
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The IS&S Future Generation (FG) Flight Deck for the PC-12 supports dual flight management systems, electronic charts and satellite weather that has been developed from the experience gained on commercial air transport, military and OEM programs.

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The company announced its first order in May this year, followed by another order in June and a third placed at the Dubai Airshow earlier this month. The first three orders came from Acropolis Aviation in the UK, Alpha Star in Saudi Arabia and KS Aviation in Germany on behalf of the owners. The airplanes will be managed by the operators and made available for charter when not in use by the owners.

At NBAA 2015, ACJ announced three additional orders – “A good start to the program,” said Velupillai. The airplane aircraft backlog now totals more than 4,300 aircraft, and even with production increased to 60 aircraft a month, the first green delivery of an ACJ319 variant to a completion center is not expected until second quarter 2018 and first delivery of a green ACJ320 in the fourth quarter of that year.

The ACJneo family promises better performance, thanks in no small part to the new, 16% more efficient CFM LEAP-1A or Pratt & Whitney PW 1100G engines shared by the ACJ319neo and the ACJ320neo, additional fuel capacity, improved aerodynamics, weight-saving composites and new Sharklet wingtips. The ACJ319neo will have a nonstop range of 6,750 nm and the ACJ320 will have a range of 6,000 nm. It means nonstop flights from Las Vegas to Beijing, Santiago, Chile; or Geneva in the ACJ319neo. The ACJ320neo will be capable of nonstop flights from Hong Kong to London or Auckland, New Zealand.

According to Velupillai, ACJ sees an important market for the ACJneo business jets in North America, “where private jets are widely used as business tools by companies, billionaires and governments, helping them to be more productive.”

In all, more than 170 Airbus Corporate Jets have been sold to date and are flying on every continent, “including Antarctica.”

Airbus Corporate Jets’ ACJneo VIP aircraft program is gaining traction, according to marketing director David Velupillai (Booth N4533).

Airbus is enhancing the way it cares for corporate jet customers and operators by expanding the capabilities and reach of its service center network.

At NBAA 2015, Airbus Corporate Jets (ACJ, Booth N4533) said the expanded network comprises companies that are owned or controlled by Airbus, as well as independent centers that have been approved. Capabilities will include line and heavy maintenance, cabin refurbishment, and cabin and system upgrades.

The service center network currently consists of the Airbus Corporate Jet Center in Toulouse, France; Sepang Aircraft Engineering (SAE) in Malaysia; and the first independent member, Comlux America in Indianapolis. According to ACJ marketing director David Velupillai, “It will grow to others in the coming months.”

The network includes provision of turnkey services, enabling customers to benefit from Airbus quality and standards, “as well as peace of mind.” It is meant to complement Airbus’ leadership in turnkey cabin-outfitting of large business jets, where it is unique in having extensive experience.”

Seven independent cabin outfitters are approved by Airbus for green cabin completion work, from Airbus Corporate Jet Center in Toulouse to HAECO in Xiamen, China.

“We already deliver comprehensive support as well as robust reliability,” said Benoit Defforge, managing director of Airbus Corporate Jets. “This latest expansion goes a step further in caring for, and responding to, the particular needs of the business aviation community worldwide.”

Airbus Corporate Jet customers already have access to support and services tailored to their needs, such as single-point-of-contact access to the corporate jet customer care center (C4you) team, dedicated customer support directors, training and customized maintenance programs.

They also benefit from around-the-clock technical advice, spares and a training network that spans the globe in support of more than 500 Airbus customers and operators.

The ACJ family currently includes 16 VIP variants of the Airbus family of commercial airliners; more than 15 ACJs are flying with VIP charter operators.

—Kirby Harrison
Welcome to Stevens Aviation...
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November 17th, 2015

11am – Universal Avionics
Universal Avionics Delivers Fans 1A and ADS-B Solutions Today

12pm – Stevens Aviation
Creating a High Quality Paint and Interior

1pm – Garmin Avionics
G5000 Beechjet Demo, G1000 King Air, Affordable ADS-B Options

2pm – Raisbeck Engineering
Safety and Performance Modifications for King Air and Learjet

3pm – Dallas Airmotive
Do Not Roll The Dice...Value Added Engine Overhauls

4pm – Rockwell Collins
Prolite Fusion for King Air Demo

5pm – Bendix King
Affordable In-flight Internet and King Air AeroVue Cockpit Upgrades

November 18th, 2015

9:30am – Flight Safety International
King Air G1000 Simulator Training

10am – 365 Jet
Checklist for Buying and Selling an Aircraft

11am – Raisbeck Engineering
Safety and Performance Modifications for King Air and Learjet

12pm – LoPresti Aviation
LoPresti BoomBeam HID Lighting for Improved Safety

12:30pm – Aircraft Lighting International
Aircraft Cabin Lighting - Energy Efficient and Customizable

November 19th, 2015

10am – Bendix King
Affordable In-flight Internet and King Air AeroVue Cockpit Upgrades

11am – CMD Flight Solutions
ADS-B Options for Part 23 and Part 25 Aircraft

12pm – L3 Avionics
ADS-B for Part 23 and 25 aircraft: Lynx & NXT600

1pm – Alto Aviation
Audio Designed With Your Aircraft in Mind

Stevens Aviation Happy Hour! 1pm-5pm

1pm – Blackhawk
Blackhawk PT6A Engine Upgrade FAQ

2pm – Garmin Avionics
G5000 Beechjet Demo, G1000 King Air, Affordable ADS-B Options

2:30pm – National Air Transportation Association
Tom Hendricks, President & CEO – NATA and the State of the Aviation Industry

3pm – Gogo Business Aviation
Airborne Connectivity 101

4pm – Rockwell Collins
Prolite Fusion for King Air Demo

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Having developed the 867-shp PT6-140 turboprop engine for the Cessna Caravan, Pratt & Whitney Canada has unveiled a Dash A version with a twin, bifurcated exhaust that will suit it to many other potential applications. A -140AG variant is aimed at agricultural aircraft.

The engine is, P&WC claims, the most powerful turboprop available for general aviation, and brings with it 15% more power and 5% better specific fuel consumption than comparable engines in its class.

The company has not announced a customer for the twin-fork exhaust version, “but there are several potential applications and we don’t develop engines in a vacuum,” says Nicholas Kanellias, general manager for sales and marketing at P&WC. There are currently more than 70 PT6A engine models used for over 125 different aircraft applications around the globe.

The new PT6A-140A features no mandatory time requirements for warm-up or cool-down, and one of the longest time-between-overhaul (TBO) intervals available – it can be extended up to 8,000 hr. or 12 years, depending on the operation, and it is not tied to engine cycles. It has, P&WC says, a minimum component life limit that is 50% higher than that of competing engines.

Optimized for the hot-and-high environments, both PT6A-140A and -140AG engines have 867 mechanical shp and 1,075 thermal shp, and offer full-load takeoff at 111°F (44°C). It is suited to both pressurized and unpressurized aircraft, says Kanellias.

Although the engine does not have full authority digital electronic controls (FADEC), Pratt & Whitney continues to work on electronic controls for its PT6 turboshaft engines. “There’s nothing to announce yet, but you’ll not be waiting too much longer,” says Kanellias.

The PT6-140 engine was developed three years ago for the Cessna Grand Caravan EX. Most recently, the FAA has certified Blackhawk Modifications Inc.’s XP140 engine upgrade for Cessna 208A and 208B Caravans with that powerplant. Blackhawk claims the conversion provides up to a 44% increase in available horsepower over a stock aircraft and can replace the original 600/675-shp engine in non-G1000-equipped Caravans.

—John Morris

The FAA has certified Blackhawk Modifications Inc.’s XP140 engine upgrade for Cessna 208A and 208B Caravans. The upgrade’s 867-shp P&WC PT6A-140 engine provides up to a 44% increase in available horsepower over a stock aircraft and is designed to replace the original 600/675-shp engine in non-G1000-equipped Caravans.

“FAA certification now allows Blackhawk to quickly install this extremely cost-effective system that is going to take operators above and beyond their current capabilities,” said Jim Allmon, the Waco, Texas-based company’s president and CEO.

“The system allows operators to retain many components from their original -114/-114A engines while boosting performance at the same time.”

Work is under way filling more than a dozen orders and reservations that already have been received. Two of the first orders are from float manufacturer Wipaire, whose owner, Bob Wiplinger, says, “Blackhawk’s hot-rod engine upgrade delivers impressive results for operators who have or are considering our Wipline floats. When I climbed to 2,000 ft. above the ground by the end of a 4,000-ft. runway, I was convinced that this engine is just what the Caravan needs.”

Blackhawk engine upgrade specialists will be on hand to answer questions and take orders at Booth C12012.

—Kirby Harrison
NextGen ADS-B Avionics for All Aircraft

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Embraer’s Lineage 1000E was showing off its range capability last Saturday, flying nonstop from New Jersey’s Teterboro Airport to Las Vegas, departing with a reduced fuel load to meet the Teterboro weight restriction of 100,000 lb.

According to Embraer Executive Jets manager of sales engineering Ricardo Carvalhal, the ultra-large-cabin business jet departed with a lighter fuel load of 27,000 lb. to bring the aircraft’s gross weight under the 100,000-lb. limit and arrived in Las Vegas with 8,000 lb., “twice the minimum.” In fact, added Carvalhal, departing from Teterboro with a full fuel load of 48,000 lb., the 1000E would make it nonstop to Los Angeles under normal conditions. With its additional fuel capacity, the aircraft has a max range of 4,600 nm.

The Lineage 1000E also operates in and out of Colorado’s Aspen/Pitkin County Airport, which has its own 100,000-lb. gross weight limit. In addition, operations are limited to aircraft with a wingspan of less than 95 ft. The Lineage 1000E Sneaks under the wire with 9 in. to spare.

The G650 from competitor Gulfstream created some controversy when it was noted by the airport that, including the winglets, the aircraft had a wingspan greater than 95 ft. An airport briefing paper issued in March 2014 said Gulfstream was notified by the county in January 2012 that “the Gulfstream 650 would satisfy the wingspan limit, based on the fact that the width of the aircraft without winglets is less than 95 ft.” But less than six months later, the FAA advised the county that a wingspan must be calculated to include winglets. The agency later adopted a formal definition of wingspan that included the winglets.

Gulfstream’s technical specifications list the G650 wingspan at 99 ft. 7 in., with the winglets.

The Lineage 1000E is priced in the $58 million range and is a VIP variant of Embraer’s successful E-Jet commercial airline program, specifically regarding the E190 fuselage but also with some major differences, most notably a different wing.

The cabin offers five distinct zones from which literally hundreds of configurations are possible. The interior measures 84.3 ft. in length and has an 8-ft., 9-in. cross section and 6 ft., 7 in. of headroom, with a private foyer entry, separate, fully enclosed dining area and an enclosed stateroom and en suite lavatory with stand-up shower.

According to Embraer, the 1000E is priced in the $58 million range and is a VIP variant of Embraer’s successful E-Jet commercial airline program, specifically regarding the E190 fuselage but with some major differences, most notably a different wing.

