

Crazy About Our Industry

Many might say the aviation industry makes them 'Crazy!' I have certainly had days like that. In fact in the early days of my career, before the days of good contacts and real exclusive agreements for buyers and sellers; before the days of such a mature culture of legal and tax aviation representation, I said many times that if I could try another profession then maybe I would. It was not unlike the Wild West in the early days!

Don't get me wrong, though. I did many deals on a handshake - and I shook some really wonderful peoples' hands.

We have seen a lot of change in our industry in the last four years. There has been enormous economic uncertainty that has rocked our value proposition; there's been a huge global expansion, followed by a contraction; and the composition of lending within our industry has changed dramatically. These are all factors and circumstances designed to weed out the faint at heart.

I am Crazy about this industry! I respect the fellow professionals that share it with me, including those associates who manufacture the aircraft, engines and avionics, and those gifted and skilled people who maintain and keep our fleet operating safely. And I very much admire the buyers and sellers who participate and believe in the value of Business Aviation. Thank you all. [It is an added bonus for me that I get to come to work each day and celebrate my passion with my family who are integral parts of my business. I know for a fact that for many of my trusted friends, that joy is shared. Our businesses are heavily weighted with family ties and family involvement. I have many friends who I started in the industry with who now have second and even third generations involved.]

I have always felt I could never bring family into a business if I did not genuinely trust the industry and those people working along-

side me day after day. This may be beginning to sound like a love story - and it is. All of you reading this column must have some involvement with the industry, either making your living day-to-day from it, or flying in business aircraft. I am sure you can sense the passion in aviation all around you. I always tell people this is ultimately "not an aircraft business, but a people business". It is people selling people aircraft; people servicing aircraft for people. It's the people, and the collective technology they are bringing to our industry that make it so dynamic. It is the people who make me crazy about this industry! So for all of the very difficult circumstances we have seen ourselves in over the last several years, I still see beyond that. I can still see the enthusiasm the people involved in aviation bring to their work every day. I am so excited that I can call this industry mine.

I watch with amazing pride when my sons interact with prospects and clients. I am sure for those involved in our industry and especially those of you who get to share your days like I do with a son or daughter or spouse, you can also appreciate the industry like our family does.

I know that our economic challenges are not over. It might still be premature to label our current market as being in a state of recovery, but it is not too soon to recognize that the industry we are all sharing is worth the challenges. It is worth the effort. I am sure that if we collectively continue down the path that lies in front of us we will have years and years of opportunity ahead.

So as we get stuck in to 2013, we should all stop from the craziness of the day-to-day activities and remember why we are all in this industry: For increasingly more of us, I believe we're here because no other industry could bring us as close to as many fascinating, bright and hardworking people. What other industry can put us on the cutting edge

of technology? How many other people can come to work each day and have a chance to solve problems that mean so much?

With regards to developing new ways to communicate, new ways to navigate, new and more efficient ways to launch a craft into the air and deliver with unparalleled safety a method of transportation that is shrinking our very world, I am not sure anything compares.

So when your phone rings next, or when you are walking into a new prospect's office, remember you are about to get a chance to relay to that person that you are crazy about what you do and the people you do business with. I know based on my 39 years of involvement that I am not alone in this passion.

Who knows? Perhaps you will make that next call to me and we can compare our enthusiasm. I look forward to talking and seeing many of you during 2013. Here's wishing much success to you all!

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