AVIAÂ BRINGS GROUP PURCHASING TO EMPOWER BUSINESS AVIATION COMPANIES

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Less than one-year old technology company AVIAÂ is pioneering predictive analytics to bring the benefits of the group purchasing organisation (GPO) model to the business aviation industry. It is the first Anglo/American company of its kind to bring such expertise and transparency to Europe and the USA and in less than 12 months has built up a substantial customer base across the US and UK.

The company, which is the brainchild of Hangar8 founder Dustin Dryden and GPO expert Jim Hall, has set out to streamline the procurement process for owners and operators using the 'collective' buying power of its members to secure the best rates for key operational items. These include fuel, insurance, training; MRO; FBO services; aircraft and engine parts; avionics upgrades and more.

As well as helping private jet owners and operators better compete with companies who already benefit from economies of scale, the GPO model also rewards cooperative suppliers.

Through accessing its member network, AVIAÂ collects historic and forecast spend data from them and shares it with their preferred suppliers. They can provide enhanced

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forecasting, minimum spend levels and better insights into the way AVIAÂ members operate. AVIAÂ can send targeted messages to its members which meet suppliers' criteria in a bid to help them secure them new business, saving suppliers unnecessary spending on sales and marketing.

Pictured: AVIAÂ Co-Founders Dustin Dryden (left) and Jim Hall (right) with CEO Gillian Hayes at the company's Oxford Airport home
Photo credit: Cordwell.aero

The success of GPOs originally came to light during the 1980s in the US medical industry, which is where Jim Hall's background lies. A chance meeting at Oxford last year brought him into contact with fellow entrepreneur Dustin Dryden and his expertise in business aviation. Both men had exited their respective businesses three years ago. Having struck up a friendship, they decided to marry up their skillsets to introduce the GPO model to business aviation, identifying the US and Europe, the two biggest markets in business aviation.

"There are many similarities between healthcare and business aviation. Both are highly fragmented industries, dominated by big players, which can make it challenging to compete. We will work with suppliers to help members reduce their friction costs (which comprise commissions, fees, interest rates, research time, etc). A typical example would be flight training, where we would look at where there are spare hours on a flight simulator, maximising the situation for both parties," Jim Hall notes.

"We will look to expand exponentially, but first and foremost we want to make a major impact in Europe and the US and scale up, bringing on more specialist talent.

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“We are excited to be applying the GPO model to this industry, where long and costly negotiations at multiple points throughout the supply chain can be commonplace in transactions,” he added.

Pictured: AVIAÂ CEO Gillian Hayes
Photo credit: Cordwell.aero

With brand new UK headquarters at London Oxford Airport and two US offices in Irvine, California and Park City, Utah, AVIAÂ’s member base is growing fast.

AVIAÂ’s early success is also due to its innovative young team’s ability to apply the latest research into data analytics to the day-to-day running of the company. The company’s CEO Gillian Hayes, PhD, is currently on sabbatical from her position as a tenured professor at the Bren School of Information and Computer Sciences at the University of California.

“I find that often companies will spend large amounts of money and time conducting their own research, when researchers have already published everything we need on the same subject. Our team can quickly access the research that is already out there.”

Working with Gillian in the US is Chief Product Officer Rick Tilghman, who brings two decades’ experience making cutting edge technologies that handle massive scales of data. Formerly Senior Director for User Experience Design at PayPal and Director of User Experience at Roundarch Isobar, Rick has a history of designing innovative products and seamless user experiences.

AVIAÂ will be making its debut at EBACE 2018 in Geneva, 28-31st May.

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