The Lineage 1000E flight from Teterboro. —Kirby Harrison
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Associated Air Center Operating at Capacity

Associated Air Center, with seven aircraft in its Love Field facilities in various stages of cabin completion, upgrade and interior refurbishment, is operating at capacity and occupies a substantial presence at NBAA 2015 at the exhibit of parent company StandardAero (Booth N4500), according to Patrick Altuna, VP of executive sales and marketing.

In June, the center signed to do an ACJ320 green completion for an unidentified Middle East customer. The Airbus twinjet is now in the completion process and represents AAC’s 90th VIP completion. Customer delivery is expected in September 2016. Interior highlights include a stateroom, large entertainment lounge, staff seating and the Ka-band JetWave satcom system.

Also in the Dallas facility is a BBJ787-8, a BBJ747-8 in for green completion work and four BBJs undergoing 12-year inspections, as well as an assortment of upgrades, including FANS/CPDLC (future air navigation system/controller pilot data link communication).

Among customer deliveries in 2014 was an ACJ330. According to Altuna, AAC’s MRO/repair station services as many as 30 aircraft a year. “Maintenance events for 2014 and 2015 have remained fairly consistent, and the forecast for 2016 is for more of the same,” he added.

Among recent highlights at AAC is STC approval for FANS/CPDLC for a BBJ757-200 classic. Associated worked jointly with StandardAero’s Springfield, Illinois, Organization Designation Authorization delegation to win the supplemental type certificate. “This certification represents another significant industry accomplishment,” said AAC president James Colleary.

Also this past summer, AAC received its first STC for installation of FANS/CPDLC in a BBJ737-300 classic VIP operated by an unidentified head of state. The center’s in-house engineering department developed the engineering data package to support the installation and integration for STC qualification.

In June, AAC obtained Agência Nacional de Aviação Civil (ANAC) Part 145 repair station certification from the Brazilian civil aviation authority. The approval applies to VIP interior completions, scheduled maintenance, cabin refurbishment and cabin systems upgrades. —Kirby Harrison

ACJC Shows Off Long-Legged ACJ319

Airbus Corporate Jet Center (ACJC) is a specialist in nose-to-tail completion and customization of Airbus Corporate Jet VIP aircraft, and the center recently delivered a new, lightweight ACJ319 cabin it described as a “technical revolution.”

The owner is an Asian customer who had asked for an airplane that would take him nonstop from Southern Asia to Los Angeles. ACJC met that demand, delivering a VIP cabin that was 10% lighter than the contractual commitment, “while assuring the very high quality of the cabin in terms of comfort and systems.”

According to ACJC, the cabin includes wireless system architecture based on a new full Internet protocol (IP) and Wi-Fi configuration driving the cabin management system (CMS) and inflight entertainment (IFE). The system includes wireless streaming to personal electronic devices from a high-definition audio/video on-demand (AVOD) system.

Amenities include a double office and lounge forward, a large dining area, a stateroom with en suite lavatory and square shower. According to ACJC general manager Joel Frugier, “The customer said upon going aboard the finished aircraft for the first time that it was a realization of the 3-D artistic views showed at the beginning of the story.”

ACJC’s VIP Pass (ACJ Engine Care) has become a growing part of the center’s service and support effort. This past summer ACJC signed a VIP Pass agreement for an ACJ319 operated by NEXUS Flight Operations, the exclusively licensed flight operations services company in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

The decision by NEXUS to sign ACJC as its preferred provider of engine support for its ACJ319 assures comprehensive coverage for five years of private operations. “ACJC’s VIP Pass ensures that our ACJ319 engines will be looked after by the companies that know them best,” said NEXUS president and CEO Abdullah Al-Sayed.

VIP Pass can include systems and cabin upgrades and refurbishment; airframe maintenance and upgrades; spares support; engine maintenance; airworthiness and maintenance; engineering services; and flight operations publications. —Kirby Harrison
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BizJet Delivers BBJ to Yunnan Jingcheng

Last year, BizJet International (Booth C10416), a U.S. subsidiary of Lufthansa Technik of Hamburg, Germany, opened a dedicated maintenance and refurbishment hangar large enough to accommodate a VIP variant of the Boeing 737-800. At the time, Brian Barber, VP of sales and marketing at the Tulsa, Oklahoma, facility described the event as crucial to market demand.

One year later, BizJet International comes to NBAA 2015 on the heels of delivery of its ninth BBJ into the East Asia market.

The aircraft was turned over to the Chinese firm of Yunnan Jingcheng Group construction and tourism on Oct. 8. It will be used for company associates’ transportation. The interior has accommodations for up to 29 passengers, and the bed in the VIP stateroom is self-leveling, to accommodate inflight changes of the angles of bank and attack.

In ceremonies at BizJet’s Tulsa facilities, the final document signing was attended by Barber and Jingcheng Group president Zhao Wei.

Earlier this year, BizJet International signed a contract for completion of an Airbus ACJ319 for an unidentified customer in China. Partnering with BizJet was the bespoke division of Hermès Paris design house, a resource renowned for its expertise in made-to-measure design and upholstery.

The cabin includes a dining/lounge area, private master suite/office and a fully equipped master lavatory with shower. The interior features upholstery by Hermès craftpeople in Paris and exclusive Hermès fabric on the bulkhead and the aft compartment separator curtain. All the furniture is being built at BizJet.

Cabin electronics will feature cabin management and entertainment systems that may be controlled via personal electronic devices through the cabin Wi-Fi environment.

Also this year, BizJet acquired a Rolls-Royce Tay 611-8C engine as a loaner for customers who want to keep flying while having one of their Gulfstream 450 engines off the aircraft for work. BizJet went into the Rolls-Royce engine business in 2004 and has since completed its 400th engine.

It was last December that BizJet signed a supplier agreement to provide engine maintenance for Gulfstream Aerospace. The accord allows Gulfstream options for engine maintenance and customer support for five Gulfstream aircraft. Since 2004, BizJet has provided service for more than 375 Rolls-Royce Spey and Tay engines.

Thomas Kuhn, who entered parent company Lufthansa Technik as an aircraft engineer in 1989, moved up steadily and in July this year became president and CEO of BizJet International sales and support. He succeeded Manfred Gaertner, who had led BizJet since 2013. Prior to assuming the new position at BizJet, Kuhn was director of engineering services at Lufthansa Technik’s VIP & Executive Jet Maintenance business unit in Hamburg.
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Flying Colours Continues to Grow

“This is our biggest show at which we will have the biggest presence,” said Sean Gillespie, vice president of Canadian completion, refurbishment and conversion specialist Flying Colours at the opening of NBAA 2015.

A big part of that presence (Booth C9340) will be the company’s successful ADS-B Out supplemental type certification (STC) approval for the Challenger 604 and 605. Automatic dependent surveillance technology allows the aircraft to report highly accurate position and status information to air traffic control, replacing the need for traditional radar. The STC is the culmination of a full 12 months of work by the team at Flying Colours KSUS in St. Louis, and orders are now being taken at the convention. “It will be pretty much front and center at NBAA,” Gillespie said.

Also highlighted at NBAA is the company’s further venture into the world of special mission aircraft. Flying Colours announced earlier this year an order for completion of three new Challenger 650 aircraft with dedicated medevac interiors for an unidentified European customer. It is a collaborative project with 650 manufacturer Bombardier. Design engineering, again, came from the St. Louis center, and the first aircraft delivery is expected in early 2016 as the customer begins replacing older aircraft models.

Flying Colours had previous success with special mission aircraft for an Asian customer. “Our strategy is to continue expansion of this part of our business as international customer demand grows,” explained Gillespie.

Meanwhile, at the Canadian facilities in Peterborough, Ontario, the company is at work on the conversion of three CRJ regional jets to business jet Execliner variants. The projects are part of an eight-aircraft order from Chinese operator Sparkle Roll. The first of the remaining five aircraft are now arriving at Flying Colours, and initial deliveries of the first three airplanes are to begin in first quarter 2016.

Execliner conversions are a major part of the company’s business, and 16 of them have already been delivered in Asia. “It was the Execliner that allowed us to branch into green completion work, including Bombardier’s Challenger 850,” acknowledged Gillespie.

Flying Colours is also engaged in a steady business of mid- to heavy cabin refurbishment, “in particular the Falcon 900 and Bombardier’s Globals.”

This year, the center is engaged in doubling the size of the cabinetry and refinishing shop. An additional hangar of approximately 60,000 sq. ft. is planned for 2016. It will be capable of accommodating VIP aircraft the size of the Boeing Business Jet. “We’ve had a number of clients asking if we could handle business jets of this size, so obviously we’re considering it,” said Gillespie. “Maybe in the next five years.”

Moving farther from home, Flying Colours’ joint venture with Bombardier at the OEM’s Singapore service center at Seletar Aerospace Park is bearing fruit. The company has already been involved in MRO work on a total of eight Challengers and Globals. “We’re the completion and interior arm of Bombardier’s facilities here, and it provides a larger door into the Asia-Pacific market, including India and Australia,” explained Gillespie.

—Kirby Harrison
Meet Josh & Julia Hochberg, Owners, Sonoma Jet Center

Is Signature Select right for you? Just ask Josh and Julia. “Signature’s marketing and sales support has been outstanding,” Josh says. “We expected that. But we didn’t realize what a fantastic all-around partner we were getting.” The Hochbergs are likely to pull out photos of two brand-new electric tugs, loaned to them by Signature. “Signature delivered these to get us through a really busy month. It was our most successful month ever. Beyond our wildest dreams.” Follow Josh and Julia’s lead. Retain your identity and your hard-earned customers and add our loyal global customer base. Join Signature Select. Profit from the power of Signature Flight Support.

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Jet Aviation Basel Expanding to Meet Demand

Jet Aviation Basel is looking forward to plenty of business jet interior outfitting and is expanding to meet that demand.

At the moment, Jet Aviation’s Basel center (Booths N5131, C11216) is working on no fewer than seven projects — two BBJ777-300ERs, a BBJ, a BBJ787-9, one ACJ319 and one ACJ320, and an ACJ330. Further, said director of completions sales and market development Marc Galin, the company signed multiple orders in 2015, three of which are already in the shop in Basel. They included a BBJ3, the ACJ319 and ACJ320, two BBJ777s and the BBJ787-9. “From Jet Aviation’s perspective, market demand for VIP completions remains strong,” said Galin.

On the customer delivery side of the ledger, a BBJ and an ACJ340-600 were rolled out in early 2015, and on track for customer delivery by the year’s end is an ACJ320.

To keep up with it all, the completion, refurbishment and MRO specialist signed an agreement in September with Basel EuroAirport authorities to expand its completions production capacity “to meet rising demand for services.”

The expansion includes establishment of an additional 39,822-sq.-ft. facility dedicated to finishing and integration activities, as well as increasing manufacturing capacity within its current cabinet shop. Plans also include investments in such equipment as CNC machines to support cabinet building, as well as glue, spray and paint facilities to support finishing operations.

“From Jet Aviation’s perspective, market demand for VIP completions remains strong,” said Galin.

“As an authorized Boeing service center, we are delighted to expand our service offerings to support owners and operators of the 787,” said Johannes Turzer, SVP and general manager of the Jet Aviation Basel Maintenance Center.

