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# JOURNAL

1<sup>st</sup> Quarter 2008



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## Man on a Mission

By David W. Almy

Sentient's Steve Hankin has been building a new service company offering retail charter, membership card (block) charter, and aircraft management services while the business and regulatory targets—and what works to hit them—have been moving rapidly. NATA recently caught up with Hankin between meetings on a busy afternoon to discuss what he's been doing and where Sentient is heading.



21

## Replacing Paper Schedules: Easy And Affordable?

By Paul Seidenman & David J. Spanovich

Automated scheduling of aircraft and crews has been making steady inroads in general aviation at FBOs, flight training organizations, charter operators, and corporate flight departments thanks to a wide range of off-shelf products that fit every budget and the growth of web-based hosting. This article explores several scheduling software products on the market today.



39

## President's Message

By James K. Coyne

7

## Inside Washington

By Eric R. Byer

11

## Safety Watch

By Russ Lawton

13

## Environmental Update

By Eric R. Byer and Kristen Moore

17

## 2008 NATA FBO Leadership Conference

30

## 2008 ACSF Safety Symposium

35

## NATA Safety News

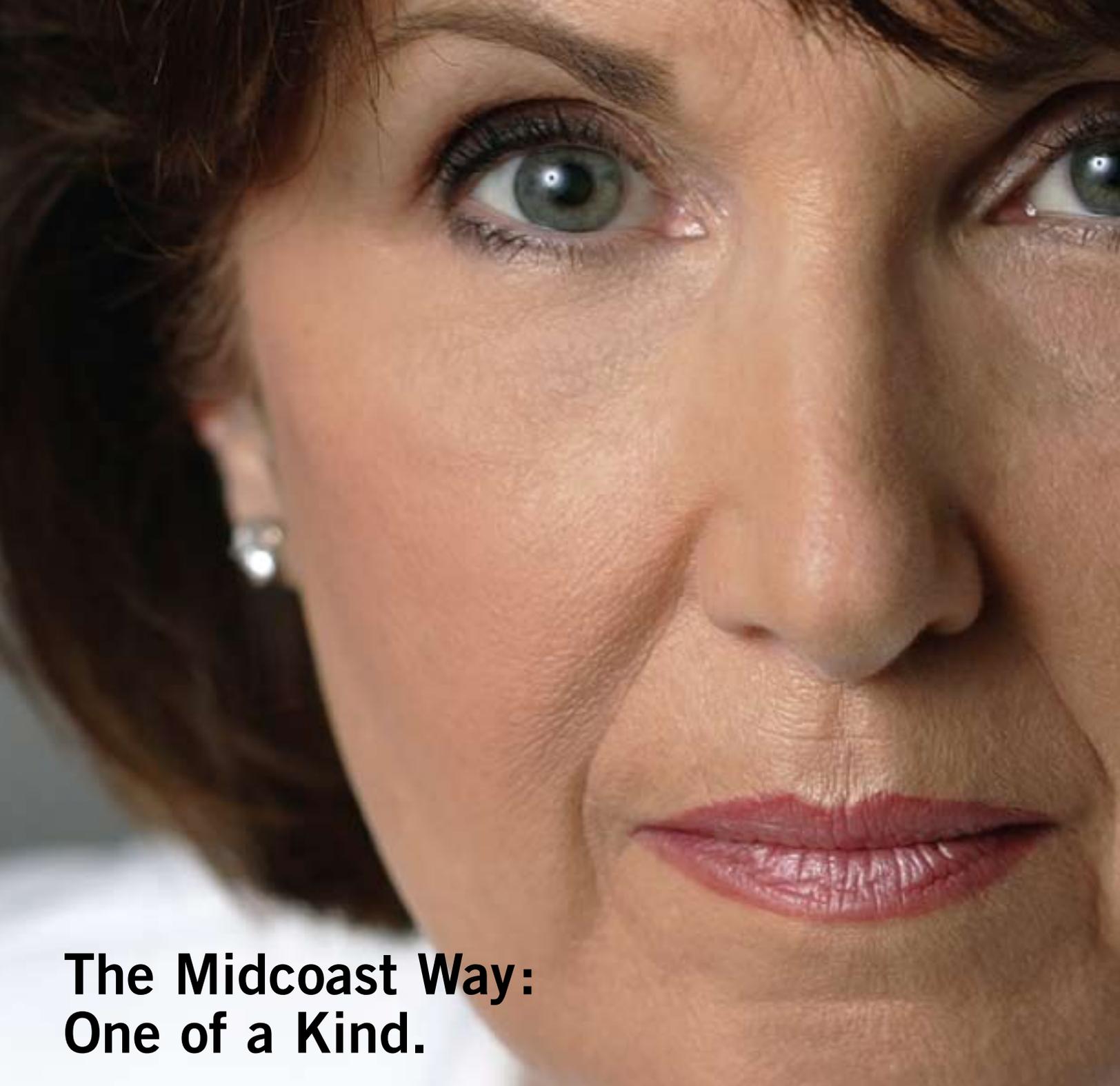
58

## New NATA Members

60

## Advertiser Index

62



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# A Crude Awakening: Fuel Prices 101

By James K. Coyne

**T**hirty years ago, I taught aspiring MBA candidates at the University of Pennsylvania's Wharton School of Business during the so-called "energy crisis" of the late '70s. From 1972 to 1980, oil prices climbed from \$3.60/bbl. to \$37.42/bbl., and the mass media responded with the usual hysteria: Rich countries were facing a new depression, the Third World would soon erupt in violence, mandatory car-pooling and gas-rationing laws were needed, and wood-burning stoves, windmills, and small cars suddenly became fashionable. Politicians weren't far behind, creating draconian price controls, vast new energy agencies, generous tax breaks for energy conservation, and regulations that made energy efficiency the duty of every citizen.

Here we go again. Since December 1998, the price of a barrel of crude has climbed from \$10.80 to \$109.36 (perhaps higher by the time you read this). No matter whether you're a buyer or seller of aviation fuels, these changes will have a fundamental effect on your business. Where are these prices headed, and how will your customers react to more expensive jet fuel and avgas? Are we again on the edge of a fearsome precipice?

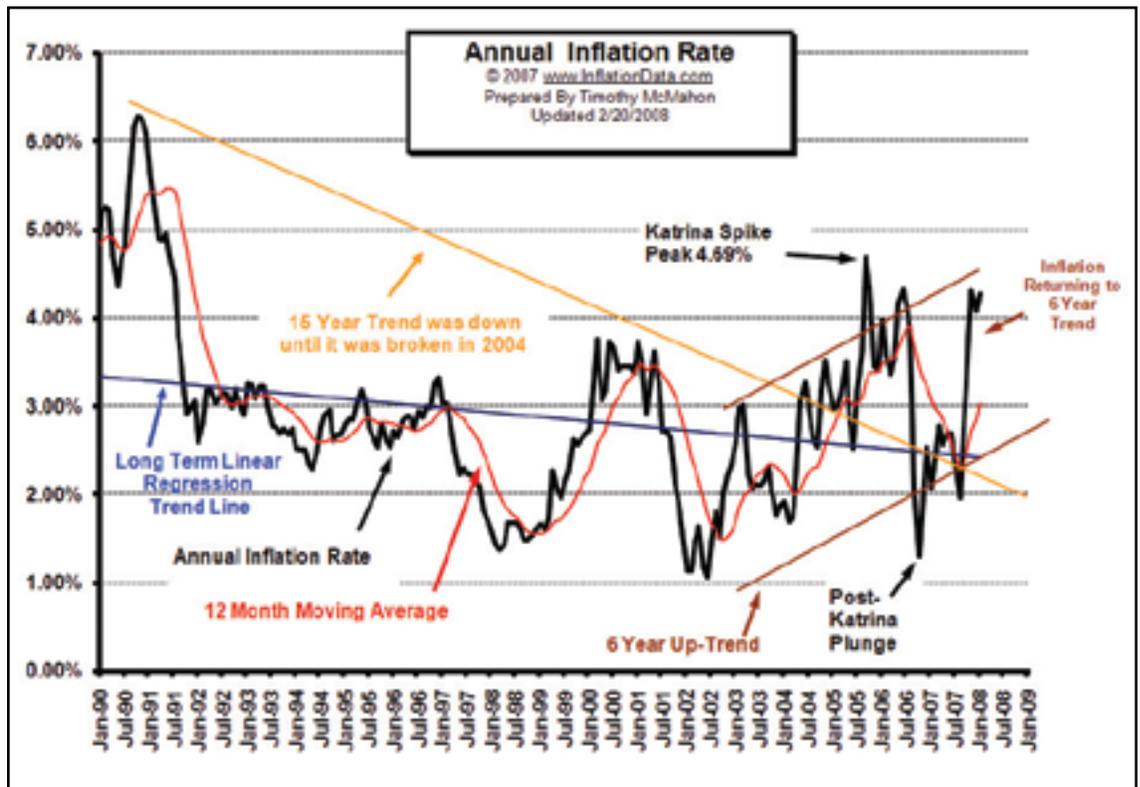
There's no doubt that we're on a wild roller-coaster ride, and although history suggests that what goes up will come down, oil prices undeniably are at an historic peak this spring, surpassing the previous inflation-adjusted 1979 level of \$104.06! But as I used to explain to my Wharton students, prices are merely messages—messages that come from the collective



wisdom of a vast, free market of buyers and sellers. Our job is to figure out what the prices really mean.

Fundamentally, the price of any commodity is telling you something about five key market factors: current supply, current demand, inflation, international exchange rates, and futures speculation. Usually, some of these factors are bullish and some are bearish, but when all five factors line up the same way, you have the kind of dramatic price increases

Continued on page 8



## President's Message

Continued from page 7

we experienced in the '70s and again today.

Most people assume that the first of these factors, supply, is the primary cause of oil price changes, but in fact, worldwide crude output is in pretty good shape and normally doesn't vary all that much. There are, of course, prophets of gloom who foresee an imminent worldwide drop in oil production, but oil experts are far more sanguine. The world uses about 86 million barrels of oil each day, and geologists estimate that 12 to 16 trillion barrels remain underground. If we can recover just half of these trillions, our oil supplies should continue to meet growing demand for many, many more decades, even if daily production levels off at 115 million barrels in 2017, as Cambridge Energy Associates predicts.

Still, supply is tight, and as in the '70s, war and international turmoil lead many speculators to expect further tightening. In addition, despite attempts by the current U.S. administration to increase domestic oil production, America continues to prevent oil drilling in areas with large, proven reserves. Furthermore, refinery capacity around the world is often not where it is most needed, which allows refinery shutdowns and other supply interruptions to affect regional pricing dramatically. But overall, the flow of oil continues to power our world.

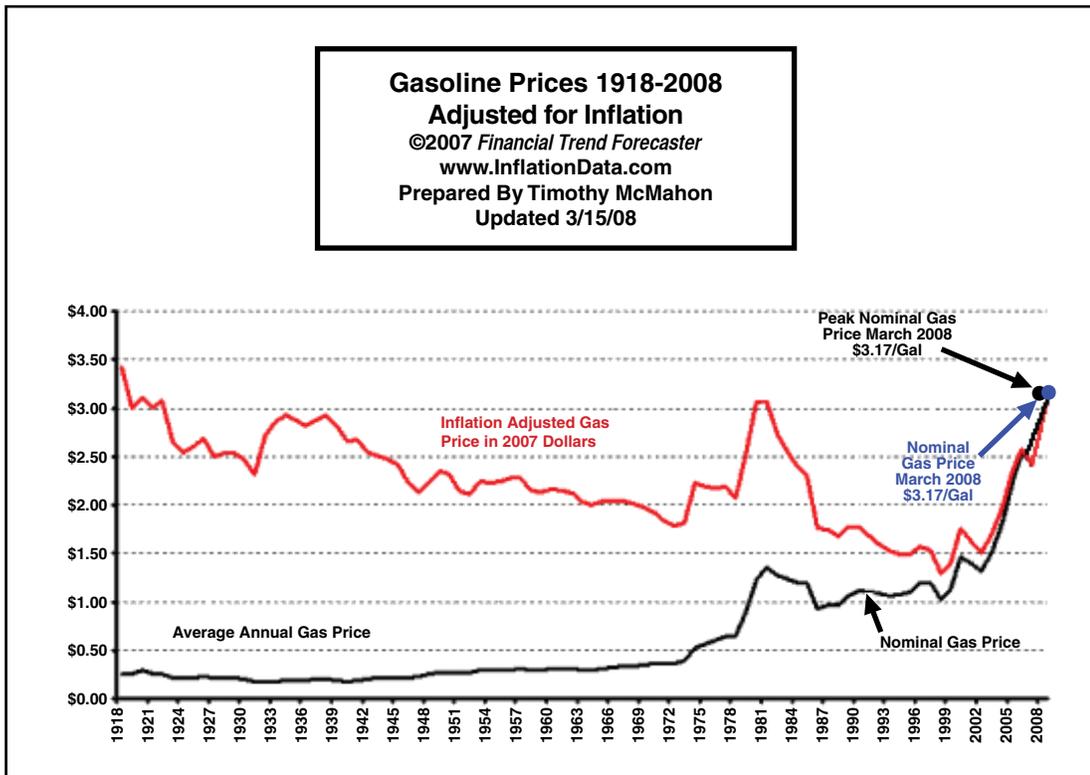
Demand growth is, in my mind, more impor-

tant, but there's no cause for alarm here either. To me, increasing oil consumption is not a bad thing because it reflects improving economic activity around the world, allowing more people to derive the benefits we all take for granted in this Energy Age. So far in the 21st century, worldwide oil demand has been growing at 1 to 2 percent per year, although obviously much faster in places like China where tens of millions of new middle-class energy consumers are being created each year as their nation's economy blossoms. At the same time, the developed world continues to get more and more economic output from each barrel of oil, so oil consumption in most western countries is flat. On balance, the increasing demand for oil is not of such a magnitude that it would, by itself, produce the rapid price increases we've seen recently.

Inflation was the biggest culprit in the '70s and no doubt plays a major role today. In fact, I bet you would be surprised to learn that for most of the past 90 years, the inflation-adjusted price trend for gasoline (as for other refined fuels) has been down, not up! **In 2007 dollars, the price of gasoline in 1999 was over 50 percent less than at the peaks in 1918, 1934, and 1980.**

Sadly, in 2008, commodity inflation is back with a vengeance. The price of everything from beef and bullion to copper and corn is at record or near-

record levels. After a 15-year downward trend, we've seen six years of increasing prices since 2002 (see chart), and who knows when it will end. Whether you blame Greenspan, Bernanke, too much credit, too little saving, the trade deficit, wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, affluent Asians, a spendthrift Congress, or a distracted President, it doesn't matter. The fact remains: Inflation has returned, and when it does, oil prices go up faster than most other prices because oil is a commodity that's more valuable than any currency. People with oil know how valuable it is and demand a big inflation premium when the world's curren-



cies lose their value.

To make matters worse, of all the world's currencies, the dollar is in the doghouse. A comparison with the Swiss Franc (a currency familiar to oil oligopolists around the world) tells the dramatic story: From 1946 to 1970, 1 dollar was worth about 4.3 Swiss francs. By 1980, it had fallen to 1.7 Swiss francs. Today, it is worth just 1 Swiss franc!

