RISE MULLS EUROPEAN MOVE AS US DEMAND GROWS

News / Business aviation

US membership-based operator Rise is evaluating the European market, with a view to launching a modified version of its scheduled business aircraft service on the continent.

Speaking on the sidelines of the Corporate Jet Investor conference in London on 1 February, Rise co-founder and chief operating officer Dan Caine said Europe could be the next step in its strategy to expand the programme globally.

“It’s early days,” Caine says. “But Europe is an ideal market for a programme like Rise.”

The venture was launched in the USA last year, offering its members an “all-you-can-fly”, point-to-point scheduled service to four major cities in Texas, using a fleet of Beechcraft King Air 350s. The bespoke eight-seat, twin-engined turboprops are operated by Dallas-based Monarch Air. “We buy a large number of hours from them,” says Caine. “This not only soaks up Monarch’s under-utilised capacity, it also gives the operator a predictable and sustainable revenue stream. It’s a win-win.”

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Rise

Rise is designed to give travellers an alternative to “expensive” ad hoc business aircraft charters, says Caine, and to offer a “far better experience” than traditional airline travel, which he describes as “inconvenient, cramped and frustrating”.

The Rise service is quick, regular, convenient, affordable and of a very high quality, says Caine. “We are simply bringing the benefits of private aircraft travel to the scheduled market. For a monthly membership fee [starting at $1,700] our customers can fly as often as they like,” he adds.

The company's ambition is to be an iconic brand in the air travel market. “We want to revolutionise global air travel the same way Uber and Airbnb have done to the car and hotel industries, [respectively],” he says. The service is already proving popular in Texas, so Rise is looking to expand the programme across the USA.

"We have aggressive growth plans, both in the USA and worldwide,” says Caine. Europe is likely to be its first international destination.

“We don’t have a timescale for a European launch, but we are studying the market hard,” he adds. "There are plenty of secondary commercial airports close to major cities where we can fly to, and a number of good charter operators with under-utilised capacity that may welcome our business."

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