EXCLUSIVE NBAA-BACE 2017 Q&A WITH INMARSAT AVIATION'S KURT WEIDEMEYER

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Twice per year business aviation celebrates "Christmas" - EBACE and NBAA-BACE. In your opinion, to what extent has the industry changed between these two events?

It's a very fast moving industry, so we're seeing a lot of change even in the months since EBACE earlier this year. For Inmarsat specifically, at EBACE 2017 we announced that our Jet ConneX inflight Wi-Fi service had been installed on 15 Gulfstream G650 private jets, now we are at over 50 G650 customers. We also announced that Jet ConneX had been selected as a linefit option by the four major business jet manufacturers – Bombardier, Dassault, Embraer and Gulfstream.

Fast forward to NBAA-BACE, and we've announced that more than 100 JetWave installs have taken place this year across 15 business jet models, and we'll hit 150 installs by the end of 2017. The pace of installs is picking up, as business jet customers talk to their peers and recommend JX. We couldn't ask for a better sales team then actual JX customers!

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What is your personal point of view on the business aviation industry – i.e. technology development, new aircraft, new marketing ideas?

Business Aviation is seeing more growth inside the aircraft than in new aircraft sales. We're seeing older tails that would normally be put up for sale getting massive cabin and cockpit updates. Connectivity is a good example. The G550 community has pushed hard for a Jet ConneX STC, many of these tails are over 10+yrs old even G450 customers are queuing up for that STC set to be ready by year end and those tails are 20+yrs old. Bombardier Global customers are another community showing up in a big numbers for Jet ConneX installs.

What has been Inmarsat's main achievement and main challenge in the past year?

As of EBACE 2017 earlier in the year, all four major OEMs (Bombardier, Gulfstream, Dassault and Embraer) have now either announced they will offer, or already offer Jet ConneX as a linefit option on their planes, which is a great achievement for us in the business aviation space. We also just announced that more than 100 business jets are now flying with Jet ConneX, which is a huge milestone for our team, along with our partner Honeywell.

We're expecting more than 150 JetWave installations to be complete on business jets by the end of the year. Working with Honeywell and our installation partners, we have now received more than 25 type certificate and supplemental type certificate (STC) approvals for JetWave from the FAA and EASA, with an additional nine STCs underway, so there's no sign of slowing down with installations going forward.

I would say our biggest challenge, this past year was radomes. We had OEMs and MROs who experienced delays in radome production, Dassault customers are a good example, so we created custom data plans so customers could come on the Jet ConneX network immediately while they waited for their new radome. Fortunately the network has more than enough capacity and capability and we could offer them data plans up to 11Mbps.

What motivates you every day to work better and smarter, as a company and as a team?

Debunking competitor marketing hype. The inflight connectivity market today is very crowded, and there are many competing and contradictory statements flying around from various competitors about the coverage and capability of each network. But at the end of the day it comes down to 4 simple questions:

1. Coverage: Do they cover the places you want to go?
2. Data plans: How does the data plan stack up to the Jet ConneX plans? Do they offer CIRs?
3. Hardware STC: Does my type model have an STC?
4. Reliability: What do the current customer say about their reliability and performance?

We are motivated by the need to stand out from the crowd and bring some clarity to the market with our inflight Wi-Fi offering. No other operator can offer reliable, seamless and high-speed global coverage through a single operator, as we offer with Jet ConneX, and we're driven every day by that truth.

What makes Inmarsat different comparing to its competitors?

Everything! Our Jet ConneX solution is the world's first business aviation in-flight Wi-Fi providing reliable, high-speed global coverage through a single operator. It's a game changer for the industry, offering data plans up to 15Mbps and coverage over 100% of major aircraft routes and

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even remote airspaces off the beaten path.

Jet ConneX data plans are the only connectivity solutions for business aviation that offer Committed Information Rates (CIRs). This demonstrates our confidence in Jet ConneX's service reliability and is provided to customers regardless of data plan purchased. CIRs are met in all our coverage areas, ensuring the same reliable, consistent service in London as in New York or Bali.

Jet ConneX has over 25 STCs within its first year of operation. Our competition has far less in triple the time. This achievement was really a team effort with not only our hardware manufacture, Honeywell, and our OEMS but also the many forward thinking Directors of Maintenance and Avionics leads who volunteered their aircraft for the STCs.

Reliability is our biggest advantage. Swift Broadband (SBB) really paved the way for Jet ConneX. SBB and the Safety Services reliability rating of 99.999% are the blueprint for Jet ConneX. The main reason for this is that we have the benefit of owning our own network, so we can implement end to end process improvements that drive accountability.

Put simply, we have the best global coverage, best reputation for reliability and the highest data plans, and our solution is available today for over 15 type models.

If you had to make a wish now on behalf of Inmarsat for the year ahead, what would it be?

I'd like to see Inmarsat Aviation continue on its current trajectory, building stronger relationships with existing and future partners to help us reach our longer term goal of bringing high-speed connectivity to every flight path in the world. We're continually considering how to improve our inflight connectivity offering for our customers, and in the business aviation sector particularly we'll be reviewing our customers' data plans to ensure they continue to receive the highest speeds and most reliable quality of service in the industry.

My wish is that word of mouth on Jet ConneX's performance keeps spreading within the Business Aviation community. I encourage the Avionic leads and Directors of Maintenance to talk to their peers who have installed Jet ConneX. We have over 100 customers, spread all over the US, who would be happy to give you their opinion on Jet ConneX or even a demonstration– our competitors would never encourage this type of "yelp" reviews.

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