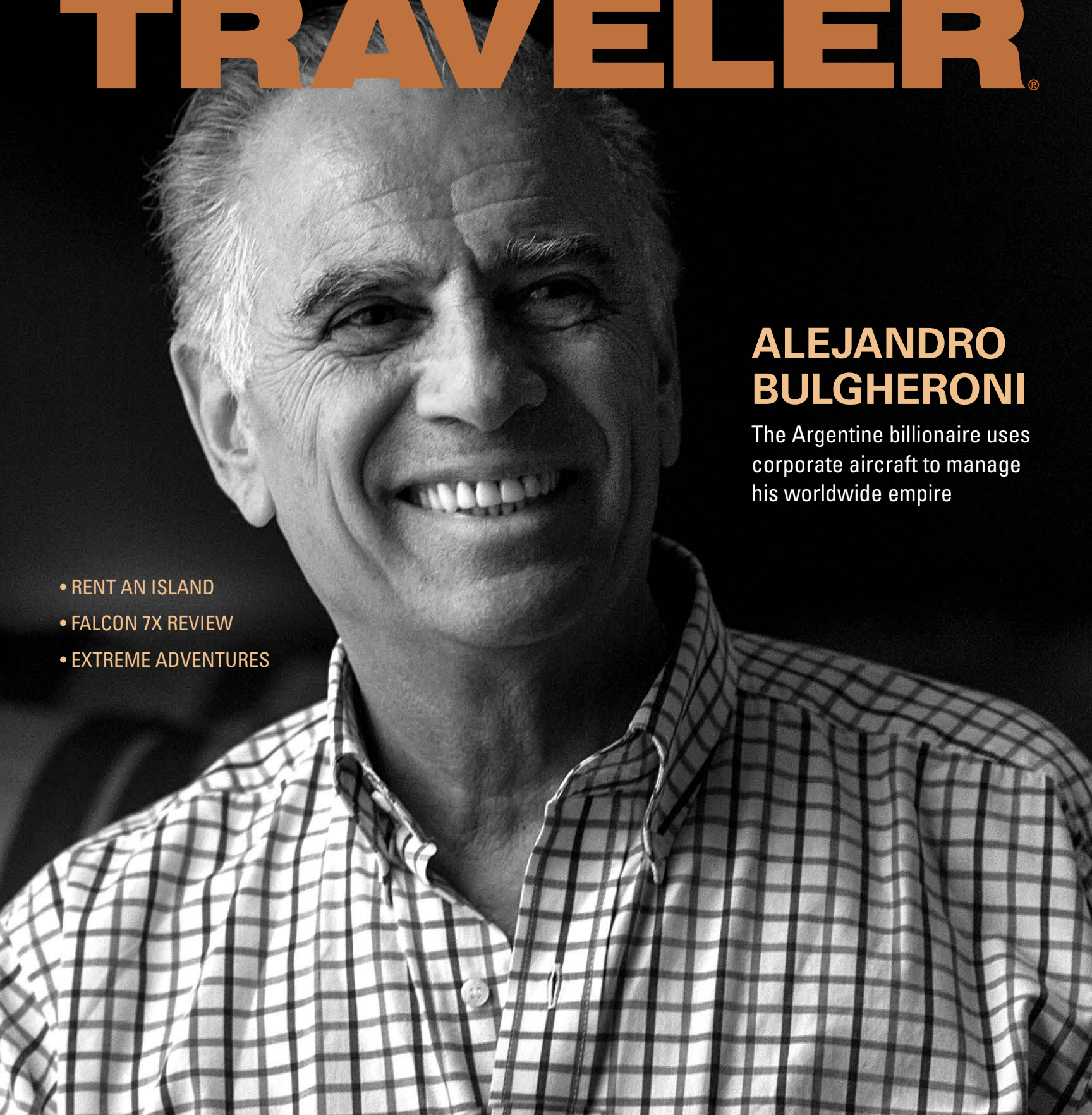


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ALEJANDRO BULGHERONI

The Argentine billionaire uses corporate aircraft to manage his worldwide empire

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INSIDE **BJT**

APRIL/MAY 2017

FLYING

14 ON THE ROAD

Over the past two decades, our columnist has checked into everything from presidential suites to a dump that recalled an infamously **horrific motel**.

16 READY FOR TAKEOFF

A new recurring feature spotlights **noteworthy aircraft** that are currently for sale. In this issue: midsize and super-midsize jets.

17 PREOWNED

After owners put their aircraft on the market, they're increasingly apt to change **asking prices** or brokers.

26 NEW AIRCRAFT PREVIEW

Airbus Helicopters' H160, a medium turbine twin, incorporates innovative technologies, promises strong performance, and looks great, too.

34 USED AIRCRAFT REVIEW

Dassault Falcon's 7X climbs like a rocket, goes anywhere, and burns up to one-third less fuel than comparable models.

DEPARTMENTS

6 UP FRONT

BJT introduces a new feature—and a **new website**.

8 MAILBOX

On **Larry Fitzgerald** and supersonic flight.

10 ON THE FLY

America's **highest-priced home**, plus wine apps and in-flight fires.

38 MONEY MATTERS

Inflation and other factors could take a toll on your investment portfolio over the next few years. Act now to limit or **avoid the damage**.

62 CALENDAR

Europe's big **business aviation** event.



40 TAXES, LAWS, AND FINANCE

The **model year** assigned to an aircraft can be misleading, and failing to understand why can be a multimillion-dollar mistake.

48 INSIDE CHARTERS

You won't find many **service reviews** by air charter passengers on the web. Our columnist wondered why.

64 EXIT

Owners of small aircraft aren't the only ones who will benefit from an **FAA rule change**.



LEGACY® 450

BY EMBRAER



The revolutionary Legacy 450 truly transcends previous perceptions of mid-light capabilities. A remarkable union of technology and design, this aircraft flies faster and farther than any other jets in its class. of taking off and landing on shorter runways. This is the only jet in its category with full fly-by-wire technology, and the advanced Rockwell Collins Pro Line Fusion™ platform puts pilots in complete control in passengers enjoy the smooth flight experience in the largest-in-class stand-up cabin with unmatched luxury, comfort and style. The jet's ultra-quiet environment is perfect for working or relaxing. Welcome to the heights that can be reached when your mission is to rethink and redefine what's possible.



WOW, WHAT AN AIRCRAFT!

"Smart Air has been operating the first Legacy 450 in Europe for many months. We receive very positive feedback from customers using the aircraft as a charter. They are extremely pleased with the comfort.

My favorite elements are the quietness in the cabin, craftsmanship quality, the astonishing cockpit from a quality and technology standpoint, the fly-by-wire as a true added value in terms of comfort and safety. Pilots enjoy flying this aircraft. These are remarkable features that are not present in other similarly priced aircraft.

I now realize that my customer experience with Embraer is far better than what I experienced with other OEMs because we remain customers even after the aircraft delivery. The teams are very invested in customer satisfaction. They have a true willingness in accompanying the customer and ensuring his satisfaction throughout the aircraft operation.

The capability of the aircraft to land in Saint-Tropez/La Môle is an important time saver. The landing is done in very safe conditions. The technical data after certification were far better than preliminary data. Those are good surprises when we take the risk of being the first customer on an aircraft not yet certified without any validated performance. It is very nice, as a consultant company, to be able to go back to our customer and say that the choice we recommended is by far exceeding the reality that existed when the decision was made."



-Stéphane Ledermann, Founder & President, Smart Air
Watch Stéphane's story and request more information at
EmbraerExecutiveJets.com/Stephane

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Rethink Convention.

 **EMBRAER**
Executive Jets

PEOPLE

18 ALEJANDRO BULGHERONI

Argentina's richest man uses a fleet of corporate aircraft to manage a worldwide empire that includes energy holdings and wineries.

58 INDUSTRY INSIDER

Jay Mesinger, founder of one of the world's most respected aircraft brokerages, talks about his family-run business and what life has taught him.



TIME OFF

30 PARADISE BY THE WEEK

Renting a **private island** can be the ultimate getaway, and it can be less expensive than you might guess.

42 SELL YOUR HOME FASTER

Professional **stagers can enhance** a property's appeal, which could mean more bids sooner, and possibly even a higher sale price.

44 OUTDOOR ADVENTURES

It's no wonder that many people are discovering **windsurfing**—or that many of them flock to a little Oregon town to try it out.

46 GREAT GOLF

Tiger Woods scores a win with his U.S. golf course design debut.

50 ATTENTION, THRILL SEEKERS

Looking for a **challenge**? Here are nine ways to find one.

52 GETAWAYS

China's Sichuan Province offers a wonderful opera, majestic mountains, and a zoo that houses more than 80 of the country's rare **giant pandas**.



FEATURED CONTRIBUTOR

GEMMA Z. PRICE

Price, who traveled to Uruguay to conduct the interview for this issue's cover story (see page 18), has contributed to **BJT** since 2012. A U.K. native, she has lived in Japan, Australia, Vietnam, and the U.S. and now divides her time between Saigon and San Francisco. She has written for dozens of publications—including *Conde Nast Traveler*, *Travel + Leisure*, the *Wall Street Journal*, and *Time*—on subjects ranging from travel and food to tech, style, and wellness. Her website is www.gemmazprice.com.



On the Cover: Argentine billionaire Alejandro Bulgheroni, photographed by Eric Wolfinger.

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▶ **Phenom 300** review

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WHEELS UP
UP THE WAY YOU FLY

Up Front

A major upgrade for BJTonline.com

Revamping a website, particularly a data-rich one like BJTonline.com, is not a job for the faint of heart. Our development team have spent the better part of a year on this project, and we think their patience, dedication, and attention to detail have produced an online home for the magazine that's far more attractive and useful than its predecessor. The responsive, easy-to-navigate site features beautiful photography and a fresh, streamlined design. We hope you like it as much as we do.

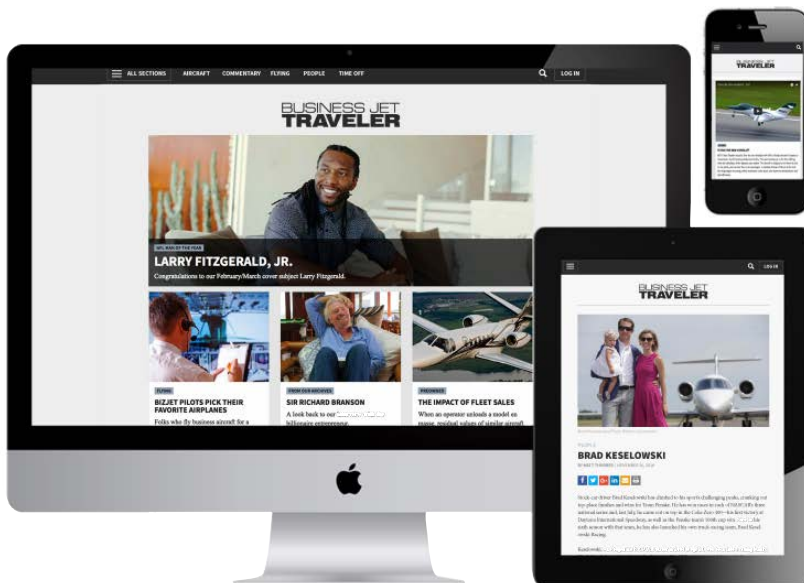
We also hope you'll stay tuned for more, because several major enhancements to the site are yet to come. A searchable aircraft guide will soon make it much easier to learn about and compare models, for example, and we'll also be debuting an improved, regularly updated online version of our **Buyers' Guide's** Yellow Pages directory, with listings of everything from charter companies, insurers, and completion centers to caterers, cabin-electronics manufacturers, and aircraft brokers.

Speaking of those brokers, be sure to check out Ready for Takeoff on page 16 of this issue. This new recurring department will spotlight noteworthy aircraft that are available at press time from the world's top brokers. In each edition of the magazine, we'll highlight a different category of business aircraft, starting with this issue's look at midsize and super-midsize jets.



Jennifer Leach English
Editorial Director
jenglish@bjtonline.com

P.S. Congratulations to Margie Goldsmith, recipient of a silver award from the North American Travel Journalist Association for "Georgia on My Mind," which appeared in our February/March 2016 issue. This honor marks the 48th editorial award won by Business Jet Traveler and its contributors since 2005.



EDITORIAL

Editor-in-Chief Charles Alcock
Editorial Director Jennifer Leach English
Editor Jeff Burger
Group Production Manager Tom Hurley
Production Editor Lysbeth McAleer
Associate Production Editor Martha Jercinovich
Art Director John A. Manfredo
Contributors Chris Allsop, Chris Caswell, Mary Ann DeSantis, Bob Ecker, Mark Eveleigh, Marion Flanagan, Margie Goldsmith, Mark Huber, Bradley S. Klein, Debi Lander, Thomas R. Pero, Mark Phelps, Kim Rosenlof, Chana R. Schoenberger, Joe Sharkey, Matt Thurber, Helen Ann Travis, Jeff Wieand, James Wynbrandt
Graphic Designers Mona L. Brown, John T. Lewis, Grzegorz Rzekos
Lead Web Developer Michael Giaimo
Web Developer Evan Williams
Video Producer Ian Whelan
Editorial Assistant Samantha Cartaino
EDITORIAL CONTACTS
214 Franklin Ave., Midland Park, NJ 07432
(201) 444-5075 • editor@bjtonline.com

BUSINESS

Managing Director Wilson S. Leach
Group Publisher David M. Leach
Publisher Anthony T. Romano
Associate Publisher Nancy O'Brien
Advertising Sales
Melissa Murphy-Midwest, (830) 608-9888
Nancy O'Brien-West, (530) 241-3534
Anthony T. Romano-East/International, (203) 798-2400
Joe Rosone-East/International/Middle East, (301) 834-5251
Diana Scogna-Italy, (33) 6 62 52 25 47
Daniel Solnica-Paris, (33) 1 42 46 95 71
Victoria Tod-Great Lakes/UK, (203) 798-2400
Marketing Manager Zach O'Brien
Audience Development Manager Jeff Hartford
Onsite Logistics Manager Philip Scarano III
Sales Assistant Nadine Timpanaro
Advertising/Sales Secretarial Staff Cindy Nesline
Director of Finance & Human Resources Michele Hubert
Accounting Manager Marylou Moravec
Accounting/Administration Staff
Mary Avella, Bobbie Bing
ADVERTISING CONTACTS
81 Kenosia Ave., Danbury, CT 06810
(203) 798-2400 fax: (203) 790-8044
adsales@bjtonline.com

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LARRY FITZGERALD, JR.

Regarding Larry Fitzgerald, Jr. [February/March 2017], I consider him a true champion in every sense of the word and an inspiration to all, but especially to young kids coming up, wondering how to be a real man.

Thanks for a great magazine.

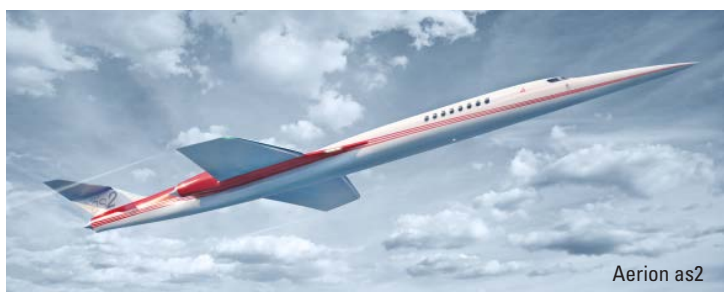
*Bert Botta
posted on bjtonline.com*



SUPERSONIC SKEPTIC

The Gulfstream G650 is 99 feet, nine inches long with over a 7,000-nautical-mile range. The as2 is a proposed 170 feet long with a proposed 4,750-nautical-mile range. I'm thinking about airport ramps that could accommodate, and that when push came to shove, the G650 would beat the as2 on a mission over 5,000 nautical miles...no need to stop.

*Aaron
posted on bjtonline.com*



Aerion as2

TWIN BEECH VS. RAPIDE

"A Tale of Two Pretties" [Exit, February/March 2017] is an excellent article outlining the differing design and operational outlooks of the British and American airplanes. I wonder how the two airplanes compared in purchase price. My guess is that the Twin Beech was much more expensive than the Rapide.

posted on bjtonline.com

Nice comparative article on two different styles of design, and what a beautiful photo of a Lockheed model 12A "Electra Jr." to illustrate the Beech 18.

*Michael Moran
posted on bjtonline.com*

Mark Phelps replies: Moran is right—we mistakenly showed the Lockheed instead of the Beech (which is pictured above). They're similar enough in appearance that they are often mistaken for each other, but we should have known better.

"A Tale of Two Pretties" is a very good article. I hadn't considered the comparison of the Beech 18 to the DH Rapide, nor how well each fit its respective market. As to cost at that time, the first 18 Beech Monoplanes, as they were called, were Wright- or Jacobs-powered and cost \$30,000–\$35,000 (1937–39). The



Beech 18

1939–41 P&W Wasp Jr. powered 18s cost \$45,000–\$50,000.

[The Rapide cost the equivalent of about \$15,000. —Ed.]

*Bob Parmeter
posted on bjtonline.com*

FEAR OF FLYING

"Cabin Fever" [Exit, December 2016/January 2017] contains much good guidance, especially the idea that fear of flying has multiple presentations. But those of us who specialize in treating these presentations de-emphasize seeking to become more comfortable and emphasize self-regulation and putting oneself in challenging situations *despite* the presence of uncomfortable sensations. Self-management techniques will ultimately prove effective for many.

*Les Posen
posted on bjtonline.com*

FLYING IN TO SKI

Regarding "Skiing without Waiting" [On the Fly, December 2016/January 2017]: How about Sun Valley, Idaho? Thirty minutes or less to the gondola from Atlantic Aviation in Hailey (KSUN). Hardly ever a wait in lift lines.

*Jeff Miller
posted on bjtonline.com*

At a mountain airport, I always chat with the line crew to find out which operators fudge the 10-knot tailwind limit and otherwise push the weather. I encourage charter customers to ask their operator for a copy of the company policies relating to mountain airports (the stricter the better). Nothing brings me more joy than the occasional call from a client complaining about a ski country delay or diversion. I smile as I explain that the operator and I have both accomplished our primary job.

*Daniel Herr
Fractional Law
Murray Hill, New Jersey*

CLARIFICATIONS AND CORRECTIONS:

In the New Aircraft Preview article in our last issue, we indicated that the Cessna Citation Longitude would be certified in 2018, but Cessna tells us that certification will happen this year. The company also says that it opted for Honeywell HTF 7000-series engines not because the originally planned engines were unavailable but because it decided to rethink the aircraft's design. The company additionally notes that it has dropped the Clarity name from its cabin in-flight-entertainment system and that it objects to our characterization of the Latitude's seating style, which it says it changed in later models of that aircraft. —Ed.

Your comments are welcome. Please e-mail letters to editor@bjtonline.com. Include your name, address, and a daytime telephone number. Letters are subject to editing and are presumed to be for publication unless the writer specifies otherwise.



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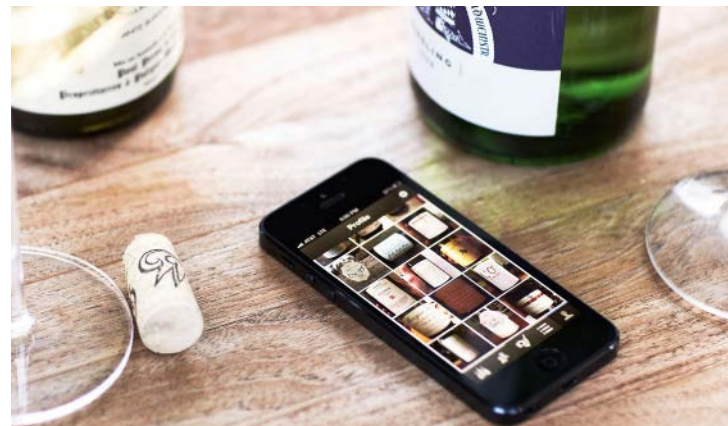
Wine by the App

Nowadays, more than 100,000 different wines await corkscrews or, increasingly, hand twists. How to deal with this embarrassment of riches? Free smartphone apps can help, though here, too, choices abound. Here are four of the best:

Vivino. This app responds to smartphone snapshots of wine labels (though far from always) with one-to-five-star ratings based on reviews from 15 million users; it also provides information such as average retail price. A monthly charge buys extra features, including a “manage your cellar” function.