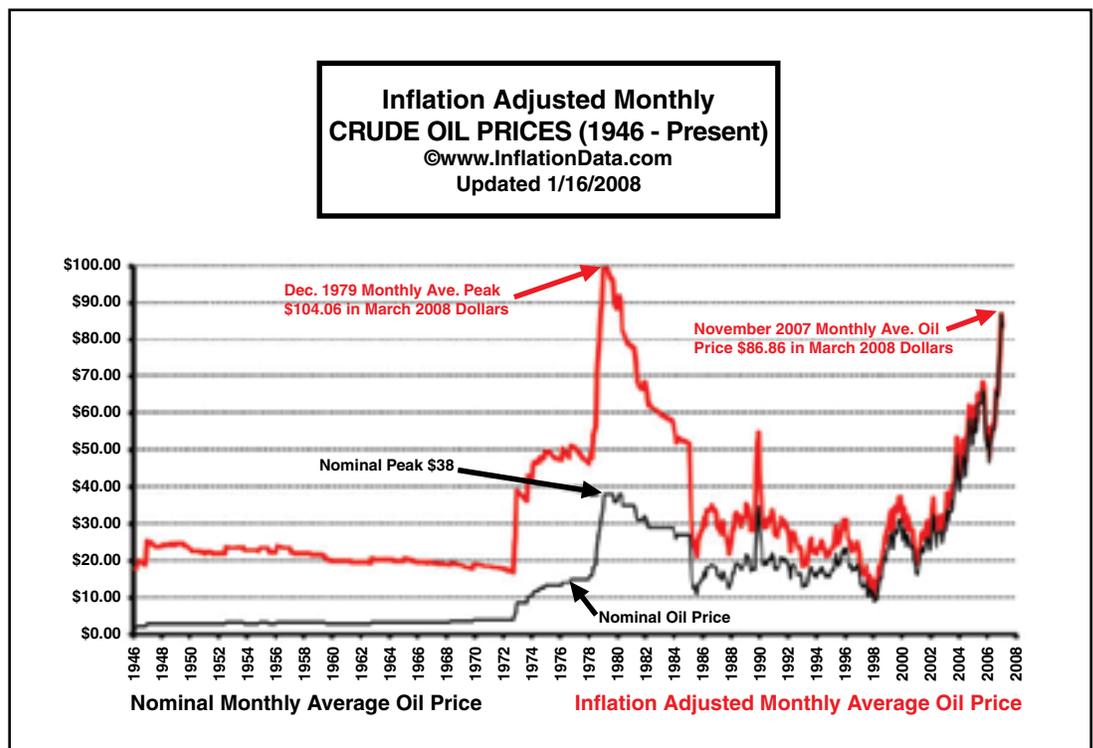
Therefore, anybody with lots of Swiss francs (or most other non-dollar currencies) doesn't feel that much pain when the price of oil (in dollars) goes up, if the dollar is falling against their own currency to a similar degree. Thus, their oil buyers are more willing to bid up the price for oil as long as the price is quoted in (cheap to them) dollars, and as a result oil gets that much more expensive for Americans.

These unfavorable dollar exchange rates, therefore, give oil buyers around the world a currency advantage over Americans as long as oil is priced in dollars. At times like these, when the value of the dollar is falling to new lows almost every day, the effect is dramatic. To us, oil price inflation is a crisis; to the rest of the industrialized world, it is merely an annoyance.

Finally, the price for oil is affected by speculators who essentially place bets that the price will go up (or down) based on their underlying predictions about how the other four factors (supply, demand, inflation, exchange rates) will behave in the future. If a speculator expects oil supplies to tighten, demand to rise, inflation to accelerate, or the value of the dollar to erode further, he might buy thousands of barrels of oil at a premium over the most recent price, confident that he can sell it several months hence at a much higher price. Sometimes, widespread speculative activity can convince the market that prices are never going to fall, creating a buying frenzy that pushes prices to levels that defy any rational justification. A "correction" is inevitable, of course, but in the meantime prices keep climbing and climbing.

Today's oil market is nearly hysterical, and it's sometimes hard to hear what the prices are trying to say. To me, though, the message is more about inflation and the weakness of the dollar than it is about the fundamentals of oil supply and demand. The inflation picture, however, has a significant speculative dimension, and I doubt that worldwide inflation can continue for long in the face of rapid growth of productive capacity, especially in Asia. Similarly, it's hard to imagine that the dollar can fall much further. Thus, if inflation, exchange rate, and speculative pressures on oil prices cool in the coming months, I hear the prices telling me that traditional supply and demand forces will meet market expectations and prices can then stabilize or perhaps even fall to 2006 levels. Existing war worries, coupled with nervousness in Venezuela, Africa, Russia, and elsewhere, ensure that oil geopolitics will always be a risk, but as long as guns and dictators don't block the flow of oil, we should see oil markets return to normal before long.

When they do, believe it or not, I predict that the historic trend of declining real energy prices over the long term will be reestablished. In the meantime, though it may be of little comfort the next time you fill up your plane, consider that things could be far worse: In Zimbabwe last year, oil prices rose (in the local currency) by more than 100,000 percent!





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# NATA Air Charter Summit—Take Two!

By Eric R. Byer

**G**enerally, I write my column about an issue or set of issues troubling our members. I even make the occasional prediction about presidential elections (e.g., Giuliani and Clinton winning the nominations) that end up making me look like the antithesis of Nostradamus.

However this time around, I would like to focus on the importance of an upcoming event. As most of you know, the 2008 NATA Air Charter Summit is June 9-11 at the Westfields Marriott in Chantilly, Va. This is the second time NATA will host this event, and it follows an incredibly successful launch last June at the Lansdowne Resort in Leesburg, Va. Operational control was the buzzword du jour in 2007 and provided lots of material over the two-day event.

This year's event looks even better, with the number of important issues confronting the Part 135 on-demand air charter industry on the rise. While operational control will still play a key role in the summit's agenda, the Large Aircraft Security Program, slated to be released in the May-June time-frame, will be of particular interest to those who operate aircraft weighing more than 12,500 pounds.

Should the proposed rule (which it will be, a far cry from the days of when interim final rules were the norm for the Transportation Security Administration) be released prior to the summit, Senior TSA officials will be at the event to describe the proposed rule and its impact on the Part 135, 91k, and 91 operators.



This year's summit also offers a forum for a number of other important issues, including ETOPS, a variety of legal issues, drug operations involving charter aircraft, and taxes. Association staff recently finalized the following preliminary agenda for the summit (below).

The 2008 NATA Air Charter Summit is a can't-miss event. Make sure you sign up soon, as we expect a large crowd in Chantilly. To learn more on the summit, visit [www.nata.aero/acs](http://www.nata.aero/acs). I look forward to seeing you in June!

## Preliminary Agenda

### June 9

7:00 - 11:30 a.m.

President's Golf Tournament

1:00 - 5:00 p.m.

Tour of the Stephen F. Udvar-Hazy Center

1:00 - 4:00 p.m.

Air Charter Safety Foundation Board of Governors Meeting (private meeting)

4:15 - 6:00 p.m.

Air Charter Safety Foundation Executive Committee Meeting (private meeting)

6:30 - 9:00 p.m.

Welcome Reception & Dinner

### June 10

8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.

Welcome and Keynote Speaker

FAA Regulatory Review

ETOPS: Are You Prepared to Meet the New Regulation?

The Telling Signs of Drug Running for Charter Operators (included with registration)

Emerging Legal Issues Confronting the Air Charter Industry

IC Check in the Real World: Operator Experiences

6:30 - 9:00 p.m.

Reception and Dinner  
Clyde's Willow Creek Farm  
Broadlands, Va.

### June 11

7:30 a.m. - 12:15 p.m.

ACSF Announcement of the Industry Audit Standard

The Green Movement's Impact on Part 135 and 91k

What Should Charter Operators Expect from Full-Service FBOs?

TSA's Increasing Presence in General Aviation



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# Developing Your SMS: One Bite at a Time

By Russ Lawton

**M**any who attend our Safety 1<sup>st</sup> workshops on developing a Safety Management System (SMS) tell us that they want to implement an SMS in their company but are perplexed about where to start. It all seems so overwhelming. This brings up the allegorical question: How do you eat an elephant? The answer: One bite at a time. The SMS elephant may seem overwhelming, but dividing the project into 10 bite-size chunks makes it more manageable and helps feeling overwhelmed. Those bite-size chunks for starting an SMS include the following 10 steps.

## Step 1 Identify and assign safety responsibilities to managers.

Safety does not “belong” to the safety manager. All company managers must take an active role to ensure the success of the company’s safety program. They should therefore be assigned tasks to assist in the company’s SMS development and ensure the SMS remains active in their departments. It should not become another document that gathers dust.

## Step 2 Identify the person responsible for implementing the SMS.

One person must be responsible for ensuring the SMS gets done. This does not mean one person will do all the work. (Although, if you’re the one doing it, you often feel like an army of one.) Every department must participate in the effort.

## Step 3 Describe the system.

In other words, document how you intend to manage safety in your company. Describe all your

company’s activities and how safety risk is evaluated, controlled, and monitored within each activity.

## Step 4 Conduct a gap analysis of existing resources compared to SMS requirements.

You probably already have a safety program in place but aren’t sure how it measures up against a full SMS. The only way to find out is to conduct a review (gap analysis) of your safety program against the SMS standard outlined in FAA Advisory Circular (AC) 120-92, *Introduction to Safety Management Systems (SMS) for Air Operators*. Don’t let the title mislead you; the SMS standard in the AC applies to any organization, regardless of whether you conduct flight operations, maintenance, or FBO operations.

We discussed how to conduct a gap analysis in *Mind the Gap* (ABJ, 2nd Quarter 2007) and provided a sample checklist. The gap analysis is an important tool to mark your progress and provides a sense of accomplishment. Send email to [safety1st@nata.aero](mailto:safety1st@nata.aero) for a copy of our gap analysis tool.

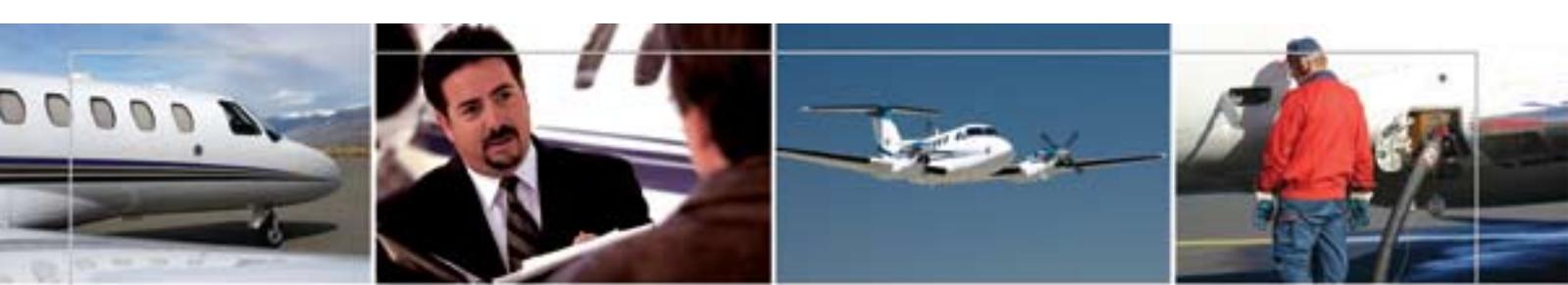
## Step 5 Develop an SMS implementation plan.

Put all your tasks on a timeline and post it for all to see. The plan should be initially based on a 12-month implementation schedule. While this schedule might be too aggressive for some companies, it propels both the momentum and enthusiasm to complete the implementation.

## Step 6 Develop documentation relevant to safety policy and objectives.

This step starts at the top in any organization. Top management must clearly document and communicate the company’s safety policy to all employees. This should include a commitment to provide resources and ongoing support for the safety management program. The policy should state what the company hopes to achieve by implementing an SMS.

Continued on page 15



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



## Safety Watch

Continued from page 13

### Step 7

#### Develop and establish a means for safety communication

Get the safety message out to all employees on a regular basis via newsletter, Internet, etc. You must also establish a non-punitive safety-reporting program that allows everyone to communicate hazards and near misses that could result in incidents or accidents.

### Step 8

#### Communicate the SMS implementation to all employees

Ensure that everyone understands what the SMS program is all about and what their role will be as it's implemented.

### Step 9

#### Develop an initial training plan for all employees

Everyone must be trained on how the SMS works and what their expected role will be within the SMS.

### Step 10

#### SMS implementation plan.

The person responsible for implementing the SMS assigns tasks within the company and monitors and communicates progress to everyone. A gap analysis should be conducted periodically (at least every six months) to document progress and give everyone a sense of accomplishment.

## Completion

When you've completed the initial development of your SMS, you should have the following documentation completed:

- Management commitment letter,
- Management responsibilities defined,
- Safety policy and objectives,
- Safety responsibilities for man-

agers defined,

- Results of gap analysis of your operational systems,
- SMS implementation plan for the entire organization,
- A letter or equivalent advising all employees of the SMS implementation, and
- SMS training plan for all em-

ployees.

Congratulations on completing the initial development. You're ready to move on to the next phase, which we'll discuss in the next issue. Until then, we've provided you a roadmap to get started—now go do it!



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By Eric R. Byer and Kristen Moore



# The Green Movement

Everyone is “going green” these days. We see ads and news clips for green cars, green light bulbs, and even green construction projects. We see the “Energy Star” on everything from computer monitors to refrigerators to our children’s toys. A day doesn’t pass that we don’t see something relating to environmental issues. But what do you hear about aviation? It seems that most of what we hear about aviation and the environment is bad news instead of good news. Aviation is often a major target of global warming, and sometimes it just doesn’t seem fair.

Here are just a few examples of recent news items or web clips.

- The carbon dioxide emissions from aircraft are contributing to global warming. The European Union has reported that greenhouse gas emissions from aviation have increased by 87 percent between 1990 and 2006. The union is considering taxation of air travel to bring some control over emissions.
- Corporate aircraft burn lots of fuel and carry few passengers. These aircraft get a great deal of attention, especially Al Gore’s jet.
- Proof of aviation’s impact toward global warming was reported to be “proven” by an analysis of the change in temperature in the three to four days following 9/11.
- The growth of aviation has also been reported to be a concern to environmentalists. The FAA was reported to have estimated that greenhouse gas emissions from domestic aircraft will increase by 60 percent by 2025. A petition was submitted to the EPA to take action.
- It is theorized that greenhouse gas emissions that occur higher in the atmosphere have a more significant impact toward global warming. This analysis included CO<sub>2</sub> and N<sub>2</sub>O at an altitude of 20 to 40,000 feet.
- It is theorized that contrails and water vapor could contribute to cirrus cloud formation and impact global warming.

What can we in aviation do about this? First, let’s get some facts straight.

- Aviation accounts for only 3 to 4 percent of the greenhouse emissions worldwide based on data from the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change.
- Data from the Department of Energy show that the supply for aviation gasoline and jet fuel accounts for 1,642,000 barrels per day. In comparison, the total amount of petroleum products is produced at a rate of 20,588,000 barrels per day. That corresponds to about 12 percent of total petroleum products. Other products such coal, natural gas, and wood/paper contribute to greenhouse gas emissions to reduce the net effect for aviation.
- Theories about high altitude CO<sub>2</sub> and N<sub>2</sub>O effects are just that, theories. We have seen no real scientific proof that this is significant.