Part of the growing business was the installation of the Pro Line 21 upgrade in a Falcon 2000 in August, following by a second installation in a Falcon 200EX in September. Jet Aviation says the upgrade is designed to last a generation. It is a solution that provides flexibility in flight deck configurations and flight display formatting.

Earlier this summer, Jet Aviation Basel announced it is developing a “cutting-edge, plug-and-play inflight dishwasher with a three-minute wash cycle that requires just three liters of water and is compatible with an eco-friendly soap.”

It will be available in different sizes to ensure a perfect fit in all galleys, including that of the BBJ787. Further, it is approved for taxi, takeoff and landing with up to nearly 45 lb. of dishes inside the dishwasher.

Also this past summer, a groundbreaking ceremony was held at Jet Aviation’s Boston/Bedford, Massachusetts, facility to begin construction of its new FBO at Hanscom Field. The improvements include a two-story, 13,000-sq.-ft. FBO, a 40,000-sq.-ft. hangar capable of accommodating aircraft as large as Bombardier’s Global 6000, and 16,000 sq. ft. of office and shop space. Completion is expected in third quarter 2016.

At NBAA 2015, Jet Aviation’s global network of FBO facilities is a main feature of the company’s exhibit. — Kirby Harrison
Give yourself and your passengers the peace of mind that comes from putting flight-critical information at your fingertips while increasing the resale value of your aircraft. Contact your Textron Aviation company-owned service center today to discuss upgrading your avionics.
While the company (Booth N4910) does not typically engage in green aircraft cabin completion, many of its major refurbishments involve pulling out the entire interior and starting the refurbishment from near-zero, “in essence doing a green completion.”

“But we value our past green aircraft completions experience and during times of high demand will continue to be there for our OEM partners,” Slieter explained. However, he added, “our main business niche has always been focused on combining interior work with maintenance events and helping operators make the most of downtimes by performing interior, paint and avionics upgrades at the same time.”

Operators and owners are continuing to look at bundling work together to take advantage of downtime required for most major inspections, according to Duncan. “Nearly all of our inspections have some additional service bundling with the inspections,” said Slieter. But he noted that clients “are not spending as much on what they often view as discretionary interior items as they once were.”

He considers the most impressive thing about technology is “how it helps us all to do our work better, faster and more efficiently.”

There are many ways the MRO business has embraced technology, not just in performing actual work on aircraft, but some of the most popular technological advances have been in automating the fundamentals.

One example from Duncan is its myDuncan online project management system. Launched four years ago, it allows real-time communication between project managers and customers. “We have also embraced technology on our back-end processes, from electronic sign-offs to improved internal communications, better workflows and more accurate and timely invoicing,” said Slieter.

Currently high on the list of upgrades at Duncan, several NextGen ADS-B and FANS projects are in the process and others in discussion. There is also considerable interest in Wi-Fi installations, and Duncan has already installed 600 systems. Most recently, Duncan finished a Falcon 900B flight deck upgrade with Universal avionics.

Last year, Duncan completed main hangar additions at its Lincoln, Nebraska, campus, followed by a new paint facility. Smaller expansions include additional hangar at the sites in Battle Creek, Michigan, and Provo, Utah. In Provo, the company is working with the state of Utah on plans to build a ground-up MRO facility at Provo Airport.

Most recently, Duncan announced in September a move of its avionics satellite shop and engine rapid response teams to a 31,000-sq.-ft. facility at Fort Lauderdale Executive Airport in Florida.

In addition, said Slieter, “Our senior team recently met to update our 10-year strategic plan [and with] industry projections for necessary hangar space and MRO facilities, we can see the possibility of additional maintenance hangars at Lincoln and Battle Creek within the next decade.”

Meanwhile, Duncan has hosted a number of free, daylong NextGen seminars across the country. “Given the number of questions operators have had about the upcoming mandates, we will continue to offer these throughout 2016 and are currently determining locations,” said Slieter.

—Kirby Harrison
Seeing 20/20?
The 2020 ADS-B mandate is in sight

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“Versatility and flexibility are what you need in the completions market today,” says Comlux America CEO Scott Meyer. “There are very few completions to go after,” as buyers are ordering next-generation Airbus A320neo and Boeing BBJ MAX aircraft that will not become available until 2018 or so. That leaves a gap in demand, which Comlux is trying to fill in several ways.

The first is by expanding its maintenance capabilities so that it can refurbish VIP aircraft at the same time it carries out major airframe checks. Another is by expanding into widebody completions.

A major expansion of its hangar to house a widebody completion is due to come online this month, and the first aircraft, an A330, has already arrived. “We’re hiring staff and ramping up on the A330,” Meyer says.

Meanwhile, Comlux “is being very creative” in pursuing the single-aisle completions that do arise. “It isn’t low price that always wins the contract. If it were, the completion centers with the deepest pockets would win,” he notes.

Instead, Comlux (Booth NS506) is playing on the strengths of the whole group to woo customers. It is, Meyer says, the only company that owns and operates VIP aircraft itself, so it can charter to customers as it outfits their aircraft, or can help them with ownership or operations. “You have to connect with the clients on their other business needs,” Meyer says. “You have to be a lot more creative than in the past.”

In August, Comlux completed its ninth VIP interior on an Airbus ACJ320 aircraft for a private customer. This was Comlux America’s fourth ACJ interior completion overall since becoming an authorized service center for Airbus in 2010.

The VIP interior of the ACJ320 featured a modern interior balanced with a classic European flair. Comlux Creatives led the design under the direction of Lauri Church and in partnership with Fiona Riddle of In Flight Cabin Solutions, the customer design representative.

The Services division of Comlux America has been gearing up to provide our customers with new services approved by the major manufacturers,” says Arnaud Martin, EVP of operations for Comlux Group. “Our goal is to become one of the leading centers of excellence for VIP aircraft services worldwide.”

Comlux America also provides state-of-the-art cabin completions for all OEMs. The company has recently developed its capabilities with the extension of the hangar facilities to accommodate widebody aircraft.

As a long-time refinisher of VIP aircraft, Comlux America is known for its flexibility and creativity. The company is well-positioned to meet the needs of its customers in today’s market.

—John Morris
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Bell 412EP/412EP-Fast Fin†
Bell 430
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Dassault Falcon 20/20-5†
Dassault Falcon 2000/2000EX†
Dassault Falcon 2000EX EASy/DX/LXS/LXS+†
Gulfstream G550
Hawker 400XP
Hawker 750/800/800XP/850XP/900XP
Sikorsky S-92

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Beechcraft King Air 100/100I
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Cessna Citation I V
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Gulfstream G550
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Gulfstream G750
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Cessna Citation XLS/XLS+

PARIS, FRANCE
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Dassault Falcon 20/20-5†
Dassault Falcon 2000/2000EX†
Dassault Falcon 2000EX EASy/DX/LXS/LXS+†
Dassault Falcon 7X†
Dassault Falcon 900C†
Dassault Falcon 900EX†
Dassault Falcon 900EX EASy/DX/LX
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Gulfstream GV*

SHREVEPORT, LA
Airbus Helicopters AS350
Airbus Helicopters H135

SINGAPORE, SINGAPORE
Sikorsky S-76C/76C+†

STAVANGER, NORWAY
Sikorsky S-92

TETERBORO, NJ
Dassault Falcon 2000/2000EX
Dassault Falcon 2000EX EASy/DX/LXS/LXS
Dassault Falcon 50EX†
Dassault Falcon 8X†
Dassault Falcon 900/900B/900C†
Dassault Falcon 900EX†
Dassault Falcon 900EX EASy/DX/LX

TUCSON, AZ
Bombardier Challenger 601-3A/3R†
Bombardier Learjet 604†
Bombardier Learjet 31A/35A†
Bombardier Learjet 40/40XR/45/45XR†
Bombardier Learjet 60†

WEST PALM BEACH, FL
Piaggio P.180 Avanti/Avanti II†
Sikorsky S-70A/76-50A†
Sikorsky S-70B†
Sikorsky S-76C++/S-76C++†
Sikorsky S-92†

WICHTA, KS (CESSNA MX)
Cessna Citation I
Cessna Citation CJ1†
Cessna Citation CJ3†
Cessna Citation Encore
Cessna Citation Latitude

WICHTA, KS (LEARJET)
Bombardier Learjet 25B†
Bombardier Learjet 35A†
Bombardier Learjet 40/40XR/45/45XR†
Bombardier Learjet 55†

WILMINGTON, DE
Beechcraft Premier IVA
Bombardier Challenger 300/300I/300I/IIF/500/500I
Bombardier Global Express/XRS/3000i†
Dassault Falcon 900/900i†
Gulfstream G200
Gulfstream G350
Gulfstream G650†
Gulfstream GV/G300/G400†
Gulfstream GV*

HAIR, Korea
Airbus Helicopters AS350
Airbus Helicopters H135

SINGAPORE, SINGAPORE
Sikorsky S-76C/76C+†

WEST PALM BEACH, FL
Piaggio P.180 Avanti/Avanti II†
Sikorsky S-70A/76-50A†
Sikorsky S-70B†
Sikorsky S-76C++/S-76C++†
Sikorsky S-92†

WICHTA, KS (CESSNA MX)
Cessna Citation I
Cessna Citation CJ1†
Cessna Citation CJ3†
Cessna Citation Encore
Cessna Citation Latitude

Cessna Citation Sovereign/Sovereign+ Cessna Citation X/X+

DEDICATED MAINTENANCE CENTERS
MONTREAL, CANADA
Patt & Whitney Canada Engine Training

WICHTA, KS (LEANJET)
Bombardier Learjet 604†
Bombardier Learjet 31A/35A†
Bombardier Learjet 40/40XR/45/45XR†
Bombardier Learjet 60†

WICHTA, KS (HAWKER BEECHCRAFT MX)
Maintenance training for P&W engines and all Hawker aircraft that FlightSafety provides pilot training for.

WICHTA, KS (BEECHCRAFT MX)
Maintenance training for P&W engines and all Beechcraft aircraft that FlightSafety provides pilot training for.

Additional Pratt & Whitney Canada engine training also available at Brisbane, Australia; Botucatu, Brazil; Curitiba, Brazil; Dallas, TX; Halkou, China; Lansenia, South Africa; Paris, France; Bangalore, India†; Singapore; Toronto, Canada; and West Palm Beach, FL.

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Astronautics Promotes Anti-Hacking PaTIO

Citing increasing vulnerability behind an increasing desire for connectivity on a wider range of devices, Astronautics Corp. of America is promoting a new architecture designed to prevent hacking of an aircraft’s data.

The need for cyber security is particularly acute as pilots and other aviation professionals increasingly use their own personal electronic devices – PEDs like iPads and competing tablets – to handle aircraft and flight-related data.

“People want connectivity,” says Astronautics president Chad Cundiff. “We want to enable connectivity.”

But, he told ShowNews, “if we don’t enable it in a secure fashion, data’s going to be vulnerable. Your aircraft’s going to be vulnerable.”

“The tablet,” he says, “opens up a lot more vulnerability.”

