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JULY 2023

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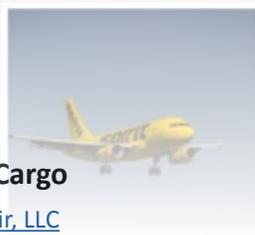
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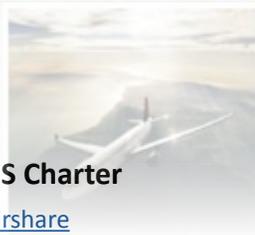
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The Grid (contract comparisons, pay charts, company details, etc.) has moved online. Click on the airlines above to go directly to that airline's information, or go to www.AeroCrewNews.com/go/thegrid. A sample comparison of two airlines begins on [page 46](#).



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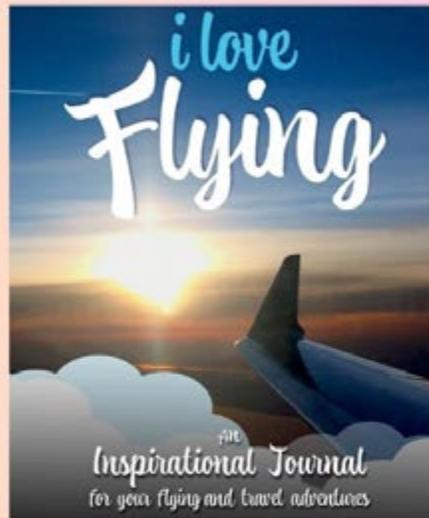
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Dear readers,

Over the past month, we have been working hard to create airline and aviation company profiles on our website, aka The Grid. You may have noticed that we started with as many companies as we could within the United States, then we focused on the Canadian companies. Now we are focusing on the bigger airlines around the globe. Once those are completed, our plan is to go country by country and create as many profiles as we can. If you can provide us with any details for any airline or charter company across the globe, please email us at GridUpdates@AeroCrewNews.com. For a list of what we are looking for (aside from work rules and pay rates) please visit AeroCrewNews.com/acn-grid/ and check out some of the profiles.

Speaking of pay rates, this month we welcome a new author, Christopher Broyhill, Ph.D., creator and founder of AirComp Calculator. AirComp Calculator is sophisticated software that can help flight departments determine proper compensation packages for their pilots based upon the latest market rate. Christopher will be writing about the corporate side of aviation. We welcome him and his expertise and I encourage you to check out his new column Business Vector.

As always, feel free to contact me with your questions or comments at info@AeroCrewNews.com.

Fly Safe,

Craig D. Pieper

Craig D. Pieper



Craig Pieper is the Publisher and Founder of Aero Crew News. Craig obtained his Bachelors of Science in Aeronautical Science, along with a minor in Aviation Weather, from Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University in 2001. Craig is also a First Officer for a major airline with a type rating in the Boeing 737 & Embraer 145 and has logged over 8,000 hours of flying time since his introductory flight on November 14th, 1992.

About the Publisher ✈️

June 2023

What you may have missed in June

Feature – The winners for the 2023 ACN Photo Contest were announced!

Fitness – Start your summer program with a fitness assessment.

Food Bites – Visited another worthy BBQ joint, but only if you're hungry.

Grey Matter – Explored the all-important proficiency in soft skills, at every level of your career.

Love Flying – Yellowstone National Park is a don't-miss adventure.

Money – Examined four fundamentals found in a balanced portfolio.

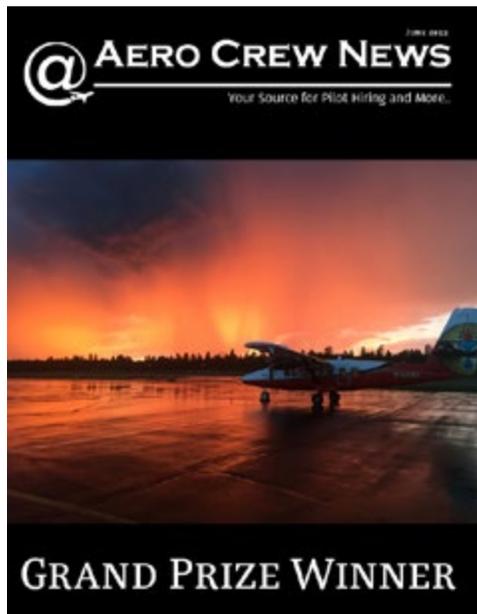
Perspectives – Your passion for aviation is your superpower.

Skylaw – Explained marriage-based visas.

The Grid – Compared APA's AIP with Delta's 2023 contract.