Do the facts really mean anything when it comes to public perception? Often not, and in this case I would say definitely not! We in aviation have an uphill battle, but it’s one that is vitally important for us to fight. Other industries have successfully deferred public criticism; take the automotive industry for example. Unleaded gasoline is produced at a rate more than twice that of aviation fuels, and you would think the automotive industry would get more negative attention when it comes to global warming. Yes, we hear about gas-guzzling SUVs, and the sales of these large vehicles have slipped significantly over the last several years. Yet the automotive industry has produced numerous examples of small fuel-efficient and alternative-fueled vehicles that help defer the attention away from their lower-mileage models. Aviation must take advantage of opportunities of positive examples to show the public that our efforts are making a difference in the environment, or at least we are making a real effort to try to make a difference.

Continued on page 18

## Environmental Update

Continued from page 17

Several examples of environmental good news exist in aviation:

- Many corporate aviation facilities are purchasing carbon offsets to counter the use of jet fuel in their aircraft. A trading organization has emerged, the Chicago Climate Exchange, to buy and sell carbon-offset programs. A firm in California, Carbon Neutral Plane, offers a service to help set this up for corporations and other aircraft owners that are interested in carbon offsets.
- The aviation industry has made great strides in engine efficiency over the last several years. Today's jet engines burn much less fuel than they did 20 or 30 years ago, but the increase in passengers and the increase in number of aircraft far exceed any improvements in efficiency.
- Aircraft design also has improved fuel efficiency, and a good example is the wing-tip design. Winglets have been reported to save as much as 3 to 5 percent of fuel consumption.

There are several examples of alternative fuel programs:

- Virgin fuels, Boeing, and GE Aviation—This team, which includes a division of Richard Branson's

conglomerate, has produced a jet fuel mixture based on coconut oil. They successfully tested one of Virgin's 747s to fly a run from London to Amsterdam in February.

- University of North Dakota—This team has a \$5 million grant from the federal government to develop a cold weather suitable biofuel to be used by the military.
- University of South Dakota—This team has developed an ethanol-based fuel to replace avgas. The project has been ongoing since 1996, and they have tested the fuel in several aircraft, including a Cessna 180, a Mooney 201, and a Piper Seneca.

There is also a lot that each of us in aviation can do to join the effort. The NATA Environmental Committee is working on a program to make carbon offsets available to member companies. These typically are available for 3 to 4 cents per gallon and utilize the Chicago Climate Exchange for obtaining offsets. I think it is important for everyone to talk up the alternative fuels programs, and if an opportunity comes along to test one of these fuels, take advantage of it. Having a "green aviation facility" also means several other important environmental awareness programs are in place, including recycling (newspapers, aluminum cans, fluorescent bulbs, and used batteries). It is important to keep these recycling programs very visible because it makes it easier for customers, employees, and tenants to recycle materials, but it also demonstrates an awareness and concern for the environment. Green aviation facilities also mean proper environmental compliance, which includes Spill Prevention Control and Countermeasures (SPCC) Plans if you store fuels in above-ground tanks or refuelers. Also important are the storm water regulations that are typically permitted by the airport authority, but tenant facilities may have requirements for training, inspections, and reporting. Finally on the compliance front, be sure you are properly handling wastes at your facility to include waste fuel, waste oil, solvents, and any EPA hazardous wastes. NATA member resources are available to assist aviation facilities with compliance.

In summary, much of the recent environmental news about aviation has related to global warming. There are many theories as well as facts and programs that aviation professionals must be aware of. This article has presented just a few examples; there are many more out there. I encourage all of us in the aviation industry to become more aware and make every effort to become a green aviation facility.

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# Man on a Mission

**Sentient's Steve Hankin has been building a new service company offering retail charter, membership card (block) charter, and aircraft management services while the business and regulatory targets—and what works to hit them—have been moving rapidly.**

I've been here three years and eight months," Sentient CEO Steve Hankin said instantly in response to the question. "It's hard to believe that it's only been that long."

Hankin readily admits that he is not—genetically—an "aviation guy," like so many in the charter community. He came to Sentient from Starwood Hotels and Resorts (which includes the Sheraton, W, St. Regis, and Westin hotel chains, among others), where he was the chief marketing officer and president of Starwood's technology and revenue systems division. Before Starwood, Hankin was with McKinsey & Company, the high-octane international consulting firm, where he began his career after receiving an MBA from Darden and a BS from Wharton. But upon his arrival at Sentient three and a half years ago, Hankin found he had to tackle a few new challenges.

NATA caught up with him between meetings on a busy afternoon in March.

"It was at that point a \$65 million membership company that had a very mixed reputation," Hankin said. "It wasn't growing at all, but it had a couple things going for it.

"It had an interesting product to sell. Even back then, people said that if we got service and safety right, it actually was a pretty good product and they would like it. The other thing we had was a great head of sales. He's one of the few employees on the senior level who are still around. Once we got him something to sell, the thing took off."

**But was Sentient's business model correct—essentially selling block charter contracts under Sentient's brand name and standard of safety and service?**

"Yes. Fundamentally, at a very high level, it was

Continued on page 22

By David W. Almy



## Hankin Interview

*Continued from page 21*

correct. People wanted to pay a fixed hourly rate they knew in advance only for live [i.e., flight] time. And they wanted guaranteed availability. If you look at Sentient and what the fractional providers offer—the delivery of what the consumer gets and where supply comes from—it was the same product: guaranteed availability, fixed pricing, a national brand.

“Sentient just got its supply from a non-captive fleet rather than a captive fleet.

“To the extent that the consumer has said that they like to pick up the phone, call, and have someone be responsive and the plane shows up on time without a lot of ‘I’ve got to go find a charter operator’ or ‘I’ve got to figure all that out.’ Well yes, I do think the consumer likes it. And they continue to like it.”

### **Which isn't to say that Sentient hasn't changed its approach over the last several years.**

“There are lot nuances of the program that we've changed a lot—our service level, the quality of the fleet, how we made decisions on which jet we dispatched—all of those things are fundamentally different in their execution today than they were in the beginning. Back then it really was a ‘best position jet’ and if we found something, you got it. And that, in retrospect, the client doesn't want. Clients do have preferences, and while we aren't trying to be jet specific, we are selling to meet clients' expectations. So if they don't want a Lear and we send them a Lear three times in a row, we're not going to keep them for very long, so we've learned a lot about service delivery.”

### **Of course, Sentient's competitors are chasing the same target markets, with many of the same logistical and management challenges.**

“I think that if you'd gone back three and a half years ago and I'd walked in the door and said, ‘Well, we're going to compete head-on with the fractionals,’ people in the industry would have looked at us and said ‘You're crazy.’

“And I think understanding our client base today is not the easiest. We clearly have a large number of clients who've come out of fractional and said they don't want to put capital at risk. But they do want to feel really good about the service and safety program that we have in place today, and they love us. I think that phenomenon would have been a surprise if the industry had looked at it, particularly given the size and magnitude of our client base today.

“It's just easier to call us. I think we're really good at service delivery, and people like it. We have clients from both sides, and I think honestly the client base in the industry has evolved over time, in that people really do have multiple solutions today. We don't have a lot of clients who just say, ‘I'm yours. That's it. I'm not touching anything else.’ I think the client today is fairly sophisticated.”

### **Is the market mature or growing?**

“I think that you would have to conclude that the market is mature today, although it's still growing. I think the char-

*Continued on page 24*





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## Hankin Interview

Continued from page 22

ter and fractional industry is growing somewhere between 5 and 10 percent. That's kind of what my gut says about where the industry is growing. It's probably closer to five or six percent as an industry right now. I think last year or earlier in 2007, it was growing more in the 10 to 12 percent range. I think the industry has a lot more growth opportunity, but I don't think we've figured out how to capture that yet."

**Hankin tracks the economy, and thus his markets, "every minute" to get the best sense of what lies ahead, and what lies ahead is not always self-evident.**

"Here's the challenge, and our investors ask us this every day, as you can imagine. We had a very good February with our fleet, probably the best month we've had, and we continue to grow at a rate far faster than the industry. But because the company is so different than it was a year ago, it is very hard to [define benchmarks] to know the impact of the economy on Sentient. In certain parts of our

**"The aviation industry has always had a lot of people who loved being here because they loved the smell of aluminum. They'd get an idea and get something going, but growing it beyond small is very hard to do, as I've learned. Even in the last year there have been a number of people who have professed to be really big players in an industry that throws them aside very easily because it is a very difficult operating environment."**

business, I think you can clearly see it. Although our growth is still quite strong, you can see that it has come down some. But overall the fleet flew more hours in February than it has since we put it together. So we had a very good February."

**Do you have a sense of what percentage of the hours flown are flown for personal reasons and what percent are flown for business?**

"I'd say 60 percent business. You know where you can see the effect of the economy? I think you can see it on the holidays since last November. To me the economy changed mid-November, if you look at the numbers. Thanksgiving, Christmas and New Years, Presidents Day—all were off of where they should have been. In contrast, the Super Bowl was

huge, but outside those peak days, which are more leisure, you haven't seen as much softness."

**Sentient has been on a buying spree recently, building its own captive fleet. When you walked in the door, how many airplanes were in the fleet in any form?**

"Zero. Here is how it evolved, and it has evolved a lot in both its nature and how we think about it. When I started we had no aircraft dedicated solely to us. We just bought into the market. As we grew, we began to see that that was going to be an issue, and we moved to get jets that were dedicated to our operation. And today about one-third of our flying is done in jets that are not on our certificate, but are essentially only flying for us by contract. So that was really the first big change. When I was first hired there was a notion of buying an operator. And about a year later we bought our first operator, Atlantic Aviation Flight Services. And the idea behind that was to learn how it affected our economics: how did we think about it, did it impact service, all

those things that we wanted to understand better. And it turned out in retrospect to be a good idea. Though much harder to do than we anticipated, and I have some empathy for being an operator."

**How many planes in that first acquisition?**

"We began with 13 and grew it to 22, which at that point was actually record success. Not many people can grow a certificate that size that rapidly. And we learned a lot. We were looking at some other acquisitions when the whole Jet Direct deal came to fruition. And

that was not even a year ago. At that point, we had about 20 planes, and they had 110 and had yet to really consolidate any of it. It was just six or seven, not random, but geographically dispersed operators in important markets, but how to integrate that had not been figured out at all. We spent six months where I probably spent 75 percent of my time trying to figure out how you integrate. We sat down with the FAA and said basically if we're going to be a 150- to 200-aircraft operator, that's very different than bringing together 10 plane operators. And we threw away everything that had been done. Everything! And we said, 'How do you [consolidate many certificate holders into one and] build a premier,

Continued on page 26



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## Hankin Interview

Continued from page 24

safe, 150- to 200-aircraft operation?" It's a very difficult task that had never been done before, other than on the fractional side and certainly in a different way.

"So we started that process late last summer, and since then, every single thing that we planned has happened on time and on schedule, even to this week when we have a major merger of two certificates going on—right on schedule.

### **Then came TAG/AMI and a unique opportunity.**

"The big shift obviously came with TAG. TAG really forced us to think about the business differently, in that they additionally were in the aircraft management business. When we acquired Atlantic, we had [been introduced to aircraft management], but we had taken that business and separated it into pieces. But TAG really taught us a lot more about being an aircraft manager. We took the path that said we're

**"Sentient's owners thought that there was an interesting opportunity in the market, and they invested heavily in building out a pretty seasoned team to run it. In fact, on the non-operating side, the non-regulatory side, the team is still the same as it was when we brought them in three years ago. And it's a very seasoned team, which is why I think in the end we've been successful in growing to where we are today—because we haven't had to constantly upgrade the team subsequent to that."**

an aircraft management company and if you bring your plane to us, we're going to manage it, and our fleet, and if you want charter, we'll put it on charter, but the fleet is not here for any other purpose and you own it. Which I think is different than the perception in the market of what EJM does and that is a captive fleet for other products.

"We are, today, independently an aircraft management company and a jet membership company and a retail charter company. Those businesses stand on their own. The fact that we source jets from ourselves is helpful, but it is not why we're in the aircraft management business. We're in the aircraft management business now to be the leading aircraft manager. And we think a lot about why someone should want us to manage their aircraft."

### **Although Atlantic was the first acquisition, there have been several since at a breathtaking rate.**

"Atlantic was first, then Jet Direct actually bought us, but before they bought us they had acquired six operations and their six certificates. They included Presidential in Florida, Summit in Farmingdale on Long Island, JetDirect in Chester County, Jet Corp in St. Louis, Spirit in Van Nuys, California and Regal in Dallas, which was six. They bought us [along with the former Atlantic], which gave them seven.

"Then we bought TAG, Air Group, Southwest Jet in Scottsdale, and Sunset Aviation in Nevada, Calif. So it was 11 companies plus the membership companies, so 12 companies were put together to [create Sentient as it is today]."

### **So, are you done?**

"I'm tired. You know I can honestly tell you that there is nothing in the pipeline right now. And our focus is clearly on building one single company with one brand and one way of operating. And we're making a lot of progress. You know I think that people didn't expect it to succeed, and if I had to do this ten times I'm not sure I could make it succeed ten times. But I think people now see that we're past the point of no return and have executed really well. I'm really, really proud of how we've executed. There's always going to be noise, but by the end of March, half our aircraft will be on one certificate. Everything from TAG will be done, and

we will have that operating on a certificate that I believe is arguably the best certificate in the United States.

"Those 12 certificates, consolidated, represent nearly 300 aircraft in the fleet, with about a third characterized as managed."

### **Where does safety fit in Sentient's priorities?**

"You know I think safety is easier to talk about and harder to do. It is a deep, deep, deep-seated passion of mine, and it started early on during the first winter when all those accidents occurred. I remember sitting in our command center and thinking that my brother was on one of our planes, and I just said 'Boy.'"

"So we were very lucky that [former FAA Administrator] Jane Garvey was involved with the compa-

ny. I called Jane and said, 'How do I get my hands around this?' The first person she introduced me to was Greg Phillips, who was a former lead investigator for the NTSB, and Greg told her that he would not meet with me, as I was 'just a broker.' But Jane convinced him to meet with me. If you don't know Greg, he's just a gem. He is a consistent professional with an impeccable reputation, and we sat down in New York for half a day. At the end of the day, he said, 'Ok. I'll work with you.' And it was really eye-opening. My first year here I probably spent half my time with him, just learning how to think about safety, learning about what a safety culture is, how you make decisions, how you draw the line. I think we've been really pioneering in it.

"We formed an independent safety advisory board that still operates autonomously today. It's a mirror. That's all it is, a mirror looking right back at Sentient. But it's a mirror of people who are not inside the company, are not bound by anything that we do, with no financial relationship with us, who just represent real expertise.

"When we started building the operation, especially last summer, the question became 'How do

we run the best operation in the industry?' And by "in the industry" I mean the broader aviation industry, because as [NTSB Vice Chairman Robert] Sumwalt says, we expect an equivalent level of safety. And we've put together a team that has both the expertise and the culture. There is no question where we draw the line."

**Would it be fair to say a euphemism for culture could be attitudes?**

"You know it is somewhat attitude, but this is walk the walk. This is unequivocal, no uncertainty. Every fork you take in the road, you make the decision that costs more and is clear and unequivocal. It's a commitment to doing what is right from a safety standpoint.

"As one example, in our flight attendant program, are they going to be crew members or not? Are they going to be trained to standards of commercial airline flight attendants, where they're crewmembers? How many people would make that decision if a flight had to go and a flight attendant wasn't up to speed? There are a lot of nuances every day where you can make a decision that yields better economics.

