



TPCAPTAIN: TURBOPROPS DEDICATED - INTERVIEW WITH LAURENT TRAVOSTINO

News / Business aviation



With the development of the Africa's aviation industry in recent years, the need for access to efficient and reliable planes has never been more important. In such an environment, a company stands out from the rest: TPCAPTAIN. Dedicated to the sale and leasing of turboprops, TPCAPTAIN has achieved a truly remarkable business, with its imprint etched forever in Africa's sky.

TPCAPTAIN, an innovative, young company, was founded by professional pilot Laurent Travostino, Italian with African heritage, who is a skilled entrepreneur with business in his blood. Travostino's team of professionals specializes in turboprop aircraft, and they recognize the complex needs of African operators in the services they provide. From navigating the more complex laws governing the industry to the unique management of maintenance and support services, TPCAPTAIN always goes above and beyond to achieve the goals of their clients—no matter how audacious. They have had an admirable, though not always easy, journey, Laurent and his team have proven to be up to the task and able to meet any customer needs, managing the entire aircraft purchase process from A to Z — from aircraft sourcing to aircraft delivery.

Q. What inspired you to start TPCAPTAIN Ltd., and what was your vision when you founded the company?

L.T. As a pilot and aviation enthusiast, I have always been fascinated by turboprops. This passion was born during my years of service in the Italian Army when I was in the US based in Pisa. Every day, I saw the immense C130 Hercules operating, and I wished one day to be able to fly them. Unfortunately, this dream did not come true. However, years later, I became a pilot in private aviation.

Q. Why Africa, and what role does TPCAPTAIN Ltd. play in supporting and developing local aviation infrastructure in Africa?

L.T. There are two key reasons I decided to develop a company operating in Africa. First, I am the son of an Italian father and a Gabonese mother, so Africa has always been part of my culture. The second reason is that the market for turboprop aircraft in Africa is robust and growing. As an entrepreneur, I noticed early on the opportunity to create and grow a project there. There's a significant need for aircraft that can operate efficiently in various terrains. At TPCAPTAIN, we're seeing a trend towards increased demand for newer, more fuel-efficient models, as well as a shift towards safer and more well-maintained aircraft.

Q. How do you assist your clients in selecting the right turboprop aircraft for their needs?

L.T. One of our strategies is the ability to travel to Africa, physically meet the client, and establish a relationship of trust between us as brokers and them as buyers. We protect and control the business between the seller and the buyer by assisting the client throughout the entire process of acquiring the aircraft. The TPCAPTAIN team takes care of everything from financial management and inspection management right up to the delivery of the aircraft.

Can you share a success story of how TPCAPTAIN Ltd. has positively impacted one of your African clients?

One of our clients, a regional operator in East Africa in the medevac field, was struggling with frequent delays and high maintenance costs. We worked closely with them to provide newer, more efficient turboprop aircraft and implemented a tailored maintenance program. As a result, they significantly improved their on-time performance and reduced operational costs. Their success has allowed them to expand their routes and increase passenger satisfaction, which demonstrates the positive impact of our collaboration.

Q. What are some of the biggest challenges you've faced in the African aviation market?

L.T. Working in Africa is often complicated due to the complex aircraft financing system via lines of credit. Another of the disadvantages or difficulties is often related to aircraft experiencing technical problems. Often, buyers are searching for obsolete aircraft with really low and unrealistic budgets, which may be unsafe for their clients. Last but not least, we experience cultural obstacles that we, as Italians with African heritage, are able to manage without major problems.

Q. How do you build and maintain strong relationships with your clients in the aviation industry?

L.T. As said, our secret is the ability to travel all over Africa to meet the clients physically. Personally, I have travel in my blood. In the last 4 months, I traveled to 9 countries.

Q. What are your short-term and long-term goals for TPCAPTAIN Ltd., and how do you plan to achieve them?

L.T. I would not speak at the level of objectives strictly related to TPCAPTAIN but rather about objectives related to African aviation. Following the success and growth of TPCAPTAIN, we developed Skafrica Airways (www.skyafrica.org), a company that specializes in selling commercial aircraft for African operators. Our goal is to ensure safer aviation for passengers by providing services and aircraft of the latest generation. Our partnerships with operators allow us to attract end users, thus reducing the brokerage chain and offering an efficient, and qualitative service.

Q. Are there any partnerships or collaborations that have been particularly impactful for your business?

Our most important clients are humanitarian associations and organizations in the healthcare field, even the United Nations, as well as industry and oil & gas groups. Working with these clients is not just a deal but is an ongoing collaboration over time with constant requests, development, and the operation of aircraft, often on lease.

Q. What advice would you give to aspiring entrepreneurs who want to enter the aviation industry, particularly in the African market?

L.T. First of all, embrace the desire to move, to invest in oneself, to understand, to know, and to trade directly with African operators. In Africa, it is still possible to conclude great deals by shaking hands in person. Most brokers stay locked in their homes working via LinkedIn. Our advantages are flexibility, the desire to travel, and eagerness to learn about new cultures, combining passion with work.

For more details: www.tpcaptain.com

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