Vulnerable information includes aircraft flight plans – where an aircraft has gone or is going – and passenger manifests – who’s been onboard or is going to be.

“There are well-resourced entities out there that have interest in this type of information,” Cundiff says.

PEDs used online outside of an aircraft – in a hotel, for example – could be infected with “bots” that allow data to be transmitted to such an entity – perhaps via satcom services, or even an aircraft’s inflight entertainment system – when the device is reconnected in the course of a flight.

Even more pernicious, a capable hacker could feed bad information into a flight management system, causing a pilot to fly into an area where he did not intend to go. Enter Astronautics’ new PaTIO – short for “PED and tablet I/O (input/output).”

PaTIO works with the company’s Nexis multipurpose data server and is designed to facilitate the use of PEDs. But because Nexis and PaTIO use different operating systems, communications between the paired devices are far more difficult to intercept.

“Deterrence is about making systems that are architecturally hard to hack,” Cundiff says.

Deterrence is the first of Astronautics’ “three-D” approach to hacking. “Defend” includes such measures as encryption and strict log-in protocols, and the ability to shut down potential data-theft channels like Bluetooth when a PED is being used as an EFB (electronic flight bag) display. “Detect” allows operators to know when an attempt has been made on the system: It’s independent of domain-specific knowledge, Cundiff says, and is instead “based on algorithms, and on how the data behaves.”

“As you think about the security problem, you’ve got to think of it on a lot of different levels,” he says. “Connectivity’s going to change. Any separate item can be overcome. You need a multilevel approach.”

Astronautics is at Booth C13547.

—Rich Piellisch

JSSI Launches Parts Service

JET SUPPORT SERVICES (Booth C7318) has launched a new aircraft parts affiliate called JSSI Parts. JSSI procures parts for customer maintenance covered under a JSSI program. Now, it is taking its expertise and buying power to expand its procurement services to clients in need of parts not covered by a JSSI program and to third parties, the company said. The program is a way to reach operators who have not historically worked with JSSI.

Thousands of engines, airframes and APUs are enrolled in JSSI programs. Typically, JSSI manages 6,000 maintenance events a year that involve parts procurement. Because of that, the volume of parts bought by JSSI daily exceeds any normal operator’s buying power.

That leverage allows the team to negotiate best pricing from its network of global suppliers.

Inventory distribution points will initially include Los Angeles, Chicago, Miami and the UK.

—Molly McMillin

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—Astronautics president Chad Cundiff

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Astronautics is at Booth C13547.
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Emphasizing safety, especially on approach, Sandel Avionics has introduced Avilon as an easy-to-install retrofit King Air cockpit that can replace legacy equipment for a guaranteed fly-away price of $175,000.

“Avilon is intended to redefine how modern cockpit avionics are designed, built, sold and installed,” the company says.

Modern cockpits have had little positive effect on overall safety, Sandel president Gerry Block said here yesterday. “Pilots get confused about what the airplane’s doing. We think this design is going to improve safety,” he said, especially with regard to landing approaches.

“This is a complete system,” Block said. “It includes display, radios, transponders, ADS-B. This is the most fully featured avionics suite available probably in all of general aviation.”

Avilon for the 200 series King Air line is to be STC’d and to begin shipping in June 2016. Sandel anticipates shipping to dealers in just one piece, with installation taking just five days. Removal of an aircraft’s existing cockpit will take four times longer than installation of the new one, Block says. Depending on hardware removed, Avilon can reduce aircraft weight by as much as 200 lb.

Sandel Avionics (Booth C10232) has named Cutter Aviation (Booth C7336), Landmark Aviation (Booth N3522) and Stevens Aviation (Booths N1321 and C6907) in the U.S., and Rocky Mountain Aircraft in Canada, as Avilon cockpit dealers.

MSB Becomes Supplier for VIP Completions

MSB, best known for its highly customized cabinetry inserts to store and protect crystal, china and flatware (CCF), is moving aggressively into the VIP business aviation market, including the cabinetry itself.

The Canadian company’s expansion began in earnest in May this year with the announcement that Associated Air Center at Love Field Dallas had selected MSB (Booth C10721) to provide inserts for an Airbus ACJ320 VIP green completion. The contract called for MSB to deliver more than 100 of the individually created inserts by August of this year. They will be used to securely store dining ware, glasses, artwork, objects d’art and other fragile items. Made of high-density foam certified for aviation use, the inserts also are designed to eliminate the rattling noise made by stored items.

“We have worked hard...to increase our footprint in the VIP sector and Associated Air Center is the first of a number of large-scale orders we anticipate completing,” said business development director Shannon Gill.

The anticipated business has MSB gearing up for additional orders by expanding the precision engineering division with the addition of two full-time technicians and opening of U.S. offices. “We’ve only started looking at the VIP growth over the next five years,” said Gill, who will manage the first U.S. office in Savannah, Georgia.

In addition to the cabinetry inserts, MSB already produces single-pedestal Hi-Lo conference tables and a ready-to-assemble, customized cabinetry kit. In fact, the Montreal-based company is a long-time supplier to Bombardier for items such as magazine racks, divan boxes and wardrobes. MSB also has a developing relationship with Gulfstream and contracts with Florida-based Embraer Executive Jets.

French engineering and contracting company Sogeclair purchased 80% of MSB in November 2014. The MSB Group now forms the second-largest division of the Sogeclair portfolio. “The acquisition allows us to leverage our expansion into the U.S.,” stated Gill.

Gill recalls that the best feedback she ever had with regard to their inserts came from the flight attendant on a new Embraer business jet equipped with them. “She said that on the first owner flight, the usual rattle of glassware and china was so obvious by its absence that she thought for a moment they had forgotten to bring them on board.”

MSB launched the company with Bombardier as its first customer, and 11 years later it is in the midst of a major expansion. “It’s really an exciting time for us,” said Gill.
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Thomas Rutkowski
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18+ Years of Aviation Experience

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FBO Concierge Consultant
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Visit Us at NBAA Booth #N5131
Esterline’s Korry Unveils Touch-Screen Panels

Esterline Control & Communication Systems (Booth C12838) is launching a Korry Utility Control System touch-screen display technology at NBAA.

It’s the first touch-screen-control solution for overhead panels in civilian aviation, it said.

The touch-screen display replaces a number of separate display and switching components and can be adapted to individual aircraft requirements.

The Korry UCS technology was originally developed by Esterline in a precursor application as a touch-screen display for the overhead panel of the Gulfstream G500 and G600 long-range business jets.

Esterline, based in Everett, Washington, is a lead contractor to Gulfstream Aerospace for the G500/G600 flight deck.

“It’s an industry milestone for Esterline to develop touch-screen display technology specifically for overhead panels in civilian aircraft,” said Kevin Moschetti, president of Esterline Control & Communication Systems. “After pioneering this application for the business jet market, we are now making the technology available in a format easily adapted to a wider range of aircraft.”

The display technology includes the ability to update software instead of changing hardware, an anti-fingerprint surface, 75% reduction of separate switches, multiple touch-screen display sizes, secure control activation and an open architecture in which customers can implement their own look and feel of control interface. In addition, three displays, each with two channels, allow for one channel to be down without interfering with normal aircraft operation, the company said.

Texton Introduces ProOwnership

Textron Aviation (Booth N3032) has introduced ProOwnership, a support and FAR Part 91 aircraft management service for operators of Cessna Citation business jets and Beechcraft King Air products.

The program can be customized for the needs of individual customers, which makes owning and operating an aircraft enjoyable and seamless, said Brad Thress, Textron Aviation SVP of customer service.

Services can include providing customers with a Textron Aviation transition flight crew or pilot mentoring services, selection of a home airport and hangar, trip planning, overseeing maintenance and providing concierge services.

“Between our team’s incomparable product knowledge, our commitment to service and our work to ensure a new owner’s seamless entry into service, Textron Aviation is more than an aircraft manufacturer,” Thress said. “Our customers rely on us to be their trusted advisors throughout their ownership experience.”

—Molly McMillin
GE Honda united two of the most respected engine manufactures to develop one of the world’s most advanced jet engines. Such an engine deserves an equally superior form of service—which is why we created EMC. We keep your engine performing up to our highest standard so you’re always cleared for takeoff.

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gehonda.com
Kimberly-Clark has long been known for Kleenex facial tissue, Huggies diapers and Scott paper towels, but its industrial division has a long history in business aviation.

Earlier this year, the company announced a collaboration with Eastman Aviation Solutions, a division of Eastman Chemical Co., with the goal of developing solutions for cleaning aircraft surfaces and components.

It now offers a range of wiping and personal-protection products to aid in the performance of critical manufacturing and return-to-service tasks, the company said.

For example, it offers the Jackson Safety G29 Solvent Protection glove to provide hand protection and improved dexterity for aviation workers using solvents, hydraulic fuels and turbine fluids or oils, and Kimtech A2 aviation wipes for abrasive surfaces and low-lint properties that reduce the risk of contamination when preparing composite surfaces for bonding and painting.

Kimberly-Clark Professional offers the Efficient Workplace program, an on-site assessment that helps aviation companies identify simple ways to make their facilities “healthier, safer and more productive.”

“It’s not simply a question of clean, but how clean,” said global aerospace marketing leader Stephen Burn. “It is not merely a matter of wiping, but how the wiping product interacts with the chemical and the surface being cleaned – which requires engineered-to-order wipes. What we deliver is also an assurance that a surface is clean and ready for the next step.”

Kimberly-Clark is making its first appearance at the NBAA convention in Las Vegas, at Booth C13201.

The Roswell, Georgia-based company has a long history in the business aviation segment. That heritage includes the formation of Midwest Express Airlines from its corporate flight department in the 1980s, and the former K-C Aviation, an aircraft completions, refurbishment and MRO facility. K-C was acquired by Gulfstream Aerospace in 1998.

“As a company with a heritage of innovation and a long history in corporate aviation, we bring insights and expertise to meet the needs of general aviation operators, as well as original equipment manufacturers and maintenance and repair organizations,” Burn said.

—Kirby Harrison
SyberJet Aircraft is showing a new SJ30i cabin interior at Static Space 300 at Henderson—and wants customer input to help complete the design. The firm bills the SJ30 as the world’s fastest and longest-range light jet. With up to 2,500 nm range and Mach 0.83 cruise, operators “get midsize performance for the price of a light jet.”

“SyberJet believes customer input is paramount in this critical design and ultimately to owner/operator satisfaction down the road,” the firm said prior to NBAA.

At center stage is the new SyberVision avionics suite. The cockpit features four large 12-in. displays and includes the SmartView SVS/synthetic vision system as standard, as well as INAV™ moving map display, standard IRS, electronics charts/maps, TCAS II, TAWS Level A, synthetic displays, dual flight management systems with dual WAAS GPS/LPV, graphical flight planning, onboard weather radar, full EICAS, aircraft system controls incorporated into the MFD/multifunction display, electronic checklists, envelope protection, DME, ADS-B Out, and 0.3-nm RNP as well as support for FANS-1A, SmartLanding, SmartTaxi, SmartRunway, TOLD and RVSM operations.