Continued on page 28

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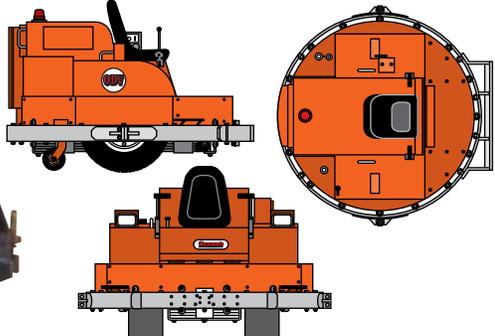
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## Hankin Interview

*Continued from page 27*

“As another example, we had a mechanical problem with one plane, and it turned out that it happened a lot on this type of plane. Well, when we learned about it, we grounded the fleet. We were the only ones in the industry that did it. And we just said we’re not flying, we’re not comfortable. So you know I’m not a pilot, and I recognize that I’m not a pilot, but I’m a real student about building a safety culture, and it’s real here; it is.”

### **Do you think some safety decisions made by other charter operators are for short-term economic benefit rather than long-term safety benefit?**

“The fact is that we can afford to do things today that we couldn’t afford to do when we were a ten-plane operator. We spent a million dollars writing new manuals with a commercial aviation consulting firm that is certified to do 121 startups. It’s a million dollars. That’s a lot of money to write manuals so that we would have the most sophisticated manual suite that was at the core of how we operate and to adopt the processes in the commercial world that are not unlike a 121 operation.

“You know, you’d like to see everyone have an SMS. You know, we did it. We didn’t have to. No one said we had to. You look at ATOS [the 121 world’s Air Transport Oversight System]. It requires us to audit our aircraft every year. Do you have to have an independent group of people go out and audit the records on every single aircraft? We believe it’s the right thing to do.”

### **If you think there’s an economy of scale that kicks in that facilitates more successful charter businesses, is 300 aircraft a sweet spot or is the sweet spot at another level?**

“I think we certainly are at the point where we can afford to do what we want to do and realize the economic gains from it. Now, if we add another 50 aircraft, once we’ve built the infrastructure, is it economically a clear win? Yes. I think we’re certainly beyond the point that we had to get to, but it’s been expensive. I mean, honestly, when people come here and see the infrastructure, it surprises them. It surprises everybody when they come here.

“You know, we have a full-time security person now. We believed that we needed to. Given all the places we operate around the world, it was what we needed to do, and we certainly couldn’t have done that if we were smaller. It is very important to me.

“We’re not saying we’re more safe [than everyone else]; we’re not saying you know that [everyone has] to do it this way.

“We’re saying that this is what we wanted to do and what we believe is important. It doesn’t mean that we’re not going to have an accident. Bad things

happen to good companies but, if we ever have one, I want them to look at it and say it’s a very good operation and they had an unfortunate mistake.”

### **How is your relationship with the FAA?**

“It’s great. Now, a lot of people say we got favored treatment. I think what a lot of people didn’t know is what we committed to on our side six months ago and how far we were down that process. So when TAG came along, we had a lot of the infrastructure in place; we were nearly done. So we had the resources available to us. If it had happened four months earlier, we would not have done the TAG deal. We would not have been capable of doing it.”

### **Timing is everything...**

“It is, and if it had happened 90 days later, it would have been a lot easier to do if it had gone on our core certificate. But working with the FAA is about establishing credibility, and we’ve worked very hard at establishing credibility by what we’ve done. Our relationship is based on a deep understanding of the quality of the work that you have to do to gain their confidence. And that’s what we did.”

### **When you talk about the FAA, are you talking about your POI, FAA headquarters, or both?**

“It is a relationship with our FSDO at the region level and in Washington.”

### **So across the board?**

“Across the board. I don’t think you can run a 300-plane operation without Washington being aware of it. But our relationship there was built on what we philosophically wanted to do. And they embraced it. I think that’s very important because we came to them with “here’s a picture of what we’d like to build” and they said, ‘Ok, if that’s really what you’re going to do, we’ll support you in doing that.’”

### **Over the next 12 months, what are your three greatest challenges?**

“I think that one is to completely gain the remaining trust that we need with the aircraft owners, especially from TAG, who really enjoyed the service level at TAG and want to continue to see that. I think we owe our owners the fruits of the work that we’ve done and the frustration that we’ve put them through. [Our managed aircraft owners] didn’t bargain on consolidation, or in TAG’s case, they didn’t expect to lose AMI, so I think that my first priority is to really ensure that our service delivery to our owners meets expectations and we gain the remaining part of the trust that we’re a long way toward gaining. But we still are early in the process, and they are still waiting to see attitude. It’s a very important accomplishment for me. That’s number one.

“Two is, I think, that we have brought together a lot of employees on a very rapid basis, and we owe them a company they can be proud of. I’m determined to build that company for them. There’s a lot of pride at TAG and a lot of the other legacy companies, and I want them to be proud of the company that they are a part of today. So that’s my number-two priority.

“My number-three priority is to continue to deliver the growth and economic success that our investors expect.”

**And you think there are still some legs left on the growth side?**

“I think there’s a lot of legs left for us. I think the growth opportunity for us today is as good as it’s ever been. I expect the company to continue to grow at a very good clip. We still have not really gone outside the U.S., and I’d like to see us do that. There are still good opportunities in the U.S., and there are other products in aviation that I’d like to see us get into. I think mid-year this year, when everything’s done and we’ve settled down and we’re starting to run the company the way I’d like to see it run, you’ll see us start to reach out and start to plant some more seeds.

“I’ll put it simply. It is a monumental accomplishment to get to where we’ve gotten. But I think now that I’ve gotten here, the infrastructure and the quality with which we aspire to do things really set us up to be a leader in the industry, and I want to continue to see us do that.

“I think that we want to be a great company in

the industry, and we want people to really respect what we’ve done. We’ll continue to grow with that.”

**So, have you developed even the slightest love for the “smell of aluminum” in the last three years?**

“I have. But I’ve been told, by the way, that the fact that I do not have pie eyes for airplanes is one of my greatest strengths.

“You know I love the service business. I’ve always loved service businesses, and I don’t know what I did as a child to deserve this torture. But I do love service, and I think it’s very hard to be great at it. This is the hardest service job I’ve ever had in my life. It’s a very sophisticated product; it’s very complicated. It’s a customer base that has enormous expectations and I like that. You know there are a lot of parts of the company now that I am really proud of where we are. We manage more Gulfstreams than anybody in the world. We manage more Falcon jets than anybody in the world. And I’m beginning to learn the iron side of this. When we have a great crew with a spectacular aircraft that does a great trip for an owner or someone else, I take enormous pride in it.

“I indulged myself and took a trip on one of our Challengers with the owners back from Aspen to New York recently, and it’s a nice aircraft. You can see how people really like to do that. It’s not a bad ride. But I love it when we really deliver. We have a very, very sophisticated service delivery operation here, and when it runs well, it’s really a pleasure to see. So in that regard, yes I love aluminum.”





# 2008 NATA FBO LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE



**S**everal hundred FBO leaders gathered in Dallas, Tex., in late March to exchange information and business intelligence at the 2008 NATA FBO Leadership Conference. Held adjacent to the Aviation Industry Expo in the Dallas Convention Center, the conference's 16 informational sessions covered a wide range of topics of interest to FBO managers. Key among the issues discussed were improving FBO management, the state of the economy, the effect of rising fuel prices on aviation service businesses, and industry consolidation.

Among the featured speakers were James D. "Murph" Murphy (in flight suit), founder and chairman of Afterburner, Inc.; Mark Chambers (bottom left), managing partner, Aviation Resource Group International; Jodie Brown (bottom center), president, Summit Solutions; and William D. O'Grady (bottom right), chief global investment strategist, A.G. Edwards & Sons, with NATA President James K. Coyne.

The continued growth of the major chains (estimates of the latest worldwide base counts has Signature at 105, Atlantic at 68, Landmark at 41, Millionaire at 32, Jet Aviation at 25, TAC Air at 12, SheltAir at 11, Cutter at 8, and Elliott at 4, to name just a few) is not expected to end anytime soon, with the influx of foreign capital and favorable exchange rates driving the acquisition pace for larger operators.

NATA distributed five major awards during the annual Industry Excellence Awards Breakfast. The awards recognize individuals, offices, and organizations demonstrating excellence in their field and the highest level of customer service to the general aviation community. NATA gives the awards annually to exceptional individuals and organizations that have helped improve the general aviation community.

Headlining the awards ceremony was former Washington Redskins quarterback Joe Theisman (top and left) who spoke passionately



about the certainty and challenge of change. Following are the award recipients:

Ray Fitzgerald (top row, left), vice chairman and director of Landmark Aviation, received the William A. Ong Memorial Award in honor of Bill Ong, NATA's co-founder and its first president. The award is given for extraordinary achievement and extended meritorious service to the general aviation industry.

Mike Sweeney (top row, right), chairman and CEO of USAU, the world's largest aviation underwriter, received NATA's Distinguished Service Award, honoring outstanding service and ongoing contributions to the industry.

Greg Coile (2<sup>nd</sup> row, left) of Business Jet Access, based in Dallas at Love Field, received the ATP/NATA General Aviation Service Technician Award for exceptional performance of a licensed airframe and powerplant mechanic or radio repairman who has practiced his craft for 20 or more years.

Ray Bishop (2<sup>nd</sup> row, right), the director/CEO of the Jackson Hole Airport in Wyoming, received the Airport Executive Partnership

Award, which recognizes an airport manager for outstanding efforts to nurture the relationships between aviation businesses and airport operators.

Matt Thurber (3<sup>rd</sup> row, left) received NATA's Aviation Journalism Award, which identifies a journalist, writer, or publication that excels in consumer education or editorial support beneficial to the FBO/air charter industry.

NATA's own Amy Koranda (3<sup>rd</sup> row, right) received a surprise Employee

of the Year honor from Coyne for her exemplary work on behalf of safety at NATA-member companies.

Two NATA directors were thanked for their service: outgoing board member Mike Grossman, president of Castle Air at the Akron Canton, Ohio, airport, and former NATA Chairman Reed Pigman, president of TexasJet at Meecham Field in Fort Worth, Tex.

"Change Is in The Air" was the topic of a well-attended session (bottom, right) moderated by Coyne and including Bernard Carroll, senior vice president of the Macquarie Group; Traver Gruen-Kennedy, vice president of DayJet; Craig Sincock, president and CEO of Avfuel; and David Vaughan, vice president, Xjet.



# The *Business*



**T**hat business aircraft fly like “homesick angels” is due in large measure to the aviation service businesses that support them.

It is, after all, the NATA member FBOs, flight schools, maintenance and repair organizations and GA airports that employ the good folks on the ground who make it possible to get off the ground.

These aviation service businesses make business aviation work.

O R T A T I O N      A S S O C I A T I O N

# of Business Aviation

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

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

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# Developing a Healthy Safety Culture



**T**he Air Charter Safety Foundation (ACSF) recently hosted more than 100 members of the on-demand and shared aircraft ownership industry at the first Air Charter Safety Symposium. ACSF held the symposium, “Developing a Healthy Safety Culture,” in cooperation with the National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) at its Training Center in Virginia, and it devoted two days to learning how to implement, achieve, and maintain a healthy safety culture.

The 2008 Air Charter Safety Symposium attracted industry leaders as well as top safety experts eager to share their knowledge and experience. NTSB Member Robert Sumwalt delivered the keynote address and expressed his deep appreciation to the foundation and those in attendance for having the commitment to lead the industry toward a culture of continuous safety improvements. Sumwalt not only delivered a pow-

erful opening for the symposium, he also saw so much value in the scheduled sessions that he attended the day’s full slate of presentations.

Other speakers highlighted how the emergence of Safety Management Systems is being managed internationally, provided an overview of the Part 135 on-demand safety record and an examination of the sick safety culture that existed at the National Aeronautics and Space Administration, riveted the audience, and had many furiously taking notes.

Successfully developing a healthy safety culture takes time, commitment from the top down, and ongoing reflection. While giving the audience the information necessary to begin a safety culture revolution, the ACSF Executive Committee and Board of Governors wanted the symposium to not focus solely on theory, but to also provide attendees with the ability to begin making safety

Continued on page 36

NATA Chairman and Jet Solutions LLC President Dennis Keith (below) was among the presenters at the first annual Air Charter Safety Foundation Symposium, held (above) at the NTSB Training Center in Ashburn, Va., in February.



## Developing a Healthy Safety Culture

Continued from page 35

improvements right away. The second day of the symposium provided just that and offered an explanation of practical steps that any operator could implement immediately to have a positive effect on safety.

The success of the Air Charter Safety Symposium is a clear affirmation that the industry is willing and eager to embrace the safety-mindedness that will elevate on-demand air charter and shared aircraft ownership to the next level of success.

If you were unable to attend this year, you can still benefit from the knowledge of our well-respected speakers. All speaker presentations are available for download at [www.acsf.aero](http://www.acsf.aero). A website user registration (free of charge) is all that's required for you to explore the wealth of safety knowledge that was shared.

Planning for the 2009 Air Charter Safety Symposium is already underway. Mark your calendar now for February 24 and 25, 2009. The NTSB has graciously welcomed the ACSF back to their Training Center in Ashburn, Va., and we look forward to another successful event at this top-notch facility.

To learn more about the Air Charter Safety Foundation or to become a member, visit [www.acsf.aero](http://www.acsf.aero) or call (888) SAFE-135. 



Participants in the 2008 Air Charter Safety Foundation Symposium included (clockwise from above) National Transportation Safety Board Vice Chairman Robert Sumwalt, NATA President James K. Coyne, NetJets Aviation President Jim Christiansen (on right), Flight Options Chief Executive Officer S. Michael Scheeringa (on left), Chief Technical and National Programs for Transport Canada Jacqueline Booth-Bourdeau, Johnson Controls Base Manager/Chief Pilot Peter Stein, Chantilly Air Safety and Security Coordinator Andreas Bentz, and FAA Safety Analysis Branch Manager Peter Devaris



# 2008 ACSF Safety Symposium



# seize the day

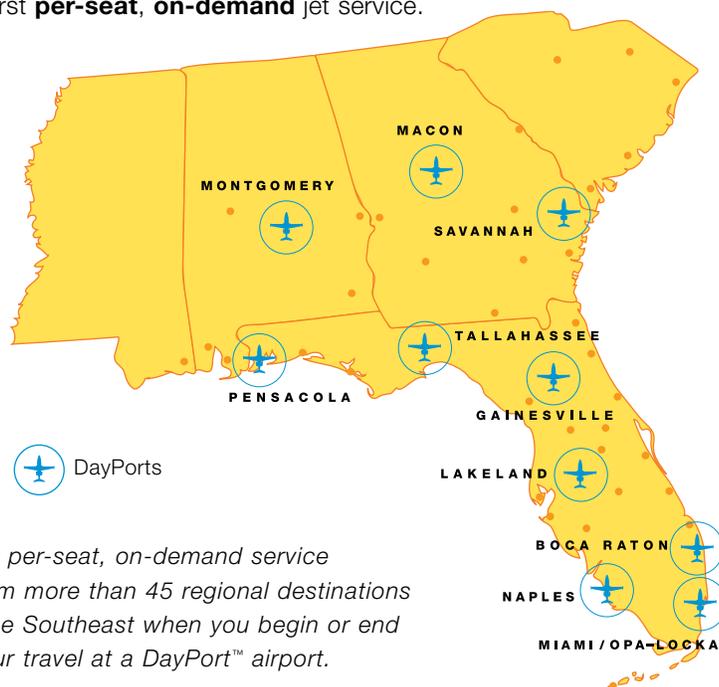


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# Aircraft and Aircrew Scheduling Software

## Replacing Paper Schedules: Easy And Affordable?

By Paul Seidenman & David J. Spanovich

**A**nyone who has ever visited an FBO is likely to have seen the ubiquitous “big book,” the voluminous scheduling record for aircraft rentals, flight training, charter trips, and maintenance. But at a time when more office functions are being automated, the labor-intensive process of paper-based scheduling may relegate the big book to the recycling bin.