Delectable. This app does a great job of recognizing wine labels and offers one-to-10-point reviews from rank-and-file members plus sommeliers, wine writers, and industry folks. Become a follower of someone whose tastes seem to align with yours and you can fast-track your education and better target your purchases. Another plus: the app also covers beer, sake, and spirits.

CellarTracker. Created by a wine lover while on sabbatical from Microsoft, CellarTracker is to a spreadsheet (his former tool) what runway models are to mannequins. Enriching its capabilities, which



DELECTABLE

include alerts when a vintage has reached peak drinkability, are more than five million tasting notes from the app’s 400,000-plus users. Budding wine enthusiasts can learn from one another and from the experienced aficionados who post and engage in online conversations. An annual fee brings more features.

Wine Ring. This app does for wine what Pandora does for music. After you enter basic assessments

of a dozen or so wines—love it, like it, so-so, don’t like it—Wine Ring’s paradigms click in, predicting what you’ll think of a new wine according to your ever-evolving preference profile. There’s guidance on food/wine pairings and, if your dining companions are among your Wine Ring followers, you can optimize the night’s wine selection by including them in your query. —John Grossmann



Thinking about moving up to a better home? A newly built residence in Los Angeles’s Bel Air neighborhood will take you about as far up as you can go.

Developer Bruce Makowsky constructed it after noting that the average billionaire enjoys private jets and \$100 million yachts but “then they only live in a

\$30 million home.” To address that discrepancy, he loaded his 38,000-square-foot property with every conceivable luxury and a \$250 million price tag, making it the most expensive home ever offered in the U.S.

So what do you get for a quarter-billion dollars? For starters, 12 bedrooms, 21 bathrooms, three kitchens, and two crocodile-skin-lined elevators. Also here are wine cellars stocked with 2,500 bottles; six bars; a 40-seat theatre with 7,000 movies; 130 artworks from around the world; an 85-foot pool with swim-up bar and adjacent outdoor 20-foot movie screen; a \$30 million gallery of exotic cars and motorcycles, including a rare Rolls-Royce and a Bugatti; a spa with his-and-hers massage tables; a dining room with drop-dead views and a \$2 million floating glass staircase;

seven employees (for the first two years), including a masseuse, who live in a staff wing; and a four-lane bowling alley.

Oh, yeah: you also get the helicopter that’s parked on the roof. As Makowsky told the *Los Angeles Times*, “The home comes with everything. You don’t even need a toothbrush.”

Of course, while this property may suffice for many people, inevitably someone is going to want more. And if you’re that someone, you won’t have to wait long: developer Nile Niami is reportedly already at work on a home in the same neighborhood that will up the ante even further by featuring a casino, a 30-car garage, and 100,000 square feet of living space—nearly double what the White House offers. The target asking price for this one: \$500 million. —Jeff Burger



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Bagging an In-Flight Fire



While in-flight fires remain extremely rare, the proliferation of lithium-ion (Li-ion) battery-powered personal electronic devices (PEDs) has increased the chance of one occurring. As of last October 5, the FAA had recorded 130 incidents of smoke or fire involving lithium batteries carried as cargo or baggage at airports or on commercial flights. In one case, a passenger's Samsung Galaxy Note 7 caught fire while he was boarding an airliner.

Li-ion battery fires can be difficult to put out due to the ultra-high

temperatures involved. If not cooled quickly, the battery can explode. The FAA recommends using a Halon extinguisher to snuff out the fire, then dousing the PED with water.

Because these steps don't always prevent an explosion, especially on waterproof PEDs, some airlines and bizjet operators are equipping their aircraft with PED fire-containment systems (FCS). Essentially a fireproof bag or case, an FCS is designed to contain flames, fumes, and objects during a Li-ion fire or battery explosion.

Some FCSs, like those from Fire Containment Concepts and PlaneGuard, allow extinguishing agents to be added to the sealed bag or case.

The Hot-Stop "L" uses Airtight Zipper Technology to hold water and fumes inside regardless of how the bag is tipped. Most FCSs also include fireproof gloves for handling the hot PED. Your pilot or cabin attendant should indicate the existence and location of the FCS during your passenger briefing. —*Kim Rosenlof*

QUOTE UNQUOTE

"China's commercial interests are spreading all over, to Africa, to South America, regions which are not necessarily their traditional markets. When they go looking for resources, they're usually in remote areas, so access becomes crucial. How do you get from Beijing to Angola easily and when you want to? The answer is business aviation."

—*David Dixon, president, Jetcraft Asia*

SOURCE: NEW YORK TIMES

Santa Barbara Shows Off Its MOXI

The much-anticipated opening of MOXI, the Wolf Museum of Exploration + Innovation, took place in Santa Barbara, California, in late February. Three floors of the Spanish Colonial-style, 25,000-square-foot building include exhibits focused on science, technology, engineering, the arts, and math. You can try out a 3D printer, explore a



large outdoor water play/experimentation platform, and design a boat to test in the water.

MOXI plans to introduce a series of evening events for adults later this year, including themed cocktail parties with hands-on demos and games. Also in the works are camps for kids and field trips.

Info: moxi.org —*Margie Goldsmith*




Giving Back



Coalition to Abolish Slavery and Trafficking

CAST (castla.org)—one of the first U.S. organizations dedicated exclusively to assisting survivors of human trafficking and modern-day slavery—provides social and legal services, outreach, and training. The group, established in 1998, operates the first shelter in the nation focused solely on addressing slavery survivors' physical and mental health issues.

To improve survivors' access to justice, CAST also conducts advocacy and training sessions for over 10,000 service providers, law-enforcement officials, policymakers, and members of the general public. About 27 million people are enslaved around the world, and CAST strives to spread the word about their plight and encourage action within the anti-trafficking movement. —*Lysbeth McAleer*

BJT readers—who represent one of the highest-net-worth magazine audiences anywhere—clearly have the means to contribute to a better world. To help you do that, we're spotlighting one deserving organization per issue. All of them have received a four-star overall rating from Charity Navigator (charitynavigator.org), which evaluates philanthropic institutions based on their finances, accountability and transparency.



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Hotel adventures

Over the past two decades, our columnist has experienced everything from presidential suites to a dump that recalled an infamously horrific motel.

by Joe Sharkey

Unless you're traveling to a home you own or to visit a friend or relative, you'll probably be staying at a hotel when you reach your destination. And the good news is that, across the board, hotels are better than ever. They have to be, because competition is intense—especially among the major chains that dominate the industry—thanks partly to the growing popularity of Airbnb options. This year, 468 hotels will open in the top 20 U.S. markets, including 76 in New York City alone, according to Smith Travel Research.

I've written about domestic and international travel for almost 20 years, giving me wide exposure to the lodging industry, at precisely the time when it was undergoing enormous expansion, and hotels all were upping their games. Lucky me, I've had the opportunity to experience some great high-end international hotels, such as Claridges and the Dorchester in London; the (Marriott) Ritz-Carltons in Berlin and Pudong Shanghai; the Four Seasons George V in Paris; the Taj Mahal in Mumbai; the Four Seasons Peninsula Papagayo in Costa Rica; La Mamounia in Marrakesh; the Peninsula in Hong Kong; and the Grand Hyatt in Tokyo.

One of my most memorable experiences came during a business trip to Japan, when I stayed at the Tokyo Grand Hyatt. Richard White, then Hyatt's marketing director for Asia, met me in the lobby and, rather than put me in

the standard room I'd booked, insisted that I experience the elegant, 850-square-foot presidential suite. Located on the top floor of the 21-story hotel, it featured a private 10-by-40-foot swimming pool under a retractable roof.

"So how's the hotel?" asked my wife when I phoned home.

"Nice. It has a pool," I replied.

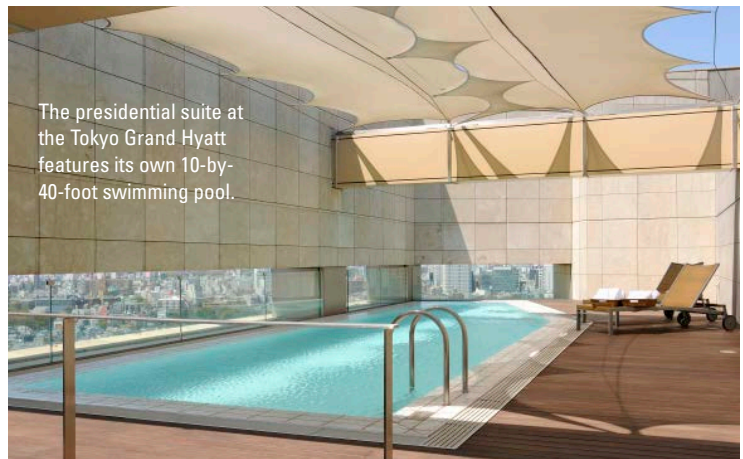
"Hmm?" she said.

"In my *room!*" I said.

Most of the luxury hotels I've stayed in belong to major chains, and those chains also manage many midlevel properties, such as the Hilton Garden Inn, Marriott Courtyard, Comfort Suites, and Best Western Plus. Those chains have all improved amenities to the point where you can often expect an excellent breakfast, Wi-Fi, and the kind of quality bedding that used to be found only in the swanky hotels.

In fact, at least some of the most well-heeled travelers actually prefer the midlevel properties, which they consider just as reliable and also less pretentious than the top-of-the-line establishments. For example, I know an entrepreneur who owns a Gulfstream IV and stays at Hilton Hampton Inns whenever one's available. (There are over 2,000 in North America, Europe, and India.)

"Except on vacation with my wife, I'm not usually comfortable in five-star hotels," he says. "Too much fussing. And at a place like



The presidential suite at the Tokyo Grand Hyatt features its own 10-by-40-foot swimming pool.

a Hampton, I always know exactly what I'm going to get in terms of service and quality. No surprises."

That's usually the case if you stick to the major brands. It's not so true when you wander, as I learned last July, after a business meeting in Huntington, West Virginia. Since I was traveling on my own nickel and hotel rates in Huntington seemed exorbitant, I went onto Orbitz.com and found a bargain just across the river in South Point, Ohio.

The description and photos looked fine, so I booked it for one night, at a mere \$66.80.

When I arrived, I passed two men and a woman smoking and drinking beer in the parking lot. At the check-in desk, the clerk handed

me my room key—and a small rolled-up bundle.

"What's this?" I asked.

"Your towel," she said.

With my rollaboard in tow and my towel tucked under my arm as if I was in a seashore bathhouse, I made it past a broken elevator and down a littered hallway to my room, where at least the Wi-Fi worked. Belatedly, I checked the user reviews for the hotel, and the first one I saw said, "Run!! The place is Norman Bates *Psycho* scary!"

I quickly booked a room at the Marriott Fairfield Inn in Huntington, and fled back across the Ohio River. The cost for the night at the Fairfield was about a hundred bucks more.

But at least the towels were in the bathroom. **BJT**

Joe Sharkey (jsharkey@bjtonline.com), the author of six books and a longtime BJT contributor, wrote a weekly business travel column for the *New York Times* for 16 years.



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This new recurring editorial feature will spotlight noteworthy aircraft that are for sale at press time, beginning with this issue's look at midsize and super-midsize jets that are less than 10 years old. **BJT's** editorial department selects aircraft for inclusion and the magazine receives no compensation in exchange for coverage. Brokers wishing to have their aircraft considered for this department should email readyfortakeoff@bjtonline.com.

Late-Model Midsize and Super-Midsize Jets



↑
2016 Embraer Legacy 500

This new Legacy, which is available for immediate delivery, comes with \$2 million worth of options and five years of prepaid enhanced Embraer Executive Care. It offers Inmarsat high-speed internet and steep-approach capability.

Asking price: make offer

Broker: The Jet Business

↑
2008 Cessna Citation Sovereign

This one-owner aircraft, which has been maintained by Citation service centers, has 3,600 hours of flight time. The Wi-Fi-equipped jet includes 10 passenger seats with a double club, single forward side-facing divan, and belted lav.

Asking price: \$5.295 million

Broker: Elliott Aviation



↑
2011 Hawker 4000

This WAAS/LPV-equipped Sovereign is enrolled in Cessna's ProParts and PowerAdvantage programs. With its Document MC (450-hour) inspection recently completed, it has logged just 887 hours and 751 landings. The 10-passenger cabin incorporates a forward refreshment center.

Asking price: make offer

Broker: Jetcraft



↑
2011 Hawker 4000

This one-owner Hawker is in excellent condition, says the broker. It features Load 20 avionics upgrades as well as a paperless cockpit. The cabin contains a forward galley with forward and aft four-place club seating and an aft lav.

Asking price: make offer

Broker: Guardian Jet

BRINGING A NEW LEVEL OF SERVICE AND STYLE TO TRANSPACIFIC CHARTER





*Geoffery Cassidy,
cofounder and managing director*



*James Seagrim,
cofounder and director of operations*

HOW ZETTA JET HAS RAISED THE BAR FOR PRIVATE CHARTER TO OFFER NOTHING LESS THAN A TRULY PERSONALIZED AIRLINE

Less than two years after launch, Singapore-based Zetta Jet has succeeded in establishing a new class of transpacific air charter, providing discerning clients with unparalleled speed, service and connectivity for their international travel. The company offers a unique customer experience, combining a dedicated Asian service philosophy with the flexibility and “can-do” spirit of the U.S., along with a European flair for fashionable luxury—all delivered aboard new Bombardier Globals, the world’s most modern ultra-long-range business jets. No other charter company can claim the operational and fleet advantages that elevate Zetta Jet from a charter provider to the world’s first truly personalized private airline.

In recent months, with new-aircraft deliveries continuing for its all-Bombardier owned-and-operated fleet, more travelers have been discovering the “airline” difference that sets Zetta Jet apart.

“As our business grows, so does the understanding of the product and our capability to quickly dispatch and operate ultra-long-haul flights,” said Geoffery Cassidy, Zetta Jet cofounder and managing director.

That’s an understanding every international charter customer and business travel professional should have.

A PERSONALIZED PRIVATE AIRLINE

Zetta Jet’s airline-level capabilities are first evident in its non-stop trans-global flight paths: Beijing to New York, Hong Kong to Los Angeles, or Los Angeles to Moscow, for example. It’s the only Part 135 (on-demand air charter) operator authorized by

the U.S. Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) to fly polar routes—as the airlines do—saving passengers hours of travel time and eliminating fuel stops.

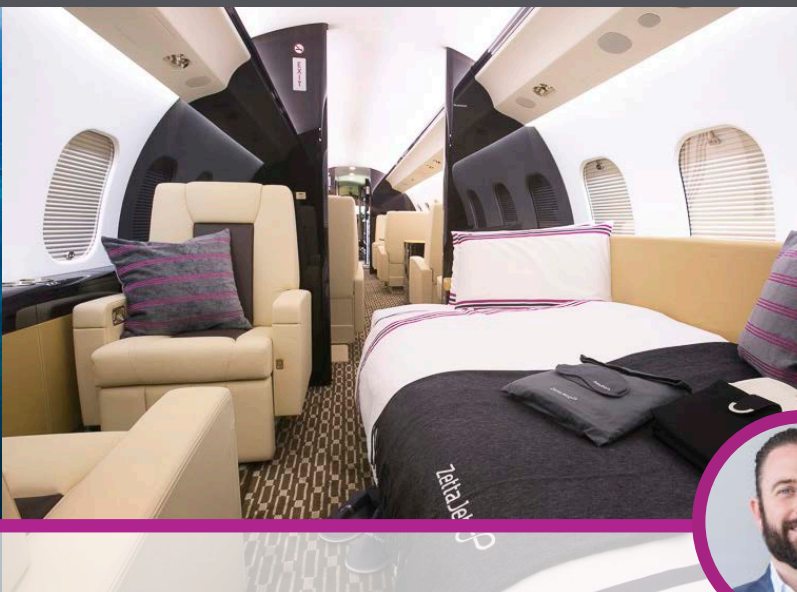
Also like an airline, Zetta Jet owns its fleet, giving the company complete scheduling flexibility and operating efficiency, and a consistent platform for creating the ultimate customer experience. In contrast, the great majority of charter operators use independently owned aircraft that they manage, an inefficient arrangement that creates scheduling and availability issues, requires owner approval before charters can be booked, and can result in inconsistent quality.

Zetta Jet is also the first charter service to offer the new high-speed Inmarsat Ka-band Jet ConneX satcom service—the fastest and most reliable in-flight connectivity service available—on the Global 6000. “Our customers can meet their business and entertainment needs by bringing their office into the sky, streaming videos and using social media to make their time onboard productive,” said James Seagrim, cofounder and director of operations.

This same connectivity is used in the cockpit, a pipeline to real-time weather and routing data through Zetta Jet’s new global operations center in Singapore, enhancing comfort, safety and efficiency.

This commercial-scale capability is singularly focused on fulfilling the unique needs and desires of each customer. Select your preference for the interior configuration and color. “People like choice,” said cofounder Matthew Walter, director of sales. “Some customers want a double divan in back, some want a huge bed.”

Your flight attendant will speak your native language and has been trained at the world’s finest hospitality school. Your meals and wine are sourced from Michelin-starred restaurants and the world’s finest vineyards, and are impeccably prepared and served to your individual tastes.



Matthew Walter,
cofounder and director of sales

And though Zetta Jet's routes are direct, no charter provider is more eager to go extra miles for customers. "We believe that no desire is too extravagant, and no request too difficult to satisfy," Seagrim said.

These are among the elements that set Zetta Jet apart, not only as a private airline, but also as a truly personalized one.

GLOBAL ROOTS FOR GLOBAL SERVICE

The Asian, American and European influences that define Zetta Jet's operating philosophy reflect the background of its three principals. Cassidy grew up in Asia, whose culture "is very service- and detail-oriented," he noted. Walter, a Californian with a passion for customer service, exudes a native spirit of ingenuity. "Americans don't give up without figuring out a solution," he said. The fleet's U.S. FAA registration—the world standard for quality and safety in aviation operations—underscores the company's U.S. link. Seagrim, born in London, personifies the panache of European stylishness and refinement that's so important to the Zetta Jet experience.

Cabin crews hail from a score of countries, and passengers are paired with an attendant who is completely familiar with their culture, language and preferences. All are carefully selected and receive extensive training in every facet of the cabin arts and sciences, from emergency medical care to culinary and service training at Switzerland's École hôtelière de Lausanne, the world's finest hospitality academy.

AN ALL-FLAGSHIP FLEET

Zetta Jet boasts the most modern and capable business jets available to intercontinental travelers. The Global 5000s and Global 6000s in the company's all-Bombardier fleet provide effortless

ultra-long-range service across the Pacific Rim and around the world. Indeed, Cassidy admits Zetta Jet couldn't provide its signature service without the foundation of capability, speed and comfort the Globals afford.

The aircraft interiors are all configured uniquely by design, providing a choice in cabin layout and color schemes that meet the preferences of a wide range of tastes, from traditional to contemporary. All are outfitted for global satcom connectivity and seamless service through customers' personal devices. Zetta Jet's industry-leading Jet ConneX Ka-band service on the Global 6000 is complemented by the most advanced Ku-band connectivity on the rest of the fleet, ensuring travel time can be used for work, entertainment or socializing with contacts half a world away.

The Zetta Jet Global 6000 also features the first installation of Rockwell Collins's acclaimed Venue Cabin Management System (CMS), which Bombardier has customized for enhanced passenger flexibility and ease of cabin-systems control.