The new cabin also features a forward-facing potty providing a more comfortable seating position, a sixth cabin window, improved use of space in the forward cabin, LED wash lighting in the ceiling, Alcantara soft goods, and 12.0-psi cabin pressure for a sea-level cabin at 41,000 ft. —Rich Piellisch
Japan Girds for Bizav Surge With Olympics & Paralympics in Tokyo in Summer of 2020

Japanese airport operators and service providers are busily gearing up for the summer of 2020, when the late-July-through-early-August Olympic Games will be followed a month later by the 2020 Summer Paralympics.

Both will be centered in Tokyo and both are expected to spur already growing business aviation activity in the country.

Officials of JCAB, the Japan Civil Aviation Bureau, a unit of MLIT, the Ministry of Land, Infrastructure, Transport and Tourism, are detailing their agency’s plans at Booth C12349.

International business aviation movements grew from 2,918 in 2010 to 3,287 last year, an average annual growth rate of 3.3%, says JCAB deputy director Hayato Yamaguchi. International movements grew from 1,644 during the first half of 2014 to 1,888 for the first six months of this year, a surge of 15%, he told ShowNews Monday.

The 2020 Olympics are alone expected to account for upward of 1,000 movements.

JCAB is expanding parking slots and transit routes at Haneda and Narita, both of which service Tokyo.

Business jets are also accommodated at Japanese airports including Kobe, Nagoya, Mount Fuji Shizuoka, Chubu, and Kansai International.

—Rich Piellisch

Daher’s TBM Charter Pack for Part 135 Ops

Increasing use of the Daher (ex-Socata) TBM fast turboprop in passenger charter operations has prompted launch of an adapted package of support services. TBM Charter Pack provides an inclusive package solution with an extended version of the TBM Care Program (TCP) to cover higher aircraft utilization rates; continuing airworthiness monitoring through CAMP Systems; a dedicated TBM maintenance hotline; and TBM professional training courses. “As TBM charter flights continue to develop around the Globe, we want our services to best match the expectations of commercial operators,” explained Nicolas Chabbert, SVP of Daher’s Airplane Business Unit (Booth C13307).

Gulfstream Picks Rosen for Hi-Def Displays

Gulfstream Aerospace has selected Rosen Aviation (Booth N1135) to supply high-definition displays for its new G500 and G600 aircraft. Under the contract, Rosen will supply the high-def displays and cabin control equipment for the two aircraft models. The award comprises a series of 1080p HD display sizes to include 24-in. bulkhead and crew rest displays, and 26-in. and 32-in. credenza flip-up displays. It also will provide 10.1-in. galley and vestibule touch-screen controllers to control cabin functions along with personal displays.

Honeywell goFuel App in the Apple Store

Honeywell is promoting goFuel as a free app that “saves business jet pilots and operators time and money as they fuel their airplanes.” The app, available via Apple, allows pilots to store and manage their fuel cards digitally and lets them check jet fuel prices at FBOs and airports in the same geographical area. Pilots can pre-order aviation fuel at any airport wirelessly with the touch of an icon. The goFuel app also features customized Jet-A fuel price recall per location, a graphical map view of fuel prices, and weekly updates of customized fuel prices per location. Honeywell is at Booth C7807.

Pentastar’s STC for Satcom Direct Router

Pentastar Aviation has received an STC from the FAA for installation of the Satcom Direct Router (SDR) for the Gulfstream GIV-X (G350/G450) and the GV-SP (G500/G550). The SDR is a smart router capable of managing all aircraft voice and data solutions and allows simultaneous use of multiple satellite connections without additional wireless access points. It compresses and caches data to give users maximum bandwidth for information transmission. When it senses that an aircraft is on the ground it switches from a satellite network to 3G service. Pentastar is at Booth C7329 here.

Air Charter Guide Teams With FlyEasy

Penton’s Air Charter Guide, the original worldwide guide for on-demand, charter services (part of the Aviation Week Network), has combined forces with FlyEasy, the technology-based platform for empty-leg charter flights and jet charter data, to offer a streamlined feed for empty legs. FlyEasy uses custom tools to help businesses sell more charter and combat inefficiencies. Subscribers will be able to post their empty legs automatically on http://www.aircharterguide.com using FlyEasy software. “We look forward to a long and productive collaboration,” said Frank Craven, Penton managing director for business aviation. Penton is at Booth N5521.
Universal Avionics (Booth N5733) is offering special incentives for the next Falcon 900B operator to sign up at NBAA for an upgrade using Universal’s retrofit flight deck package.

The upgrade is available through a partnership with Duncan Aviation and includes the Future Air Navigation System (FANS) and Automatic Dependent Surveillance-Broadcast (ADS-B) Out capability.

The onetime incentive includes an extended one-year warranty with FlightAssure at a savings of about $15,000 and “early bird” pricing, which will save customers about 10%, Universal said. Installation must take place before June 30, 2016.

Universal also is demonstrating a new Touch CDU app for its Flight Management System Trainer (FMST) desktop software to attendees of NBAA. The app is available for the iPad and acts as a virtual control display unit, which allows operators to interact with the FMST desktop software program.

The app includes a 4-in. flat-panel CDU, 5-in. FPCDU and multifunctional display options. It gives all the interactive functionality of a physical FPCDU, including data entry, line select key selection and function key selection, without the expense of having to buy the physical unit.

In addition, Universal is introducing Software Control Number (SCN) 31.0 for the UniLink UL-800/801 Communications Management Unit (CMU) at NBAA. SCN 31.0 is designed to provide UniLink UL-800/901 operators with the necessary controller-pilot data link communications (CPDLC) message sets to meet European Link 2000+ program mandate requirements. Operators can acquire the additional capability with a software upgrade.

Universal Rolls Out New Avionics Features

**Offer for Falcon 900B Operators**

**New Avionics Products**

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Airbus Goes with CAMP for More Choices

Airbus Corporate Jet customers and operators can now benefit from a wider range of computerized maintenance planning services, following an agreement concluded here with CAMP (Booth N9104).

As the manufacturer, Airbus (Booth N4533) defines the maintenance tasks that operators need to carry out to ensure the continued airworthiness of each of its modern aircraft families. These tasks are typically broken down into digital job-cards, adapted to each specific aircraft.

With the new service, CAMP for ACJ brings together two leaders in the business: Airbus with in-depth knowledge of its aircraft and CAMP with its expertise in computerized maintenance management services.

“We are committed to helping customers and operators get the best from their Airbus aircraft, and this new service answers their needs,” said Benoit Defforge, managing director of Airbus Corporate Jets. CAMP for ACJ, he added, “is a fully digital solution, available on any computer, smartphone or tablet with Internet access.”

The launch customer is Acropolis Aviation. Five-year-old Acropolis, based at Farnborough Airport, will start using CAMP for ACJ on its Airbus ACJ319 G-NOAH early in 2016.

—Kirby Harrison
ONE Aviation (Booth C13216) has received a $60 million order from Jinggong General Aviation, its exclusive distributor of Eclipse 550 and Eclipse Special Edition jets in China.

Jinggong placed an order for 20 twin-engine Eclipse jets to be delivered over the next several years, the company said.

“It is currently believed that China will need 100,000 light aircraft within the next five to 10 years to accommodate general aviation’s rapid expansion,” said Alan Klapmeier, ONE Aviation CEO. “We are delighted that our partner, Jinggong, is taking the lead position in that market.”

Jinggong General Aviation has been in operation for 11 years in China. It began sales, training and service of ONE Aviation’s products in October.

Making its first convention showing (at Booth C13216) is ONE Aviation, a “new-old” firm that formed six months ago to unify the well-established products of the Eclipse and Kestrel companies. Alan Klapmeier, the CEO, can always be relied upon for a straightforward account of his company’s situation and did not disappoint at a pre-show press conference.

Unfortunately, the Kestrel 350 turbo-prop remains without a production plant and appears likely to be shortly without an engine, too, because of a perceived difference of opinion with Honeywell over the TPE331. Whether that means a return to the Pratt & Whitney Canada PT6A-67A, Klapmeier did not say.

Progress with Kestrel is “slow, but continues to move forward.” Rejecting the option to resort to the usual excuses about delayed aircraft, Klapmeier declares, “The FAA is not the problem. It is the best of the government agencies to deal with.”

At least 16 Eclipse 550s have been delivered since production resumed, as have two older 500 aircraft refurbished to the same standard and known as SEs. Production plans for 2016 call for between 14 and 18 Model 550s and 12 SEs, some of which will be going to Europe, where Jet Lounge GmbH was recently appointed dealer for Germany, Benelux and Scandinavia.

Klapmeier had planned to announce European Aviation Safety Agency certification of the 550 this week, but the entire process is stalled over the meaning of the word “advisory.” Once that has been satisfactorily translated from American English into Euro-English, Jet Lounge’s first airplane will launch skyward.

In a few days, Ascension Air, the aircraft time-shares and management company of Atlanta, will take delivery if its first Eclipse 550, it was revealed on Monday. There’s only one so far, but more are expected.

—Paul Jackson
HondaJet Type Certificate ‘Very Soon’

Michimasa Fujino, president and CEO of Honda Aircraft Co., says the $4.5 million HA-420 HondaJet will receive FAA type certification “very soon.” Function and reliability (F & R) testing with FAA pilots aboard is slated to be complete by Nov. 21, 2015, paving the way for type certification by December, with initial entry into service coming shortly thereafter.

During F & R, the aircraft has operated from 58 airports in 34 states, testing hot, cold, wet, crosswind and all weather conditions. The flight test program involved five production-conforming aircraft, which flew more than 3,000 hours and operated out of 70+ airports.

Twenty-five aircraft now are on the assembly line. Fujino-san says production is being ramped up for three to four deliveries per month in 2016.

To support entry into service, Honda Aircraft (Booth C11524) has inked dealership agreements with 11 firms on three continents. The company’s training facility at Greensboro, North Carolina, has been up and running since 2014.

The first customer class soon will begin flight training; The HA-420 simulator at FlightSafety International has Level C approval and it will get Level D certification once the aircraft receives type certification.

Honda has invested $160 million in its 133-acre, 680,000-sq.-ft. campus at Greensboro. More than 1,700 associates now are employed at the headquarters, R & D facility, production plant and customer service facility.

Most of the firm’s early orders are in the United States. Customer response during the North America, Europe, Brazil and Japan demo tours was strong, says Fujino-san. Based on response in Japan, Fujino-san believes there’s great untapped potential for sales, as most potential customers are new to business aviation.

Honda Aircraft originally planned to bring the aircraft to market in third quarter 2012, but several snags delayed the program for more than three years. Industry sources say Honda has invested well over $1 billion in the program. Its $4.5 million “policy price” will make it quite competitive in the light-jet market, especially considering that it offers speed, fuel efficiency and cabin comfort advantages over most competitive light jets.

High production volumes of the HA-420, however, are unlikely to generate sufficient revenues for Honda to reach the break-even point, considering the aircraft’s $4.5 million price tag. Honda Aircraft will have to develop a family of future aircraft to recover its investment.

“Our start-up phase required a little more investment than existing OEMs,” says Fujino-san. The technologies, though, are scalable. Developing a family of aircraft “would enable quick recovery of the investment,” he adds.