Automated scheduling of aircraft and crews has been making steady inroads in general aviation at FBOs, flight training organizations, charter operators, and corporate flight departments thanks to a wide range of off-the-shelf products that fit every budget and the growth of web-based hosting. Put another way, the advantages of automated scheduling, once enjoyed mainly by *Fortune 500* flight departments or a huge fractional ownership plan, are now an affordable option for even the smallest aircraft operator.

The available products range from simple scheduling tools to those with multiple capabilities, or modules, relative to every business-related activity. More often than not, today’s scheduling software allows users to do far more than log in an airplane reservation.

“I think that the market wants more information to be captured within a central system,” said Mike Carr, president of software producer Carr Engineering in Dublin, Ohio. “People want to get away from using different software products along with paper systems for each part of their operation. A lot of flight schools are still using paper-based systems for scheduling and for training records.”

Tom Hornak, president of Paperless 141, a San Jose, Calif., software developer, argues that the market will go more in the direction of inclusive enterprise packages that will include a scheduling module. “If you want scheduling only, you are really not looking at the big picture,” he said. “You have to have multi-modular integration instead of five to six different software (packages) that perform different functions and don’t talk to each other.”

Nonetheless, some users view scheduling software as simply a way to maximize labor efficiency. “It allows an FBO or flight school to free their front desk people to do jobs other than answering the phone and taking down reservations for rental aircraft or flying lessons,” said Tony Troxel, owner of Schedule Pointe in Corona Del Mar, Calif. “It saves the cost of hiring additional staff and leads to greater utilization of assets.”

For Josh Smith, general manager and CEO of the West Valley Flying Club in Palo Alto, Calif., automated scheduling presents an opportunity to increase revenue, yet reduce employee headcount. “When you have a web-based system, your customers have 24-7 access to scheduling, without 24-7 staffing,” said Smith, whose club now accounts for 83 aircraft based at four San Francisco Bay-area airports.

The often-demanding world of corporate aviation has also been quick to embrace scheduling software. As Patricia Jones, administrative supervisor and dispatcher for an East Coast-based *Fortune 500* company flight department noted, it could take up to 20 minutes just to plan one trip using a paper

Continued on page 40

## Scheduling Software

Continued from page 39

schedule. "But with our system, we can plan 15-20 trips in the same amount of time," she said.

While the market for scheduling software seems to be expanding, a major challenge for vendors will be balancing capabilities with price.

"People today are more price sensitive, but they want ease of use, more features, and greater reliability," said Gregg Sullivan, president of Beachside Software in Indian Harbour Beach, Fla. "Along with this, they expect the highest reliability, which is especially important with anything that operates on a web-based server. And, of course, they want excellent customer support."

Given the interest in scheduling software, ABJ reporters contacted 19 vendors based on referrals from users and other industry sources as well as an Internet search. While this should not be considered a comprehensive listing of all currently produced scheduling software, it does represent a cross section of available products.

### 141-in-a-Box

#### Paperless141

P.O. Box 23224  
San Jose, CA 95153  
www.paperless141.com

Tom Hornak  
President  
info@paperless141.com  
408-426-8060

#### Capabilities / Platform Requirements

##### Key Features

- Custom tailored turnkey Part 141 certification package
- Full course curriculum/syllabi/exams for Part 61/Part 141 built in (fixed wing and helicopter)
- Complete customer flight and financial account management, automatic QuickBooks integration and insurance qualification administration, credit card processing, fully FAA/TSA/ SEVIS compliant
- Full aircraft maintenance administration, parts inventory, work order and purchase order administration, tracking of ADS and limited life parts, maintenance forecasting
- Integrated scheduling and aircraft dispatch, full aircraft key locker control

Client/server architecture located on customer's premises; Local Area Network and Internet access required.

- Integrated with an all-in-one software suite for managing an entire FBO, flight school, or flying club operation

#### Customized Features

Paperless141 solution suites are available as complete turnkey systems

and when implemented, eliminate the need for old-fashioned paperwork and greatly minimize administrative overhead. Every system and installation is completely customizable to the customer's business model and environment.

#### Average Price Range / Terms

Price includes turnkey Part 141 certification package, professional installation live support, training, configuration, set up, new releases, and software updates. Pricing is a function of implementation size and architecture. See vendor for details.

No upfront fees, annual license, billed monthly

As its name implies, 141-in-a-Box has staked out an important niche in the Part 141 flight school community. However, the system's San Jose, Calif., vendor, Paperless 141, counts flying clubs among its customer base. One large segment of the software's primary market is Part 61 training facilities transitioning to Part 141 certification.

Available since 2001, 141-in-a-Box was designed as a comprehensive, multi-module software suite for in-house server hosting, with scheduling accounting for about 10 percent of the software's capabilities. Users can choose one or more modules. While not web-based, the software can be accessed from remote locations using a wired or wireless Internet connection to the user's server.

According to the vendor, the software's modules are applicable to every aspect of a flight school's operation.

As examples, an administrative module, used for customer accounting, interfaces with QuickBooks and can track all data pertaining to student pilots. This includes such financial information as debiting and crediting and automated credit card billing. TSA and FAA requirements, as well as aircraft dispatch and or rental authorization, are also tracked.

The software's maintenance data module, considered the main portal for fleet status, tracks data concerning inspections, squawks, and discrepancies, and it is a central source for all information related to work orders and maintenance-related purchase orders. In addition, the module currently incorporates the parts catalog for Robinson Helicopters and Aviall, but the vendor will include a parts catalog for any aircraft or engine OEM or aftermarket supplier at customer request and at no additional charge.

141-in-a-Box's training module is considered "the centerpiece for ground school and flight instruction," enabling authorized administrators to track student enrollment, transfer of credits from one other

Continued on page 42



# *Base of Support*

**Atlanta:**

**800-458-6177**

**Wichita:**

**888-429-6318**

**After hours AOG:**

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(800-264-5463)**

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## Scheduling Software

Continued from page 40

schools, progress reports, and course completion information, for example. A key feature of the training module is its ability to automate the fill out of FAA Form 8710, which must be completed by pilots for submittal to an FAA examiner for required testing.

For Part 61 schools transitioning to Part 141 certification, 141-in-a-Box provides a turnkey forms package for submission to the FAA.

Pricing is predicated on a license fee for the software and then a monthly subscription, which includes customer support and training.

## AircraftClubs.com

### AircraftClubs.com

P.O. Box 117  
Larkspur, CO 80118  
www.AircraftClubs.com

Tim Dumler  
President  
tim@aircraftclubs.com  
303-898-4365

### Capabilities / Platform Requirements

#### Key Features

- Internet-based flight scheduling system for clubs, partnerships, corporate flight departments, flight schools, and FBOs
- Unlimited toll-free phone access to schedules with voice recognition
- Make backup reservations with auto-notification of priority changes
- User-configurable access for scheduling limits and qualifications
- Tracking of medical, BFR, and checkout review dates with auto-lockout upon expiration

Web-based system; Internet access required for web scheduling. Toll-free voice scheduling also available.

AircraftClubs.com is a stand-alone scheduling system with group collaboration features such as online document storage, email, web links, news items, etc.

### Customized Features

- Medical, BFR, and flight review expiration date tracking with scheduling lockout upon expiration
- Set max number of days into the future a reservation may be made
- Set the total combined number of hours a pilot may have on the schedules
- Set the total number of reservations a pilot may have on the schedules
- Set the maximum length of a single reservation.

### Average Price Range / Terms

Price includes unlimited web access, toll-free phone systems, and ongoing software updates (no installations required). System is simple enough to learn online in a few minutes. Support via email on the website.

\$5.95 per resource per month for web-only access; \$10.95 per

resource per month to include unlimited toll-free phone access. Volume discount of one free resource with every five paid resources. Customer may add an unlimited number of pilots to the system at no additional fee. Monthly or yearly. Yearly payment gets a two-month, free discount.

30-day, no-obligation trial period with access to complete system.

AircraftClubs.com, produced by a Larkspur, Colorado-based firm of the same name, is currently used by 34,000 pilots in 15 countries and has processed more than 2.6 million aircraft reservations since it was first introduced in 1999.

As the name implies, AircraftClubs.com is a web-based service hosted by the vendor, which permits unlimited access via the Internet or toll-free phone using voice recognition technology. Major markets include flying clubs, shared aircraft ownership groups, corporate flight departments, flight schools, FBOs, and charter and aircraft rental fleet operators.

Among the system features is a reservations module that can be configured to ensure that pilots are authorized to fly the aircraft they wish to schedule. The module also tracks medical currency and biannual flight reviews. Closely related to this is a "Lockout With Message" component, which will deny a user the ability to schedule an aircraft and cite the specific reason(s) for the denial.

AircraftClubs.com is available on a monthly or full year subscription, with no minimum contracts required. Pricing is based on the number of aircraft in the system. Available discounts include two free months included in a yearlong subscription, plus one free aircraft listing for every five. A 30-day free trial period includes phone and web access. Periodic upgrades and customer support are offered at no charge. Customer training is carried out via an online tutorial.

## Always On Schedule

### Always On Schedule

510 Water Street  
Kissimmee, FL 34747  
www.alwaysonschedule.com

Jeff Bertram  
Sales Manager  
jmbwater@aol.com  
800-316-7363

### Capabilities / Platform Requirements

#### Key Features

- Easy to use

Continued on page 45

June 9-11 | Westfields Marriott Washington Dulles



## AIR CHARTER SUMMIT NATA 2008



The only conference dedicated solely to *charter operators*  
and the unique issues they face



NATIONAL AIR TRANSPORTATION ASSOCIATION

# 2008 NATA AIR CHARTER SUMMIT

## Conference Highlights

- **Welcome & Keynote Speaker Nicholas Sabatini, Associate Administrator, Aviation Safety, FAA**  
The 2007 NATA FAA Customer Service Excellence and Excellence In Pilot Training Awards will also be presented.
- **FAA Regulatory Review**  
Senior FAA leadership directly responsible for Part 135 oversight will provide updates on current initiatives including runway performance assessments prior to landing, new regulations for very light jets, actions to publish the 135 ARC proposals and more.
- **ETOPS: Are You Prepared To Meet The New Regulation?**  
Discover what you need to do to ensure your ability to continue to operate after the compliance date, what aircraft manufacturers are doing to help you comply and how industry trade groups are working to ensure the regulations are correctly implemented and applied.
- **The Telling Signs Of Drug Running For Charter Operators**  
The DEA's Acting Administrator has been invited to discuss the agency's current activities to stop the flow of illegal drugs and the role played by air charter operators.
- **Emerging Legal Issues Confronting The Air Charter Industry**  
**Part I – FAA Enforcement Issues**  
**Part II – DOT Enforcement Issues**  
Learn from top government and industry lawyers about the sale of empty legs, per seat charter, compliance with DOT broker guidance and more.
- **IC Check In The Real World: Operator Experiences**  
Receive a quick update on IC Check, including our recent integration with CTA/FOS, and find out what the FAA believes the future holds for compliance-driven flight releases in the 135 community.
- **Reception & Dinner** Clyde's Willow Creek Farm, Broadlands, VA
- **ACSF Announcement Of The Industry Audit Standard**  
Learn how this revolutionary program will completely alter the auditing landscape for the better.
- **The Green Movement's Impact On Part 135 and 91K**  
Three key operators will discuss what they are doing operationally to preserve the environment.
- **What Should Charter Operators Expect From Full-Service FBOs?**  
Hear straight from the FBOs what they believe are reasonable operator expectations. The impact of escalating fuel costs, insurance and liability concerns, and line service training standards will all be discussed.
- **TSA's Increasing Presence In General Aviation**  
The TSA is poised to release new regulations requiring security programs of all large aircraft. Find out how this will impact air charter operators and aircraft management.
- **President's Golf Tournament** Westfields Golf Club
- **Afternoon Tour** National Air and Space Museum - Steven F. Udvar-Hazy Center

*To learn more or register online, visit*

[www.nata.aero/acs](http://www.nata.aero/acs)

### SUMMIT PARTNERS:



## Scheduling Software

Continued from page 42

- Inexpensive
- 24-hour online access
- 30-Day, free trial

Stand-alone, server/web-based product; requires high-speed Internet access/PC

### Customized Features

N/A

### Average Price Range / Terms

Price includes 24-hour online unlimited access. Contact vendor for pricing information.

Monthly subscription

Always On Schedule, an Orlando, Fla.-based company, introduced its scheduling software of the same name in 2003. Its target market is the flight school seeking a basic, inexpensive scheduling product that simply automates the paper scheduling process. In that respect, Always On Schedule has been designed to coordinate the activities of pilots, students, instructors, dispatchers, and administrators using an online connection. As a web-based product hosted by the vendor, no software purchase is required.

Among the software's capabilities is a real-time visual timeline display that shows dispatchers the status of individual aircraft in the flight school's fleet. The time line is shown as a color-coded, horizontal bar graph. The graph indicates if the aircraft is in flight and its service-ready status, including downtime for maintenance or squawks and discrepancies reported by pilots.

Students wanting to schedule an aircraft are issued a password that enables them to access the site from their desktop PC or notebook computer through either a wired or wireless Internet link.

As basic as the system is, the vendor reports that Always On Schedule can be configured with multiple levels of security designed to restrict access to the data, depending on the sensitivity of the displayed information. For example, the owner of the flight school would be able to see all data, while a student would be restricted to aircraft and instructor availability information. The system has also been designed to interface with the popular QuickBooks accounting software product.

Always On Schedule is available as a monthly subscription, with a two-week, free trial period. During that time, the user is provided with access to a 10-minute, online tutorial for system training.

## BART

### SeaGil Software Co.

6020 Parkway North Drive, Suite #900  
Cumming, GA 30040  
www.seagil.com

Janet Murphy  
Salesperson  
sales@seagil.com  
800-481-2593

### Capabilities / Platform Requirements

- BART is easy to use and learn.
- BART is a good fit for any size flight department.
- BART data can be viewed in a browser and on a PDA/Blackberry.
- All modules are fully integrated, so no rekeying.
- Import and compare contract fuel prices at each airport.

BART can be installed on the customer's desktop or server or can be hosted on vendor's own server. A PC with high-speed Internet service is recommended but not required. BART is offered on a stand-alone basis or as part of a comprehensive software suite.

### Customized Features

BART has numerous system options that can be used to make the system work like users want. It can also be customized to fit customer needs.

### Average Price Range / Terms

Price includes software and training. Training is web-based and one-on-one; pre-recorded syllabus-based trainings are available 24/7. Onsite training is also available but not required.

For non-subscriptions, the initial licensing fees are typically between \$6,700 to \$23,000, depending on features desired. This includes the first year annual support. Each year thereafter has an annual support fee.

Monthly subscriptions fees start at \$350 and typically range up to \$1,000, depending on the features and number of users.

