

New Company Caters to the Special Needs of Owner-Pilots



Guardian Jet Creates New Concept Focused on Service, Consulting and Brokerage

by Dianne White

Guardian Jet has assembled a team of experienced, service-oriented professionals who are focused on the issues facing owner-pilots. From left, Vice President Ted Glassman, President Mike Dwyer and Director of Operations Mike Mikolay.

One of the biggest challenges facing owner-pilots is not necessarily the next instrument approach to minimums. Instead, it is the oversight that goes into cost-effectively managing the operation and ownership of the aircraft. Wouldn't it be great to have someone who understands the owner-flown market on your side, looking out for your best interests? Wouldn't it be ideal to work with a company that isn't solely focused on commissions and getting that next sale?

Wouldn't it be great to work with a group of professionals who "get it?"

Finally, there is a company that does. Guardian Jet, LLC is a Connecticut-based company that is 100-percent focused on meeting the unique needs of the owner-operator.

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Photo by Don Delphia

With extensive aircraft sales experience and a CitationJet type rating, Guardian Jet President Mike Dwyer (center) founded the company on the principle of bringing together all the service and support owner-pilots need in owning and operating their aircraft.

Guardian Jet Is...

One of the easiest ways to define Guardian Jet is to describe what it isn't. The company is not just an aircraft broker, although that service is offered. Nor is it a management company, even though some of the traditional aircraft management functions do fall under their umbrella of services.

According to Mike Dwyer, Guardian Jet president, the company is an amalgamation of every service and requirement that intersects an aircraft.

"Think of us as a conduit and source for all the services an owner-pilot needs to effectively operate their aircraft," said Dwyer. "Service to our customers is the foundation from which other functions, such as brokerage and consulting, flows."

Dwyer has spent the last 12 years in aircraft sales, working for such companies as Mooney Aircraft, Cessna Citation and Gulfstream. An ATP, CitationJet type-rated pilot, Dwyer is keenly aware that a disparity in the services available to owner-pilots. In his observation, an owner-operator is an individual who not only is the proprietor and chief pilot, but also serves the role of maintenance director, risk manager, records administrator, dispatcher, ferry pilot and overall aircraft supervisor. Although brokers, aircraft managers and contract pilots can fill some of those roles, no one entity offers all those functions to help owner-pilots maximize their ownership experience. In early 2002, Dwyer decided it was time the gap was filled.

"Guardian Jet is a lightning rod

for value-added services that an individual owner could not possibly find, keep up with, or afford on his or her own. We bring a breadth and scope of resources under one umbrella," Dwyer explained.

Guardian Jet Vice President Ted Glassman, another long-time aviation professional, brings a special expertise in aircraft purchasing and market research. Specializing in turboprop and light jet sales and purchases, Glassman has accumulated a personal sales tally of more than 300 transactions since 1986.

Guardian Jet has assembled a core team of employees and has developed special arrangements with experienced sub-contractors in a wide range of disciplines to assist owner-operators with specific problems or help develop long-term strategies.

Among its core offerings, Guardian Jet provides acquisition search and evaluation, which allows owner-pilots to obtain the best value for their dollar, mission and eventual resale. The company also offers performance engineering to provide customers with custom performance solutions, address weight and balance issues and solve unique performance profiles. Additionally, Guardian Jet provides financial analysis services to help owners plan and project their investment in an airplane and understand the cost of the asset over the life of the aircraft.

“We believe in ‘cocktail napkin’ mathematics. Simply put, you should be able to explain a sound investment on a cocktail napkin. Once the principle is sound, we

can then use powerful programs and spreadsheets to support the specific needs of a customer’s operations,” said Dwyer, who holds a master’s degree in finance. “We can also help address tax implications and track expenditures against a budget, ensuring the customer is on course.”

The company also provides owner-focused services including contract/legal services; access to a nationwide network of qualified pilots; maintenance oversight; and custom training programs to fit the specific needs of owner-pilots.

Guardian Jet also recognizes insurance is a key ingredient when purchasing an aircraft. The company’s principals maintain close relationships with the agents and underwriters that handle the

owner-flown market. “We will provide owners with the necessary tools to ensure they receive the best coverage, at the best cost with minimum obstacles to keep them flying,” Dwyer added.

A GEM of a Solution

Guardian Jet has put together a fee-based portfolio of services that make owning, flying and operating more cost-effective and worry-free. Called Guardian Echelon Membership (or GEM for short), this program is customized to meet the unique needs of the owner-operator. An annual retainer provides members with access to technical services, legal consultation, accounting advice and tax expertise. GEM members also

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Photo by Don Delphia

Under the broad scope of the company’s technical services, Guardian Jet provides maintenance audit and planning, pilot services, pre-purchase inspections, as well as some not-so-traditional services such as cabin management services, tele-medical assistance, air-to-air photography and VIP concierge services.

receive a newsletter subscription and unlimited access to the Guardian Jet Member web-based bulletin board, providing owner-pilots entrée to the community of Guardian Jet owner-pilots.

Because Guardian Jet is focused on providing a flawless customer experience, the company is initially offering the Echelon Membership to pilots and owners of the following aircraft: the Cessna CitationJet, CJ1, CJ2, Cessna Citation 500 and 550 series and the Raytheon Premier I. Other aircraft models will be added in the future.

Paradigm Shift From Traditional Thinking

Guardian Jet's business model is

based on three basic tenets: service, consulting and brokerage, prioritized in that order. Dwyer contends this is a significant paradigm shift from pure sales companies because Guardian Jet has consciously placed lifetime service to its customers over the pursuit of a quick sales commission.

“Our relationships with our customers' aircraft can be described as cradle-to-grave,” Dwyer explained. “We don't simply help you acquire or sell an aircraft and then disappear. To win your business, we have to provide outstanding services and consulting. I have to buy you the best aircraft value available because I am going to live with it for the life of the aircraft. Guardian Jet is incented to

maximize your resale because we want to acquire the replacement. Each piece of the puzzle is related to the other as all are designed to improve the experience of owning an aircraft.”

Dwyer concedes this is can be a more intense way to do business, “but it's the right way. Our customers will look to us as a trusted advisor who are motivated to ensure every decision and every dollar spent is in the owner's best interests – both now and in the long term.”

For more information, contact Guardian Jet at (203) 458-2500 or visit their Web site at www.guardianjet.com



GUARDIAN JET, LLC

741 Boston Post Road
Suite 304
Guilford, Connecticut 06437
203-458-2500
203-458-1577 Fax
Guardian@guardianjet.com
www.guardianjet.com