—Fred George
At the same time, the company continues to move forward with the G90XT, a remanufactured King Air C90A twin turboprop. The Nextant aircraft made its first flight in January 2015, and received FAA certification on Monday, Nov. 16.

“Like our previous aircraft, the 400XTi, we’re taking a good aircraft and making it a great aircraft,” said Heublein. To that end, the G90XT features the new and more powerful General Electric GE H75 engine with electronic engine control and complete exceedance protection, as well as fully integrated Garmin G1000 cockpit avionics. Digital pressurization features all-new dual-zone air-conditioning and a significant interior upgrade for enhanced cabin comfort.

Nextant believes the new engines and a change in position of the propellers relative to the fuselage will make for a much quieter and more comfortable flight experience. The aircraft is expected to offer an 8% to 10% reduction in specific fuel consumption and a 13% reduction in time-to-climb.

The price of the G90XT, if Nextant sources the aircraft, is $2.8 million to $2.9 million, depending on options. If the customer sources the aircraft and brings it to Nextant, the price ranges from $2.2 million to $2.3 million. Nextant has received “several deposits” for the G90XT and first deliveries are expected in early 2016. The rebuild process takes approximately 8,000 hr. and 130 to 140 days to finish.

According to Nextant, some 20% of Beechjet 400 owners have now committed to having their aircraft remanufactured as Nextant 400XTi’s. The success of the program can be seen in the fleet of 61 400XTi’s now in service in 12 countries. Proof of overseas sales prospects can be seen in the recent confirmation by the U.S. Export-Import Bank that remanufactured aircraft can be financed in the same manner as new airframes.

In China, AVIC International Aero-Development Corp. (AVIC ADE) is the exclusive Nextant sales representative for the greater China region. The Chinese company has an extensive aviation customer network and its market and policy insights give Nextant direct lines of communication with all its target markets, corporations, entrepreneurs and charter operators.

Nextant was founded in 2007 to develop an aircraft modernization program and the result is the $4.95 million 400XTi. It has all the comfort, range and performance of a new competitive aircraft at 50% of the purchase price, and with significantly lower operation costs, according to Nextant.

Just since January this year, the 400XTi has marked a number of milestones. Time Air, a European charter operator, took delivery of its third 400XTi, citing “range, reliability, comfort and economics as key factors in the re-order decision.” On the other side of the world, Skyline Aviation of Napier, New Zealand, took delivery of a 400XTi and immediately put it to work as an air ambulance for emergency medical transport. And the company’s regional agent JetHQ celebrated delivery of its first 400XTi to a Saudi customer.

Looking at the Nextant success, Heublein was unabashed in his opinion: “We’ve proven without a doubt that there is indeed a market worldwide for remanufactured aircraft.”

—Kirby Harrison

Nextant Eyes Super-Midsize and Large-Cabin Jets

Nextant Aerospace (Indoor Static Display), best known for its fast-growing Nextant 400XTi light-jet remanufacture of the Beechjet 400A or 400XP, is now “studying engineering, costs, certification process and market potential for a super-midsize or large-cabin business jet rebuild project,” said Nextant EVP of global sales and marketing Jay Heublein.

The Nextant G90XT received its FAA certification on Monday.
Astronics AeroSat and Panasonic Avionics announced a strategic partnership to bring high-speed connectivity services and global live television programming to the business and VVIP aviation market.

The partnership combines Astronics’ “unmatched” tail-mounted satcom solutions with Panasonic’s “industry-leading” global communications services to offer broadband data Internet services, four channels of global television and regional DBS-TV programming, all from a single antenna.

“Together, we will provide dedicated bandwidth, higher speeds, unmatched television content and far superior system performance than any other solution offered today.”

“Since 1997, AeroSat has designed and delivered the industry’s highest-performing and most efficient connectivity solutions for business and luxury aircraft,” said Astronics AeroSat president Dennis Ferguson. “With Panasonic, we can now deliver a complete end-to-end package with an attractive upgrade path for existing data-only and TV-only aircraft operators that delivers broadband data Internet and TV in a single antenna system.”

Astronics is also promoting a new AeroShield brand low-drag radome and composite adapter plate combination. The assembly improves fuel burn and provides bird-strike hardness meeting FAA safety requirements.

“AeroSat’s FliteStream T-210 tail-mounted data and TV satcom system.

Astronics AeroSat is at Booth C8543 and Panasonic Avionics is at Booth C13146.

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Air BP Signs With Signature for Sterling Card Access at 63 U.S. FBOs

Air BP has signed an agreement with Signature Flight Support allowing the fuel provider’s Sterling Card customers to access fuel and flight support services at 63 Signature fixed base operator locations in the U.S.

“We are extremely pleased to add these new locations to our global Sterling Card network,” said Julio Casas, Air BP’s new North America director for general aviation. “With this new agreement in place, Sterling Card customers can be confident that they will receive the very best in terms of fuel provision and FBO services in the world’s largest GA market.”

Customers will be able to use their Air BP cards to buy fuel at all Signature locations. And, in a first for Air BP, customers will also be able to purchase other flight support services—ramp, lavatory and water services, lubricants, de-icing, and merchandise—using the Air BP card. “As Air BP has agreed to work exclusively with Signature at each of these locations, it is anticipated the deal will attract new customers to Signature,” states a release.

“It’s a major deal,” says Air BP chief commercial officer Norbert Kamp, augmenting his firm’s presence at more than 700 airports in 50 countries.

“We wanted to go with the biggest and the best,” he says, noting that his firm’s North American presence shrank with the dissolution of a joint venture with Epic in 2012.

“We took a step back and took stock,” he told ShowNews, and now, “where other people are retreating, we see an opportunity.

“We’ve made a strategic commitment to this market. We see it as an attractive market where we can add value for customers.”

Low oil prices? Air BP can work with them, especially as they in many cases allow customers to grow.

Air BP is at Booth C10835. Signature is at Booth N3505.

Pentastar Opens Interior Studio at PTK

Pentastar Aviation (Booth C7329) opened its new aircraft interior design studio at the company’s Oakland County International Airport (PTK) headquarters. The new studio will support the company’s aircraft interior business. Industry studies forecast that the global market for aircraft interior modification services could reach $17 billion by 2019. This trend compelled Pentastar to build a dedicated interior design studio for its aircraft interiors operation.

Universal Shannon FBO Renovation Complete

Universal Aviation Ireland, located at Shannon Airport (EINN), has completed renovation of its FBO. The update included a revamped VIP departures lounge as well as all-new crew and operations offices. Universal says that traffic continues to grow at the FBO, which opened 2003. The airport has a U.S. Customs and Border Protection pre-clearance facility, which offers business jet operators the opportunity to pre-clear Customs and Immigration and proceed directly to their U.S. destination. Universal Aviation is at Booths C10429 and C10435.

Fort Pierce APP Jet Center Gets CAA Nod

The Corporate Aircraft Association has named APP Jet Center Fort Pierce, the company’s FBO at St. Lucie County International Airport in Fort Pierce, Fla., a Preferred FBO. The award marks the company’s third CAA Preferred FBO award. Fair prices and good service are criteria to receive this distinction. Only 25% of FBO applicants become Preferred FBOs and CAA only allows one Preferred FBO at an airport. Booth C13046.

Ruggirello Named ExcelAire VP of Sales

Kevin Ruggirello is the new vice president of sales and marketing for ExcelAire (Booth N5512), a jet charter and management company of Hawthorne Global Aviation Services. Ruggirello joins ExcelAire with more than 15 years of corporate aviation experience in both Part 91 and Part 135 operations. Before coming to ExcelAire, Ruggirello served as VP of management sales at Priester Aviation (Teterboro, New Jersey) and as VP at Key Air (Oxford, Connecticut).

Westjet Debuts Phillips-Branded FBO at RAP

Westjet Air Center Inc. (Westjet) has finished construction on its $1 million Phillips 66 Aviation-branded FBO at Rapid City, South Dakota (RAP).

The FBO boasts a modern flight-planning center, pilot’s lounge, private sleeping quarters and a children’s room for traveling families. WestJet re-signed its fuel contract recently, increasing its fuel storage capacity to 88,000 gallons of Jet-A and 20,000 gallons of avgas. Linda and Don Rydstrom, who purchased the FBO in 1978, own Westjet.

Mountain West Opt for Epic Fuel

Mountain West Aviation, a family-owned and operated FBO headquartered in Lake Tahoe, Nevada, selected Epic as its fuel provider for its two new FBOs, in Carson City Airport and Elko Regional Airport (KEKO) near Elko, Nevada. Epic is the current fuel supplier for Mountain West Aviation’s operations at Lake Tahoe Airport (KTVL).
NATA Acquires FBO Organization

The National Air Transportation Association (NATA) has been strengthened considerably with its purchase of the for-profit Independent Fixed Base Operators Association (IFBOA), according to the head of the association.

“The addition of IFBOA is a win for everybody, helping NATA serve smaller independent operators and creating opportunities to attract new members,” said NATA president and CEO Tom Hendricks. The purchase price was not disclosed.

Including IFBOA members, there are now 1,800 FBOs in the NATA family. NATA members, which also include charter providers, trainers, airline service and aircraft management companies, can be found at 2,300 locations across the U.S.

The road to acquisition began in late 2012 when Hendricks succeeded Jim Coyne, who was stepping down. At the time, NATA was losing FBO members, in part, because IFBOA “had a very good workers’ compensation insurance product,” noted Hendricks.

Hendricks flew to Boston to meet with IFBOA founder John Wraga and his team to see how both groups could work together. From a strategic perspective, Hendricks believed it would be good if both groups spoke as a single voice on Capitol Hill. Negotiations with IFBOA eventually produced an agreement, which ensured that the independent nature of IFBOA’s members would remain.

NATA will for now keep the IFBOA brand, said Hendricks, with a dedicated staff for the IFBOA members. “We haven’t made a decision whether or not we will ever fully integrate them,” said Hendricks. “We think there is value in maintaining a separate identity under the NATA umbrella for independent operators that choose to remain so.”

IFBOA members can receive either the NATA or the IFBOA workers’ compensation insurance programs. IFBOA’s popular workers’ compensation program featuring the “Good Experience Return” will continue to be available. The program is administered by AirSure Ltd. and underwritten by “A” rated carrier QBE.

IFBOA members can utilize NATA’s programs and services, such as Safety 1st, NATA Compliance Services and NATA Aviation Solutions.

Meanwhile, NATA, which bills itself as the “Voice of Aviation Business,” continues to focus on issues of interest to its members on Capitol Hill. In an interview before the NBAA Convention, Hendricks provided an update on the aircraft management services legislation introduced by Sens. Sherrod Brown (D-Ohio) and Rob Portman (R-Ohio). The bill states that aircraft management services companies, which often align with FBOs, are not subject to air transportation taxes.

“This is common-sense legislation that essentially forces the IRS to view the [aircraft management services] industry the way they historically have,” said Hendricks. No date for a vote has been set, but the legislation has bipartisan support, he added.