Corporate flight departments and charter operators have been the dominant customer base for BART (Business Aircraft Records Tracking), produced by SeaGil Software of Atlanta, Ga., since 1985.

While customers have the option of using a web based version of the software, about 99 percent of the nearly 500 users of the system have elected to host BART on their own in-house servers. Nonetheless, according to the vendor, an increasing number of customers are considering the web-based version, which can be accessed by any wireless device.

BART can be ordered as a complete package or on a per-module basis because all the system's components are designed to work as stand-alones or in tandem. In addition to scheduling, the system pro-

Continued on page 46

## Scheduling Software

Continued from page 45

vides charter quoting and flight log record keeping, along with the BART maintenance program.

BART's Charter Resource Management (CRM) module allows customers to produce invoices for trips flown, which can then be imported into their own accounting software packages via an interface. CRM also tracks sales information and customer preferences, so users can weigh sales data against specific revenue goals.

One especially useful feature is a "Crew Legal" component, which enables CRM to monitor pilots' currency data, including medical certificates, recurrent training, and other qualifications. Another component records aircraft flight hours, which are automatically transferred to the maintenance module, alerting operators to upcoming required inspections. This feature permits the maintenance department to decide what items should be checked against the scheduling of an aircraft.

The vendor recently introduced a significant upgrade involving the capability for BART to interface with PDAs, giving the user a more comprehensive view of scheduling and other items related to charter and corporate flying.

BART customers normally pay an upfront fee for the service plus an annual support subscription, which includes a training syllabus for each module. The syllabi are available 24/7 over the Internet. Subscription fees are predicated on the number of concurrent users. SeaGil Software allows new users a 30-day, free trial period.

## calendAir

### Custom Digital Services

P.O. Box 3179  
Hutchinson, KS 67504-3179  
www.custom-ds.com

Zack Clobes  
Owner  
www.custom-ds.com  
620-921-5989

### Capabilities / Platform Requirements

- 24/7 online scheduling of planes and accessories (headsets, GPS, instructors)
- Online reporting of pilot and asset usage
- Tracking of pilot information (ratings, medicals, flight reviews)
- Restrictions on pilots who have not been approved for certain aircraft

Web-based system is designed to work with any modern web browser with Internet access.

### Customized Features

- Customized look and feel to match existing website.
- Customizable blackout periods when general users cannot reserve aircraft.
- Confirmation emails can be customized to suit legal/business needs.

### Average Price Range / Terms

Price includes one year of scheduling service, any updates issued during that year, and initial training session.

Annual subscription: \$75 per aircraft. Volume discounts are available. One-time setup fee applies.

Designed by Custom Digital Services of Hutchinson, Kans., web-based calendAir provides 24/7 online scheduling for an unlimited number of aircraft, with smaller FBOs, flight schools, flying clubs, and aircraft rental operations as its main markets. Introduced just over two years ago, calendAir Version 2.0 is its latest upgrade, which has been available for the past year.

A jump to calendAir can be seamlessly integrated and imbedded into the customer's website. If, for example, a pilot wants to rent an aircraft, clicking on the link will automatically open the calendAir scheduling program. The system will record and display the pilot's name, aircraft-specific information, and pick-up and return times. The software can also be configured to display scheduling blackout periods. Because calendAir is password controlled, the fleet operator retains full control regarding which users have access to individual aircraft and to the scheduling feature.

Upon scheduling an aircraft, both the pilot and fleet owner will receive automatic confirmation via email. The notification provided is customizable and can include rental agreements or related items.

For flight schools, calendAir can track pilot qualifications and ratings, flight reviews, and medical and training currency. In addition to aircraft scheduling, a provision to schedule flight instructors is included. Rentals of ancillary equipment such as headphones and GPS devices can also be scheduled.

Custom Digital Services makes calendAir available by annual subscription and performs all software maintenance and upgrades.

## CASSi

### Beachside Software, Inc.

1861 S. Patrick Drive, #162  
Indian Harbour Beach, FL 32937  
www.cassitechnology.com

Gregg Sullivan  
Owner  
greggs@beachsideoftware.com  
321-777-8970

#### Capabilities / Platform Requirements

- Web-based aircraft scheduling & flight school management
- Easy-to-use, intuitive screens. Color-coded, click-able schedule board.
- Modules for scheduling, dispatch, maintenance, reporting, accounting.
- Scheduling "rules" enforce your company's rules and FARs on who may fly planes and when.
- Extensive pilot and management reports for aircraft, instructor, pilot utilization.

Stand-alone product available in two formats:

Option 1. Web-based, hosted on vendor's servers, monthly subscription based on the number of aircraft, requires Internet access;

Option 2. In-house license, hosted on customer's server.

#### Customized Features

Schedule and dispatch rules may be customized to fit customer's needs. For example,

- Aircraft checkout and currency (e.g., Is the pilot checkout current in the aircraft?)
- Min/max schedule period (e.g., Pilot may schedule a flight for no more than 3 days?)
- BFR, Medical, IPC (e.g., Is the pilot's BFR & Medical current?)
- Account currency (e.g., Is this pilot's account up-to-date?)
- Maintenance (e.g., Is this aircraft with its annual 100-hour inspection, etc.)
- Instructors (e.g., Is this instructor current for this aircraft?)

Additional software customization is also available as needed.

#### Average Price Range / Terms

Price includes all updates, phones support, training materials, startup assistance.

Subscription: \$30 per month per aircraft, up to 10 aircraft. \$10 per month per aircraft for additional aircraft.

CASSi (Computerized Aircraft Scheduling System - Internet), produced by Beachside Software, Inc. of Indian Harbour Beach, Fla., is used by FBOs, flying clubs, flight schools, and training academies. The dominant user is the training facility operating more than 30 aircraft. In addition to 29 U.S. customers, CASSi has been deployed

for the past three years at the Beijing Pan Am International Aviation Academy, which is China's first privately operated flight school.

Originally introduced as a DOS product in 1989, CASSi transitioned to a web-based version in 1997, hosted by the vendor. While most customers have selected the web-based service, in-house hosting is still an option.

CASSi incorporates a sophisticated rule-based checklist prior to authorizing a pilot to schedule a particular aircraft. The software cross checks compliance, currency rules, and the user's qualification to operate the aircraft along with any billing data to assure that customer accounts are in good standing.

The software's accounting module records flight time, flight hours, and billing and provides management reports. This module interfaces with popular off-shelf accounting packages and with a variety of in-house packages developed by customers.

A maintenance module tracks maintenance squawks and discrepancies, and schedules periodic maintenance events such as 100-hour inspections. This module will prevent dispatch of an aircraft if

Continued on page 48



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Horizon Business Concepts, Inc.

## Scheduling Software

Continued from page 47

it falls beyond the time for inspection based on the number of hours flown.

The Internet version of the software is available by month-to-month subscription, with the fee contingent on the number of aircraft operated. All updates and customer support are included, with training via phone support and user manuals. Those who want to run CASSi on their own servers pay a one-time license fee plus an annual subscription charge for updates and support.

## Flight Schedule Pro.com

### Flight Schedule Pro

15128 Glenwood Avenue, Suite 100  
Overland Park, KS 66223  
[www.flightschedulepro.com](http://www.flightschedulepro.com)

Jasen Barnes  
Co-founder and President  
[jbarnes@flightschedulepro.com](mailto:jbarnes@flightschedulepro.com)  
866-391-8324 x81

### Capabilities / Platform Requirements

- Web-based scheduling
- Pilot currency tracking
- Aircraft maintenance tracking

Stand-alone, web-based product; Internet access required.

### Customized Features

- Custom reservation types
- Custom schedule views and colors
- Custom pilot currency items
- Custom maintenance reminders
- Custom roles and permissions framework

### Average Price Range / Terms

Price includes initial staff training, 24/7 systems performance monitoring, free updates, robust server redundancy, regular data backups, business hours real-time support, and after-hours emergency response.

Full-featured, free, 30-day trial. No setup fees, no long-term contracts. Monthly or annual subscription.

\$14.95/month to \$129/month depending on size of organization.

Flight Schedule Pro of Overland Park, Kans., began marketing its web-based software product in 2000 to civilian flight schools, Air Force flight training centers, Civil Air Patrol wings, flying clubs, and aircraft rental firms.

Flight Schedule Pro.com provides three basic capabilities: aircraft and flight instructor scheduling, pilot currency tracking, and maintenance tracking. Students wishing to schedule aircraft and instruc-

tor time can access the system using most mobile devices and desktop or notebook computers with an Internet link.

The software's maintenance tracking feature allows users to monitor HOBBS and TACH time on a per-aircraft basis within the customer's fleet. Users can create a flight record of the pilots and instructors and maintenance reminders on the aircraft.

The system's pilot currency tracking feature keeps a record of flight and medical certificates and endorsements. It allows the user to track and automatically update all, or any, pilot currency issues, even at the time that a reservation is made or prior to aircraft dispatch.

The vendor reports that two upgrades to Flight Schedule Pro.com will be made this year: a QuickBooks interface and the release of the latest edition, Flight Schedule Pro.com, Version 4.0, a higher performance product. These upgrades will be automatically included in the current customer subscription rate with no additional charge.

Subscriptions are available on a monthly basis with no long-term contract requirement. The exact amount charged is predicated on the number of aircraft, instructors, and simulators or training devices included in the scheduling process. Customer training is offered at no additional charge. All new customers are permitted a 30-day trial period.

## FlightPak

### Universal Weather and Aviation, Inc.

8787 Tallyho  
Houston, TX 77061  
[www.Universalweather.com/FlightPak](http://www.Universalweather.com/FlightPak)

Faye Fazeli-Oates  
FlightPak Sales and Training Specialist  
[ffazeli-oates@flightpak.com](mailto:ffazeli-oates@flightpak.com)  
386-615-7543

### Capabilities / Platform Requirements

- Aircraft/crew scheduling
- Universal Weather and Aviation, Inc.-supported airport databases, including UVTripPlannersm with MapQuest capabilities
- Blackberry crew interface
- Fuel price search based on trip
- Search TSA No Fly list, etc.

Server based, web-based, or desktop based. Levels of service based on modules purchased: FlightPak, FlightPak Hosted, FlightPak Online.

Internet access recommended; PC compatible.

FlightPak consists of seven modules: Database, Preflight, Postflight, Utilities, Charter Quote, Corporate Request, and Locator. Charter Quote, Corporate Request, and Locator are add-on modules.

### Customized Features

Based on modules purchased, FlightPak can be configured to allow view, add, edit, and delete access, accordingly.

### Average Price Range / Terms

Price ranges from \$14,500 to \$24,750 and up.

Annual software support fee is \$3,500; contact company for detailed pricing information.

Price includes onsite training; software update is billed annually.

Produced by Universal Weather and Aviation since 1995, FlightPak is a multi-module suite catering mostly to the larger charter fleet operators and corporate flight departments for scheduling and dispatching. Customers may opt to host the software on a desktop PC or local server or select web-based hosting by the vendor. FlightPak also interfaces with any Blackberry handheld device.

The Houston, Tex.,-based vendor has made a number of modules and options available. For example, FlightPak's Main Module enables flight departments to create a trip, schedule aircraft and crew, organize complete trip logistics, and manage all post-flight record keeping and expenses.

The Preflight Module presents a wide range of aircraft and crew calendar displays on a monthly, daily, or weekly basis. Information can be displayed as needed for the creation and modification of trips from a single trip-sheet management window.

FlightPak's Post Flight Module offers the capability to report, log and analyze crew, aircraft, and all other trip-related expenses as well as crew, flight, office duty, and training.

Fully customizable, additional features and modules are available for the specific needs of each customer's operations. One feature, Charter Quote, generates trip-pricing quotes, itineraries, and invoices and incorporates a database listing all customer preferences. Another module, Corporate Travel Request, was specifically designed for staff not involved with dispatch to submit requests for corporate aircraft use, print trip itineraries, or change existing schedules.

FlightPak also works with UVTripPlanner, which offers a comprehensive airport guide and FBO directory of information and services, allowing users to access searchable database of airports worldwide and receive real-time information about all facilities used for a specific trip. The service works with MapQuest, which presents driving directions from FBOs to hotels.

FlightPak is available via an annual support fee, which includes onsite training.

## MyFBO.com

### MyFBO.com

926 Main Street  
Danville, VA 24541  
www.MyFBO.com

support@myfbo.com  
434-793-6800

### Capabilities / Platform Requirements

- Scheduling for all types of flights (rental/instruction, air tour, charter, corporate/fractional), including passenger/observer booking.
- End customers can schedule based on pre-established rules (time in advance, duration, etc.).
- Qualification and limitation checker assures compliance with regulatory (FAA, TSA, JAA, CASA), insurance, and company requirements for all flights.
- Aircraft maintenance tracking and maintenance scheduling, crew time off scheduling.
- Optional standby/wait list scheduling for schools and flying clubs.

Requires Internet access plus any standards-compliant browser. Broad-band connection recommended for large/multi-feature subscribers.

Continued on page 50



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## Scheduling Software

Continued from page 49

Part of a management suite. Subscribers can select scheduling-only and add management features later as desired.

### Customized Features

- More than 300 customization selections
- Complete aviation management system
- Student curriculum tracking for schools and academies (paperless operation)
- Multi-location support (enterprise ready)
- Customer aircraft/contract management

### Average Price Range / Terms

Price includes multi-level staff/customer security system and daily redundant database backup. Database download available for local backup. (Data belongs to the subscriber, not MyFBO.com.) Full support including online help/knowledge base, online support requests, and telephone. (Skype on request.) Training via interactive learning software and by regularly scheduled online conference (webinar) programs. Updates issued continually.

Begins at \$42 per month, depending on features plus number of aircraft and crewmembers. Quotation available on website (pricing is public). No charge for unlimited users.

Monthly subscription with no start-up fees.

Developed and marketed as a web-based, total management system, MyFBO.com includes a scheduling module within its four editions: Classic, Standard, Premium, and Advanced. According to the Danville, Va.,-based vendor (also known as MyFBO.com) the scheduling feature is applicable to a wide range of general aviation activities, including on-demand charter, aircraft rental, flight schools, flying clubs, and aviation management companies.

MyFBO.com is totally integrated to all of the user's back office functions, including customer billing and credit card processing. The software's aircraft/aircrew scheduling includes many scheduling options such as a checkbox scheduler that allows customers to enter data concerning a timeframe for a flight, from a single day through 31 days. A click-and-drag option provides a multi-day overview of schedules and aircraft availability up to 14 days at a time with immediate single or multi-day scheduling.

For those carrying out contract flying on a regular basis, such as cargo operators, MyFBO.com's scheduling module permits single and multiple reservations.

The scheduling module uses the same processes for aircrew and aircraft, enabling simultaneous crew and airplane scheduling. Users can track trips and number of hours flown (along with total duty time) for payroll purposes and generates complete crew logbooks for access by the operator and crews.

That information is matched to the tail number of the aircraft flown. The data is fully integrated to the operator's back-office functions.

Because MyFBO.com is an online system, users can access it with any Internet enabled device and revise their schedules at a remote location, which is especially useful if there is a charter trip involving itinerary changes. The system also features a passenger scheduling capability, which can associate a passenger's name and other information, such as weight, credit card, and emergency contact information, with the passenger's scheduled flight. It will also keep a complete record of the flights and how much the user pays for them.