Zetta Jet's owned-and-operated-aircraft structure gives the company complete fleet availability and scheduling flexibility, as well as control over how the aircraft are outfitted and maintained. Charter requests can be quickly confirmed and a consistent customer experience delivered. Moreover, the company's "floating" fleet model—the aircraft have no home base they must return to—enables it to offer one-way pricing, further enhancing the efficiency of its operations.

In the last 12 months, Zetta Jet has added U.S.-based Bombardier Challenger 650s to its fleet, making it the only operator to have these newly introduced large-cabin jets available for charter in North America. The Challenger 650 is ideal for transcontinental and transatlantic flights.

COMMERCIAL-GRADE OPERATIONAL CAPABILITY

Zetta Jet’s airline-level operational capability and the efficiencies it achieves are why the company’s customers alone can take full advantage of the range, reliability and span of missions a fleet of this type can support. “We have the highest fleet utilization of a Global fleet in the industry; that’s a fact from Bombardier,” said Cassidy. Its jets are flying an average of “well over 100 hours per month,” and utilization increases “with every aircraft we add.”

Though the company is only two years old, the principals have decades of combined experience in air charter operations and aircraft management. Their exemplary records of regulatory compliance and operational excellence are behind its unique FAA Part 135 approval for flights through areas of magnetic unreliability—i.e., the polar regions. This authorization allows Zetta Jet’s aircraft to take direct routes and fly nonstop to many destinations that most other operators require refueling to reach.

The company’s operations center in Singapore, opened in late 2016, functions 24/7, providing dispatch and operational support worldwide. Meanwhile, flight crews are based at strategic locations around the region, ready to perform any mission on short notice.

To assist customers when they’re on the ground, Zetta Jet supplements its headquarters with a main office in Los Angeles, and




sales and support offices in New York; London; San Jose, California; Beijing; and Shanghai. The company is streamlining and upgrading this worldwide support network to meet growing demand, particularly in North America and Europe, for its travel services.

But Singapore will remain Zetta Jet’s home for an important reason: “Asia is the hardest region in the world for business aviation—the language barriers, the need for landing slots, the logistics challenges, the sheer size,” explained Cassidy. “If we can be strong in this region, we can operate anywhere.”

ONWARD AND UPWARD

Recently, the company amalgamated longstanding relationships the principals have had with management clients, and requests from former charter customers who now own aircraft, under a new division: Zetta Jet Management, based in the U.S. The firm will provide the Zetta Jet experience, operational style and capabilities for these owners aboard their own long-range jets. But these aircraft will not be mixed with the Zetta Jet fleet, and the company remains committed to and focused on its core charter service.

Asked about benchmarks of the young company’s growth, Cassidy pointed to the increase in corporate customers relying on Zetta Jet for supplemental lift, and more important, sales of block-hour agreements. “When you can take a customer who’s loyal to another brand and not just convert him into our customer, but sign him to a block-hour program that takes him off the market,” Cassidy said, “that’s the biggest benchmark.”

Zetta Jet now has 16 aircraft in its fleet, with additional Global 6000s and Challenger 650s on order. But the big news is that the company is “close to signing” an order for the Global 7000, which is scheduled to enter service next year, Cassidy said. With a range of more than 7,000 nm, the Global 7000 will be the world’s largest four-zone-cabin business jet. Cassidy proclaims it “a game changer,” certain to “transform the landscape of ultra-long-haul flights.” That’s a description many would apply to Zetta Jet itself. 



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Marketing moves

After putting an aircraft up for sale, more and more owners are making changes, such as switching brokers or adjusting the asking price. Our columnist ponders the trend.

by James Wynbrandt

If you're selling a business jet today, you're probably more willing to lower the price, fire your broker, or pull the aircraft off the market than you would have been five years ago—or even one or two. That's one conclusion I've drawn from a review of sequential weekly preowned-market changes that were recorded over the last half decade.

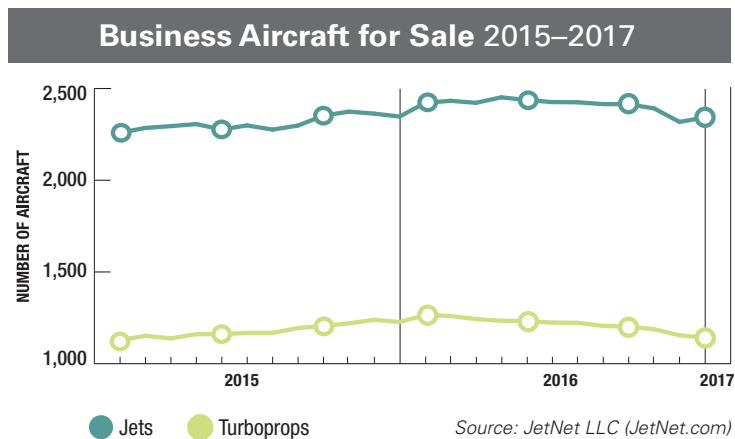
These changes include purchases and new listings, which are closely watched as industry barometers. But a business jet may undergo several other changes along the route from "offered for sale" to "sold." It may be repriced; the broker may be replaced; an asking price may be changed from a firm figure to "make offer," or vice versa; or the aircraft may be withdrawn from the market altogether. Market-change data catalogs this information.

I reviewed analogous weekly market-change reports from aircraftpost.com going back to 2013 (one per year, all from late February), looking for any correlation between market adjustments and subsequent preowned sales. For example: Would more price-adjustment activity or

broker changes indicate sellers were more responsive to market demands, resulting in higher sales in the rest of the year? Or would such activity hint at efforts to prod uninterested buyers, with more changes correlated to fewer subsequent sales?

Frankly, I didn't expect to uncover any connection (spoiler alert: I found none), but I did discover evidence of a growing proclivity to alter sales plans on the open market. In fact, in the weekly summaries, the percentage of changes that represent repricings, broker changes, and market withdrawals has climbed rather steadily. In the 2013 weekly summary, 56 percent of the aircraft with changes were listed because of adjustments, not because they had sold or were new to market. That percentage rose to 67 percent in 2014 and 77 percent in 2015; it declined a little to 68 percent in 2016, then jumped to 82 percent in 2017.

As for links between these alterations and subsequent sales, in 2013 retail preowned transactions hit what was then an all-time record of 2,303 business jets, but the increase in adjustments seen



in following years' samples shows no correspondence with transaction totals. Yet it's noteworthy that during this half decade, as preowned prices continued to defy owners' hopes for stabilization, transaction specialists have stressed the need to be ahead of the market and price aggressively.

Perhaps the adjustment activity illustrates that the message is getting through.

Parsing the changes by aircraft manufacturer, Falcon owners

evidence the most willingness to adjust their sales plans. Out of Falcons listed in the five weekly market change reports I reviewed, 85 percent were there because of price and/or broker changes and withdrawals from market. Also making such changes were the owners of 82 percent of the listed Gulfstreams, 81 percent of the listed Challengers, 73 percent of the listed Hawkers, 57 percent of the listed Learjets, 50 percent of the listed Globals, and 43 percent of the listed Citations. **BJT**

James Wynbrandt (jwynbrandt@bjtonline.com), a multi-engine instrument-rated pilot, is a longtime contributor to **Business Jet Traveler**.

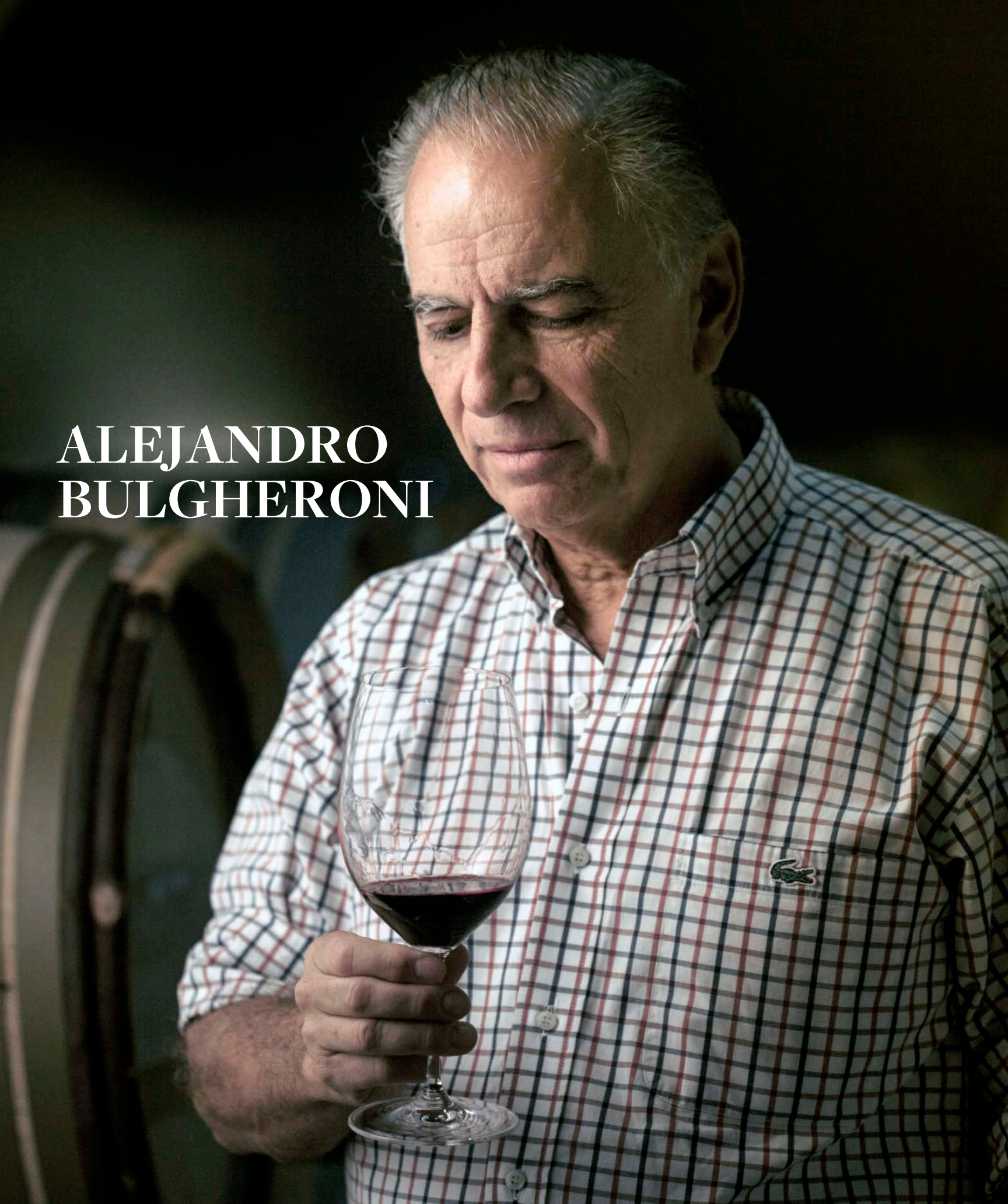
SOME POPULAR PREOWNED MODELS 2015-2017

	BOMBARDIER CHALLENGER 300	BOMBARDIER GLOBAL EXPRESS XRS	CESSNA CITATION C.J3	CESSNA CITATION SOVEREIGN	EMBRAER LEGACY 600	FALCON 2000EX EASy	GULFSTREAM G650	HAWKER 900XP	BOMBARDIER LEARJET 45	EMBRAER PHENOM 100
No. in Operation	454	160	412	348	174	104	157	183	243	337
No. for Sale	38	17	27	28	27	11	10	19	25	40
Average Price 2015 (millions)	\$11.36	\$28.88	\$4.86	\$7.88	\$9.10	\$14.80	\$72.82	\$6.37	\$3.14	\$2.87
Average Price 2016 (millions)	\$11.74	\$23.90	\$4.81	\$7.66	\$8.30	\$13.50	\$66.54	\$5.74	\$2.86	\$2.55
Average Price 2017 (millions)	\$ 9.23	\$22.28	\$4.08	\$6.51	\$8.19	\$11.64	\$58.98	\$4.47	\$2.12	\$2.30

Note: Prices are as of January in each year.

Source: JetNet LLC (JetNet.com)

**ALEJANDRO
BULGHERONI**



Argentina's richest man uses a fleet of corporate aircraft to manage a worldwide empire that includes energy holdings and wineries.

by Gemma Z. Price

He made billions developing his family's energy company, Bidas Corporation. Now 72-year-old Argentinian oil magnate Alejandro Bulgheroni is applying his analytical nose for business and love of agriculture to building a global collection of wineries to pass on to his children and grandchildren.

Bodega Garzón—a 5,400-acre, \$85 million property in Uruguay that now contains a winery, vineyards, a private club, and a restaurant overseen by Argentinian chef Francis Mallmann—was his first purchase back in 1999, when it was still undeveloped land. Since 2011 Bulgheroni has picked up additional fixer-upper properties at the pace of roughly two per year; and construction of wineries in Argentina, Italy, France, Australia, and Patagonia is well underway. In California, his Napa Valley Alejandro Bulgheroni Estate, which he calls his “flagship,” is slated to open this May.

It's common knowledge that the wine industry is risky, but Bulgheroni has built his career on finding lucrative opportunities in adverse conditions. At age 22, he joined the oil business that his father had established in 1948; and in 1985, when his dad passed away, he took over operations in partnership with his brother Carlos, an attorney who died last September.

The brothers last ran oil exploration and production ventures successfully during Argentina's

military dictatorship and in the Soviet Union; their interests in Bolivia and Turkmenistan survived the nationalizations of both. (Carlos brokered talks with the Taliban to build an unrealized Bidas pipeline from Turkmenistan across conflict-torn Afghanistan to Pakistan in the 1990s.)

In 2010, the brothers sold 50 percent of Bidas—now Argentina's largest privately operated energy company—to China's government-owned CNOOC Group. In 2012, Bidas in partnership with CNOOC took over Axion Energy Argentina, acquiring ExxonMobil's crude-oil refineries and fuel and lubricants trading assets in Argentina, Paraguay, and Uruguay.

Bulgheroni—who has domestic energy interests in the U.S., Mexico, Bolivia, and Argentina—has no plans to stop investing in oil and gas. On the contrary, last year, Pan American Energy, owned by Bidas and BP in a 40/60 split, announced it would pour \$1.4 billion into Argentina over the following 12 months. Bulgheroni's more recent acquisitions, however, suggest a desire to diversify his holdings. For starters, there's his 10,000-acre Uruguayan agriculture business, Agroland S.A., which in addition to the Bodega Garzón winery includes cattle ranching and production of extra-virgin olive oil, almonds, and pecans.

While billionaires who buy vineyards often have a passion for imbibing, Bulgheroni quit drinking when he married his wife Bettina about 20 years ago. (He notes that he only recently started to taste wine again out of necessity.) He says the wine industry appealed to him partly because of the economic prospects inherent in hospitality: while creating year-round tourism jobs for local people, especially in remote, unconventional wine destinations such as Garzón and Patagonia, Bulgheroni can offer a lifestyle proposition that attracts the ultra-wealthy.

Three former presidents of Uruguay, the current vice president, a former president of Spain, and many South American celebrities attended the March 2016 launch party for Bulgheroni's Bodega Garzón, which features a Howard Backen-designed clubhouse. Still to come: a luxury hotel and a wine club, to be capped at 300 members.

Benefits will likely include being able to store selections from private wine collections in the cellar and to “own” blocks on the property where members can make their own wines; zero tee times on the adjacent golf course; and reciprocity at clubs at soon-to-come wineries worldwide.

We met with Bulgheroni at Bodega Garzón, where he talked about his half-century career, his business plans, and his extensive use of private aviation.



ALL PHOTOS: ERIC WOLFINGER/COURTESY OF ALEJANDRO BULGHERONI

What have been your career's defining moments?

These 50 years have been very challenging. As you know, the price of oil has gone down, and relations in Argentina were always changing. Things were very difficult in 2001 and 2002. The good thing about it is that I never had a boring day.

We were always creating new projects. We went to central Asia and had very successful exploration in Afghanistan, which was confiscated. We were able to go to arbitration [in the U.S. Supreme Court], although we didn't get 10 percent of what we had discovered. We knew the Amoco people since 1959, and we became partners in '97. I always said that I went to sleep with Amoco and woke up with BP because we signed the agreement in '97, and in '98 Amoco was sold and BP took over. In 2001 we had about 8 percent of the oil investment in

Argentina; today we have 18 percent, but that's not only because of our goals, but because other investors decreased their production.

You have wind turbines here at Bodega Garzón and at your adjacent property. Are you planning to move into renewable energy?

No. I wanted to have a farming operation that was self-sufficient, which is why I started with windmills. Now we are evolving into solar, so we will combine wind and solar, not just on this property but on other properties, maybe this year.

How did you get started in the wine industry?

We started with this one [Bodega Garzón] because somebody said that the soil here was wonderful to grow in. And so I got in touch

with a friend in Argentina and he said talk to [Italian oenologist and winery consultant] Alberto Antonini and whatever he says to do, you do it. So that's what I did.

Didn't Antonini suggest that you experiment first over several harvests with small parcels of your flagship grapes, tannat and albariño? You now have more than 7,400 acres of those two varietals, plus pinot gris, viognier, pinot noir, caladoc, and sauvignon blanc, among others.

Yes. There were no wines being produced in the area, and at the beginning he was very, very cautious. He wanted to take a few years but I said I think we should do it faster. I told him I don't have that much time. Even though there was a risk, we started. In 2010, when he said, "I believe it's a wonderful terroir, a wonderful climate, and



FASTFACTS

NAME: Alejandro Pedro Bulgheroni

BORN: 1944 in Rufino, Santa Fe Province, Argentina

EDUCATION: University of Buenos Aires; University of Texas

BUSINESSES: Oil and gas (Bridas Corporation) plus wineries in such countries as U.S., Argentina, Uruguay, France, and Italy

NET WORTH: \$5.2 billion between him and the estate of his brother Carlos, who died last September, according to *Forbes* estimate. In 2016, *Forbes* listed Alejandro and Carlos as No. 324 on a list of the world's billionaires.

TRANSPORTATION: Global 5000 and Hawker 800 business jets, two helicopters, all owned by Bulgheroni's company

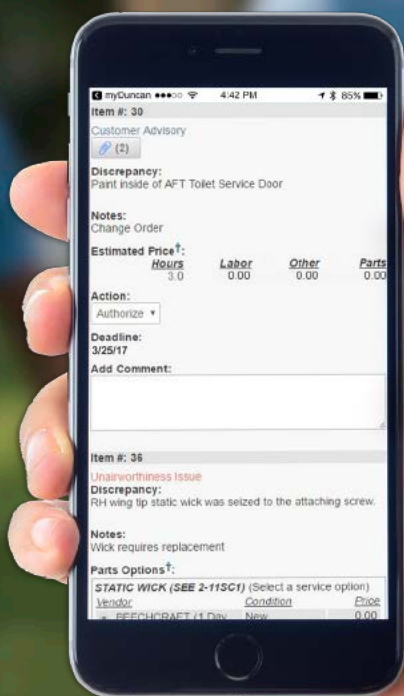
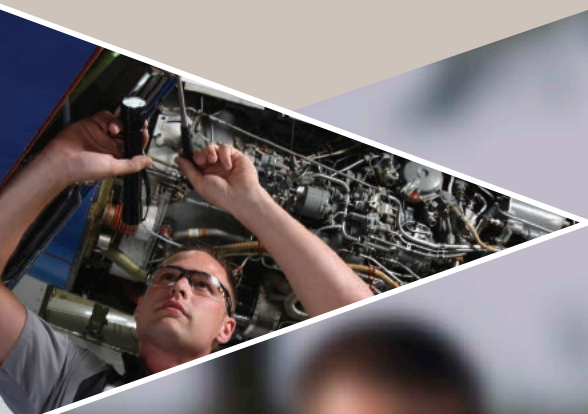
PERSONAL: Lives in Buenos Aires, Argentina. Married in 1996 to Bettina Bulgheroni. Seven children.



