PLANESENSE GROWS WITH JET FRAX PROGRAM IN ITS SIGHTS

News / Business aviation

Fractional ownership provider PlaneSense is finalizing the details of a new jet-based program that it intends to launch “in the coming months.” The New Hampshire-based company is expecting to boost its fleet to 40 aircraft by year-end, as it prepares for the late 2017 service entry of the new Pilatus PC-24.

In mid-June, PlaneSense took delivery of its third Nextant 400XTi jet, which it is operating in tandem with its 35PC-12 turboprop singles. The operator will add two more PC-12s before year-end, and might take more 400XTis as required.

The addition of a jet has allowed the company to expand its standard billing area to include Bermuda. Over the past 12 months, the company has landed at more than 750 airfields across most of the U.S., as well as operating to Canada and the Bahamas. “The PC-12 is still the backbone of our strategy because it can get in and out of the shortest runways,” said PlaneSense president and CEO George Antoniadis. “Even the PC-24 can’t land on a 2,400-foot runway. [It has a balanced field length of 2,690 feet.]”

The PlaneSense PC-12s logged almost 35,000 hours in 2015 and the company expects to match that total this year. It also anticipates that its three Nextant 400XTis will have flown close to 3,000 hours by year-end. In September, the company expects to exceed the 300,000-flight-hour mark since it started operating 20 years ago in 1996. PC-12 share owners can upgrade their plans to have interchange access to the jets.

“Fractional ownership is still a very vibrant business,” Antoniadis told AIN. “We have had clients

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that have been with us since 1998, and that’s a true testament to our program when people are being barraged by aggressive marketing campaigns [for new jet charter programs]. Digital technologies are opening channels for very different solutions and we are hopeful that these will broaden the market and that the pie is getting bigger, but there are always those who will stay loyal to fractional ownership.”

06 JULY 2016

SOURCE: AIN
ARTICLE LINK:
https://50skyshades.com/index.php/news/business-aviation/planesense-grows-with-jet-frax-program-in-its-sights

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