If a flight school or charter company operator desires, he or she can allow customers to access the same information from their own computers via password. During 2008, MyFBO.com plans to add a similar feature to allow passengers (the individual seat holders) to access their online schedules and flight records.

By policy, MyFBO.com leaves ownership of all data to the subscriber, allowing that individual to export and/or download it at any time. The service is available by monthly subscription, with prices predicated on the specific edition and modules used.

## PFM Flight Department Management System

### Professional Flight Management, Inc.

555 East City Avenue  
Bala Cynwyd, PA 19004  
www.pfmsys.com

Julie Brooks  
Business Manager  
julie@pfmsys.com  
610-668-1655/sales

### Capabilities / Platform Requirements

- Scheduling for plane, crew, pax
- Post-flight data entry for ops reports, aviation taxation, corporate chargeback
- Interface with ARINC Direct for flight planning, weather, ETE calculations, international flight following, fuel releases
- Web-based passenger reservation systems and automatic shuttle booking
- Customization of system to customer's specifications

Server or desktop based, and web-based; requires Internet Explorer or Mozilla Firefox, Internet access, PC.

### Customized Features

PFM is totally customized to fit the unique needs of each operation. It is utilized by standard corporate flight departments, large governmental agencies, and aircraft manufacturers. PFM is used for flight department management and can interface with other office products such as accounting.

### Average Price Range / Terms

Price includes training, various customizations, and updates for customers subscribed to the software maintenance agreement.

Pricing is based on user count; contact vendor for more information.

A major player in the corporate aviation scheduling world since 1983, PFM, produced by Professional Flight Management of Bala Cynwyd, Pa., is a totally integrated package designed to automate a flight department's office and dispatch functions. The software is available for installation on a local server, or it can be hosted by the vendor on its own website for Internet access. Access is via any system with an Internet connection, including all major brands of PDA devices.

In addition to PFM's primary capabilities, which include aircraft, aircrew and passenger scheduling, it can provide post-flight reporting and passenger reservation tracking when aircraft are deployed on charter trips or shuttle operations. The software maintains records concerning aircrew currency and training, medical status, and crew and aircraft logbooks.

PFM's accounting software will interface with all major corporate software products. It can also be used to automatically calculate the Standard Industry Fare Level federal tax levied on those who use corporate aircraft for personal business.

PFM will soon interface with ARINC Direct, a flight planning service that provides information concerning weather, estimated time on route, international flight following and fuel releases. The software is available for a one-time license fee, which includes training, plus an annual subscription charge per concurrent user.

## Schedule A Plane

### Schedule A Plane

1645 W. Valencia Rd., Suite 109  
PMB #257  
Tucson, AZ 85746  
www.schedulemaster.com

Ed Hosmer  
Owner Operator

info@scheduleaplane.com  
888-886-6809

### Capabilities / Platform Requirements

- 24/7 online accessibility for all users
- Flat-rate price
- Maintenance alerts
- Customized user settings
- Built-in ATIS information

A stand-alone, web-based product; requires Internet access.

### Customized Features

Users may add logo, time-zone information, ATIS, start and end times, and schedule views.

### Average Price Range / Terms

Price of \$25 per month or \$300 per year includes software updates and online support. Customers may choose either monthly or annual subscription. No one-time fee.

Tucson, Ariz.,-based Schedule A Plane introduced its namesake product in 2002 for FBOs, flying clubs, flight schools, college and university aviation departments, aircraft rental services, and shared

Continued on page 52

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## Scheduling Software

Continued from page 51

aircraft programs. The software is hosted on the vendor's own server and accessed over the web via password.

Schedule A Plane is especially focused on smaller flight schools and FBOs that want an affordable online scheduling system but do not need or want to pay for an integrated, multifunction system.

The product, which displays a daily, weekly, or monthly view of aircraft availability, can be customized to the system administrator's requirements concerning what specific information users can view. For instance, it could be configured to display open instructor and aircraft times to students and provide administrators with data concerning the students' qualifications to fly the aircraft.

Other capabilities include the ability to generate activity reports, along with an email alerting provision. Along this line, maintenance alerts let users know when certain items on an aircraft are due for inspection or change out.

Schedule A Plane comes with a 30-day free trial period. Although monthly subscriptions are available, most customers subscribe annually. The cost is predicated on a flat rate, which covers any authorized user and is not dependent on the number of people or aircraft being scheduled.

## Schedule Master

### Time Sync, Inc.

202 N. Curry Street, Suite 100  
Carson City, NV 89703  
www.schedulemaster.com

Kenneth R. Porter  
Sales/Support  
kporter@timesync.com  
888-846-3796 x222

### Capabilities / Platform Requirements

- Resource scheduling via web, telephone, or mobile device
- Standby scheduling and notifications by email, pager or fax
- Rich rules-based scheduling including check out, currency and flight review/medical tracking
- Time collection and maintenance tracking
- Full accounting interface with Quick Books or PeachTree software

Internet-based system; web access and/or phone access required. PC or Mac.

### Customized Features

- Scheduling policy for reservation limits and length
- User date limits for fixed and custom items
- Maintenance/squawk customization
- Accounting and billing support

### Average Price Range / Terms

Price includes training, support, updates, and web hosting. Prices start from \$10 per month

Monthly rates, with no set-up fee involved. Billing discounts available for quarterly, six-month, or annual payments.

Introduced in 1993, Schedule Master is applicable to any organization that has a scheduling function need. Its primary aviation markets are flying clubs, corporate flight departments, flight schools, aircraft rental and shared aircraft operations, and FBOs. Internet-based, Schedule Master is hosted by Time Sync, which provides all software upgrades and site maintenance.

Time Sync is marketing Schedule Master in different levels as needed: Entry Level, Standard Level, and several Extended Module options.

The Entry Level version is a basic system accessible via the web and by telephone, which involves using a touchtone menu. It offers tracking of pilot certifications, medical currency, flight reviews, and notification capabilities by email, pager, or fax. Customer support is provided via email.

At the Standard Level, added capabilities include toll-free U.S. phone access. An incidental scheduling feature allows flight school customers, for example, to schedule simulator or instructor time and GPS device and headset rentals. The Standard Level includes a "standby scheduling function," which automatically puts multiple users onto a standby list for a previously reserved aircraft. After a cancellation, the next person on the list would be alerted.

Other Standard Level features include posting of current customer accounts and a squawk module that manages and tracks all unexpected aircraft-related maintenance contingencies on a multi-level (of urgency) basis.

The Extended Module includes all of the Standard Level capabilities along with a "time collection/maintenance module" that enables the user to input post-flight information from HOBBS or TACH meter readings. Based on those readings, any maintenance issue requiring attention will automatically be flagged and notification given. With the Extended Module, users can interface with two widely used accounting software products (QuickBooks and Peachtree), enabling full collection of data against individual user activity and fully automated invoicing.

Schedule Master is being deployed by hundreds of customers and is available by monthly, quarterly, or annual subscription. For no additional charge, Time Sync will host the customer's website and link

it to Schedule Master, commencing at the Standard Level.

## Schedulebook.com

### Schedulebook.com

11705 Airport Way, Suite 308  
Broomfield, CO 80021  
www.schedulebook.com

Glenna Brush  
Manager  
gbrush@schedulebook.com  
816-550-2968

### Capabilities / Platform Requirements

- Standby scheduling allows users to be put on standby for a time period already scheduled.
- Dual scheduling. An aircraft and instructor can be scheduled in a single entry if desired.
- End-user settings. Each end user has several settings available to customize his or her experience including the ability to filter out items that they never schedule.
- Resource notes. An optional note can be attached to each item scheduled, describing the resource in detail. Changes to notes are automatically tracked.
- Disabled resources. If an item becomes unavailable, customer can disable it. Notifications are automatically sent to any affected schedulers.

Web-based stand-alone product; requires Internet access, web browser, session cookies, and JavaScript enabled.

### Customized Features

- Customer has several choices for scheduling intervals: 10, 15, 20, 30, 60 minutes, or 1 day.
- Customer can enable or disable the standby feature mentioned above.
- Customer can specify on an individual basis which items end users can schedule.
- The program can be configured so that the name of the person who has scheduled an item can be displayed or hidden from other end users.
- Customer can control how far into the future end users can schedule items.

### Average Price Range / Terms

Product is 100 percent web-based, so all updates are automatic. Flat-rate price includes full access to all features. Flat-rate pricing regardless of number of items being scheduled or number of members accessing the schedule. Price: \$269.99 per year

developer of the same name. Among its customers, the Broomfield, Colo., company counts flight schools, flying clubs, and corporate flight departments as well as FBOs involved with aircraft rental and shared aircraft ownership.

Schedulebook.com is highly customizable to the individual user's requirements. For example, it incorporates "Resource Notes," a scheduling function for flight schools that provides information specific to the aircraft and matched to the instructor's name. "Resource Alert" triggers a notification of unavailability for a previously reserved aircraft or instructor.

Other features include the capability to generate a usage report for each aircraft describing the operation and usage history. A "standby event" capability allows customers to be put on a standby list for aircraft already scheduled for use. If the reservation is canceled, the next customer in line is notified.

The service is available by yearly, monthly, and semi-annual subscription with a 30-day, free trial.

## SchedulePointe

### Schedule Pointe, Inc.

3334 E. Coast Hwy., #303  
Corona Del Mar, CA 92625  
www.schedulepointe.com

Tony Troxel  
Sales Associate  
tonyt@schedulepointe.com  
949-677-5592

### Capabilities / Platform Requirements

- Online scheduling
- Aircraft dispatch
- Customer accounting
- TotalFBO integration
- CharterX integration

Web-based, high-speed preferable. Product functions as a stand-alone system, as well as part of solution with other back office products (i.e., Quickbooks)

### Customized Features

Highly customizable; call for details.

### Average Price Range / Terms

Price includes training and support. \$15 per month, no set-up fee. Usually billed monthly

Schedulebook.com, a web-based product introduced in 1998, is marketed to any business involved with some form of aircraft sharing, according to its

Fight schools, charter operators, flying clubs, and shared aircraft ownership programs are among the 200 customers using SchedulePointe in the

Continued on page 54

## Scheduling Software

Continued from page 53

U.S., Europe, and the Caribbean. Introduced seven years ago by a Corona Del Mar, Calif.,-based firm of the same name, the web-based system is accessible by wireless device and desktop and notebook computers.

SchedulePointe incorporates scheduling, dispatch, and customer accounting, which includes an automatic feed to back office systems such as QuickBooks and Total FBO. The software also has a feed to the Charter X website, which posts empty or return legs available for charter.

Other modules include a comprehensive maintenance component for data about squawks and discrepancy reporting, along with the tracking of 50- and 100-hour inspection intervals. Another module validates pilot currency, allowing users to create their own validation parameters.

SchedulePointe's event scheduler can be used to log in special events, such as a seminar. By filling in the parameters, such as the number of people who can be accommodated, it will automatically schedule participants up to the specified limit.

Currently, about 90 percent of the software's customers subscribe on a monthly basis, and quarterly and annual subscriptions are available. Price is contingent on the number of aircraft in the user's fleet and the number of modules selected. The subscription includes training and customer support.

## SkyScheduler

### **Carr Engineering, Inc.**

5433 Haverhill Dr.  
Dublin, OH 43017  
www.skyscheduler.com

Michael Carr  
President  
mcarr@skyscheduler.com  
877-759-7483

### **Key features**

- Scheduling
- Dispatching
- Accounting
- Maintenance tracking
- Training progress tracking

Web-based, hosted by Carr Engineering. Web access, Internet browser required. A stand-alone product, but can synchronize with QuickBooks.

### **Customized Features**

Almost every aspect of the system is customizable; call for details.

### **Average Price Range / Terms**

Price includes web-based training and regularly issued updates.

Typically, \$20 per aircraft, per month. Large fleet discount available. Monthly or annual subscription.

SkyScheduler was introduced by Dublin, Ohio,-based Carr Engineering Inc. in 1996, initially for an Ann Arbor, Mich., flying club. Since then, it has carved a significant niche among FAR Part 61 and Part 141 flight schools, which make up 65 to 70 percent of the customer base, with flying clubs and aircraft renting services accounting for most of the remainder.

A totally integrated, web-based package hosted by the vendor, SkyScheduler offers tracking of aircraft scheduling, dispatching, and maintenance data as well as accounting. For flight schools, a syllabus feature tracks students' training progress.

SkyScheduler is designed to permit data sharing among its multiple modules, which the vendor says reduces paperwork and enhances safety. For instance, the software will prevent dispatch of any aircraft with an overdue no-go maintenance item. It can also prevent a student with a negative account balance from reserving an aircraft or flight instructor.

The software's accounting module can generate an invoice detailing instructor and flight times. By the summer of this year, SkyScheduler will undergo a major upgrade, incorporating the ability to generate more detailed invoices and maintenance work orders, listing man hours and part used.

SkyScheduler is available by monthly or annual subscription, with training included. The training is carried out over the Internet using Microsoft's Live Meeting, which allows users to conduct a virtual live meeting without having to travel to the customer's location.

## Tak-Off

### **The Construction Link, Inc.**

3394 Sutton Road  
Geneva, NY 14456  
www.tak-off.com

Lance R. Ward  
Owner  
LRWard@TCLI.com  
315-781-1829

### **Capabilities / Platform Requirements**

- Easy to use, simply click in the start and end time slots wanted.
- Reserve both an aircraft and an instructor at the same time.
- View the schedule by week, aircraft, instructors, or a custom view.

- Customizable security settings, handling of medical classification
- CFI checkout and biennial checkout rules.
- Post messages for others to view during logon.

Stand-alone, web-based product requires IE and Internet access.

#### Customized Features

N/A

#### Average Price Range / Terms

\$4.50 per aircraft per month. Three-month service fee in advance required. Price includes service only.

Produced by the Geneva, N.Y.-based software firm, the Construction Link, Tak-Off was developed in 2002, initially for the Penn Yan (New York) Flying Club. Currently Tak-Off is used by 180 organizations in the U.S., including flying clubs, flight schools, aircraft rental companies, and shared ownership programs, which represent a growing part of the software's customer base.

Tak-Off, according to its developer, is designed strictly for scheduling. The software lets users schedule up to one week of bookings online. Among the data displayed are multiple aircraft and instructor availability. The system also incorporates a customized security setting, useful for flight schools because it allows administrators to track a student's ratings and medical certificates to ensure that the student is qualified to operate the aircraft being scheduled. In conjunction, aircraft listed in the user's database may be grouped by complexity.

Access to Tak-Off is via any Windows-based Internet system, including desktop or notebook computers or hand-held devices.

The vendor makes a 30-day, free trial period available on sign-up, with subscriptions offered for as little as three months and up to one year. Subscription costs are based only on the number of aircraft involved.

## The Flight Operations System

#### Computing Technologies for Aviation (CTA)

P.O. Box 5523  
Charlottesville, VA 22905  
www.cta.aero

Fred Powell  
President  
fred@cta-fos.com  
434-971-7624

#### Capabilities / Platform Requirements

- Charter quoting

- Aircraft and crew scheduling
- Flight log records and reports
- Crew legality and training
- Third-party interfaces

Stand-alone system can be used on server, via Internet, or on a desktop system.

#### Customized Features

Very customizable—many parameters and options. Consult vendor for details.

#### Average Price Range / Terms

Price ranges from \$2000 to 50,000. Typically, 5-user: \$16,000, 10-user: \$23,000, and 20-user: \$31,000.

Perpetual license plus annual subscription for updates and technical support (20 percent).