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When you're talking about a 15-year-old plane and a new plane, the technologies are completely different.

we could produce good wines here,” we started building the winery, the restaurant, the club. The wine cellar is getting better every year.

How did you select your winery projects in other markets?

We have two main advisors. In most of our wineries, it's Antonini. In France and in Napa [California], it's [Bordeaux-based oenologist] Michel Rolland. They are the ones telling me how to manage things. So far we've been buying wineries or vineyards for the terroir. If it's a good terroir, we can produce good wine.

In Italy it was different. We are growing a lot of olive trees here [in Uruguay] and the olive oil that we're producing is very good, but nobody knows Uruguay, nobody understands the quality of what we have. So I thought having some olive oil in Italy would create some synergies so that when we have

a big production here, we'd also have the market to take [the brand]. That's how we got into Italy.

Now you have 12 wineries, most of which you've bought in the last five years. What is it about this business that appeals to you?

It's a way of life. It's all about experiences, so we're combining it with tourism.

Do you think there's a strong business proposition in having people come to the property, dining here, and staying overnight?

Definitely. Putting together dining and wine is really interesting. We also have a golf course. With the six golf courses in Uruguay, that makes it a destination to come and play golf. There are also polo fields and we have the olive oil plant—that's also a great experience—

so I believe that all of that together creates a very interesting proposal for visitors.

What is your plan for opening the clubhouse we're sitting in to members?

We've been looking into clubs around the world and we want to set it up right. Since we have properties in the north and the south [hemispheres], we can bring people south and north during different times of the year. Mainly the club is about wine and the wine cellar and producing your own wine—maybe you could have your own acre and produce your wine for 20 or 30 years.

Do you have a grand vision for tying all of the wineries together in one club?

Maybe not one club; maybe different clubs. We have a very nice property in Argentina in Mendoza where we're thinking of making a wine club similar to this one. We have some



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We're still waiting to see how Brexit or the election of Mr. Trump is going to impact things. There are big question marks.

connections for people coming here and to Mendoza in our summer; and then maybe in the summer in the north, people can go to Tuscany or Bordeaux or the U.S. So this is the idea that we're trying to put together; the benefits of this club will be related to the others.

What's your vision for the oil and winery sides of the business?

They are two different visions, two different worlds. The oil side of the business—which is the Bidas Corporation—is also owned by my brother's family. But the wine business is owned by me, my wife, and my children only. Of course that would mean different approaches.

I don't think I want to grow the wine business more than where we are now. Maybe one or two wineries in specific places, but that will be all. I'm not seeing a very big business; I'm seeing a reasonably sized business, which hopefully in a few more years will be profitable.

Your properties are far flung, and I understand you reach them via private jet.

The company owns the jets and we fly them. We have a Global 5000 and a Hawker 800. And two helicopters.

How often do you fly?

Maybe two or three times a month, in a short range: Argentina, Uruguay, and so on. Long range—New York, Miami, Washington—maybe once or twice a month. We have to make two stops and we can go to China or various

other places. We have a small winery near Adelaide in the Barossa [in southern Australia], and I've flown there twice.

How does traveling by private jet enhance your life and your capability to do business?

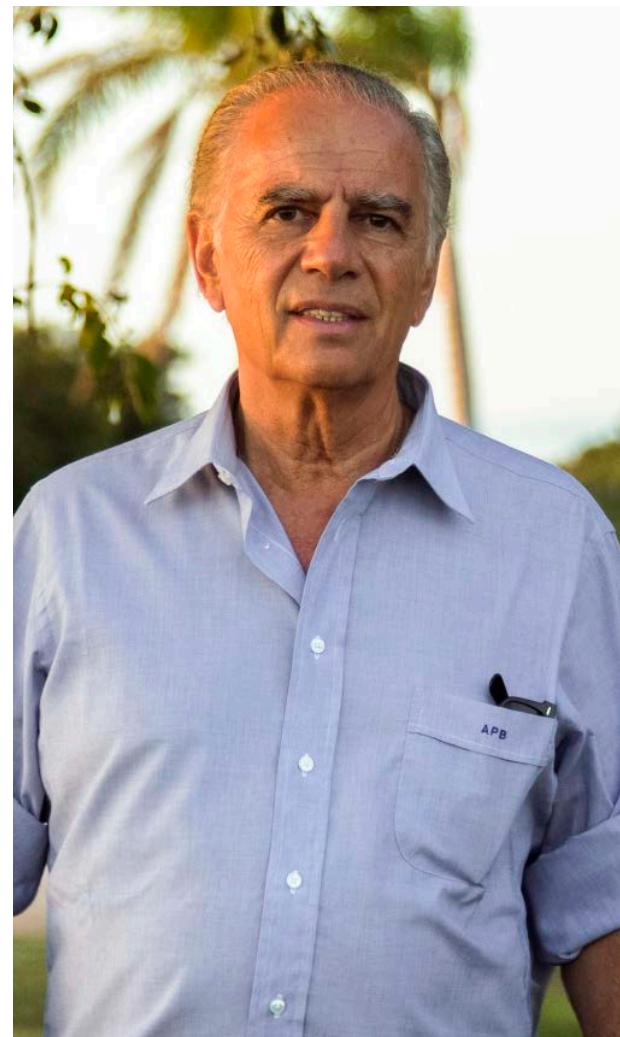
In my personal life, I can fly with my family, which is a lot better [than traveling commercially]. Sometimes we fly six people, long range. My wife has a lot of occupations, and flying this way makes it possible.

The important thing is the technology. When you're talking about a 15-year-old plane and a new plane, the technologies are completely different. When you have long flights, [comfortable onboard amenities] are important. If we are going to work the next day, we want to sleep. Sometimes we take our long conversations but usually we sleep.

How do you think the current political climate will affect your businesses?

I don't know. We're still waiting to see how Brexit or the election of Mr. Trump is going to impact things. There are big question marks. The vote in Italy is different, but we will see. We will adapt. Doing business in Argentina for 50 years, we had to adapt a lot, every year. It's been very, very challenging, and I believe we're more prepared than many other people for those types of challenges. **BJT**

Gemma Z. Price (gprice@bjtonline.com) has contributed to **BJT** since 2013. This interview has been edited and condensed.



ALEJANDRO BULGHERONI'S BUSINESS JETS

	Global 5000	Hawker 800
Variable cost/hour for latest model	\$3,899	\$2,493
Seating (exec/max)	13/19	8/15
NBAA IFR range 4 Passengers	5,137 nm	2,491 nm
Max cruise speed	511 kt	442 kt
Maximum takeoff weight	92,500 lb	27,400 lb
Cost new	\$50.441 million	N.A.
Cost range used	\$13–\$39.5 million	\$0.55–\$2.8 million

Sources: Conklin & de Decker Aircraft Cost Evaluator, Conklin & de Decker Aircraft Performance Comparator, Vref Aircraft Value Reference
Assumptions: Jet fuel, \$4.06/gallon; variable cost: fuel plus maintenance reserves; NBAA IFR 200 nm reserve fuel; four passengers (200 lb each including baggage).



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AIRBUS HELICOPTERS

H160

This medium turbine twin incorporates innovative technologies and promises strong performance. It looks great, too.

by Mark Huber

For Airbus Helicopters, the company's new H160 medium turbine twin is more than just another addition to its product family; it represents the catalyst through which the European company is trying to transform the way it makes and supports helicopters. Airbus introduced the model in 2015 as a state-of-the-art replacement for its AS365 and H155 twins.

For several years, Airbus Helicopters (or Eurocopter as it used to be called) was generally perceived as making great products that were let down by less-than-stellar product support. This reputation didn't seem likely to change until Guillaume Faury took over as CEO in 2014.

Faury had spent most of his career at Eurocopter in flight testing and engineering. He rejoined the airframer after serving as vice president of research and development at French automaker Peugeot from 2009 through 2013. His sojourn into the automotive world transformed his vision of what customer support should mean and he quickly set about making changes at Airbus, dramatically increasing the supply of spare parts, improving their delivery rates, and adjusting their prices downward in some cases; he also unveiled a comprehensive warranty program called H Care.

The moves paid off. Airbus Helicopters advanced from the basement to second place

among rotorcraft manufacturers in the annual product support survey of our sister publication, *Aviation International News*, and has remained there since 2015.

The transformation has started with the production stage, with a plan to perform final assembly in just 18 weeks—about half the time it now takes for the AS365. The final assembly line in Merignane in the south of France will integrate five major component assemblies that will be completed and tested before they reach the line. This means that lead time will be stable in the final assembly line. The flow will be automated and move down two production



lines, each with several workstations capable of assembling the various H160 configurations. Airbus intends to ramp up to 50 helicopters per year.

Two prototype H160s are in flight test and a third is scheduled to join the program later this year. Certification is slated for 2019. The model features an all-composite airframe with aggressive lines and futuristic styling unlike anything the industry has seen before. It features a flat-floor cabin, oversized windows, and a generous baggage compartment that can swallow 661 pounds. The cabin can be configured to seat four or eight passengers—with

all the bells and whistles you'd find in the latest large corporate jets—or it can offer utility seating for 12.

The H160 incorporates a variety of new technologies, including “Blue Edge” active tracking main rotor blades in a five-blade system with a double sweep design that reduces noise and improves ride smoothness; new Safran Arrano engines that offer 10 to 15 percent better fuel consumption; and the Helionix avionics system with four large touchscreens, the architecture of which already is flying on other Airbus twins, including the H135, H145, and

H175. To control costs, Airbus decided to skip a pricey fly-by-wire flight-control system and to make rotor-blade deicing an option. Still, there is much to like about the new technology that the standard model incorporates.

The Blue Edge blades feature tips with a bend that resemble the business end of a hockey stick. As rotor blades spin, the tips emit vortices. Bending the tips disrupts the “blade vortex interaction” from one blade to the next, reducing the helicopter’s noise signature by as much as 5 dB.

The Arrano engines (1,300 shaft horsepower each) feature a two-stage centrifugal compressor

**NEW AIRCRAFT
PREVIEW**



The model features an all-composite airframe with aggressive lines and futuristic styling unlike anything the industry has seen before.

and variable inlet guided vanes, which cut fuel consumption in all phases of flight and particularly at cruise power. They help propel the H160 to its estimated maximum cruise speed of 160 knots and service ceiling of 20,000 feet and give it an anticipated range of 450 nautical miles. Airbus Helicopters also maintains that the Arranos will have lower maintenance costs than other engines in their class.

Helionix avionics are designed to reduce workload by providing pilots with the information they need when they need it. The avionics couple to a four-axis autopilot and a first-limit indicator that shows all engine instrument data. Other advanced features include traffic and weather advisories, terrain-avoidance, and a synthetic-vision system.

The H160 also incorporates a canted fenestron tailrotor that further decreases its noise signature. The canted fenestron and the biplane horizontal stabilizer on the tailboom combine to improve lift. Electrically activated landing gear

and brakes in place of the traditional hydraulic systems trim weight and improve reliability. A health usage and monitoring system tracks key maintenance parameters and can transmit them to technicians on the ground while the helicopter is in flight, with the proper datalink.

Airbus thinks that the H160's overall maintenance costs will be more in line with those of a light twin than a medium one; and that it will be one ton lighter and 15 to 20 percent more efficient than its main perceived market competitor, the wildly successful AgustaWestland AW139. That remains to be seen, as does the price, which will be in the neighborhood of \$19 million with an executive interior.

What we do know now is this: the H160 incorporates impressive technology. And on looks alone, it is in a class of its own. **BJT**

Mark Huber (mhuber@bjtonline.com), an aviation industry veteran, has reviewed aircraft for **BJT** since 2005.



2019 Airbus Helicopters H160 at a glance

Crew	1-2
Passengers	4-12
Maximum cruising speed	160 kts
Maximum range	450 nm
Service ceiling	20,000 ft
Maximum takeoff weight	13,228 lb
Exterior dimensions	Length 45.9 ft
	Width 39.4 ft
	Height 13.1 ft

Source: Airbus Helicopters

Note: All figures preliminary. Interior dimensions and price not available.



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Paradise

by the week

Renting a private island can be the ultimate getaway, and if you share the cost with friends or relatives, it can be less expensive than you might guess.

by Helen Anne Travis

 With amenities ranging from secluded beaches and personal chefs to sailboats and submarines, renting an island can be a great option for travelers who want the comforts of a luxury resort, minus the crowds.

Islands that typically accommodate a dozen to 30 or more people are popular for family reunions, weddings, and milestone birthdays. Smaller islands make for intimate honeymoon and anniversary destinations.

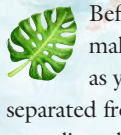
“Renting an island takes the idea of getting away from it all to a whole new level,” says Melanie Fish, a travel expert at the vacation site HomeAway.com. “When you know you’re surrounded by water, it makes disconnecting all that much easier.”

The disconnection comes at a cost. Fees range widely, from \$1,000 per night for basic accommodations on a private island in Belize to a whopping \$170,000 a night for a luxuriously

equipped island in Fiji. The sticker price typically includes food, a chef, housekeeping, and all the island’s amenities. Many groups opt to split the fee among several couples or families. This can sometimes bring the cost more in line with that of a high-end resort.

If you don’t like the price, moreover, you can try asking for a discount. “There’s significant room for negotiation,” says Eric Grayson, founder and CEO of Discover 7 Travel, a luxury travel concierge company in New York City. He says he has seen prices drop as much as 15 to 20 percent during negotiations.

Many travelers think “tropical” when contemplating an island rental, envisioning secluded coves in the Caribbean Sea or Indian Ocean, but you can find plenty of private islands in other locales. Fish says she has seen rentals just off the U.S. coastline and on domestic lakes and rivers. “You can even rent a private island in Connecticut,” she adds.

 Before you commit to a major rental, make sure you’ll like island life as much as you think you will. The idea of being separated from the rest of the world may sound appealing, but when some people realize just how separate they are, they go a little stir crazy, says Melissa Biggs Bradley, CEO and founder of Indagare Travel. She recommends doing a “dry run” at a private island resort, booking just a villa or room, instead of the whole island, for a weekend to see whether you enjoy being that removed from society.

If you do, it’s time to start shopping for an island. The best way to avoid disappointment is to work with someone who is familiar with the available properties, says Grayson. Engaging a booking agent lets someone else ensure that the rental contract, which is often extensive, details everything from how the island deals with power outages to how food is prepared. It may also open up new options,

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A sampling of island rentals

Laucala Island, Fiji (laucala.com). Prices start at \$170,000 per night with a five-night minimum. This 3,500-acre private island features 25 villas, complete with pools and indoor and outdoor showers. The property also features a hilltop spa offering Fijian treatments, five dining locations, an equestrian center, a boat fleet, and an 18-hole golf course. You can fly your private jet directly to the island's airport or land at Fiji's Nadi International Airport and be transferred to the island via the resort's airplane.

Turtle Island, Fiji (turtlefiji.com). Prices start at \$325,000 per week. The island has 14 "bures," or Fijian villas. Each comes with an assigned "Bure Mama," also known as your personal concierge. The island is designed to be self-sustaining and harvests all its power from its solar farm. As the name suggests, Turtle Island has its own sea turtle preserve. The closest airport that accepts private jets is Nadi International. The rental fee includes transfers to the island.

Little Palm Island, Florida (littlepalmisland.com). Prices start at \$175,000 for a three-night stay. The island has 30 one-bedroom suites. The fee includes transfers from and to the mainland; breakfast, lunch, and dinner for up to 60 people; non-alcoholic beverages; and amenities that include paddleboards, kayaks, motorboats, and fishing and snorkel gear. To reach the island, you fly to Key West International Airport and then transfer via seaplane or by car and then boat.

The Brando, French Polynesia (thebrando.com). Prices start at \$130,000 per night. Located on the Tetiaroa atoll 30 miles north of Tahiti, the island features 35 villas, a spa, and watersports that include snorkeling, paddleboarding, Polynesian canoeing, and scuba diving. Guests enjoy cuisine from Guy Martin of the Michelin two-star restaurant Le Grand Véfour in Paris, as well as guided island explorations led by local naturalists. Guests land on the main island of Tahiti at Faa'a International Airport, where they are transferred by the island's private airplane and/or helicopter to the Brando.

Deep Water Cay, Bahamas (deepwatercay.com). Prices start at \$75,000 per night at this island, which can accommodate 50 guests in cottages and oceanfront homes. The cost covers lodging, meals, and daily boat-guided activities such as scuba diving, flats fishing, reef fishing, and snorkeling. You can fly privately directly to the island's airport, or you can land at Grand Bahama International Airport and then take a boat to Deep Water Cay.

Musha Cay, Bahamas (mushacay.com). Prices start at \$57,000 per night for up to 24 guests at this island, which magician David Copperfield owns. Rental includes access to a gym, tennis and volleyball courts, and a pool. To reach the island, you fly into Exuma International Airport; from there you're transported to Musha Cay by private air or boat charter. —H.A.T.



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1. Musha Cay, Bahamas (photo on page 32)
2. The Brando, French Polynesia
3. Little Palm Island, Florida
4. Turtle Island, Fiji
5. Deep Water Cay, Bahamas
6. Laucala Island, Fiji

Paradise by the week

since some island owners opt to work only with certain companies and agents.

The key to getting what you want is clearly communicating all your expectations.

“We’re all about getting to know clients’ needs,” says Lindsey Epperly, a luxury travel consultant and owner of Epperly Travel. Her process involves asking people about past experiences: Where’s the nicest place they’ve stayed and what did they like and dislike about it? This helps her find properties that will fit their needs.

It also gives her information that the island’s staff can use to pamper guests with personal touches. Don’t be surprised if you find pictures of your dog in your room or if music by your favorite musician is playing in the main cabana when you arrive. The staff on a private island, Epperly says, “is always five or six steps ahead.”



Even with a great staff, though, a property may not suit your needs.

“We scout out each island, and we are upfront about what we think the pros and cons are,” says Bradley. “Everyone is going to show you the photo of a palm tree and a white sand beach. But whether that beach is in the British Virgin Islands, the Maldives, or the Bahamas makes a big difference.” Transportation issues, local culture and customs, and seasonal weather changes can’t be communicated in a photograph, she adds.

Working with an island advisor isn’t the only way you can do your due diligence, says Jon Santangelo, founder of Chariot, a company that assists with arrangements for tropical destination weddings. Websites like TripAdvisor.com may contain feedback from travelers who rented all or part of an island. An online search can reveal whether an island has received any negative press. Santangelo’s favorite trick: entering the island’s name into Facebook’s search bar to see what other visitors have publicly posted.

You can also ask to speak to former renters, he says. You might not be able to, but there’s no harm in trying.

If you opt to find island listings without the help of an agency on sites like HomeAway.com and Airbnb.com, do so carefully. “If someone’s listing a private island for rent on Craigslist, I would proceed with caution,” says Fish.

It’s particularly important to clearly communicate your needs if you work directly with a private owner, she adds. Many offer a chef, staff, and other amenities, including transportation to and from the island and a fully stocked refrigerator, but sometimes only if you ask. You don’t want to wake up the first morning and realize you have to fly back to the mainland for coffee, Fish says.



Once you’ve picked your perfect island, suggests Santangelo, reserve it at least a year before you plan to go, to ensure



7. Musha Cay, Bahamas
8. Little Palm Island, Florida
9. Laucala Island, Fiji

availability. Then start planning the logistics, or let someone else do so. Because the location may be remote and importing wine and foods may involve complications, you might need to allow considerable time for customs’ approvals and transporting specialty items by boat, says Bradley.

“You do have to plan differently,” she adds. “You can’t be spontaneous.”

That’s certainly true when it comes to arranging for your arrival. Some islands have private airstrips but most require you to land at a nearby airport and take a boat, seaplane, or helicopter. Experts recommend ensuring you understand the transportation process and how long it will take to get from the airport to the island. Hopping in a puddle jumper and then a ferry after a two-hour flight is one thing. Doing so after a 12-hour, multistop journey is another.

