



An office in the air

Jack Arnold and his company, JR Arnold Consulting, help area companies keep their businesses running smoothly through the use of corporate aircraft.

article by Suzanne Loomis-Studinski • photos provided by JR Arnold Consulting

In addition to helping a company secure and maintain important business relationships, a corporate aircraft can help obtain maximum productivity from two of its most important assets: people and time.

"Efficient scheduling and time savings are key advantages of corporate aircraft use," asserts Jack Arnold, president of JR Arnold Consulting, who specializes in advising businesses about purchasing or chartering general aircraft to meet corporate and personal travel needs. For most

businesses, time is a very critical commodity. When you consider that a business aircraft has the ability to fly nonstop among 3,500 general aviation airports throughout the U.S., highly efficient employee time management becomes a very real benefit."

Successful business owners, especially, are often faced with trying to be in two places at the same time. "They may be needed in the office while they also need to get out to secure and/or maintain relationships with their clients," explains

Arnold. "They've hired excellent people to work for them and need to make the best use of their time, as well. They understand this high technology world offers instant mobile communications-cell phones, email, teleconferencing and internet conferencing - but they know personal, face-to-face meetings are still best for business, too. Business aviation can offer a solution to that quandary."

Arnold has been involved in aviation in one form or another for almost 30 years. "I started out as a flight instructor

with an aviation management degree and then worked for several different corporations,” he recalls. “Then I went into the Air Force as a fighter pilot for 10 years and I also flew with the Indiana Air National Guard for quite a few years. For about 20 years now, I’ve been a commercial pilot with a major airline. About eight years ago, I was asked to work with different local companies to help them sort through their corporate travel needs. Many of them needed to get somewhere that wasn’t easily accessible from Fort Wayne commercially on a very timely basis so I worked with them to help them measure different charter companies.” Today Arnold works with clients on individual travel requirements to help them decide which option is best for them. “I help with brokering airplanes for those selling as well as for those buying or trading up. In each case, we analyze what their current and future travel needs are. Business aviation today has many key advantages.”

Productivity

On board a corporate aircraft, the productivity sustained en route to and from a destination can add substantial value to the bottom line. “A corporate airplane is a tool, for the most part, to allow business owners, managers and other key employees to be the most productive they can be,” says Arnold. “In the private, secure office environment of a corporate plane, strategizing immediately before meetings with clients and debriefing afterwards is more common.

Marketing

An aircraft also can be used as a creative and impressive marketing tool for presentations to potential customers about your products and services. “On board, you have one-on-one, uninterrupted time to meet and work with clients,” says Arnold. “Whether you take them on board for a meeting, take them along on a trip, or pick them up to bring them to your facility, you show them how important they are to you. It also opens access to a lot of different customer bases. Where you might have had limits or time constraints or just didn’t have the personnel to reach out to a potential customer due to distance, a private plane gives you the opportunity to bridge those gaps. Corporate aircraft can provide opportunities for businesses in Fort Wayne to be able to have a connection literally to the entire country and beyond. When you make it easier and more attractive to come into your facility in northern Indiana, potential clients are more inclined to want to do business here and it also makes it an attractive business model for companies



Arnold recently helped local company LaBov & Beyond purchase its first corporate jet (pictured).



considering relocating here.”

Flexibility

Corporate planes also offer business people much more flexibility. “You and/or your employees don’t have to spend the better part of a day or two days just traveling to and from a destination,” remarks Arnold. “You can leave the office later and be back earlier. Itineraries can be changed en route and meetings can be moved up, moved back or extended without penalty, risk or unnecessary scheduling pressure and overnight trips often can be avoided completely. That not only permits more time spent in the office but also allows more family time before and after traditional business hours, time which is critical to both business owners and to their employees. Studies show that a stable supportive family can have an acute effect on morale and productivity, so scheduling control that minimizes time away from home is a valuable asset.”

Barry LaBov, president and CEO of LaBov & Beyond Marketing Communications Inc., who has been a client for seven years, has used many of Arnold’s services, including critiquing charter companies, helping buy and sell aircraft, hiring pilots and assisting in flight department management.

“Owning our own jet has been a very

positive influence on our company,” remarks LaBov, “because it allows us to be more responsive to our customers and to act very quickly to meet any needs that they have or any opportunities to expand our business. We can fly to a city, conduct meetings and be able to fly back the same day. That flexibility allows our employees to conduct a lot of business but still be home to have a meaningful life with their families. Our clients like the fact that we can respond so quickly and it makes us even more attractive as a company. Prior to getting the jet, they may have just considered just working with suppliers nearer to them. Now we can compete with those companies because, with our own plane, we often can get to the client as quickly - sometimes even quicker - than they can.”

Economy

When considering purchasing a plane or trading up, many businesses need a quick refresher about the type of aircraft currently available. “In the last 10 years, manufacturers have done a wonderful job in decreasing the costs for purchasing a corporate aircraft,” says Arnold. “Newer and more efficient jet airplanes can carry several people up to 500 miles in an hour. When you start figuring how much your time and that of your key employees is



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worth, especially if you're putting three or four employees on a commercial plane each week, business aircraft is a very economical option. Generally over the last 15 years, the cost per hour to own and fly an airplane has been cut by about half. For

example, in 1990 it might have cost \$6,000 to fly from Fort Wayne to Kansas City with five people. Now you can fly that round trip for about \$3,000 or \$600 per person and your people aren't away from the office for a second day and they're

more productive because they're able to be home with their families at night. Certainly commercial airlines may be cheaper to travel on than operating your own plane but the difference in costs is justifiable when you consider that you're



Corporate aircraft "eliminate the distance barriers to business," says Arnold, with Labov pilot Jason Martin (left).

making the greatest use of your time to do what you do best in business.

"With a mobile office that can fly almost anywhere, you can eliminate the distance barriers to business. Expanded business opportunities are more easily considered and readily acted upon. It's like having your own off ramp in the sky." BP

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