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Alaska Airlines adds new nonstop between Honolulu and Seattle area's second airport

Alaska Airlines is celebrating more aloha with new nonstop service between Seattle/Everett and Honolulu starting this fall – our first flight connecting Paine Field-Snohomish County Airport and the Hawaiian Islands. [Read More](#)



Alaska Airlines adds new coast-to-coast routes this winter linking sunny destinations

Summer is here but it's never too early to start thinking about escaping to warm, sun-filled days this winter. Alaska Airlines is ready to help make those travel plans with the addition of three new routes just in time for the holidays. [Read More](#)



Alaska Airlines reopens renovated D Concourse Lounge in Seattle as part of an overall \$30 million investment in upgrading our Lounges

We keep showing our Lounges lots of love because we know our members and guests love them so much. And we've been busy. [Read More](#)



Timesaver! Alaska Airlines and CLEAR team up to make travel easier and more secure

Our commitment to care for our guests comes in all forms, including improving their travel day. To help do that, Alaska Airlines is partnering with CLEAR – the secure identity company – to provide friction-free and predictable travel experiences with CLEAR Plus. [Read More](#)



The Caribbean is calling! Alaska Airlines adds new flights to the Bahamas

Your winter travel options just got a bit brighter! Alaska Airlines has added our first-ever flights to the Bahamas with nonstops from both Los Angeles and Seattle. We're also increasing our service to Mexico with new routes between Las Vegas and both Cabo San Lucas and Puerto Vallarta. [Read More](#)



Allied Pilots Association: Existing Experience Requirements for First Officers "Must Be Maintained"

The Allied Pilots Association (APA), representing the 15,000 pilots of American Airlines, emphasized the necessity of maintaining the current minimum flight experience requirements for pilots before being eligible for hiring by a Part 121 passenger airline in the United States. [Read More](#)



Allied Pilots Association: “Raising Pilot Retirement Age Would Introduce Additional Risk”

The Allied Pilots Association (APA), representing the 15,000 pilots of American Airlines, voiced its opposition to any change in the mandatory retirement age for airline pilots. [Read More](#)



Allied Pilots Association: “Lowering the Bar is a Terrible Idea”

The Allied Pilots Association (APA), representing the 15,000 pilots of American Airlines, voiced its opposition to the proposed Enhanced Qualification Program (EQP), which would provide a 250-hour reduction in the actual flight experience requirements for a Restricted Air Transport Pilot certificate after completion of an air carrier-developed training course. [Read More](#)



Air Line Pilots Association Has Serious Concerns About Safety Impacts of House FAA Reauthorization Proposal

Today the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee released the text of their bill to reauthorize the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA). [Read More](#)



FedEx Pilots' Union Leadership Approves Tentative Agreement

The FedEx Master Executive Council (MEC), the governing body of the FedEx unit of the Air Line Pilots Association, Int'l (ALPA), voted to approve a tentative contract agreement reached on May 30 with FedEx management. [Read More](#)



ALPA Commends FAA for Issuing Secondary Barrier Final Rule

Earlier today at a press conference together with the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) and other pilot unions, the Air Line Pilots Association, Int'l (ALPA), commended the aviation regulator for issuing the final rule for the implementation of secondary barriers. [Read More](#)



Thune EQP Amendment Threatens Aviation Safety: Vote NO

The 74,000 airline pilots represented by the Air Line Pilots Association, International (ALPA) unequivocally oppose the Thune EQP amendment to the Senate FAA Reauthorization bill and urge you to vote no. [Read More](#)



American elevates onboard customer experience throughout summer travel season

American Airlines is elevating the summer travel experience with offerings that will deliver a consistent and connected inflight experience for all customers this travel season.

[Read More](#)



White sand and warm weather: American Airlines announces largest-ever winter schedule to the Caribbean and Latin America

Travelers looking to escape the cold this winter will have more choices as American Airlines announces its winter 2023 schedule for the Caribbean and Latin America. [Read More](#)



U.S. Travel Agency Air Ticket Sales Top \$9 Billion in May

Airlines Reporting Corp. (ARC) today released data showing May 2023 U.S. travel agency air ticket sales increased 7% year over year to \$9 billion.* [Read More](#)



Breeze Airways Signs Long-term Credit Card Agreement with Barclays

Barclays US Consumer Bank and Breeze Airways, announced they have entered into a long-term agreement to issue the airline's first-ever line of co-branded credit cards designed to allow cardmembers to earn points that can be redeemed while flying with Breeze and for a wide range of everyday purchases. [Read More](#)



CommuteAir Solidifies Purchase Of One E170 Aircraft

CommuteAir, a leading regional airline and the sole Embraer ERJ145 operator for the United Express network has executed a purchase agreement with Nordic Aviation Capital (NAC) for an Embraer E170 aircraft. [Read More](#)



77 routes, 32 destinations: Delta's largest-ever trans-Atlantic schedule takes flight