When you arrive, you can typically expect to find an around-the-clock crew of housekeepers, butlers, and kitchen staff, with employees living in separate quarters or on nearby islands. Understanding whether you want to feel completely secluded or want to always know someone’s nearby is part of the booking consultant’s job.

“There are ways [staff] can appear and disappear,” says Epperly. **BJT**

Helen Anne Travis (htravis@bjtonline.com) is a Florida-based freelance writer. Her article about Malta appeared in our February/March issue.



DASSAULT FALCON 7X

It climbs like a rocket, goes anywhere, and burns considerably less fuel than comparable models.

by Mark Huber



Over the last decade, Dassault has delivered 275 of its long-range trijet Falcon 7Xs, and the fleet has amassed 500,000 hours of flight time. With a range of 5,797 nautical miles, the 7X may not have the longest legs in the large-cabin bizjet “uber-berge” derby, but it is the undisputed champ in the go-anywhere sub-category. Don’t believe it? Check out the online version of this article for a link to a YouTube video of the aircraft threading the Alps and then landing on the

3,570-foot runway at Gstaad, Switzerland with plenty of pavement to spare.

Even with its shorter legs, the 7X handles nonstop flights between such city pairs as New York and Riyadh, Paris and Singapore, and Los Angeles and Rome. Its cabin can be configured for 12 to 16 passengers, and cabin altitude at 51,000 feet is a refreshing 6,000 feet (typically lower at airline altitudes). The aircraft climbs like a rocket, reaching 39,000 feet in as little as 15 minutes after takeoff, and has a fast cruise

speed of Mach 0.90. And it burns up to one-third less fuel than comparable aircraft.

The 7X was the first business jet to come to market with full fly-by-wire computerized flight controls, and pilots praise its fighter-like responsiveness via sidesticks that require only the slightest fingertip pressure to put the airplane just where you want it. The four large cockpit display screens are easy to read, and minor carping associated with the first iteration of 7X avionics seems to have been largely addressed





While the model resembles the Falcon 900 trijet, the 7X's 39-foot cabin is six feet longer and the aircraft features a new, longer wing that is more efficient.

with the EASy II/II+ upgrade that most owners have opted for to comply with new avionics mandates. However, the price of the upgrade can top \$1 million.

You may have read about a runaway trim incident in 2011 that grounded a portion of the 7X fleet for a few months and restricted its speed while a remedy was being designed. The problem related to a limited batch of electronic units used to control the horizontal stabilizer. Dassault fashioned a parts, software, and redesign fix that solved the problem. Aside from that incident, the 7X has been remarkably trouble-free.

While the model resembles the Falcon 900 trijet, the 7X's 39-foot cabin is six feet longer and the aircraft features a new, longer wing with

an 86-foot span that is more swept and efficient. The Pratt & Whitney Canada PW307A engines have overhaul intervals of 7,200 hours. The cabin is extremely quiet—with a noise level below 50 dBA—thanks to special engine mounts and cabin isolators. The 28 cabin windows are two inches higher and 20 percent larger than those on 900s and flood the aircraft with natural light.

The 7X comes in various cabin configurations with features including forward and aft lavatories, a third flight-deck seat, a crew rest area, enhanced closet space, added passenger leg area, and a 50-inch-long galley/work area. The forward galley, lav, and crew rest areas can be

closed off from the main cabin by deploying a sliding pocket door in the forward cabin divider.

A typical cabin configuration offers forward and aft lavs, galley, and three seating areas, including a club seating section with four facing larger executive seats and foldout sidewall tables; a conference grouping with four narrower seats and an electrically activated, folding hi-lo table and opposite sidewall credenza; and an aft stateroom with one or two divans that fold out into beds and/or executive single seats. These three zones have separate climate controls. You can access the main baggage compartment in flight through the aft lav.

The 7X is available with a standing/sitting shower, but adding that feature requires the rear cabin bulkhead to be moved forward. The shower features a "rain sky" ceiling and an electrochromically dimmable window.

Dassault began working with BMW Group Designworks to offer optional interiors for the





7X in 2011. The new designs introduce more curves, more contrast between the sidewalls and headliners, and different lighting throughout the cabin to create a more open and spacious feel.

In 2014, Dassault rolled out several improvements for new and used 7Xs, including a system that cuts in half the time it takes to refuel from 50 to 100 percent capacity and increases maintenance intervals. Dassault engineers also have devised fixes for flight delays triggered during the power-up sequence.

Early 7Xs are coming up on their major “C-check” inspections, which are due every eight years or 4,000 cycles (a cycle means one

takeoff and landing). This is an excellent time to make interior changes and modifications. If your aircraft lacks a head-up display/enhanced vision system, for example, the “C-check” is a good opportunity to add it. But like EASy II, it’s not necessarily easy on the budget: the price is around \$1 million.

Besides installing a shower, you can take other steps to upgrade your 7X. Germany’s Ruag, for example, offers a seat reupholstery package that enhances comfort; an illuminated headliner that is light/color intensity adjustable; and a forward-cabin 32-inch HD monitor. You can also enlarge the conference grouping from four to six seats by replacing the opposing credenza with two single seats or a two-place kibitzer.

You can purchase hourly service plans for the aircraft from Dassault through Falcon-Care; from Pratt & Whitney Canada for the engines through its Eagle Service Plan; and

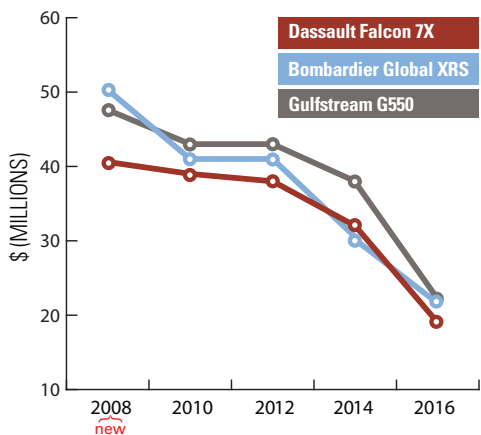
from Honeywell MSP for the auxiliary power unit. These programs can be highly customized to your needs, but taken together they are not inexpensive.

Over the last several years, Dassault has made substantial moves to improve its product support, hiring more customer-service representatives and technicians, expanding customer service centers, expanding parts inventories, opening more aircraft service centers, increasing mandatory service inspections/intervals and right-pricing parts.

While the 7X has historically maintained its value well in its peer group, the introduction of the 8X last year, with its 43-inch longer cabin, could cause the used 7X market to soften. Most 8X buyers will be trading up from 7Xs, potentially sending those aircraft into the used market and creating an opportunity for savvy buyers who value utility, speed, and great operating economics. **BJT**

FAIR MARKET VALUE

price comparison of competitive aircraft



Source: Vref Publications (vrefonline.com)

Industry veteran **Mark Huber** (mhuber@bjtonline.com) has reviewed aircraft for **BJT** since 2005.



Specifications & Performance

Passengers (executive)	12
Pilots	2
Range*	5,797 nm
Max Cruise Speed	508 kt
Cabin Dimensions	Height: 6.2 ft
	Width: 7.7 ft
	Length: 39.1 ft

NBAA IFR 200-nm reserve fuel.

Economics

Total variable flight cost/hour	\$3,976
Total fixed cost/year	\$963,591

Source: Conklin & DeDecker, Orleans, Mass.

Coming soon to BJTonline.com: a searchable Aircraft Guide that will contain detailed performance, specifications, and expense data for this and all other popular business aircraft.

Dassault Falcon 7X compared with other aircraft

Model	First year produced	Variable cost/hour	Seats exec/max	Range (nm)	Normal cruise (kt)	Max takeoff weight (lb)
2008 Falcon 7X	2007	\$3,976	12/19	5,797	488	70,000
2008 Gulfstream G550	2003	\$4,347	13/19	6,820	488	91,000
2008 Global Express XRS	1999	\$5,103	13/19	6,390	499	98,000

Assumptions: Jet fuel \$4.06/gal; variable cost: fuel plus maintenance reserves; four passengers; NBAA IFR 200-nm reserve fuel; passenger weight 200 lb includes baggage; two pilots. **Sources:** Conklin & de Decker’s Life Cycle Cost and Aircraft Performance Comparator.

Fighting market volatility

Inflation and other factors could take a toll on your investment portfolio over the next few years. Act now to limit or avoid the damage.

by Chana R. Schoenberger

Last year brought several large shocks to stock and bond markets, from Britain's surprise Brexit vote to the Trump election upset. Even the Fed's December increase in interest rates, which analysts had long expected, affected the investment landscape.

Now, with a new administration in Washington, investors wonder what factors will impact the markets over the next few years, and many portfolio managers suggest that one will be inflation. Although it hasn't been a serious problem in the U.S. recently, it seems likely to become more of an issue now, as rates rise and the speed with which money moves around the economy increases due to all the funds the Fed has distributed. And inflation can have major effects on investments, most notably by devaluing the cash in your accounts and producing losses in long-term bonds and bond funds.

"Inflation is a form of volatility that can be painful if you're not prepared for it," says Chris Sheldon, chief investment officer of Fidelity's Private Wealth Management group. If you're concerned about inflation picking up, you might consider reducing the average maturity of your bonds by getting rid of some of your longer-maturity bonds and considering inflation-protected securities like



TIPS. Note, though, that bonds with longer maturities, especially U.S. Treasury bonds, are typically good hedges against equity volatility, so you may want to keep some for that purpose. (Short-term bonds are considered to be those with maturities of three years or less and intermediate bonds mature in roughly three to 10 years.)

Sheldon also suggests looking at commodity-oriented companies and at funds that

invest in energy, metals, and other commodities. Consider both the physical assets and the companies' stocks and bonds.

Incremental steps are key, because the cost of being wrong in your predictions might be high, Sheldon says. Investors often expose their portfolios to increased risk and volatility when they make large or frequent portfolio changes.

It's unlikely that President Trump will make the stock and bond markets more or less volatile on his own, says Peter Lazaroff, a wealth manager and the director of investment research at St. Louis-based Plancorp, which manages \$3 billion. The country's rate of economic growth usually matters more to markets than politics.

To limit swings in your portfolio's returns, Lazaroff suggests, focus on fixed income, because "nothing will be better at reducing volatility than bonds." Most U.S. investors hold far too few international bonds, he adds, noting that while the U.S. represents 51 percent of the world's stocks, its companies issue just 28 percent of bonds.

Why foreign bonds? Because they "drastically increase diversification," Lazaroff explains. Each country has its own monetary

policy, currency, and rate of inflation. And diversification can lower volatility. Between 1990 and 2016, owning the currency-hedged Barclays Global Aggregate Bond Index instead of the Barclays U.S. Aggregate Bond Index meant your holdings saw a 17 percent reduction in volatility, Lazaroff says.

While returns on U.S. and international stocks are highly related, correlations are three to four times lower between U.S. and global bonds, he says, adding that “if you believe in international stock investing, you should quadruply believe in international bond diversification.”

Plancorp’s research suggests that investors should keep 30 percent of their fixed-income portfolios in international bonds. Unless your assets are huge, don’t try to buy individual foreign bonds; you’d need a global fixed-income portfolio of \$50 million, plus currency hedges, to get adequate diversification. Instead, start with a currency-hedged bond fund, like the DFA Five-Year Global Fixed Income Portfolio (DFGBX) or the exchange-traded Vanguard Total International Bond Fund (BNDX).

What you shouldn’t do to fight volatility, Lazaroff says, is move into alternative investments like hedge funds. While you might think those assets aren’t highly correlated with the stock market and will preserve your capital if equities fall, you likely will pay hefty fees that will erode your returns. Bond funds aren’t sexy, but their expenses are relatively low. And even in bear markets for bonds, such as in the 1980s, higher interest rates offset temporary losses over the long run, Lazaroff says.

With stocks, one way to counterbalance volatility is with dividends, notes Ian Weinberg, CEO of Family Wealth and Pension Management, a Woodbury, New York firm that manages more than \$300 million. “Portfolios that were more focused on dividends...recovered quicker than ones that were not” after the 2008 global financial crisis, Weinberg says.

The key is to look for dividends of about 4 percent and to choose a broad range of dividend-paying stocks—ideally 20 to 40. Too few and you chance being overexposed to a company like Lucent or Bear Stearns, both former

stars that paid handsome dividends and later crashed. To mitigate your risk, no one company should represent more than 5 percent of a portfolio of dividend stocks, Weinberg says. If you’d rather not pick stocks, consider mutual funds and ETFs focusing on dividends, like the Vanguard High Dividend Yield ETF (VYM) and the S&P Dividend ETF (SPD), he adds.

Some financial advisors also suggest structured investments in which banks create securities tied to the performance of specific indices. One variety of these, called a dual-direction note, provides a hedge against volatility, says Thomas Balcom, who runs 1650 Wealth Management in Lauderdale-by-the-Sea, Florida, a firm with \$65 million under management. The Euro Stoxx 50 index declined 7 percent between May 30, 2014 and Nov. 28, 2016, but Balcom’s clients who had bought a dual-direction note tied to the index and maturing in December 2016 had a return of 3.5 percent for the period, he says. Fees top out at 1 percent of the amount invested per year—more expensive than an ETF but comparable to many mutual funds. **BJT**

Chana R. Schoenberger (cschoenberger@bjtonline.com) has been an editor at *Forbes*, a reporter for Dow Jones and the *Wall Street Journal*, and a news editor at Bloomberg News.

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*2015 BJT Readex Survey

Deceptive dates

The model year assigned to an aircraft can be misleading. Failing to understand why could be a multimillion-dollar mistake.

by Jeff Wicand

Brokers almost always advertise business jets for sale with a “specification” that lists important equipment and facts about the aircraft. Such specifications can be notoriously inaccurate, which is why they’re usually accompanied by a disclaimer that says they’re “subject to verification upon inspection,” or words to that effect—a fancy way of stating that the broker isn’t responsible for inaccuracies. Common failings include mistakes about installed equipment and spurious claims that engines are enrolled in a maintenance program. I recently saw a specification for a two-engine aircraft that gave serial numbers and times for the “center” engine.

Many broker specifications also attach a calendar year to the aircraft, as in “2008 Gulfstream G450.” One would assume the intent is to show the model year, but model year is an elusive concept with business jets, and there are several dates to consider regarding the birth of the aircraft.

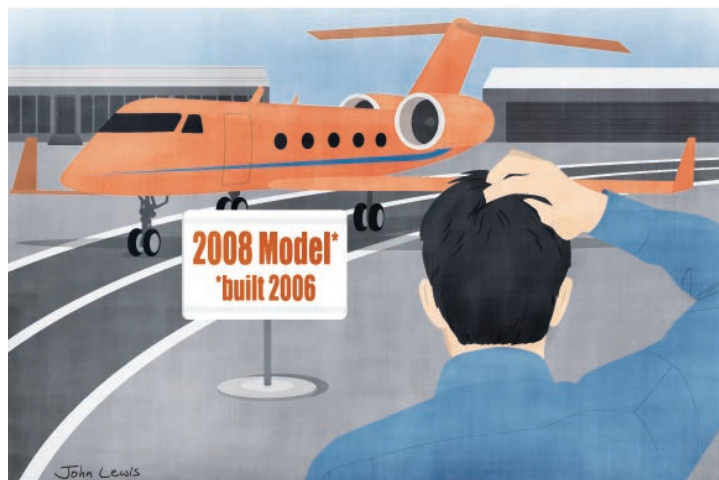
The first is the date of manufacture, which is often assumed to be the date the aircraft receives an airworthiness certificate. In the old days (which in business aviation is never long ago), you could often purchase the “green” business jet, so called because of its exterior color prior to final painting, not its lack of experience. Then you’d contract with an independent

completion center for the outfitting. The green aircraft was flyable and thus had an airworthiness certificate, the date of which was often considered its date of manufacture. Airframe manufacturers eventually figured out that they could make more money handling completion

delivering a business jet is actually a process involving several steps: due diligence by the manufacturer; the “turn of the aircraft to the customer” (in Bombardier’s parlance) so the buyer can perform its due diligence; the correction of the inevitable discrepancies; and

business is key. So if you purchase a jet in December but don’t take your first business flight (and thus “place it in service”) until January, you can’t start taking tax depreciation until January. That can be painful if you were counting on 50 percent bonus depreciation for the prior year.

To make this more complicated, aircraft manufacturers have different procedures for obtaining airworthiness certificates, assigning a model year, and the like. The FAA requires that the date of manufacture for engines be shown on the engine data plate, but airframe data plates aren’t required to include the same information, though some manufacturers show it anyway. You can find the aircraft’s “MFR year” on the website of the FAA registry, which (according to the website) is “based on information on the Application for Airworthiness Certificate.” The FAA notes dryly that “this is not necessarily the model year.”



projects themselves, so few business jets (other than bizliners like the BBJ and the A319) are still outfitted by independent centers. The date the aircraft is completed is therefore months, or even years, after it is manufactured.

The date of completion, however, is also—as philosopher W.V.O. Quine used to say—a creature of darkness. When is an aircraft “completed”? Purchase agreements for factory-new airplanes generally identify a “scheduled delivery date,” which may or may not turn out to be an accurate estimate, and

a final closing date (with or without yet-to-be-corrected glitches). Only the closing date, when the aircraft is actually delivered and accepted, is almost always crystal clear, and even that can be affected by unusual circumstances.

The closing date is also generally when maintenance and warranty clocks start running. However, it isn’t necessarily when the buyer begins to use the aircraft or use it for a specific purpose. For tax purposes, what the IRS calls the date the aircraft is “placed in service” in the buyer’s trade or

So what is a business jet’s model year? Is it the date of manufacture or the date the aircraft was deemed completed? Is it the date it receives an airworthiness certificate? Is it the date of delivery to a customer? Or is it some other date? A jet could easily receive its airworthiness certificate and have a date of manufacture in March 2016, be deemed “completed”

and turned to the customer for inspection in December, and be delivered to that customer in a January 2017 closing.

Why should anyone care? Perhaps the most important sources for “model year” information are *Aircraft Bluebook* and *Vref*, both of which group airplanes by “year,” a word that seems to beg the ultimate question. A glance at either of these publications, however, shows why anyone should care about that “year.” Take the Falcon 2000LXS. According to the current *Vref*, the “retail” value for a “year 2015” Falcon 2000LXS is \$3 million more than for a 2014. No wonder *Vref* suggests readers “use extreme caution when trying to determine serial number/model year effectively... there is no industry standard.”

Bluebook and *Vref* obtain their information on the “year” directly from the airframe manufacturers, which base their decisions on the

delivery date—the date of closing. Like automakers, business jet manufacturers generally charge more for a “2018 model” than a “2017 model,” which would seem to give them an incentive to have the model years on the aircraft they are selling be later rather than sooner. But manufacturers can’t charge more for an aircraft simply by pushing the delivery into a subsequent calendar year since the price will have already been determined when the purchase agreement was signed.

One can imagine the reaction of customers who are informed not only that the delivery of their new jets will be delayed but that they will cost more as a result. In any case, the manufacturers also have a powerful incentive to bring in cash in the current year rather than the next, which generally outweighs the benefit of any price increase they might realize by monkeying with the model year.

Moreover, while car manufacturers often introduce changes with a new model year that may justify price increases, business jet improvements are usually cut in at a specific serial number. This is generally a function of certifications and production practicalities, not the aircraft’s model year.

What to do when buying a jet? When an aircraft is marketed as a 2008 model, it pays to inquire closely as to what this means, and as *Vref* suggests, use extreme caution. Try to understand all of the dates, keeping in mind that the argument you make to the seller that a 2008 model is really a 2007 is an argument you may hear again someday when you go to sell the aircraft. **BJT**

Jeff Wieand (jwieand@bjtonline.com) is a senior vice president at Boston JetSearch and a member of the National Business Aviation Association’s Tax Committee.

