

AIR 7 CHARTER:

Accelerating exceptional customer service with inflight Wi-Fi

Quick Facts

Featured: Jeremy Newland

Position: Assistant Director of Maintenance at Air 7

Aircraft / Gogo connectivity
Bombardier Global Express with AVANCE L5 (Gogo Biz 4G),
Dassault Falcon with Gogo Biz ATG

Annual usage: 500-600 flight hours

Aircraft location: Camarillo, CA

Gogo customer since 2014

Air 7 is a private aviation jet services organization that offers FBO facilities, aircraft management, charter sales, aircraft sales and acquisition, hangar and facility leasing, aircraft maintenance and more. As a fast-growing organization, Air 7 understands the importance of exceptional customer service and being a trusted advisor. In less than ten years, they've built a loyal following (and increased revenue) by helping customers tailor their inflight experience with the very latest in onboard lifestyle amenities: including Gogo Wi-Fi.

We spoke with Jeremy Newland, Assistant Director of Maintenance, about the role that inflight Wi-Fi plays in driving success for both the management and charter sides of the business.

Thanks for talking with us today, Jeremy. Can you tell us more about Air 7?

Air 7 is a relatively new company, founded in 2012. We work out of a smaller airport and have a customer base that we get mostly by word of mouth. They fly for both business and pleasure. We manage 10-11 aircraft including a GV, a Lear 60 that's company owned, two Premiers, a Falcon 900, Hawker 800 XP, a Phenom 100, two Legacies, and one Global with another coming in next month. We have three people here in the maintenance department so we're all pretty involved.

Aircraft management and charter services are both competitive industries, but Air 7 has grown steadily since it was founded. What's your secret sauce?

I would say our customer service. We're still a pretty small business so we're able to offer that personal touch. When a customer comes in, they're greeted with soda, water, mints, the whole shebang. The GM will go out and talk to them, my team and I talk to them. They come here and they feel really welcomed. We've also built a strong network so we get a lot of referrals, which tells you you're doing something right.

Does inflight Wi-Fi play a role in offering that great customer service?

Absolutely. On the management side, we help owners figure out how to get connected. Most owners don't know anything about how to get Wi-Fi on their plane. They come to us and we ask about their price point, where they fly, their normal flight profile and what features are important to them. They rely on us to do the research and get them the best deal - that's our job as a management company. We stand by the owners and make sure they don't get ripped off.

That does sound like good service. What type of system do you typically recommend?

I've worked with Gogo for years and always recommend a Gogo system to our owners. Gogo is the go-to. You've got a good price point, great entertainment options and reliable service. The conversation is easy. Our owners don't really need convincing. They know they want to be connected, the only thing they complain about is the price of the install if the airplane didn't come with it. But even then, we tell them about the positive impact on resale value and they're sold.





Other than helping owners add inflight connectivity, how does inflight Wi-Fi beneficially impact your day-to-day job?

It's great to be able to communicate with pilots and flight attendants when they're in flight. On our Global in particular, I'm always texting with the flight attendant, giving her answers so I can keep the owner happy... how to fix this, what to do with that. Those guys are doing long-haul flights to the East Coast, Europe, so it's very important to them to have stuff up and running when they need it. Being able to provide those answers quickly, that's a big part of our customer service too.

If there were any issues with the internet, I'd be the one to fix it, but honestly we haven't had any. Knock on wood! I just make sure we're connected, update the Gogo Vision inflight entertainment for new movies and magazines, and off they go. So far I haven't heard a single complaint from our customers.

Speaking of your customers, how do they use the inflight Wi-Fi?

The Global owner just got the AVANCE

L5 system installed back in February. He's running his own business so he has to be connected 24/7. Email is just critical to him. He likes to watch movies too. He just bought 10 iPads and 10 Bose headsets and we set them all up with Wi-Fi. When they're all running, plus the pilots and flight attendants iPhones and iPads, there are quite a few devices on the network and we've never had a problem.

The Global owner is a big emailer too. I'll see him in person leaving here and he'll start shooting me emails on the flight to wherever he's going 20 minutes later. I'm the one they call when stuff needs to get done and I know they really value being able to email from the air.

Let's talk about the charter side of the business. Do you think customer expectations have changed for charter flights in the last 5-10 years?

Definitely. They expect to have Wi-Fi. It can make or break a charter trip if the customer really needs to stay connected. They can get it on Southwest for a few bucks and they're paying millions of dollars for this airplane, it better have internet. It's now the standard. We're almost at the

point where you have to have Wi-Fi to sell charter flights.

Do you attract or retain more customers with connected aircraft?

It's a huge selling point for the charter end. I think that the more charter birds you have with Wi-Fi, the more clientele you'll attract, for sure. It's the first question they ask when booking trips: "Do you have Wi-Fi?" That often determines if a trip books or not. Two airplanes can be exactly the same but one has Wi-Fi and one doesn't - they'll only take the one that's connected.

We have an older customer base so they're not necessarily online the entire flight, but it's critical that it's there when they need it. It may be used only as needed: but then it's a must-have.

What trends do you see in the charter industry and how does inflight Wi-Fi play into them?

People love to be connected 24/7 and that's not going to change. Airplanes and aviation in general have to keep up. I think Wi-Fi will soon be on every flight, so people can take care of

business and personal stuff. Inflight entertainment is really evolving too. Movies, flight maps, magazines - they love it. I think streaming will come into play more soon but right now it's still pretty expensive. I bet that will change soon.

Your owners and customers rely on you to be an expert. How well has Gogo helped you become a connectivity expert?

Learning how to set up the system helped me cut my teeth, and since then it's been trial and error. It's not hard to figure out at all. I read online about new products and services so I know what to recommend. And Gogo Tech Support is great - they're very well informed and available so I can be too.

Good to hear. Have you been happy with Gogo service from a maintenance and management perspective?

Absolutely. We haven't had any issues. Our local rep is great. I connect with him and he helps me out with anything that's going on. I love calling customer service. Sometimes I work 6-7 days a week, sun up to sun down, and they're open 7 days a week. I can always get ahold of someone. Gogo's applications and support have always been good and keep getting better as time goes along.

Are there any particular operational features or capabilities that make your job easier?

I just got Gogo DASH up and running and I really like it. I can see where flights are going, how many devices are connected, their usage, everything from IP addresses to browsing and security and how much they're using email. I used it a few weeks ago to troubleshoot a flight coming in from Seattle. The crew called me, told me they were having a hard time connecting, so I got right into my DASH profile to see where the issues were and explain how to fix it to the crew. It's already a really powerful tool and I think it's going to be even more important as we get more airplanes hooked up with Gogo.

Top 3 takeaways from Jeremy Newland, Air 7 Asst. Director of Maintenance:

- 1. Helping clients stay connected to their work and personal lives is critical to providing exceptional customer service and differentiating your business.*
- 2. Inflight connectivity is no longer a "nice to have" for charter sales - it's a must.*
- 3. When choosing a connectivity partner, a great tech support team ensures that you have the answers and expertise you need, when and where you need it.*