HIGHLIGHTS FROM 2021 AND PREDICTIONS FOR THE MRO IN 2022 - JETMS

News / Business aviation, Maintenance / Trainings

In the best traditions of the aviation industry, there can be no planning for the future without a period of retrospection. JETMS has used the end of the year as a time to assess its past performance, quantify present results, and evaluate its business strategy for 2022 and the future.For JETMS, like many other companies, 2020 was a year for survival, 2021 a time for self-assessment and reorganisation, and with the turning of the year, 2022 holds the prospect of being a year for new opportunities and growth.

2021 JETMS business overview

Following a year of tumultuous change and uncertainty in all sectors of the aviation industry, JETMS increased sold man-hours by 28% and oversaw the growth of its employee base by a further 20%. The company also witnessed new customer growth by 15%.

To increase efficiency and better manage LEAN practices, in 2021 the company migrated to a new ERP system designed to increase the life-cycle of assets, utilise the better management of materials, purchasing strategies, workforce and labour assets, along with more efficient waste and energy management. The migration to a new ERP system will help reduce and processes that do

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not offer value to the company's overall business structure.

Also, as a means of better understanding the thinking of JETMS customers, the company employed an end-of-year customer survey to evaluate their level of satisfaction and to better understand their needs and pain points. In an industry where competition is fierce and stakes are high, the valuable feedback and meaningful insights received will be used to determine strengths and weaknesses as a means of further leveraging business growth.

Among the company's other standout highlights from the past year was the opening of a new line maintenance station in Nice Airport, in the South of France. As one of the busiest French airports serving business aviation aircraft, the new facility will allow JETMS to extend its reach across the region and beyond. In addition, JETMS now offer a Mobile Repair Team (MRT) service to serve its clients, not only in Nice, Marseille, Toulon, and Cannes airports but also at any given location across Europe and the UK.

Another major business achievement in 2021 was JETMS's acquisition of the UK-based RAS Group located at London's Biggin Hill Airport. The airport is noted as being Europe's second-busiest private airport and offers huge potential for new opportunities, further growth and expansion. The RAS Group is comprised of RAS Completions Limited and RAS Interiors Limited and is a long-established and greatly respected aircraft interior, exterior, and completions company specializing in interior repairs, manufacturing, exterior finishing and painting services for VIP and commercial aircraft. JETMS's presence in Biggin Hill gives it prominence as a one-stop shop offering an ever-increasing range of aviation services.

In another move that allows JETMS to satisfy the needs of its clients in the UK market, JETMS received its Maintenance Organization Approval Certificate (MOAC) - Issued by the UK's Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) – permitting it to conduct base and line MRO services on Embraer EMB 135/145 aircraft. In what was described by the JETMS CEO, Vytis Zalimas, as "a challenging but supremely rewarding process", the valuable certification allows the company to conduct regional aviation MRO services on UK-registered aircraft from one central location.

In addition to receiving CAA certification in the UK, JETMS also received approval to conduct MRO services on Embraer ERJ135, Embraer ERJ145, Embraer Legacy 600 and Embraer Legacy 650 in response to customer's demands while strengthening its position as a leading MRO provider in the global market.

One of the year's more novel projects was the preparation and installation of a Bombardier CRJ200 aircraft inside the Avia Solutions Group's new AeroCity office building in Vilnius, Lithuania. What made the project so successful was that the company ensured that almost 100% of the aircraft was fully recycled after its lifetime use. This project came as proof that no two days or no two projects are ever the same in the MRO industry.

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Market overview & business insights

Despite the flat start to 2021, the positive growth that was seen in early summer, and continued into Q3, has been a welcome boost for the entire industry. However, many challenges still face the MRO industry as a collective. Uncertainty over inflation and interest rates, increasing energy and oil costs, the demand for growing salaries, and the process of sourcing suitably qualified employees in the industry will all heavily impact the future of the MRO sector.

Another problematic factor is the sizeable deficiency in aircraft numbers, despite the increased demand for business jets. This sharp decrease in pre-owned aircraft for sale – the lowest level in 25 years – has been the norm throughout the COVID crisis, starting slowly in 2019 and increasing in magnitude during 2020 and 2021.

As aircraft steadily return to service post-storage, the MRO market is facing a major labour scarcity and the lost competencies that go with it, forcing many companies to instigate new strategies to attract new talent. Thankfully, even in the middle of the pandemic crisis, JETMS managed to retain their core personnel and leverage their experience, knowledge, and competence to help weather the storm successfully. Should a similar situation arise in the future, another way of lessening the impact of any labour shortage is through digitalisation and the utilisation of new and technologies, such as ERP systems designed to better utilise materials, labour forces, and time management.

The implementation of digitalisation and new technologies will help JETMS to adapt quickly to an ever-changing business environment brought about by a global pandemic and changing work practices in the industry.

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2022 will highlight the resilience of many in the aviation industry and the speed at which they managed to react to change. There will be a renewed drive towards fuel sustainability, meaning many future disruptive changes, along with presenting greater opportunities for MRO organizations that are ready for the challenges that come with change.

The interest in business aircraft is certain to maintain its momentum and afford additional opportunities for those with the vision to identify them. The fact is that people have become accustomed to the benefits afforded by business aviation and are unlikely to revert to former practices so long as the economy allows.

Plans for 2022

Despite the downturn in MRO demand driven by larger aircraft – pre-pandemic – 2022 is bound to bring opportunities still to be identified, along with market sectors that have already shown their hands. In early 2020, many in the aviation industry feared for the future of their livelihoods. However, as has already been visibly demonstrated, aviation is driven by dedicated professionals with the ability to find opportunity even in the darkest scenarios.

Looking to the future, JETMS CEO, Vytis Zalimas says, “As a group of dedicated aviation professionals, and as an integral family member of Avia Solutions Group, JETMS has risen to tackle face-on the challenges presented over the past two. As evidence of our resilience, we will continue to meet and embrace any fresh challenges in the future while growing our presence and embracing new clients, new partnerships, and implementing improved procedures to meet those challenges. We also believe that the smaller players in the industry should actively cooperate, merge, and grow in unison as a means of establishing themselves as vital and competitive players in the market. To reiterate our sentiments from 12 months ago, we still maintain that mergers and acquisitions build real value and create companies that can become meaningful players right across the entire aviation industry. ”

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