Flytenow Update

Flytenow created a website where pilots planning a trip could link up with people wanting to ride along and were willing to share expenses. [See “A Flight-Sharing Scheme Collides with Federal Regulations,” *June/July*, available at bjtonline.com.] Though FAA regulations permit private pilots to let passengers share expenses, the agency concluded that pilots posting flights on Flytenow’s website were engaged in common carriage and commercial transportation. Flytenow sued the FAA in federal court and lost, and on Jan. 9, 2017, the U.S. Supreme Court declined to hear the company’s appeal. As a result, barring a change of heart at the FAA, Flytenow’s only remaining recourse would be an act of Congress authorizing internet-based cost-sharing schemes like the one it introduced. —J.W.

Essential

- **BJT Waypoints** is a weekly online newsletter filled with breaking news, expert advice, and other crucial information for anyone who flies privately.

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BESTER DESIGNS

A home staged by
Noleen Bester's NB Designs.

Sell your home **faster**

Professional stagers can enhance a property's appeal, which could mean more bids sooner, and possibly even a higher sale price.

by R. Randall Padfield

What would make you happy when selling your home? Probably two things: getting a good price and doing the deal quickly. One way to further these goals, particularly with a high-end property, is to hire a stager.

"Many real estate agents regularly work with stagers to prepare homes for sale," says Michelle Minch of Moving Mountains Design Home Staging in Pasadena, California. "That ensures that your home will sell as quickly as possible and for the highest possible price."

With ultra-high-priced homes, "stagers are used 99 percent of the time, unless the property has recently been redecorated," says Lea Governale, manager and associate broker with Weichert Properties in New York City. She suggests working with your real estate agent to find

stagers who have a good track record in your area. It's also smart to look for ones who are Accredited Staging Professionals and members of the American Society of Interior Design as well as the Real Estate Staging Association or International Association of Home Staging Professionals.

Why might staging help? "The way we live in our homes is not the way one sells a home," says Orlando Reyes of Dec My Home Staging & Redesign in Fort Lauderdale, Florida. Interior design trends are important, too, but the crux of the matter is this: what people love about their homes is personal to them. Unfortunately, it can be hard to quickly find buyers who share your tastes. "Quickly" is key, because a house sitting on the market without bids leads potential buyers to suspect there's something wrong with it, which creates

a vicious cycle by discouraging people from making offers.

The stager's job is to make the home appealing to as large an audience as possible. This means neutral colors, fashionable furniture and lighting, and "depersonalized" space, according to Corrie Taylor of Set2Sell in Saucon Valley, Pennsylvania. Depersonalizing space "means removing family photos, collections [dolls, tea cups, and so on], excess furniture, and general clutter," she explains. "The goal is to have buyers looking at the home, not at the owners' possessions."

Shell Brodnax, CEO of the Real Estate Staging Association, says, "High-end homes do really well with staging. Luxury homes do *amazingly* well. Having a lot of money has nothing to do with having taste. Purple and gold done right

Picture-Perfect Properties

Before stagers came on the scene, most homeowners depended on advice from their Realtors, friends, and family and their own common sense on how to prepare their properties for sale. In fact, although staging began in the 1970s and the International Association of Home Staging Professionals was established in 1999, the concept was virtually unknown in much of the U.S. until about 10 years ago. What has changed?

“The internet has revolutionized the way consumers purchase homes,” says Orlando Reyes of Florida-based Dec My Home Staging & Redesign. “Everyone shops online now,” echoes Corrie Taylor of Pennsylvania’s Set2Sell. “So what your Realtor puts on the internet about your home is extremely important.”

Excellent photos and video are critical for online marketing, so use a photographer or videographer who has experience in this area and ask to see work samples. This is not the time for smartphone photos taken by your offspring.

Note, too, that photos and video can be only as good as the subject. Even the best photographs can’t help a cluttered, outdated, or quirky interior. —*R.R.P.*

might look good in a bedroom, but purple and gold won’t sell the house. The bedroom needs to be more neutral. Anything that is uber-personal—that’s what needs to be changed when staging.”

Space is also critical. Furniture bought for comfort can overwhelm even a large room. “Imagine a bedroom with a bed big enough for a professional basketball player,” Brodnax says. “Depending on the size of the room, that bed might not work. The stager has to figure out how to make the room look better to potential buyers, who probably aren’t as tall.”

Adds Noleen Bester, of NB Designs in Austin, Texas: “People expect the house and property to be perfect, inside and out. Viewers should feel comfortable. During open houses, we put out fresh flowers and rearrange furniture to make the rooms appear roomier.” However, stagers need to be careful not to make the home look “too stagey,” which can turn buyers off. “Staging needs to be understated in higher-value homes,” Bester says.

Statistics about the effectiveness of staging are scarce. So, the Real Estate Staging Association asked its members for information about the sales history of 1,081 vacant and occupied staged and unstaged homes. RESA has an obvious bias, but for what it’s worth, the results suggest that staging can speed up a sale, though it may or may not increase the price.

The study did not report how long homes that were never staged stayed on the market, because RESA’s members provided data only on homes they had actually staged, explains Brodnax. (She also points out that some

unstaged homes linger on the market for years; including them would significantly skew the data in favor of staging, but the comparison would not be realistic.) Still, the study did find that homes that were staged prior to going on the market sold on average in just 23 days. The other homes in the study remained on the market for an average of 184 days before being staged, after which another 41 days passed before they received their first offers.

Therefore, these homes spent a total of 225 days on the market on average—about 10 times longer than homes that were staged at the outset. RESA’s statistics show that a home that is

staged after having been on the market requires on average only 18 more days to get its first offer than a house that was staged earlier.

So why would any seller not opt for staging? “Some people use the excuse that they don’t want to invest the money,” Brodnax says. “So, instead of paying, for example, \$5,000 up front for staging, they would rather reduce the sales price of their home by \$20,000 after several unsuccessful months on the market, because they don’t consider this ‘real’ money.”

While staging certainly costs real money, the amount varies widely, depending on the area of the country and other factors. “We base our price for staging on the size of the home, the number of rooms to be staged—we don’t always stage every room—and the listing price,” says Minch. “These factors tell me how much furniture, artwork, and accessories I’ll need and how fancy I need to get. Obviously, higher-end homes require more expensive furnishings, so the price will increase.”

As a rule, you can figure on paying about 0.5 to 1 percent of the listing price to stage the key areas of a home. That’s not pocket change, but it could feel like a bargain if it results in a speedy sale or produces a higher sale price. **BJT**

R. Randall Padfield, BJT’s founding editor, retired in 2014 as COO of our parent company, AIN Publications.

When Staging Isn’t Enough

If your home lacks amenities that buyers will expect in a property like yours, given its location and value, you may need to make improvements. The cost, like that of staging, may be justified because it results in a quicker deal and/or a higher sale price.

“The top-flight new condominium buildings in ‘Billionaire’s Row’ [a section of 57th Street in Manhattan] are amenity-driven,” says Lea Governale, manager and associate broker with Weichert Properties in New York City. Features such as wine storage, private spas, elaborate gyms, screening rooms, and deeded parking are usually a given.”

In other parts of the country, buyers might expect different amenities. Outdoor living areas of Florida homes, for example, often need to be screened and those with waterfronts may benefit from private boat docks, says Orlando Reyes of Dec My Home Staging & Redesign in Fort Lauderdale. In the Hill Country in West Texas, swimming pools are a given, along with “great entertainment areas outside and inside,” with separate areas for adults and children, explains Noleen Bester of NB Designs in Austin. She also mentions as popular amenities a home gym and a smart-home automation system.

One way to know what buyers expect is to find out what’s being offered in other homes in your neighborhood. You can do that by attending open houses for both older and newer properties. “Sellers of older homes need to understand that they are competing with new construction in their area,” explains Corrie Taylor of Pennsylvania-based Set2Sell. —*R.R.P.*

WHERE WINDSURF



It's no wonder that many people are discovering this sport—or that many of them flock to a little Oregon town to try it out.

by Thomas R. Pero

TO RIVER

Back when I lived in Bend, Oregon, I drove north as often as I could to the Columbia River and hiked, biked, or boated up its tributary called Deschutes. My mission was to catch a steelhead, an elusive sea-run fish, on a fly rod.

What I remember most is the wind. One August day, a friend placed his nine-foot graphite rod on a reclining camp lounge chair. In a split second, a fierce, hot gust turned the chair into crocodile-like jaws that snapped the rod into five dangling pieces.

That relentless wind attracts windsurfers from around the world to the deep Columbia River Gorge—as many as 1,000 to 2,000 a day during peak season, which lasts from Memorial Day through Labor Day. They climb on a board with a handheld sail rigged on a universal joint. Drivers on Interstate 84, which follows the gorge, are treated to the spectacle of hundreds of colorful sails skimming the blue river, for miles and miles.

“We have a cold ocean 100 miles to the west and a hot desert 50 miles to the east,” says Dave Nunn, who operates Windance Boardshop, one of dozens of businesses catering to water sports in picturesque little Hood River, Oregon. Nunn explains that, as the hot desert air rises, it sucks in the cold ocean air to replace it. The wind gets squeezed through the Columbia’s massive basalt canyon walls and accelerates. Daily winds average 17 mph with up to 40 mph common. Gusts often reach 50.

“It’s the only place I know where, when the wind really blows, instead of boarding

up windows, people head to the water,” says Eddy Patricelli of Big Winds, another local shop.

Not surprisingly, the town hosts many windsurfing manufacturers, distributors, and retailers, making it the center of the sport nationally. A big plus is the Columbia Gorge Windsurfing Association (gorgewindsurfing.org), a community nonprofit that has been promoting the sport locally and ensuring access to and cleanliness of launch sites for many years. Locations such as Swell City, the Hatchery, and Doug’s Beach are all under the supervision of the CGWA, which works closely with local government authorities.

Patricelli is 44 and has been windsurfing Hood River since he was 16. He says it’s the only sport he’s still doing as well and as easily as he did as a kid. “Compared with running, skiing, tennis, and other sports, there is a low rush-to-risk ratio,” he says. “It’s easy on the joints.”

Patricelli adds that when he started during the 1980s, windsurfing had a reputation as an activity for high-end athletes. The equipment was designed for going faster and faster. But today, many people in their 50s and 60s are discovering windsurfing—and the increasingly popular kiteboarding. Wider boards and lighter sails make it easier and faster to learn. A beginner can pick up in one or two days what it used to take two weeks to master.

It’s also a highly portable outdoor adventure. You can take it with you to a lake in the Adirondacks or a beach in the Bahamas. But before you go to one of those places, consider the many advantages of surfing the inland Columbia River. Last time I looked beneath the waves, for example, I saw no man-eating sharks.

EJT

Thomas R. Pero (tpero@bjtonline.com) is publisher of Wild River Press and the author of the new hunting book *Turkey Men*.



RAISE A LOCAL PINT IN HOOD RIVER

With four superb breweries in town—Full Sail, Double Mountain, pFriem Family Brewers, and Big Horse—and just 7,380 residents, Hood River prides itself on being home to the most breweries per capita among American towns with more than one. That’s a lot of locally handcrafted beer and ale for everyone. —T.R.P.



PREVIOUS PAGE AND LEFT: MICHAEL PETERSON PHOTOGRAPHY

Texas's

Bluejack National



Tiger Woods scores a win with his U.S. design debut.

by Bradley S. Klein

You might expect the first American golf course design from a guy as theatrical and celebrated as Tiger Woods to have the visual effect of an ESPN highlight reel. But Bluejack National—in Montgomery, Texas, on the far northwest end of Houston development—conveys subtle maturity, not flashy strobes.

The 91 acres of fairways are more than twice as wide as a standard golf course. The grass down the middle is a tightly mown Zeon Zoysia that lets the ball run. Bunker deployment is sparse—only



COURSE:

For more information about Bluejack National, visit bluejacknational.com or call (281) 475-2165.

AIRPORTS:

Lone Star Executive/Conroe-North Houston Regional Airport (CXO), in Conroe, Texas, is 29 miles to the east and has a 7,501-foot runway.

George Bush Intercontinental Airport (IAH), in Houston, is 50 miles to the southeast and has a 12,002-foot runway.

William P. Hobby Airport (HOU), also in Houston, is 61 miles to the southeast and has a 7,602-foot runway.

49 in all. There are plenty of open entrances to the greens for bouncing approach shots in. The intimate connection of greens to tees means the course remains easily walkable. Overall, the influence of Augusta National is unmistakable.

The par-72 layout can stretch to 7,552 yards for Woods and his buddies. The bulk of play will take place at saner distances: 6,856 yards down to 5,224, with a dedicated set of junior tees at 3,008 yards. A massive two-sided range with a short-game area provides plenty of practice ground. And for warming up or winding down, there's a cozy little 10-hole, 714-yard long par-3 course called the Playgrounds.

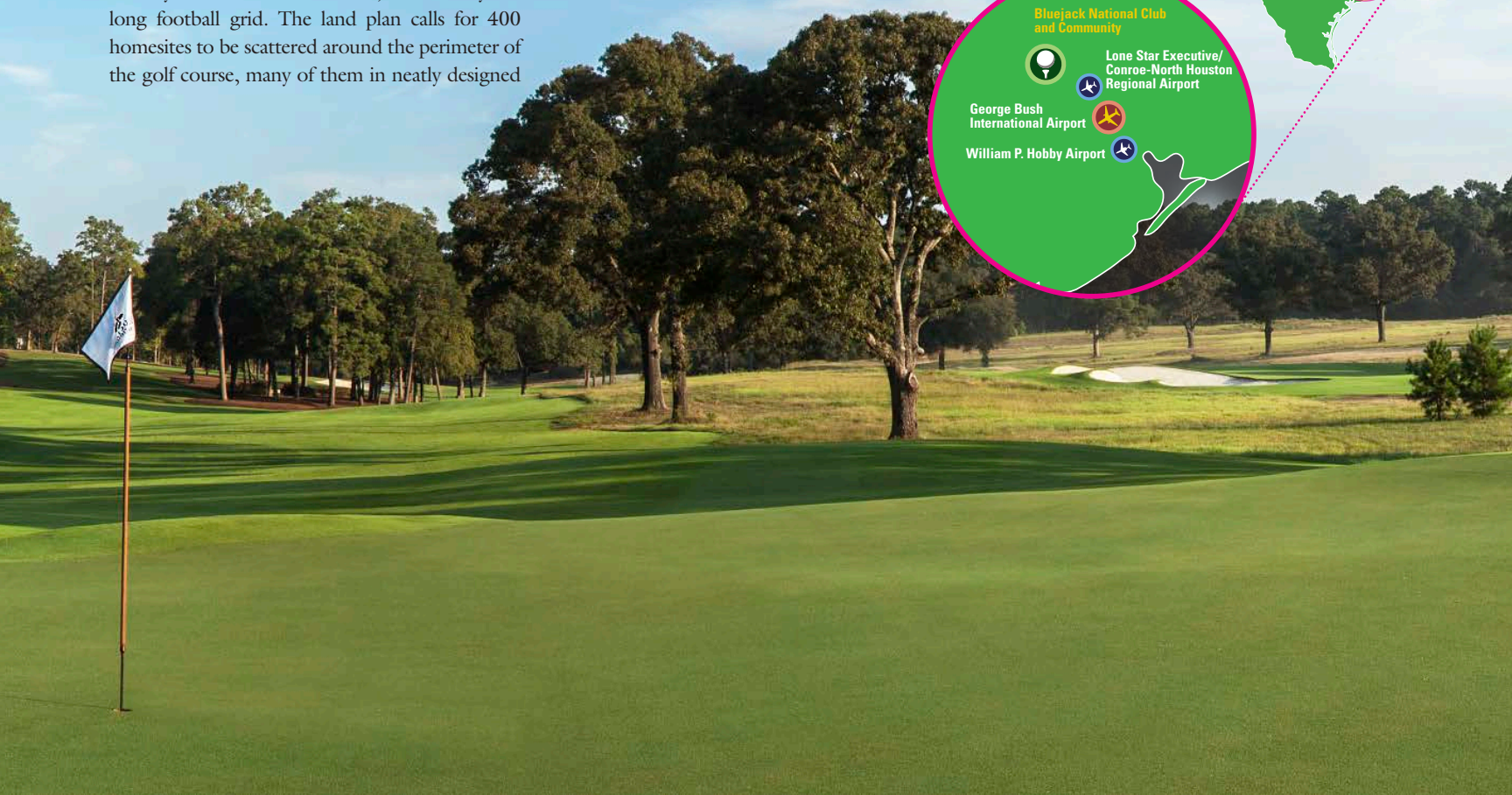
There are fishing ponds, hiking trails, a "Little Fenway Park" whiffle-ball field, and a 60-yard-long football grid. The land plan calls for 400 homesites to be scattered around the perimeter of the golf course, many of them in neatly designed

village clusters. Residences run from 1,200-square-foot suite-style units to estate lots larger than one and a half acres. Guests at Bluejack National have access to 40 cottages and suites, with enough meeting space for executive getaways.

With Exxon bringing its new headquarters and 13,000 jobs nearby, this region at the edge of the sprawling Houston metropolis is poised for a leap. Those who get to Bluejack National will find plenty to make them want to stay.

BJT

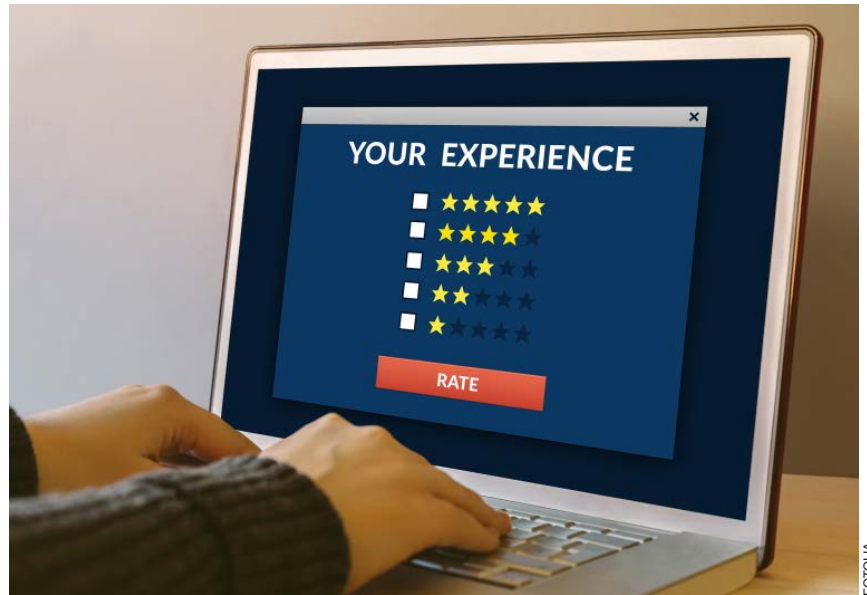
Bradley S. Klein (bklein@bjtonline.com) is the architecture editor of *Golfweek*. His latest book is *Wide Open Fairways*.



Customer critiques

You won't find many online service reviews by air charter passengers. Our columnist wondered why.

by James Wynbrandt



These days, you likely wouldn't buy a set of golf clubs, book a suite at a resort, or hire a plumber without first checking online reviews. But if you want to see what other customers say before choosing an air charter company, you're probably out of luck.

Look for comments on just about any major broker or operator on TripAdvisor.com and you'll come up empty. Try the same search on Yelp.com and, if the site lists the provider at all, you'll likely see a message that begins, "Hey there trendsetter! You could be the first review..." Comments about jet card and fractional ownership programs are even tougher to find.

Of course, lift providers often feature glowing customer testimonials on their own websites, but these are far from the unvarnished, validated comments that some third-party sites offer about other products and services. And recent research from Northwestern University with PowerReviews finds that consumers increasingly value such comments. The higher the purchase price, moreover, the more importance they place on reviews by other buyers.

