

The History & Development of Corporate & Business Aviation

For
Paramount Business Jets
101 Ivy Lane, Suite A
Daytona Beach, FL, 32114

Arman Motiwalla
2/11/2009

Throughout history, new advancements in transportation technology have proven to be key elements in fostering better commerce and an improved quality of life. The development of early transportation networks helped younger nations to facilitate advances in commerce and trade, and ultimately laid the foundation for modern transportation networks. The birth of aviation (or more specifically powered flight) proved to be a vital aspect in advancing nations' economies and improving transportation networks and infrastructure. As a result of individual, government and corporate effort and innovation, aviation has now developed as the leading form of business and leisure transportation in the world.

The birth of aviation was spurred by the Wright brothers' first powered flight of 129 feet in 1903. This milestone signaled the first form of early aviation transportation and the development of personal air travel. Their many innovations and developments in the aviation industry led to the creation of aircraft used for civilian and military cargo and passenger operations. By the end of the 1920s, individuals were beginning to see the advantages of using air travel over conventional methods of ground transport. Although interrupted by the start of the First World War, aviation continued to develop in the United States due to government interest and military innovation. This government promotion of civil and military aviation was vital in stimulating public interest and commercial aviation development by private enterprises.

The development of business aviation was encouraged by the surplus of available aircraft after World War II. These aircraft were not used for large group transportation but were used for individual and personal travel as well as company promotion via barnstorming trips and air shows instead. Furthermore, the continual development of aircraft in the 1930s contributed to the creation of closed cabin monoplanes and reliable engines among many other advancements in aviation technology. In

turn, these new technologies created an influx of new aircraft designed for a wide variety of aviation operations. Combined with national authorities regulating civil aviation, these new aircraft proved to the world that air travel could be a safe, efficient and reliable method of transportation.

With public support and interest, commercial aviation was booming. The development of airlines and charter operations also encouraged businesses to utilize their corporate aircraft as a means to facilitate their business activities, which saves companies the costs and hassles of using commercial air carriers. In addition, the introduction of new business aircraft further stimulated the growth of business aviation and provided new developments and technologies that benefited the aviation community as a whole.

Again World War II called a halt to the development of commercial and business aviation. However, due to the extensive use of aircraft in wartime service, it also acclimated the masses to the concept of air transportation in both a civilian and military environment. Once again, the availability of postwar aircraft and surplus military transports greatly influenced the development of commercial and business aviation. Advances in military aviation technology were quickly utilized in civilian applications to make commercial air travel even more reliable, safe and efficient. Improvements in navigation, air traffic control, communication as well as aircraft components and systems all contributed to the substantial growth of personal, commercial and business aviation in the 1950s.

Despite this, it was primarily the introduction of commercial jet aircraft in the late 1950s that spurred the greatest development in the business aviation industry. Fast, convenient and comfortable, jet aircraft provided corporate travelers with an effective, efficient and economical method of business travel. In addition, jet aircraft such as the first Learjet and Hawker 125 were created to cater specifically to the business aviation community, which was quickly becoming recognized as a significant part of the commercial aviation industry. The mid-1970s also saw a further increase in the number of business

aircraft available which contributed greatly to the growth of corporate aviation and related air taxi and air charter services.

While business aviation had clearly won itself a permanent place among the world's corporations, the availability of jet aircraft soon led to the creation of charter operators and charter companies. Aircraft charter companies soon began chartering flights for corporations, executives, individual private travelers, medical flights, sports teams and entertainers on jet aircraft as opposed to smaller prop or turbo-prop aircraft.

Jet charters have become increasingly common since the mid-1990s and in particular since the early 2000s. There has been increasing demand for jet charter vacations and many experienced and semi-experienced travelers consider it easier and cheaper to hire a jet rather than own their own aircraft. The end of the 1990s saw jet charters becoming increasingly popular due to use of the internet. Due to the fact that jet charter companies were never a part of the major Global Distribution System (GDS) or travel distribution systems, it could not reach wider audiences. With the introduction of internet communication, the distribution of information regarding the availability of aircraft, placement, and pricing became readily available to both brokers and potential customers around the world.

Nowadays there are also hundreds of aircraft charter brokers or agent companies. These companies offer jet finding and travel organization services similar to travel agents but more specialized. They use their experience and networks to locate a client's ideal aircraft in terms of price and location and normally charge a small percentage of the charter price for their services.

The development of corporate and business aviation has been greatly influenced by advancements in aviation technology and the development of civil aviation as a whole. Nowadays, the use of business aviation aircraft provides organizations and corporate travelers with safe and secure access to more

than 5,500 locations in the United States alone and many more internationally. Business aviation allows corporate travelers to bypass the restrictions of limited airline service and inefficient schedules to enhance the productivity, efficiency and effectiveness of their employees and executives. Over the years, business and corporate transportation has emerged as one of the most important aspects of the commercial aviation industry. It will continue to be recognized worldwide for its important contribution to the history and development of civil aviation, as well as its role in facilitating significant advances in domestic and international commerce now and for the foreseeable future.