GLOBAL JET CONCEPT

A SUCCESS STORY

Founded only ten years ago, Global Jet is a leader on the European market of charter, management sales and acquisition of private aircraft. The company, which started out with only two jets in management, today offers 70 aircraft available for public transport, out of a fleet of more than 60 aircraft in management. Those include the largest Dassault Falcon fleet in Europe, the largest Bombardier Global Express fleet worldwide, as well as the large cabin Airbus A318 Elite and Boeing Business Jet aircraft. 

BY Stanisław Pykaś
Global Jet was founded in December 1999 by Mike Savary a business aviation professional with a sound knowledge of the field and excellent contacts, Laurent Autier and Antoine David but the activity itself started in 2000,” says Laurent Autier CEO of Global Jet Concept and co-founder of the company. Initially we had only a few aircraft in management and we made giant steps. Year after year we enrolled additional aircraft. In less than ten years we reached a total of more than sixty aircraft mainly long range and wide body aircraft. We wanted to respond to a growing need for tailored and customized solutions for our clients. Throughout the year we have had to adapt our structure to the expansion of the fleet.”

True to its values
“The company owes its success to its ability to remain close to its customers’ wishes,” explains Richard Cocu, Global Jet Concept’s Chief Operating Officer. “We focus on being very attentive to their needs and true to the values for which we stand for,” he adds. “From the very beginning, we have put a strong emphasis on our employees’ professionalism. They are dedicated to satisfying aircraft owner’s most particular wishes, providing them with a just and objective analysis of their needs. With their experience and technical expertise they can offer our clients the best possible solution tailored to their personal needs.” In his position as COO, Mr Cocu is responsible for the supervision of foreign-based sales offices and the development of new partnerships abroad. Part of his mission is to investigate the potential of further new sales bases worldwide. “The human factor is vital,” adds Laurent Autier. The company’s image starts with the receptionist. The talent and savoir-faire of our staff has brought added value to our Company throughout the years.”

Quest for quality
The defining feature of Global Jet’s development strategy is the constant quest for the highest quality throughout the range of services, both for the plane itself and for the service offered before, during and after the flight. Some 150 employees, crews and flight attendants not included, work in the main headquarters in Geneva and Luxembourg. The head office in Geneva, located in the Air Centre building, adjacent to the international airport is no longer in keeping with the expansion of the company. GJC had been looking for an opportunity to move its headquarters to more spacious and IT sophisticated facilities until recently. “We were able to sign a contract for 1000 m² of office space in the brand new Geneva Park building,” says Richard Cocu. The location could not be better, ideally lo-
“CUSTOMERS WILLING TO CHARTER A JET HAVE JUST ONE PHONE CALL TO MAKE AND ONE TEAM TO TALK TO.”

cated just a few meters away from the Pavilion C3, Geneva’s business terminal boarding and arrival gate located at the tip end of the runway, on the south-western side of the Airport. “This new location will allow us to expand, of course, but also to perform even better, with enhanced communications between services, due to the larger open space available,” adds Richard Cocu. Transfer to the new office is scheduled for last quarter 2010. This project of expansion is a great challenge for Global Jet, especially in today’s economic situation. In the meantime, two people were hired in the key positions of IT Director and Dispatch & Operations Director.

Worldwide operation
Global Jet is present elsewhere in the world, with marketing offices in Paris, Moscow, Vienna and Beijing. A new office is now open in London. The Monaco office deals more specifically with aircraft sales and acquisitions. In the short term, Global Jet Concept plans to have a presence in the Middle East and also in India. “A partnership with a North American broker or operator could be of some interest, as would be another base in Asia to further strengthen our Beijing office,” comments Richard Cocu. “The very type of aircraft in management in our fleet, essentially large-cabin long-range jets, are perfectly fit to answer the needs of possible exchanges between such bases and Europe,” he adds.

“We opened a representative office in China and believe in this emerging market as well as in the Indian one,” explains Laurent Autier. “Of course the Middle East and CIS markets are also very important to us. Thanks to the great variety of our fleet, we are able to position ourselves on those markets. Indeed, our fleet comprises all types of aircraft such as Boeing, Airbus, Global Express, Challenger, Falcon, Embraer, Hawker, which gives our clients a large possibility of choice and which allows us to target the markets with different types of cabins adapted to their preferences,” he adds. The diversity and quality of the aircraft in Global Jet’s fleet has certainly been a major factor to achieve its status as one of the most im-

GJC manages large-cabin long-range aircraft perfectly fit to answer the needs of the highest net-worth individuals.
"WE SHALL CONTINUE TO EXPAND WORLDWIDE AND HOPE TO REINFORCE OUR POSITION OF LEADER ON THE EUROPEAN MARKET."
important figures in private European aviation. “In operational terms, it is better to have new planes, if only to avoid breakdowns. From a sales point of view, clients prefer to charter very recent planes, less than 5 years old. This automatically dictates a certain number of aircraft that we can offer,” explains Richard Cocu.

Stable work force
Like most of Global Jet Concept’s employees, Mr Cocu has been in the company for many years. He was first recruited eight years ago to launch the French office based at Paris-Le-Bourget Airport. He then moved to Geneva in 2004 to develop and diversify the commercial activity, which was strongly focusing on Russia at the time. Geneva-based Bjorn Naberhuis, Charter sales Director responsible for the daily operations, has been with the company for six years. “We had twelve aircraft when I started, with only 3 available for public transport, and today we have more than 60 in management and 22 for charter. In the beginning they were fewer aircraft, and the demand was high. Six years ago the charter business was really booming. Certain products like the Global Express were fairly new and everyone wanted to fly them. Consequently, the management department started to grow.” In Mr Naberhuis’ opinion, not being attached to any maintenance facility in particular also contributed to the success of Global Jet Concept. “We can go to any company and ask for the best deal. Our large fleet and experience with Bombardier, Falcon and Airbus aircraft give us an edge to negotiate prices. We are not operating just one business jet.”

Private aviation users do not like change when it comes to the people they are used to deal with, who have known them for a long time and can anticipate on their needs, habits and personal preferences. Global Jet Concept’s charter team has been the same for a long time, which brings a sense of stability to the customer. “I started as a client’s representative,” says Bjorn Naberhuis. “I did some operations and began to grow internally in the charter department and then became Charter Sales Director. This is a company where you have possibilities to grow if you want.”

Safety first
Since its creation in 2000 and until 2007, Global Jet Concept’s growth has been spectacular then, in 2008 and 2009, the charter activity slowed down. The management activity continues to grow and in 2010 Global Jet will enrol a second Falcon 7X together with 5 additional new aircraft. For the charter activity: “Of course, we were affected by the economic crisis,” says Laurent Autier. “It is important to reassure our customers, to stay close to them and to adapt our strategies to their needs. Like any other companies we are in the wave of cost savings policies and optimization of expenses. However, a slowdown phase is also a good opportunity to reinforce our structure and consolidate its foundations,” he adds.

“Today, customers look for very competitive prices but of course do not wish to give up on the safety and quality of service. Global Jet Concept has never made compromises on those crucial aspects of business aviation and shall continue to guarantee outstanding services in the utmost safety. Obviously, the future of business aviation will be closely linked to the future of the world economy. We hope that the world will find back its financial health. The niche markets will also give a tendency of the evolution of the business. Global Jet Concept will monitor that very attentively and will base its strategy accordingly. We are planning to enrol other aircraft in our management program and will develop our charter business on new markets in Europe and worldwide.