So why are online critiques so rare in the bizav market? "This is something we've been looking at for years," says Joe Moeggenberg,

president and CEO of Argus International, whose audit programs for charter operators, and now brokers, are among the industry's standards. Argus, he says, has long sought to add a comments section to its TripCheq reports on aircraft and crew, which are provided to customers of Argus-rated operators prior to every flight. "The problem has been, we can't get [business aviation users] interested in talking about their experiences."

You might think the dearth of comments at least partly reflects a relatively small population of customers. But about 0.6 to 1.5 percent of consumers post reviews of other purchased products and services, according to research by Gregory Yankelovich of Applied Analytics and Duncan Simester, an MIT professor of management science. (Other studies put the percentages significantly higher.) Using data from the Argus 2016 Flight Activity Report, I estimate that at least 500,000 charter, jet card, and fractional flight passenger experiences occurred last year. Based on that, you'd expect to find about 3,000 to 7,500 reviews. So the size of the market doesn't explain the void.

Security and privacy considerations surely keep some lips zipped,

says Francine Brasseur, associate publisher of *Air Charter Guide*, but she suggests that self-interest may also play a role in a lack of positive reviews, given the finite quantity of quality lift and service. "If you're happy with the service, why would you share it with other people?" she asks.

Moreover, "charter brokers and operators do not try to create a sense of community" that may entice customers to comment, as do many consumer brands and products, notes Troy Martin, a vice president at charter service Miami Air International and past president of the Air Charter Association of North America (Acana), which establishes standards for the air charter brokerage community.

The lack of an appropriate business aviation-oriented online platform to post reviews is also a factor, says Paul Class, a senior vice president at charter management company Solairus Aviation: "I believe customers want to leave reviews and would if they had avenues [dedicated to business aviation feedback]."

But listen to industry professionals and you get the sense that the shortage of reviews may extend to a lack of customer communication with charter providers themselves.

"As an operator, we have to solicit feedback—otherwise we wouldn't

get it," says Robert Molsbergen, president of charter management company ExcelAire. Solairus's Class, meanwhile, notes that customer comments rarely come directly to management. Instead, he says, "we hear from crewmembers."

Of course, such feedback is critical, because businesses rely on it to keep doing things customers like and fix things that make them unhappy.

Virtually all those we spoke to, however, assume that if comments did find a forum, the posts would be problematic. For one thing, say providers, the preponderance of feedback would be complaints, which would give unmerited weight to a relative handful of disgruntled customers. "It may be a cliché to say that people will tell 10 others about a bad experience and one person about a good experience, but this is a truism when it comes to online reviewing," says Paul McCluskey, a vice president at Hunt & Palmer USA, and cofounder of Acana.

Research into online reviews by ReputationManagement.com indicates, however, that while men are more likely to post negative reviews, women are more apt to post positive ones—and are more likely to write reviews than are men. This may

help to explain both the scarcity of online critiques and providers' experiences and expectations about their content, since all indications suggest that the majority of current bizav customers are male.

Charter brokers are additionally concerned that reviewers will hold them responsible for operators' lapses. "We don't have control of the aircraft, so occasionally issues arise that are out of our control," says Joel Thomas, president and CEO of Stratos Jet Charters, and former Acana chairman.

But fears about waves of negative comments may be overblown. Given the problems that reportedly vex them most, charter customers might be reluctant to air their gripes, which include "a lot of complaints about catering,"

"We have to solicit feedback—otherwise we wouldn't get it," says ExcelAire president Robert Molsbergen.

says ExcelAire's Molsbergen, a former president of Executive Jet Management, one of the world's largest charter operators. "Sometimes," he adds, "a charter customer can be critical about the quality of the aircraft, even though there's nothing wrong with it. They don't like the [interior] color, or the leather, or the cloth."

Whether such comments would be helpful to other charter shoppers, the blogosphere might not view them from the same consumerist perspective. Questions about the validity and propriety of such reviews were put in sharp relief

last year when Kim Kardashian unleashed a series of gushing tweets about JetSmarter, urging her followers to download the charter broker's app. Other posters slammed Kardashian for not disclosing any financial or other ties she had with the service. While JetSmarter denied that it had paid Kardashian's \$10,000 membership fee, the company admits providing free charter service to celebrities on occasion. Meanwhile, the tweets shut down the company's phone system due to the volume of inquiries it generated, according to JetSmarter.

So what guidance is available in lieu of legitimate consumer reviews? Look for providers audited (not simply listed) by Argus, Wyvern, or the Air Charter Safety Foundation, or ones that belong to Acana, whose members agree to operate according to transparent, codified ethical standards. Also consider how long the firm or its principals have been in business. Brokers listed in *Air Charter Guide* must be recommended by three operators.

You might also see how or whether companies respond to customer comments. Maybe because its Phenom 100-based service is about as mass market as charter gets, California's JetSuite customers have posted several reviews. A buyer of a cancelled empty leg (sold subject to cancellation) complained on a third-party site that the company wouldn't reimburse a forfeited hotel deposit. A JetSuite representative apologized for the inconvenience online and provided a phone number for the poster to contact a customer representative, which could be taken as a sign of attention to detail that potential customers might appreciate. **BJT**

James Wynbrandt (jwynbrandt@bjtonline.com), a multi-engine instrument rated pilot and regular **BJT** contributor, has written for the *New York Times*, *Forbes*, and *Barron's*.



#AWESOME

Business Jet Traveler's responsive new website includes beautiful photography, a fresh design, and bonus content, including videos. Coming soon: a searchable aircraft guide.

BJTonline.com



Attention, Thrill Seekers

Looking for a challenge?
Here are nine ways to find one.

by Margie Goldsmith

Think you've done it all because you've powder-heli-skied, caught the big fish, summited mountains, and more? You haven't. No matter what you've already experienced, there's always a new extreme adventure waiting. So pack a suitcase and hop in your jet. All of the destinations discussed below are near bizav-friendly airports, so if time is short, you can head out on Friday, test your mettle on the weekend, and be back in the office Monday morning.



Foil Kiting, Necker Island, British Virgin Islands

Kite surfers who want to be challenged are turning to foil kiting. A hydrofoil fin lifts the board above the water, giving you a smoother ride with more speed and less wind than kite surfers experience. Aficionados compare the sport to catching a wave on a cloud or roller-skating on ice. The place to do it is Necker Island, where "foilers" can surf to Anagada Island, 12 miles away, with ideal wind from 17 to 20 knots and with huge expanses of both flat water and waves. *Airport:* Tortola. *Info:* virginlimitededition.com/en/necker-island



AXExperience, Nova Scotia, Canada

A fifth-generation, seven-time world lumberjack champion teaches you his art in this three-hour hands-on experience in Nova Scotia's Tobetic Wilderness, a Dark Sky Preserve. Climb a tree; throw an axe; use a bow saw and cross-cut saw; and logroll on the Barrington River. Bring a change of clothes and a spare pair of sneakers because you'll probably fall into the water trying to balance on a log. *Airport:* Yarmouth International. *Info:* bit.ly/1r42dvI



Snowshoeing, Bryce Canyon, Utah

Bryce in winter? Yes, that's when you'll pretty much have this stunning hoodoo-filled national park to yourself. Strap on snowshoes with crampons, grab a whippet (a ski pole with a mini axe handle on it), and buckle on a helmet. You can choose the trail length, from a 4.5-mile loop to nine miles. Nothing is more beautiful than the red rocks against the snow. Snap photos from the top of the rim, drop down to Queen's Garden, and hike underneath natural rock arches. *Airport:* Bryce Canyon. *Info:* elevatedadventurecompany.com

ILLUSTRATIONS: FOTOLIA.COM



FRANK KOVALCHEK



Paragliding, Sun Valley, Idaho

Jump off the top of Bald Mountain in Sun Valley, Idaho while connected to a tandem paragliding instructor. Take a few easy strides and suddenly you'll be gliding. Depending on lift conditions, your flight will last from

15 minutes to an hour. Enjoy the exhilarating rush as you glide above lush mountain scenery, farmland, and the Sun Valley Resort. You'll take home a video of yourself and your panoramic bird's eye view. *Airport:* Sun Valley. *Info:* flsunvalley.com



Ice Canyoning, Quebec

During winter, think of rappelling on ice, not rock. Canyoning is usually a summer activity that involves crossing over rugged rivers, hiking, swimming, and abseiling, but Québec invented ice canyoning and has turned it into a winter bucket-list activity.

Don't crampons, rope up, grab ice picks, and learn to descend by easing yourself down the ice while trying to avoid breaking the frozen stalactites in this four-hour extreme adventure. *Airport:* Quebec Jean Lesage International. *Info:* solotrekker4u.com



Redwood Bungee Jumping, Placerville, California

Bungee jumpers who'd love to leap off a tree can do it with Bungee Adventures. It's really three adventures in one: you must first climb about 100 feet up the tree by rope (similar to rock climbing); then you traverse a rope bridge between two trees; and finally you do a bungee jump to the forest floor.

Don't want to climb a tree? Try a bungee jump from a bridge or a rock in the same area. *Airport:* South Lake Tahoe. *Info:* bungeeadventures.net



Alaskan Dog Sled Expedition, Willows, Alaska

Answer the call of the wild and join dog-sledging champion DeeDee Jonrowe for a mushing adventure. Jonrowe, the fastest woman to ever compete in the Iditarod, will teach you the skills and techniques required to mush your team of dogs and your own sled on a journey through the wilderness. The trip, customized to your level of intensity, will take you through some of the world's most rugged terrain. Choose to sleep overnight in a supplied tent or in a cabin on Jonrowe's property. *Airport:* Anchorage International. *Info:* ifonly.com



Helibiking, Whistler, British Columbia

Mountain bikers who crave Black Diamond trails should head to Whistler for an extreme helibiking experience.

You'll chopper up 6,000 feet to the peak of Rainbow Mountain, where you'll take in the endless panoramic vistas of the Coast Mountain Range, Whistler and Blackcomb, Pemberton, Black Tusk, and Squamish. Your bike will also arrive by helicopter for this guided single-track ride. The descent starts out rocky, and the trail includes alpine meadows and steep forest. Talk about being pumped! It's similar to a bike park, but with no other people. *Airport:* Squamish. *Info:* bearbackbiking.com



Ultimate National Parks, Western U.S.

Travel via a tour provider's private jet to as many of America's spectacular national parks as you have the energy to visit. Begin in California's Yosemite with a strenuous five- to six-hour guided hike to the top of the 594-foot Nevada Falls. Continue to Page, Arizona. Climb one of Utah's via ferratas or try the strenuous rim-to-rim hike in the Grand Canyon. Take a chopper to Moab, Utah, for some whitewater rafting or bicycling. Experience Colorado's Monument Valley and its vast sandstone buttes with a Navajo guide. For the extreme in technical climbing, don't miss "Climbing the Grand" in the Grand Teton. **EJTB**
Airport: Fresno. *Info:* kerdowney.com

Frequent contributor **Margie Goldsmith** (mgoldsmith@bjtonline.com) has visited 130 countries and written about all of them.







China's

Sichuan

Province

Attractions include a wonderful opera, majestic mountains, and—in the capital of Chengdu—a zoo that houses more than 80 of the country's rare giant pandas.

by Debi Lander

Two giant pandas sprawled like slovenly kings amid a pile of bamboo. In the morning's hush, I could hear the loud crunch of a stalk, as it broke apart. The amplified snapping repeated rapid-fire as the bears chomped. They grabbed pieces, bit off segments, sucked out the juice, and let the fibrous remains fall from their mouths. When they gnawed down to the softer shoots, they chewed longer and swallowed more. And as soon as they finished, they'd grab another piece in their other paw.

Where my panda-besotted rose-colored glasses saw majesty, my fellow travelers managed to put China's national symbol into a more familiar framework. "They look like beer-bellied sports fans reaching into the bowl of pretzels while watching TV," my friend Susan exclaimed.

I'd arrived for the breakfast feeding at the Chengdu Breeding Center and Panda Preserve (where I was glad to find English signage). It's the top attraction in Chengdu, the capital of Sichuan province in southwest China. The park draws hordes of Chinese who are extremely fond and proud of the starkly two-toned bears, which the country's citizens have long considered the physical manifestation of yin and yang.

This rare breed (*see box below*) lives just in China, and the 92-acre Chengdu center is the only public viewing area with numerous animals on display. Visiting this verdant bamboo sanctuary, you feel far removed from the congestion and noise on the streets. The entrance appears much like the gateway to a theme park, yet once you're inside, the facility seems more like a woodsy modern zoo, one without cages. Electric trams zip you between lush viewing locations, museums, and dining facilities. A film with English subtitles helps to educate.

Late spring to summer is the best time to visit because that's when pandas give birth. A newborn weighs approximately five ounces, about one-thousandth of its mother's mass. (Adult female pandas weigh 200 or more pounds.) When they're old enough, the youngsters make brief appearances in the outdoor "kindergarten" playground.

In addition to giant pandas, the Chengdu Preserve breeds rust-colored red pandas. These smaller creatures scamper about the ground and dash through the trees at roadrunner speed and seem to love playing hide-and-seek. They're fetching, but the iconic giants steal the show.

About Giant Pandas

Once they're grown, giant pandas must consume 40 percent of their body weight every day, which typically takes 14 hours. They devote the other 10 hours to napping. Some prefer to rest in trees, although their weight appears too heavy for the weak limbs. As if to please tourists waiting for more photo ops, the clumsy big-eyed critters climb with perseverance and then cram themselves in between branches and slip into dreamland.

Seeing these bears in the wild remains nearly impossible. There, fragile baby pandas often fail to thrive, and

with dwindling habitats, the species teeters on the edge of endangerment.

After a mid-1980s bamboo die-out killed 184 bears, the Chinese government set up population-boosting panda bases like the Chengdu program. They have been successful at artificial insemination and bottle-raising newborns, including twins. This past year brought a bumper crop of 23 cubs at Chengdu, and the total panda population has grown from 1,000 in the 1970s to 1,800. So far, none have been released into the wild, though researchers at Dujiangyan Panda Valley, another base in the province, hope to reach the goal. —D.L.

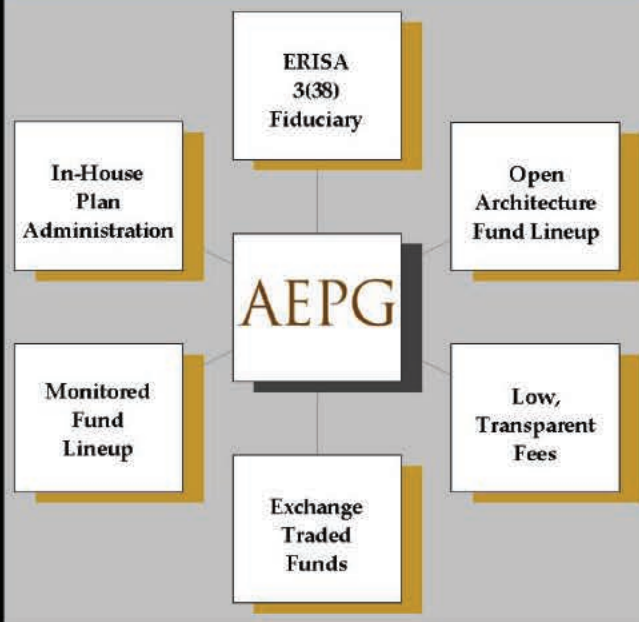
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Traveler Report Card

ACCOMMODATIONS: (A+):

Chengdu offers five-star hotels from familiar brands such as Ritz-Carlton, Kempinski, and Shangri-La. Consider the Tibet Hotel for Buddhist-themed luxury lodging and a fantastic breakfast buffet including yak tea.

FOOD (A-B):

If you like to feel the burn, you'll love Sichuan foods and snacks. Hot-pot restaurants are popular. Chengdu snacks, as the locals refer to them, are rice balls, wontons, and Sichuan noodles.

ACTIVITIES (A):

The Panda Breeding Center is the most popular destination, followed by the Sichuan Opera and luxury shopping. Day or overnight trips bring travelers to Tibetan villages, stunning national parks, and ancient temples and religious sites.

The bears aren't the only attraction in Chengdu, which is home to more than 14 million people—nearly six million more than New York City—but remains unfamiliar to many world travelers. Historically Chengdu was known as the first place in the world that printed paper money; for its production of flawless silk brocade; and as the home of the Sichuan Opera. Today, its bustling downtown sprawls over an area four times the size of New York City and ranks 11th in the world for the number of skyscrapers.

The ultra-modern buildings amaze first-time visitors. At night, sophisticated digital illumination leaps between towers, as if someone were playing a gigantic video game. My guide Maei encouraged a visit to the New Century Global Center, where many Chinese shop for high-end goods. She claimed the complex is twice the size of the previous mall record holder in Dubai.



Chengdu isn't all malls and skyscrapers: you'll also discover a few teahouses, green parks, and elegant ancient temples. The spaces provide residents a place to practice tai chi, a martial art typically performed as a slow series of movements that look like a choreographed dance. Like the pandas, it's considered a fusion of yin and yang.

One of Chengdu's best attractions is the Sichuan Opera, which presents less-formal performances than those in Beijing. Theatergoer Lauralee Dobbins, an American, says, "The Sichuan Opera is a thoroughly entertaining evening of vaudeville theater complete with singers, shadow puppets, comedy sketches, unusual musicians and, of course, the high drama of elaborately costumed Chinese opera. Comfy, cushioned rattan seating with complimentary tea service elevates the experience. Preshow activities—like dressing up in costumes, watching the performers apply makeup, and chair massages—make this a must-do experience."

Devote a day to exploring Mount Emei, one of the most famous holy mountains in Buddhist culture. Dress for a major hike up and down hundreds of slippery stone stairs and past temples and tea plantations, then through clouds and bamboo forests. Consider buying a walking stick for support and try to ignore the monkeys that often pester hikers along the way. Stop at the midpoint or take a cable car to Jieyin Dian. Complete the grueling climb to the 10,167-foot summit and you'll be rewarded with a chance to see the golden Jin Ding Temple and, if weather permits, a bird's eye view of the world.

Nearby reigns the Giant Buddha of Leshan, which was carved from the hillside at the confluence of three



In northern Sichuan, I saw water buffalo pulling plows, donkey carts carrying loads, and Tibetan prayer flags flapping in the wind.

rivers. Completed in A.D. 803, it is 233 feet tall—the world’s largest stone Buddha. Its feet alone are nearly nine yards long, large enough to accommodate 100 people. A popular way to view the statue is by riverboat.

I joined a group tour to visit more remote northern areas of Sichuan, including some of China’s most glorious national parks and ethnic rural villages of the Yi, Qiang, and Tibetan people. There, I saw water buffalo pulling plows, donkey carts carrying loads, and Tibetan prayer flags flapping in the wind. Despite the language barrier, I always received warm smiles and permission to take photos.

My tour bus traveled up narrow switchback winding roads in the Min Shan range to reach northern Huanglong. The range’s snow-gilded crags receded into the distance, a seemingly endless horizon. We stopped at a peak where a sign said the elevation was 3,960 meters (about 13,000 feet). I felt as if I’d reached the top of Mt. Everest.

In Huanglong [Yellow Dragon] National Park, masses of hikers take a cable car to the Snow Peak area around 8,000 feet up, and then make a three-to-four-hour trek down on boardwalks. The crowded trail passes gorgeous crystal-clear mineral shoals, calcified ponds, the Huanglong Temple, and cascading travertine pools known as the Dragon’s Scales. No wonder the park is nicknamed “The Fairyland on Earth.”

At Jiuzhaigou Valley National Park, electric-powered buses dropped us at the monstrous, showstopping Nuorilang Falls. The roar from the 105-foot-wide waterfall fills your ears long before you see it. Nearby, Long Lake shimmers with near-neon teal, green, and purple, a mix that seems otherworldly and is caused by calcium carbonate deposits. Legend claims that what you’re seeing are broken slivers from the Tibetan goddess Semo’s mirror.