Price includes training. Number of days depends on the license.

One of the oldest scheduling systems on the market, the Flight Operations System (FOS) was developed by Computing Technologies For Aviation (CTA) of Charlottesville, Va., and first installed on a customer's computer in 1983. Today, the software is used across a wide range of general aviation customers, with large corporate flight departments, major aircraft management companies, and on-demand charter operators among the largest market segments. The vendor also reports a growing demand from major airframe OEMs, which use it to schedule flight testing of production aircraft, and executive and pilot demonstration flights. Customers also include flight schools and air share programs involving multiple owners of one or more aircraft.

FOS offers four separate modules that can be procured on an individual basis or as a group: Charter Quoting, Aircraft Crew Scheduling, Flight Log, and Crew Legality and Training.

The Charter Quoting module generates quotes for charter trips, while Aircraft Crew Scheduling offers aircraft, passenger, and logistics tracking right up to the point of departure.

FOS's Flight Log module tracks all post-flight information, such as time, expenses, and aircraft utilization data, including squawks and maintenance events. The Crew Legality and Training module tracks information about duty and rest time, currency, proficiency, and training requirements. The parameters can be configured for the requirements of any country's civil air authority.

FOS has been designed to interface with the user's own accounting software and with two popular

Continued on page 56

## Scheduling Software

Continued from page 55

maintenance systems: CAMP and AVTRAK. Under current planning, Cessna's CESSCOM will be added. FOS can also interface with software systems operated by numerous third parties who provide products and services to general aviation.

CTA recently introduced FOS Mobile, which is specifically designed to interface with such PDA handheld devices as Windows Mobile and Blackberry and with electronic flight bags. FOS Mobile allows the user to enter any data into a handheld device, even in-flight. Once on the ground, users can transmit the data to wherever it needs to go using a cellphone or wireless connection.

Licensing fees for the software, which can be hosted on the customers' own servers, on a third-party server, or with CTA, are contingent on the module or modules chosen and by user count. There is also a one-time perpetual licensing fee, which includes one or more days of initial training, depending on license terms. Upgrades and technical support are included in an annual subscription fee.

### TotalFBO/Webscheduler

#### Horizon Business Concepts, Inc.

721 W Queens St.  
Broken Arrow, OK 74012  
www.totalfbo.com

Traci Lynch  
Sales manager  
sales@hbcinc.com  
800-459-9804

#### Capabilities / Platform Requirements

- Built-in integrated accounting
- Inventory
- Aircraft management
- Charter operations
- Scheduling

Desktop based with web interface for scheduling and full hosted service at [www.TotalFBOweb.com](http://www.TotalFBOweb.com).

For desktop version, Windows-based PCs running Windows 2000/XP/Vista. For hosted version, users need reasonable broadband Internet access (i.e., 256kb or better); will run on Windows PC, Mac, or Linux.

#### Customized Features

Hundreds of user-customizable features, including styles sheets that allow tailoring invoices, quotes, shop orders to customer needs, options to control accounting features such as inventory costing methods, overrides to change key phrases on customer printouts, and more.

#### Average Price Range / Terms

A typical 5-user package runs from \$5,000 to \$7,000. The TotalFBOweb

service will run around \$500 per month. The product can be purchased as individual modules, with discounting off module prices when a full package is purchased.

Purchase price is due upon purchase and is a one-time fee. The TotalFBOweb service is a monthly subscription.

The base price includes only the software and updates for 90 days. Training and extended service plans are intentionally unbundled to provide the maximum purchasing flexibility for the customer.

Horizon Business Concepts of Broken Arrow, Okla., includes a scheduling module within the TotalFBO Aviation Management System, its highly integrated FBO management software package.

Webscheduler, as TotalFBO's newest module is called, uses a standard row and column format that permits electronic scheduling from an unlimited number of "objects," which are grouped by type, such as Aircraft, Instructors/Pilots, Courtesy Cars, and Hangar Bays. Using Webscheduler, users can zoom in to display as little as a 12-hour's worth of data or zoom out to view a full month's worth of scheduling.

While flight schools and FBO aircraft rental are the module's main users, it continues to be used by a growing number of air charter operators. With proper security, Webscheduler permits scheduling information to be posted and updated on the web, even though TotalFBO, as a package, is desktop based. Access by some portable wireless devices with Internet browsers is available.

TotalFBO includes a core accounting package, comprising general ledger, invoicing payroll, and check writing, although individual modules, such as shop order and inventory, cater to repair stations, and a charter quoting and dispatch module is written for charter operators.

Horizon Business Concepts expects to improve the TotalFBO scheduling functions by providing better functionality for multiple crewmember scheduling in a single operation. This will include predictive warnings if crew schedules exceed FAA requirements. The vendor expects to have this available by the last quarter of 2008.

TotalFBO is available for a one-time license fee, but a flat rate, annual subscription is available to continue receiving the latest version and updates. The license for the full package includes free admission for one person to the vendor's weeklong training classes held monthly in Broken Arrow. However, the company will send a trainer to the customer's site if it's more cost-efficient for the

user. The program, including the WebScheduler module, is also available for a monthly subscription fee through TotalFBOweb, the company's new Internet-based service.

## Wintouch

### Touchtone Corporation

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Costa Mesa, CA 92626  
www.TouchtoneCorp.com

Debra Stafford  
Sales Executive  
debra@touchtonecorp.com  
800-786-8663

### Capabilities / Platform Requirements

- Every installation is custom integrated to customer's business processes and industry.
- Native to IBM System i server platform. Wintouch provides stability and real-time access to backend data.
- Direct dial to unlimited live customer service.
- Optional simple ERP system and already integrated to most AS400/iSeries/System i applications.
- Integration to Microsoft Outlook and Lotus Notes.

Part of a management software suite, Wintouch is IBM System i server-based requiring Internet or intranet access or web-based and hosted by the vendor.

Customer hosting requires IBM System i Server, Internet Access, plus PC or Mac client.

### Customized Features

Workflow is used to automatically schedule designated trainer/taill number when a customer signs up for flight hours via Wintouch Web Forms and send email notification to the trainer and/or team who checks fueling and maintenance. It can be used to automatically add a scheduled flight to each crewmember's calendar and send them an email when their crew is assigned a flight.

Customers/students can sign up for flight hours online 24 hours a day using Wintouch Web Forms.

Customer Profiles can be created to keep track preferences of each customer. When a customer schedules a flight by web form.

For individual end-user preferences, Wintouch screens can be customized for by account type and by user. Thus, vendors and customer screens would display only the information most relevant to their relationship with you.

Integrated to any/all AS400/iSeries/System i software currently on client's system. Sales, fueling, maintenance currently in your AS/400 green screen environment can be modeled in Wintouch's user-friendly display, and reports can be designed to allow users to analyze and develop best business practices.

### Average Price Range / Terms

Price is based on the number of concurrent users and amount of

customization needed. Each customer's costs will be different.

Annual support includes all new releases during that year and unlimited access to customer service. Annual support is included with initial cost, or Wintouch for the first year and annual support fee thereafter.

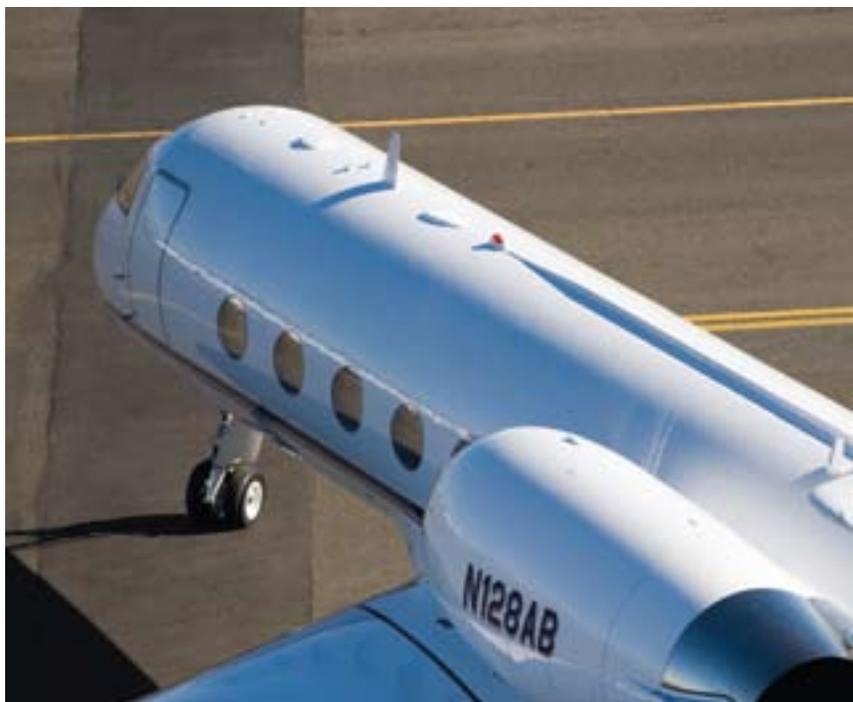
All software updates included in annual support; training is extra (two-day event either at Touchtone or at customer's location.)

Wintouch, a fully integrated FBO management software suite produced by Touchtone Corporation of Costa Mesa, Calif., includes a scheduling feature known as Web Form.

Web Form allows users to make online reservations for aircraft to be used for flight training or rental, for example, and includes a fully customized, flight training-specific module. Students may access this module using a password and check on their training progress, displayed as a report showing the number of hours they have flown, the hours needed for specific ratings, and classes they have taken or need to complete.

Wintouch can be hosted in two ways, either at the customer's own site, using a server hosted on an IBM System i or on Touchtone's own server, which would be accessed via the Internet, using wired or wireless systems.

Wintouch Customers pay a one-time license fee based on the number of concurrent users. An annual subscription charge also applies, which is the equivalent of 20 percent of the initial license fee. That covers all software enhancements and customer support. There is an additional charge for customers opting to have Touchtone host the software. The vendor will give new customers a two-day training program.



## NATA's Safety 1<sup>st</sup> Professional Line Service Rolls Out PLST Online

**N**ATA rolled out the new PLST Online at the FBO Leadership Conference and provided laptops at its booth for attendees to "test drive" online training. The new PLST Online once again revolutionizes line service training, having set the standard for nearly three decades moving from classroom training to video and now to interactive and online training.

PLST Online derives from the efforts of a team of experts leveraging decades of real-world

experience handling thousands of aircraft. Combined with the creative and technical innovation of NATA, R. Bisgard Aviation Consulting, industry line experts and online aviation training leader Avstar Media, PLST Online raises the bar on line service training to a new level once again.

The new PLST covers 32 major topics, 4,000 images, nearly 1,000 screens, more than 300 videos, and nearly 9 hours of in-depth line training. Both new and experienced line service specialists will

find the new interactive format engaging and instructive. Training is conveniently available 24/7 and consistently teaches to one standard. Online training tracks student progress automatically and eliminates the tedious, time-consuming paperwork, ultimately making your line service more productive.

Don't take our word for it. Experience PLST Online yourself at [www.nata.aero/plst](http://www.nata.aero/plst).

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### FBO Workshop— NATA's Safety 1<sup>st</sup> Solution

**A** one-hour session highlighting the importance of what should go into the selection process of an FBO was featured at the Schedulers and Dispatchers Conference in Savannah, Ga., on February 1. More than 50 attendees, including FBO owners, schedulers, dispatchers, and charter operators, came to listen to Kellie Rittenhouse of Pentastar Aviation, Greg Rorabough of ChevronTexaco, and Amy Koranda of NATA.

Rorabough began the presentation discussing in-depth details that should be known about an FBO, including numerous facility standards, customer service issues, and scheduler/dispatcher communications. His insights and focus led attendees and schedulers/dispatchers to consider far greater issues than fuel price.

An aviation veteran of nearly two decades, Rittenhouse drew on her extensive experience to emphasize the importance that communication plays. She stressed that the first call between an FBO and dispatcher is crucial for everyone. Effective, up-front communications benefit not only the FBO but also the arriving crews, she said. She added that com-

munication, both good and bad, make for a much better relationship and experience for everyone involved.

Koranda concluded the session by highlighting the attributes of well-trained line service specialists for arriving crews. She discussed the in-depth training areas that all Safety 1<sup>st</sup> certified line specialists must go through, particularly the wide-ranging aircraft-specific training for refueling and towing. Koranda said NATA's Safety 1<sup>st</sup> Professional Line Service Training had recently undergone extensive updates and would be offered online in the very near future. She encouraged attendees to call a prospective FBO to discuss the type of training they give, and she provided key signs of Safety 1<sup>st</sup> participation, such as line service patches, certificates, plaques, and decals displayed at the FBO.

Koranda also reviewed NATA's Safety Management System (SMS) for Ground Operations, which has been implemented by more than 100 Safety 1<sup>st</sup> participants. The program increases safety awareness and provides the tools and knowledge for more robust safety programs. She said the real benefits of an SMS will be realized by crewmembers when the FAA makes SMS for Air Operators a part of the regulatory process.

Additional information is at [www.nata.aero](http://www.nata.aero).

## Don't Miss NATA's New Seminar: Accident Prevention via Human Factors Training

Your line service will benefit from NATA's new interactive seminar aimed at enhancing FBO safety. If you work the line, you know the day-to-day challenges of meeting customer expectations while providing the safest service possible. This seminar arms your line service personnel with the ability to balance these issues without question. It keys in on line responsibilities that highlight safe practices and help eliminate risky practices. Identifying and doing away with unsafe behavior is essential to maximizing safety and production at your operation. Appropriate training is important to increasing your line's awareness and confidence and is vital to breaking the ramp incident and accident cycle.

Attendees will discuss several salient topics in-depth, including guidelines for safety line operations, error management models, and improving crucial decision making skills. Attendees learn the significance of their role in an accident chain of

events, recognize threats to the operation, and develop a keen sense of the need to monitor and challenge. They will be able to implement critical skills needed to work safer and smarter when they return to the ramp. The best part about this seminar is networking and talking with others about what can and does happen on the line.

This seminar was designed for line service technicians, line supervisors, ramp personnel, line managers, operations supervisors, and FBO operators. It is taught by Tom Salmon, who has more than 35 years experience in commercial and military aviation as an airline captain, line check airman, and simulator instructor. Additionally, he spent nearly 18 years designing and teaching the crew resource management program for Continental Airlines. He holds an MBA from UCLA Anderson School of Management and has held numerous teaching positions that incorporate his fun, interactive teaching style. Combined with his extensive wealth of knowledge, he is one of the best human factors trainers in the industry today.

Additional information and seminar dates are at [www.nata.aero](http://www.nata.aero).

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Continued on page 62

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## Advertiser Index

Air BP Aviation Services	Back cover
Air-Sur, Inc.	25
AirSure Ltd.	Inside back & front covers
Avfuel Corporation	3
Avgroup, Inc.	41
Center Capital Corporation	15
Chevron Global Aviation	4
ConocoPhillips Company	12
Corridor	18
DayJet Corporation	38
ExxonMobil Aviation	16
Hammonds Technical Services	27
Hartzell Propeller Service Center	49
The Hiller Group	23
Horizon Business Concepts	47
KaiserAir	51
Midcoast Aviation, Inc.	6
NATA Air Charter Summit	43-44
NATA Sustaining Members	14
NetJets	10
R. Dixon Speas Associates	59
Signature Flight Support	34
Universal Weather and Aviation, Inc.	20
USAIG	19
Velcon Filters	58



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