Another issue NATA is following closely is the proposal to privatize air traffic control. Rep. Bill Shuster, (R-Pennsylvania), chairman of the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee, proposed the idea this summer as a way to ensure more dedicated funding for ATC with aviation fees and insulate the ATC organization from budget battles with Congress.

Opponents argue this approach might not provide adequate funding for ATC modernization efforts currently underway.

“We have to be very careful about layering on costs, adding bureaucracy and administrative overhead to comply with something that won’t work well in the U.S.,” said Hendricks, who is also concerned that privatizing ATC could set back NextGen.

Congress asked the U.S. Department of Transportation’s Office of Inspector General to study ATC privatization efforts in Canada, Germany, France and Great Britain, which have had various degrees of success in doing so. Germany’s Deutsche Flugsicherung (DFS) is perhaps the best example of a fully privatized ATC service, said Hendricks. But, he cautioned, comparing the complexity and size of the U.S. ATC system with that of privatized ATC systems elsewhere is invalid. —Robert W. Moorman
Steady Growth for Atlantic Aviation

Houston-based Atlantic Aviation, a division of the Macquarie Infrastructure Corp., continues its steady growth pattern with FBO acquisitions and enhancements to existing facilities. Foremost in news is the update of its $230 million purchase last year of Galaxy Aviation and its six FBOs.

“Galaxy has been fully integrated into the Atlantic family,” said Atlantic Aviation CEO Louis Pepper (Booth N6129) in an interview with ShowNews. “This was an excellent acquisition. We went from not having a presence in Florida to becoming the number two FBO in the state.”

Atlantic made sizable capital investments in some of the Galaxy properties, including remodeling the lobby areas at three facilities. More upgrades are planned.

The purchase of Galaxy included six FBOs, five in Florida and one in Hayden, Colorado, near Steamboat Springs, a noted ski resort.

With the Galaxy acquisition, Atlantic has 68 FBOs in its family, but other acquisitions are planned, Pepper intimated.

Atlantic did the bulk of its consolidation between 2004 and 2008. The consolidation craze slowed considerably between 2008 and 2011 and recently started up again, said Pepper.

Unlike other companies that may acquire, improve and flip FBOs, Atlantic is a “buy-and-hold company to add to shareholder value,” said the chief executive. “The bigger we get, the more it strengthens our chain.”

In other developments, Pepper said Atlantic would spend approximately $25 million to build a new general aviation terminal, additional hangars, a new fuel farm and other enhancements at an FBO at Salt Lake International Airport (SLC). The announcement follows a competitive bid and a decision by the Salt Lake City Department of Airports to allow Atlantic to build the new facility.

“Our objective is to start building immediately,” said Pepper, who expects to commence operations at SLC on Dec. 1.

While Atlantic makes inroads at Salt Lake City, the major chain exited the Hartford, Connecticut, market with the sale of its FBO at Hartford-Brainard Airport. Terms of the sale were not disclosed. Atlantic is also closing its operation at Fort Wayne, Indiana, because the airport authority wants to manage the facility itself.

—Robert W. Moorman

Hawthorne to Grow Under New Leadership

Hawthorne Global Aviation Services (Booth N5512) is planning to grow organically and through acquisition of more FBOs in coming weeks.

“We have some FBO locations that we will close before year’s end and several others in the pipeline that will get done in the first quarter of 2016,” revealed Byron Burbage, who was named president of the general aviation services company in May while retaining the title of CFO, which he assumed in 2011. Prior to Hawthorne, Burbage spent 20 years in public and private businesses, including serving as corporate controller and CFO for several private companies.

Down the road, “we might look at Canada, possibly the Caribbean, for new growth,” he told ShowNews. “But we’re at a stage in our life cycle that we’re not looking to Europe.”

Burbage said the small FBO chain’s business has increased “a fair amount” over the last year. “We’re pumping more fuel. We’re projecting a bigger increase in business for 2016.”

Hawthorne is enhancing its current stable of FBOs. The company has two hangar projects about to start at FBOs in Islip, New York, and Eau Claire, Wisconsin. Another hangar is planned for the FBO at Chicago Executive Airport. Hawthorne also plans to enhance the customs facility at its FBO at Cobb County International Airport in Atlanta.

Growth plans also extend to Hawthorne’s charter firm, ExcelAire, which celebrated its 30th anniversary in October 2015. It was acquired in 2012 by Hawthorne and is based at MacArthur Airport in Islip. Hawthorne has hired experienced sales agents to help bolster the charter side of the business. Burbage said the company would add a few more aircraft to its 20-strong business jet charter fleet before year’s end and also “go after more of the retail charter business.”

—Robert W. Moorman
Sales Tax Exemption to Help Sheltair In NY

Sheltair, a privately owned aviation development company operating 16 FBOs in North America, continues expansion efforts at properties in the states of New York and Florida.

Development plans for Sheltair’s FBOs in Farmingdale, Westhampton and Islip, New York, have kicked into high gear, in part, because of an exemption from a New York State sales tax, which became effective on Sept. 1.

The New York Aviation Jobs Act, passed over a year ago by the State Legislature, exempts general aviation aircraft and machinery or equipment that is installed on these aircraft from the state’s sales and use taxes.

The tax was seen as a financial barrier to aircraft at locations in New York because most other surrounding states do not charge sales taxes or have more favorable tax treatment for such aircraft sales and basings. New York lost over 700 of these aircraft over a 10-year period, according to the New York Aviation Management Association (NYAMA). Each business jet, on average, means five direct on-airport basings. New York lost over 700 of these aircraft over a 10-year period, according to the New York Aviation Management Association (NYAMA). Each business jet, on average, means five direct on-airport jobs and $1 million of annual economic activity, said the NYS Department of Transportation.

“The exemption allows aircraft owners to base their aircraft at one of our facilities and not be taxed on the value of their aircraft,” said Todd Anderson, Sheltair SVP of properties and development. “I think you will see a lot of corporate aircraft based back in New York as a result of this exemption.”

Sheltair COO Warren Kroppel added, “The Aviation Jobs Act passed by the governor [Andrew Cuomo] and the New York State Legislature dramatically reduces taxes on aviation-related sales and maintenance. In particular, aircraft sales taxes could see an 8% reduction, which will allow New York to compete equally with neighboring states that have been siphoning off jobs, investment and state revenue. This is a huge benefit to the aviation industry in New York and allows it to serve its customers who depend upon general aviation access to New York.”

Anderson told ShowNews that Sheltair has an “aggressive program” to add hangars and other enhancements at the New York facilities over the next 18-24 months. The company has launched a series of improvements at its facility at Long Island MacArthur Airport that includes upgrades to two hangars, customer parking and repaving of ramp and tiedown areas. The latest efforts bring to $1.1 million the amount invested into the company’s Islip FBO.

These investments come on the heels of Sheltair’s ongoing modernization of its 66,000-sq.-ft. hangar at Republic Airport in East Farmingdale, Long Island, one of the state’s busiest airports. Sheltair also plans to add 55,000 sq. ft. of hangar space at its Westhampton facility.

Expansion plans at FBOs purchased over the last year in South Florida continue as well, said Anderson. Sheltair acquired FlightLevel Aviation at Lakeland Linder Regional Airport (KLAL) in November 2014 and now operates out of a relatively new 3,200-sq.-ft. terminal with 54,000-sq. ft. of office and hangar space. The airport, which has an 8,499-ft. runway, is less than an hour’s drive from Disney World in Orlando.

In June 2015, Sheltair purchased Landmark Aviation’s FBO at Ocala International Airport (KOGF) and is operating from the existing terminal until the new facility is constructed in the fourth quarter of 2016. New development plans for Ocala include construction of approximately 10,000 sq. ft. of new hangarage and offices and securing additional space for commercial and aeronautical-use real estate development, Anderson said. Sheltair is at Booth C8816A.

Sheltair, Jet Aviation Sign Exclusive FBO Pact

In an effort to expand market share, Jet Aviation and Sheltair are launching a preferred partner alliance that will offer benefits to customers across their FBO networks in the U.S.

The aim of the alliance is to heighten FBO service through favored hospitality services, personalized interactions and additional rewards programs. The companies are sharing best practices and leveraging combined purchase power to provide customers with a better travel experience.

“We are delighted to partner with Sheltair to serve our clients with reciprocal privileges while providing the highest standard in the FBO industry,” said John Langevin, Jet’s FBO Operations VP for North America.

Partnering with Jet Aviation will enhance Sheltair’s U.S. operations. “Their legacy of success in the service business is one with which we are proud to be associated,” said Danny Walsh, Sheltair’s SVP, FBO Operations.

“We look forward to offering our customers consistent service and exceptional value through our best practices.”

Sheltair, a privately owned aviation development company, operates 16 FBOs in North America. It also manages over three million square feet of aviation related properties at 22 airports throughout Florida, Georgia and New York.

Jet Aviation, a wholly owned subsidiary of General Dynamics, was founded in Switzerland. The company has more than 25 facilities throughout Europe, the Middle East, Asia, and North and South America. Its European and U.S. aircraft management and charter divisions together operate a fleet of more than 250 aircraft. Jet Aviation is at Booths N5131 and C11216 and Sheltair is at Booth C8816A.

—Robert W. Moorman

A rendering of Sheltair’s FBO development in Farmingdale, New York

Photograph: Warren Kroppel —Robert W. Moorman
Million Air Continues Expansion Drive

Million Air continues to grow its FBO network through acquisitions and makeovers of existing properties despite the lackluster economic recovery.

Asked if business has improved over 2014, Million Air CEO Roger Woolsey says it depends upon the region and the health of the business of the aircraft operator. Fuel sales and takeoffs and landings have increased over the last year at some properties. Yet Million Air Dallas and Houston – two facilities supported by the oil and gas industry – remain flat.

“At Houston, the takeoff and landing counts are down 19% from 2014,” said Woolsey, which is contrary to what some trade publications report.

Nevertheless, the company, which owns, manages and franchises independent FBOs under the Million Air brand, continues to expand its network because of a strong belief by its upper management that the FBO business will continue to improve, albeit slowly.

Million Air’s operation at New York’s Westchester County Airport (HPN), now a wholly owned subsidiary, will soon undergo a massive upgrade to better serve customers and compete with the other FBOs on site, Signature Flight Support and Landmark Aviation.

“We are about to make a major capital investment at White Plains,” said Woolsey. “In the next 18 months, it [Million Air-Westchester] will be a completely different looking facility. We think it will be the premier FBO in the country.”

Perhaps. But the facility will certainly be able to better compete with the already-saturated Teterboro Airport. Westchester is around 33 mi. north of Midtown Manhattan.

“As Teterboro becomes increasingly saturated, and the message gets out to the aviation community, Westchester will be the preferred airport,” predicted Woolsey, who said the new Westchester facility will have a “big lodge feel to it, with a pitched roof and four fireplaces.”

Westchester has a noteworthy history. Two years ago, there were five FBOs at White Plains. Today, there are three. Signature purchased Jet Systems in 2013 and Landmark acquired family-owned and operated Panorama Flight Services. If the proposed acquisition of Landmark Aviation by Signature goes through, there will be only two FBOs on site.