Sichuan brings a burst of bright, familiar flavors, as the region serves up one of China’s most famous cuisines. Try a hot-pot restaurant where soup simmers in the center of the table and diners add meat or vegetables.

The traditional broth is made from broad bean chili paste, black bean paste, Tibetan butter, and Sichuan pepper. When foreigners bite into a peppercorn (rather hard to avoid), their mouths begins to tingle and feel numb, as if they’ve had a shot of Novocain. The sensation goes away after a few minutes.

The Chinese believe *Qi* is the breath or energy that combines negative and positive forces. And like the whole country, Sichuan indeed presents dramatic contrasts. People strive to build the latest and greatest yet thankfully hang on to ancient philosophy and some of their old ways. From crowded cities to hillside rice terraces, landscapes shrouded in mist and ancient religious temples, Sichuan province offers the opportunity to feel qi run through your own body. **EJT**

Debi Lander (dlander@bjtonline.com), a Florida-based writer specializing in travel subjects, wrote about Budapest for our December 2016/January 2017 issue. She paid all of her expenses for her trip to Sichuan.



Traveler Fast Facts

WHAT IT IS:

Sichuan is a province in southwest China. Chengdu, its capital, is among the country’s largest cities, with 14 million residents.

CLIMATE:

Chengdu’s heat climbs to the high 80s (F) in the summer. Winters are cold. The high plateaus are cold year-round.

LANGUAGE:

Since 1913, the official spoken language has been Mandarin, but over 200 dialects thrive across China. Different regions may not understand each other. They share a written script.

GETTING THERE:

You can fly into Beijing, Hong Kong, or Shanghai, then on to Chengdu Shuangliu International Airport, a major hub that handled 42 million passengers in 2015.

WHAT TO KNOW BEFORE YOU GO:

You’ll need a visa for entry. (Work with a specialized agency as the application is written in Chinese.) If your itinerary includes high elevations, ask your physician about altitude-sickness medication. Credit cards are widely accepted but carry Chinese yuan for street vendors and taxis.



Mesinger Jet Sales'

Jay Mesinger

The founder of a leading aircraft brokerage talks about his family-run business and what life has taught him.

by Jennifer Leach English

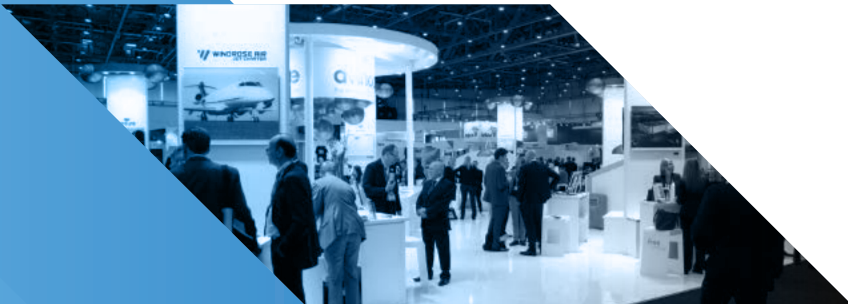
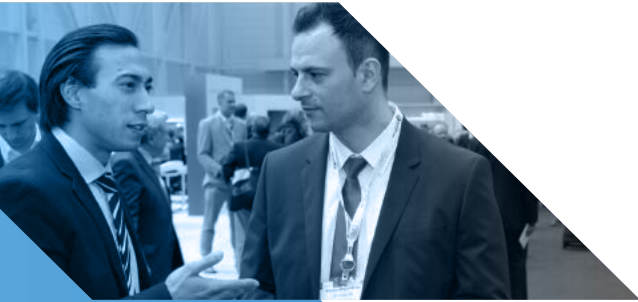
Long before he established one of the world's most respected aircraft brokerages, Jay Mesinger was a boy living in Houston's celebrity-packed Shamrock Hotel with a famous mother. Known as "Miss Moonlight," *Houston Chronicle* society columnist Maxine Mesinger had divorced Jay's father (whom she would later remarry) and moved to the hotel with her son. The idea was that living there would make it easier for her to raise him while also writing the column.

Jay Mesinger credits the lessons learned during his unconventional upbringing for much of his success. After getting his pilot's license in high school and working for many years as a Piper Aircraft dealer, he started Mesinger Jet Sales in 1982. Today, the Boulder, Colorado brokerage is a flourishing global family business. Working alongside Jay is his wife and chief financial officer, Sandra. Their sons Josh and Adam serve, respectively, as vice president and director of business development.

The Mesingers have a reputation for being hard-working, detail-oriented, and passionate. They are also known for their philanthropy and service on multiple boards. Jay's speaking skills and market expertise have made him a familiar face at industry events, where he always makes time to welcome and encourage newcomers to the field and stays until he has answered everyone's questions.



DAVID McINTOSH



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What was it like growing up in the Shamrock Hotel?

It was this gorgeous, opulent place. The whole hotel staff participated in my upbringing and made sure I was safe. I ate breakfast in the coffee shop. The bell captain took me to school every day. The biggest celebrities—Frank Sinatra, Judy Garland, Sammy Davis, Jr.—were close friends of my mom’s. They would come up to the apartment.

What did you learn from your mom?

She had a great work ethic, and I learned from an early age to see celebrities as people. She had the most fabulous reputation for integrity and the finest ethics. A socialite in Houston might be getting a divorce, and my mom might have known it before the other spouse knew it, but she would never write about it; that wasn’t her style. She was very grounded. She raised money for amfAR for AIDS research and before she died [from complications of multiple sclerosis], she raised all the money to open a big research and medical center in Houston called the Maxine Mesinger Multiple Sclerosis Clinic. Much of who I am today as a parent, businessman, neighbor, and friend came from her.

Did she shape the way you view women?

Absolutely. She taught me a lot about respecting women and respecting all people. In fact, at the time I didn’t connect the dots, but the first two salespeople I hired as a Piper dealer [in the 1970s] were women. Unfortunately, they were ahead of their time in our [male-dominated] industry, and it didn’t work for all the wrong reasons. But I never thought twice about hiring women. I always hired people only because I thought they would be perfect for the job.



Jay Mesinger was heavily influenced by his mother, society columnist Maxine Mesinger, shown here interviewing Eleanor Roosevelt in 1954.

How did you start selling airplanes?

I was a multi-engine flight instructor [before graduating from the University of Texas], but when I got out of college I didn’t know what to do. I went to work for my godfather, who was a Miller beer distributor in Houston. After about six months, he came into my little cubby where I was counting money and measuring it against beer sales and said, “You know everything there is to know about airplanes and I want to buy one.” So we went to the Piper dealership in Houston. It was going out of business and we bought it.

I was 21 years old, and I knew nothing about business. I certainly didn’t know everything about airplanes, but he put me in charge, and I learned quickly. The first year we took it to be Piper’s biggest dealership in the United States, and within a year and a half it was Piper’s biggest dealership in the world. After about three years, [my godfather] gave me the choice to come back into the beer business or stay at the Piper dealership. He gave it to me, signed for a line of credit, and it was my business.

How did you start Mesinger Jet Sales?

Many of my customers in Houston were growing out of their Piper airplanes, and by then, all I really loved to do was sell. I didn’t have much interest in [the sub-businesses within the Piper dealership such as] maintenance, FBOs, charters, or the flight school, so I went to Piper and proposed that I just sell aircraft. [Eventually that morphed into] Mesinger Jet Sales.

When did your family get involved?

My wife Sandra came into the business about 24 years ago. She’s a CPA and I am a salesman and never the two shall meet! [Laughs.] I would never be as successful without her. Josh, my oldest son, got out of college 16 years ago. Sandra and I asked him to come to work for us, but he said no because he wanted to go to third-world countries and bring technology and communications. We said, “That is a terrific idea, but would you just work for us this summer?” He never left.

[My other son] Adam went to NYU, got married, and was successfully working in the film business. Sandra and I went to visit him in L.A. and we said, “If you ever want to come and work at our business, there is plenty of



Jay Mesinger with wife Sandra and sons Adam and Josh, all of whom work at Mesinger Jet Sales.

room for you.” He came in about six months later and has been with us for six years.

We also have two daughters, who aren’t in the business. One is a tax attorney and one is an interior designer.

How many of your customers are new buyers?

Probably 20 to 25 percent. We are very sensitive to the learning curve and the extra patience required. We have developed a program [for these clients] where for a small retainer we do all the background work and build a specific mission-fulfillment plan with an annual-use budget. This way, for a small investment, you can know what the airplane is going to cost, what it can do, whether it works for you, and how many hours a year you are going to use it.

Who should be buying a business jet?

We think that if you’re flying around 200 to 250 hours per year, whole-aircraft ownership makes sense, but for some high-net-worth individuals or corporations, safety or security is more important than the number of hours flown. And there is usually not just one solution. Sometimes the solution is two aircraft or involves commercial travel. For example, if you are flying 85 percent

COURTESY OF JAY MESINGER

COURTESY OF JAY MESINGER

“I was 21 years old, and I knew nothing about business. I certainly didn’t know everything about airplanes, but I learned quickly.”

domestically, buy an aircraft for that. For the 15 percent when you’re flying international, buy a row of first-class seats on the finest airline.

How did you learn to do business in markets like China and the Middle East, where the culture is radically different from America’s?

I understand that [someone else’s] culture is bigger than me and I am not just going to go in and say, “I have arrived and you are going to do it my way.” The first seven years we were in China, I thought no one was listening to me about why they should use a broker—and then the market shifted, and we started to get calls. Last year we did five transactions in China. It was the result of friendships, patience, and time.

What is your advice to young people wanting to go into the aircraft brokerage business?

Our industry looks pretty sexy and flashy and wealthy from the outside, but I know how hard it is to get a client and to sell a plane. So the first thing I tell somebody is that the way to get into it is not just to have a business card and a cell phone and tell people you are a broker. You need to earn your place through learning the industry.

We have one of the most unsophisticated/sophisticated industries in the world. One area that is unsophisticated is that there is [no official record] of selling prices. Sellers say they got more, buyers say they paid less. Calling out daily into the market and talking to other brokers, dealers, owners—that is the way to start in our industry. Before you know it you will have created a network of friends.

What mistakes have you made as a broker?

In the beginning I had many typical failures, because I didn’t have a solid foundation in the industry. People would say, “Just tell me what your best price is,” and I would do it! Boy, was I dumb. [Laughs.] I had to learn how to sell and how to articulate things correctly and still allow

the other side to feel they were participating in a process. I didn’t always make good business decisions when I was younger, especially when I didn’t have Sandra next to me. But I have never misrepresented something to somebody or made a sale that wasn’t client-centric.

Is it challenging to work so closely with your family?

It is rewarding, challenging, and an integrity- and transparency-building exercise. I might be on the phone in the middle of losing a deal and Sandra will walk up to my door. So I don’t even have time to spin it before getting home at night so I can explain it in a softer way! [Laughs.]

One thing that Josh and Adam have that I didn’t have is me. I can help them to not have some of the initial struggles I had, because when I started, I had no clue. They have to work through their own things, but they don’t have to work through them alone like I did in the beginning.

The sustainability of the company in great part will not be about me. It is going to be about Josh and Adam. One interesting thing about a non-brick-and-mortar business is that it’s worth only a little bit of your last commission and an even smaller piece of your next. But when your kids come in, all of a sudden it has sustainability. It has value way beyond me.

You are outspoken and passionate about business aviation. Why do you choose to spend so much time speaking and writing about the industry?

The National Business Aviation Association [NBAA] really legitimized my segment of business aviation. Many years ago, the [broker/dealer] community wasn’t perceived with the same value as it is today. About 12 years ago, I was the first broker to be asked to serve on NBAA’s AMAC [Associate Member Advisor Committee]. I got to bring something to the table and exchange ideas with people who didn’t have my perspective about the preowned segment.

Also, speaking and writing about [the preowned market] is a non-threatening way to contribute and introduce concepts. If you do it right, it is a method of getting to know, building, and strengthening your community. Sandra and I believe in giving back in this way, not just in this industry, but in all the concentric circles of our world. **BJT**



DAVID McINTOSH

RÉSUMÉ:

NAME: Jay Mesinger

BORN: September 27, 1952 (age 64)

POSITION: CEO and president of Boulder, Colorado-based Mesinger Jet Sales, which he founded.

FORMER POSITION: Piper Aircraft dealer in Houston

EDUCATION: Business degree from University of Texas

PHILANTHROPY: Morris Animal Foundation, CSU Flint Animal Cancer Center, Boulder Museum of Contemporary Art

BOARDS: Jet Aviation Customer Advisory Board, Airbus Corporate Jets Business Aviation Advisory Board

PERSONAL: Wife, Sandra. Four children, four grandchildren. Enjoys hiking and snowshoeing.

This interview has been edited and condensed.

Jennifer Leach English (jenglish@bjtonline.com), BJT’s editorial director, interviewed Tony Robbins for our June/July 2016 issue.

TRAVELER CALENDAR

April 6–9

SINGAPORE YACHT SHOW

Sentosa Cove, Singapore. See the world's finest superyachts in an elite setting that includes glamorous parties and high-end entertaining. Shop for luxurious cars and waterside properties while you're there.

Info: singaporeyachtshow.com

April 6–9

THE MASTERS

Augusta, Georgia. Over four days and 72 holes, invitation-only golfers compete for the coveted Green Jacket and a place in Masters history. **Info:** masters.com

April 9

PARIS MARATHON

Paris. One of Europe's most popular marathons starts on the Champs-Élysées and passes many iconic sights in the City of Light. **Info:** schneiderelectricparismarathon.com/us/



Paris Marathon

SHUTTERSTOCK



Tribeca Film Festival



April 11–13

ASIAN BUSINESS AVIATION CONFERENCE AND EXHIBITION

Shanghai. Join thousands of attendees at the foremost business aviation event in Asia. *BJT's Buyers' Guide—China Edition*, will be distributed at the show. Visit ainonline.com for on-site event coverage. **Info:** abace.aero

April 19–30

TRIBECA FILM FESTIVAL

New York. A stellar lineup of creative minds will energize this festival. This year Snapchats will be an official category.

Info: tribecafilm.com/festival

April 29–May 5

ANTIGUA SAILING WEEK

Antigua. Conceived in 1968, this festive annual event draws more than 100 yachts and offers beach and veranda parties to close out the Caribbean winter season.

Info: sailingweek.com



Venice Biennale Art

May 5–14

MADRID OPEN

Madrid, Spain. Watch world-class tennis in the only venue anywhere that has three courts with retractable roofs.

Info: madrid-open.com/en

May 6

KENTUCKY DERBY

Louisville, Kentucky. Don your fanciest hat and grab your mint julep to celebrate old-world glamour at the world's most legendary racetrack, Churchill Downs.

Info: kentuckyderby.com

May 13–November 26

VENICE BIENNALE ARTE

Venice, Italy. The Venice Biennale has, for over 120 years, been one of the world's most prestigious cultural institutions. The festival has expanded its scope to include dance, music, architecture, cinema, and theatre.

Info: labiennale.org/en

May 17–28

CANNES FILM FESTIVAL

Cannes, France. Rub shoulders with the glitterati of the film world at this iconic event, which promotes and rewards cutting-edge films and causes controversy among enthusiasts.

Info: www.festival-cannes.fr/en.html

May 22–24

EBACE 2017

Geneva, Switzerland. *See box.*

Info: ebace.aero/2017

May 25–28

MONACO GRAND PRIX

Monte Carlo, Monaco. The narrow streets of the Côte d'Azur—among the most famous in auto racing—offer spectators an intimate view of the biggest event on the Formula 1 calendar.

Info: monaco-grand-prix.com

For a long-range events calendar, please visit bjtonline.com/calendar.

Europe's Big Bizav Event

Nestled in the Alps, the European Business Aviation Convention & Exhibition (EBACE) is the place to see over 50 elite-tier business aircraft. From May 22 to 24, attendees from Africa, Asia, the Middle East, and North and South America will flock to this premier annual gathering to discover the latest in bizjet technology and innovation. Visit ainonline.com for on-site event coverage.

Info: ebace.aero. —Lysbeth McAleer



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Praise for an FAA rule change

Owners of small aircraft cheered recent regulatory revisions, but they're not the only ones the rewrite will benefit.

by Mark Phelps

It took nine years to accomplish, but those of us who fly small airplanes are thrilled with the recent FAA rewrite of Part 23 certification rules. The new regulations significantly streamline the testing and documentation necessary for certifying smaller airplanes, and also for approving updates to their systems. Industry representatives say the changes represent an entirely new mindset at the FAA, and that they will make it easier to retrofit 21st century avionics, engines, and other systems. The new FAA attitude could also lead to a phasing out of obsolete testing requirements in certifying larger aircraft.

Greg Bowles, of the General Aviation Manufacturers Association, compared the certification system of bygone years with what the rewrite gives us today. “We had this 1950s sausage machine, and it could only make 1950s sausages,” says Bowles, who is GAMA’s vice president of global innovation and policy. “Now, we have a gourmet delicatessen. You can order what you want.”

But should business jet travelers care that adding innovative equipment has gotten easier for us small fry?

Many should, and here’s why.

First, Part 23 doesn’t cover just Piper Cubs flown by hobby pilots. Bowles points out that Part 23 includes more than a few business aircraft, including Cessna’s CJ series of light jets, Embraer Phenom 100s and 300s, and Beechcraft King Air-series turboprop twins. So the streamlined rewrite of the certification rules opens up a lot of possibilities for new designs. It also affords plenty of potential for innovation that can add efficiency and utility to older models—and make them safer.

As an example, Bowles cites the “active” winglet system from Tamarack Aerospace. Winglets—the upright “sails” at the wingtips—not only look cool; they make an aircraft more efficient by enabling faster climb to thinner air and generating greater lift with less engine



Hartzell Propeller CEO Joe Brown took this photo from his Glasair Sportsman of the same model being flown by General Aviation Manufacturers Association president and CEO Pete Bunce (left) and former Jeppesen CEO Mark Van Tine. Brown’s Sportsman features advanced avionics that could find a home in a wider range of aircraft, thanks to new FAA rules.

power (and thus, less wasted fuel). It’s an aerodynamic win-win. But in most cases, retrofitting winglets to an aircraft that wasn’t designed for them requires dismantling the wing to add reinforcing structure, due to increased flexing and stress loads caused by the winglets.

Tamarack devised a clever system that senses when an unreinforced wing is becoming stressed and automatically deflects a small control surface to relieve the load through aerodynamics. The “active” winglet system cuts installation time and labor, saving thousands of dollars, and also works better. Tamarack’s engineers used computer analysis to verify stress and aerodynamic data, but under the old rules, it all needed to be “re-proven” for the FAA in exhaustive and expensive flight-testing. Under the rewrite, much of the computer testing—which everyone agrees is safe, efficient, and reliable—would suffice. So far, Tamarack has received approval only for Cessna’s CJ-series light jets. But under the new rules, it will be far easier and less expensive to add approvals for new models.

As for installing the latest in computer-driven avionics, do-it-yourself airplane builders have had an edge for some time.

As president of Ohio-based Hartzell Propellers, Joe Brown is an energetic participant in the General Aviation Manufacturers Association. As an active general aviation pilot, he is also the “manufacturer” of his own home-built Glasair Sportsman. Because it’s licensed in a different category, Brown had the freedom to equip his Sportsman with technology that far outstrips what would have been possible in a certified aircraft, since everything on such an airplane would have had to be tested and certified.

The new rules go a long way “toward introducing real purposeful design improvements,” he says, enabling owners of certified airplanes to install the same equipment.

As I noted earlier, the new mindset of the FAA bodes well for manufacturers of larger aircraft, too. “The goal was to cut the cost and time to certify an aircraft in half,” Bowles says. “That’s a model we hope to adopt in larger aircraft and helicopters, as well.”

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Mark Phelps (mphelps@bjtonline.com), a private pilot, is a longtime **BJT** contributor and a managing editor at our sister publication, *Aviation International News*.

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