Elsewhere, there is growth activity. Freeman Holdings Group, the largest Million Air franchise, unveiled in April a new FBO at Mississippi’s Stennis International Airport on the Gulf Coast, an hour’s drive from New Orleans. The $7 million facility includes a 7,500-sq.-ft. terminal, a 25,000-sq.-ft. hangar and 500,000 sq. ft. of hangar space. Million Air-Stennis has new pilot rest areas, theater, conference and planning rooms, and a full-service restaurant.

Freeman continues construction and remodeling of the $9 million facility at March Air Reserve Base near Riverside, California. The FBO includes a 5,000-sq.-ft. terminal with facilities for passengers and aircrews.

Meanwhile, Million Air-Dallas has added four new business aircraft to its charter/management fleet – a Global Express, Legacy 650, Challenger 604 and Citation Excel.

Million Air, founded in 1984 by the Mary Kay Cosmetics family, operates throughout the U.S. and Caribbean with 1,000 employees, and is at Booth N2521 here. —Robert W. Moorman

Epic and UVair Lend Fuel, Branding to Toronto FBO

Epic (Booth C6907) and UVair (Booth C10429) have been selected to provide fuel and FBO network branding to a new FBO now under construction at the Aerospace Center at Toronto Pearson International Airport. The facility will consist of 250,000 sq. ft. of hangar and office space and offer varied options for general and business aviation in and out of Toronto. The FBO is expected to open in stages, beginning in 2016, with full operation slated for early 2017. The Aerospace Center will be operated by Aligned Aviation Development Services and will carry the Epic and UVair network brands.
Wilson Air Center Takes Advantage of Good News

Wilson Air Center’s business is picking up, signaling that the economic recovery in this segment of business aviation continues. “All four of our bases are having the best performing year since the recession,” said VP Dave Ivey. “We are having an upbeat year.”

Wilson Air-Memphis, which comes in fourth place among the Wilson properties, typically, is first in growth and fuel sales this year. Average fuel sales at all bases combined is up roughly between 7% and 10%, with Wilson Air-Memphis up 20%, said Ivey.

Arrival of “new wealth” in Memphis accounts for part of the FBO’s upgraded status. Nearly 20 new business aircraft have been sold to operators in the city over the last 18 months and transit traffic and charter business is also up, said Ivey.

The “Delta Factor” is given as a principal reason why Wilson-Memphis is hot. After Delta Air Lines acquired Northwest Airlines in October 2008 it closed a number of its hubs, including Memphis, which forced passengers to travel out of Atlanta. That situation didn’t sit well with business executives, who needed more convenient and time-saving travel. The lack of available commercial services spawned renewed interest in business aircraft.

Wilson Air-Memphis has been opportunistic toward growth. When regional Pinnacle Airlines went bankrupt a few years ago and moved its Memphis headquarters to Minneapolis, it left 32,000 sq. ft. of hangar and office space, which Wilson immediately leased and refurbished.

Wilson Air-Houston is having an off year due mainly to the depressed oil and gas business, said Ivey. Other FBOs at William P. Hobby Airport also reported a downturn in business and cite a drop in the energy sector as the principal reason. Nevertheless, Wilson’s Houston facility soldiers on with the completion of an all-new Gulfstream G650 hangar, built specifically for a single tenant. However, construction plans for a new executive terminal and ramp have been “put on hold” until the FAA completes its construction study. Ivey expects restart of the project sometime in 2016 and it could include additional hangars.

Meanwhile, Wilson Air-Chattanooga remains the sole FBO at Chattanooga International Airport. There, Wilson integrates its operations with those of TAC Air, which the airport authority bought over a year ago. “We’ve honored all the TAC Air leases,” said Ivey. “The prices have not gone up,” as some industry experts speculated following the purchase.

In a related development that is likely to benefit Wilson Air-Chattanooga, West Star Aviation, a leading MRO serving business aircraft, announced plans in August to open a new facility on the airport. It will include a 20,424-sq.-ft. heated hangar with 28-ft.-high doors. The center will house administrative offices, engineering, avionics, cabinetry and an upholstery shop as well as storage for aircraft parts. An additional 15-acre site adjacent to the facility is also slated for expansion.

West Star COO Rodger Renaud said the expansion would allow it “to better serve East Coast corporate aviation flight departments.” It represents the first step in a five-year plan that calls for additional growth in the Chattanooga area, he added. The company plans to hire between 175 and 225 positions at its Chattanooga MRO. Wilson Air Center is at Booth C8532, West Star is at Booth N4421.

—Robert W. Moorman

Cutter Enhances Its MRO Operation

THE CUTTER AVIATION
FBO chain based in Phoenix is restructuring its maintenance department to better serve customers and enhance its marketability. Cutter appointed Mark Niehaus as VP of technical services in April 2015. He is responsible for all aspects of the MRO business in the company’s network.

In July, Cutter (Booth C7336) added John David Phillips as manager of aircraft services in Addison, Texas, and James Lorentzen as regional sales manager.

These appointments should surprise no one. Smaller chains are expected to enhance their operations in coming months with additional capabilities as a result of the restart of the consolidation of FBOs.

“As a smaller FBO organization in the ever-increasing consolidation frenzy, Cutter Aviation has the ability to make decisions and react quickly as opportunities become available,” said president and CEO Will Cutter. “We are also able to easily adapt to changing needs of customers very swiftly, unlike many larger organizations.”

Business has improved at Cutter’s FBO properties at Phoenix, Albuquerque, El Paso and Addison, Texas, where the company has maintenance, sales and charter operations. Several Cutter FBOs are renovating their interiors, according to Genaro Sanchez, director of marketing at its Phoenix headquarters.

Cutter’s contract fuel services unit got a boost this summer when it successfully bid for the Defense Logistics Agency (DLA) Energy Contract to be the U.S. military fuel provider for its FBOs at Phoenix Sky Harbor Airport and Albuquerque International Sunport.

—Robert W. Moorman
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Howard 500 Makes NBAA Debut
Bold, Brawny Bye-Bye to the Piston-Engine Era

Lots of heads turned when Ryan Mohr, chief pilot for Phillippi Equipment Co. of Eagan, Minnesota, landed “Lady of the Night,” one of the firm’s Howard 500 heavy twins at Henderson Airport on Saturday evening and moved it into the static display. It’s the first time that the historic aircraft has appeared at NBAA. Dee Howard’s masterpiece marked the bold end of an era when World War II piston-engine aircraft and their derivatives were the mainstays of the Fortune 500 fleet.

“I never get tired of flying it, it’s always a challenge,” says Mohr. “It has speed, power and you see a lot of scenery at typical cruise altitudes.” Mohr’s regular job is flying Boeing 737s for a major U.S. air carrier, so he’s accustomed to flying at 39,000 to 41,000 ft. “The Howard 500 also has excellent control harmony, nicely balanced control feel with manually actuated ailerons and hydraulically boosted rudder and elevator.”

Little more than a half-century ago, Leroy Grumman decided to challenge piston-engine business aircraft manufacturers by introducing the Gulfstream [later Gulfstream II], a clean-sheet, pressurized turboprop that could climb as high as 30,000 ft., cruise as fast as 280 to 300 kt. and fly as far as 2,000 nm at 250 kt.

Grumman’s move was a figurative slap in the face to Durrell Unger “Dee” Howard of San Antonio, the famed modifier and converter of surplus Lockheed twins. Most other heavy-piston twin modifiers threw in the towel, but not Howard.

In response to Grumman’s challenge, Howard launched development of a Lockheed PV-1 Ventura derivative, stretching the fuselage 48 in., adding larger-capacity wet wing tanks, fitting a couple of 2,500-hp Douglas DC-6 spec R-2800 radials, adding panoramic windows and cabin pressurization and converting the bomb bay to an underfloor baggage compartment. The resulting aircraft would cruise as fast as 335 kt. but it normally cruises at 200-265 kt. while burning 1,200 lb. per hr.

Howard believed he could sell the Howard 500 for $565,000, about half the cost of the Gulfstream. He was sure no one would pay more than $1 million for a business aircraft. But the Grumman ironworks was flush with cash from its military aircraft contracts, so it could push the Gulfstream into production four years ahead of the Howard 500. Its late entry into service wasn’t the Howard 500’s only handicap. It’s the most challenging aircraft ever flown by ShowNews, but that also makes it the most fun.

“It has the weight of a DC-3, but half the wing area and twice the horsepower,” Mohr says. “P factor on takeoff and very limited rudder authority at low speed mean you have to lead the power on the left engine over the right by 15 to 20 in. MAP to keep it on centerline. After speed increases and the rudders become effective, you can marry the throttles.” Then, acceleration is brisk through 98-kt., average rotation speed. The V2 one-engine-inoperative takeoff safety speed is 111 kt., but Mohr says there’s zero margin for error. The props have auto-feather, but the pump takes 10 sec. to move the blades to full feather, seemingly an eternity when the pilot is holding full opposite aileron and rudder until the aircraft begins to accelerate through 130 kt. At that speed or higher, the aircraft becomes much more controllable.

“Lady of the Night” has a distinguished history as the 12th of 17 Howard 500 aircraft that were produced. It originally was purchased from Dee Howard by Dr. Forrest Bird, who flew it himself for several years. Later it was sold to Duncan Baker, who used it in support of his oil company’s travel needs. Then it sat dormant in a hangar in the UK for a couple of decades. Howard 500 aficionado, collector and operator Tony Phillippi discovered the aircraft about eight years ago and immediately negotiated a purchase agreement. The aircraft has been even more of a project than Phillippi’s first Howard 500, N500HP. It was plagued with oil leaks, engine fires and several other major squawks.

After restoring the aircraft to superb mechanical condition, Phillippi had it painted and completely refurbished the cabin while retaining Dr. Bird’s original interior layout.

“My father cautioned me never to buy anything I wanted and never to sell anything I needed. When I first saw the big props of the Howard 500 through the hangar door, though, I was hooked.”

The Howard 500 is on display this week at Henderson Airport. Mohr beams when he talks about the aircraft, speaking about it as though it were a human member of his extended family, “I can’t give it too much attention or its big sister, N500HP [Phillippi’s other flying Howard], will get jealous.”

—Fred George
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The Bombardier C Series is exceeding performance guarantees by a significant margin, according to Bombardier Commercial Aircraft president Fred Cromer. Based on the flight-test campaign so far, both the CS100 and CS300 have about 10% more range than originally targeted, better payload and airfield performance and lower fuel burn.

Bombardier (Hall 2b, Stand G172) presented a CS100 in Swiss livery and with a passenger cabin and a CS300 at the Paris Air Show on Sunday in what it hopes will be a turning point for the program after years of slow sales and development hiccups. With the aircraft now here to show, Bombardier hopes that interest from airlines and lessors is about to pick up. Cromer said both the CS100 and CS300 are now coming in at a maximum range of 3,300 nm, around 350 nm more than originally planned. Bombardier is expected to reveal further performance details about the aircraft on Monday.

—Jens Flottau

CSeries Boosts Performance

Bombardier Commercial Aircraft’s new president, Fred Cromer, will be key to the future of the Bombardier CSeries. Charged with boosting sales, he is confident he can generate new orders, especially as performance proves better than expected.