Delta's largest trans-Atlantic schedule ever is officially in full operation, and customers are flocking to idyllic locations like the golden beaches of France's enchanting Cote d'Azur, sun-soaked Mediterranean islands and other vibrant cities brimming with history. [Read More](#)



Embraer inaugurates first flight simulator for the KC-390 Millennium multi-mission jet

Embraer inaugurated its first flight simulator (Full-Flight Simulator - FFS) for the KC-390 Millennium multi-mission jet at the Embraer Academy. [Read More](#)



Equivu Capital Launches NextGen Deicing

Equivu Capital Holdings, Salvatore C. Calvino's private investment firm, today launched NextGen Deicing, a full-service aircraft deicing company, headed up by aviation industry veteran Jon Savage. [Read More](#)



Frontier Airlines and APiJET Announce Agreement to Test APiJET's Real-Time Route Optimization Technology Furthering Frontier's Commitment to Fuel Efficiency and Sustainability

Frontier Airlines (NASDAQ:ULCC), a leader in sustainable aviation and America's Greenest Airline, and APiJET, the technology leader in real-time flight optimization for fuel and carbon savings, today announced an agreement to test APiJET's Digital Winglets™ for operations centers. [Read More](#)



Frontier Airlines Begins Nonstop Service from Chicago Midway to Raleigh-Durham

Ultra-low fare carrier Frontier Airlines (NASDAQ: ULCC) launched nonstop service today from Chicago Midway International Airport (MDW) to Raleigh-Durham International Airport (RDU). [Read More](#)



JetBlue and Frontier Announce Divestiture Agreement in Connection with JetBlue's Combination with Spirit

JetBlue Airways Corporation (NASDAQ: JBLU) and Frontier Group Holdings, Inc. (NASDAQ: ULCC) announced that the airlines have entered into a definitive agreement under which JetBlue will divest all of the holdings of Spirit Airlines, Inc. [Read More](#)



JetBlue Expands Caribbean Network, Adding Service to Belize and St. Kitts, Out For Sale Starting Today

JetBlue (Nasdaq: JBLU) announced plans to continue expanding across the U.S. and the Caribbean, including the launch of two new destinations, bringing more low-fare, great service flights to customers in the airline's New York, Boston Orlando, and Los Angeles focus cities. [Read More](#)



JetBlue Introduces Its Boldest, Bluest Plane – Ever – With Livery Refresh Reflecting Its Role as Industry Disruptor

JetBlue (Nasdaq: JBLU) announced its new standard livery featuring a bold and all-blue design emblematic of its role as an innovative, industry-disrupting brand that customers love and trust for travel. [Read More](#)



JetBlue Announces Record and Payment Dates for June 2023 Additional Prepayment to Spirit Stockholders

As previously announced, in connection with the Agreement and Plan of Merger, dated as of July 28, 2022 (the “Merger Agreement”), by and among JetBlue Airways Corporation, Sundown Acquisition Corp., and Spirit Airlines, Inc. [Read More](#)



Jet Linx Stands Down Fleet for Annual Safety Summit

Jet Linx, the only locally-focused private jet management and Jet Card company in the world, today completes its seventh consecutive Safety Summit, with more than 550 team members learning and leading together nationwide as part of the Company’s unwavering dedication to improving its industry-leading Safety Management System (SMS). [Read More](#)



Spirit Airlines Expands its Pilot Pipeline with North Texas-based US Aviation Academy

Spirit Airlines (NYSE: SAVE) is turning to Texas to expand its pipeline of highly-skilled, professional pilots. [Read More](#)



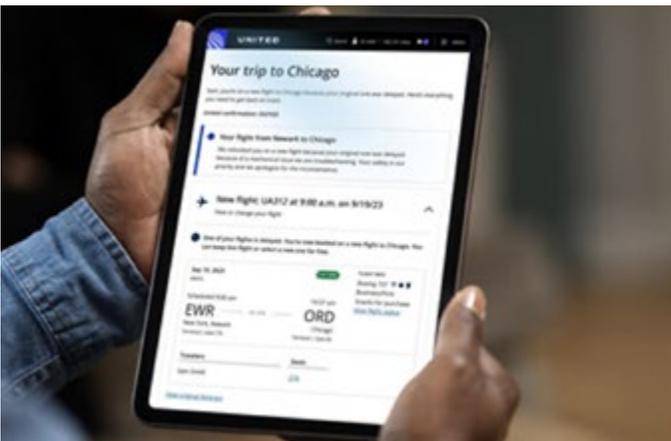
Delta Workers Call For Free and Fair Union Elections at Shareholder Meeting

Delta Air Lines workers and their union allies attended the company's annual shareholder meeting in Manhattan to demand Delta management commit to International Labor Organization (ILO) standards on freedom of association and neutrality in union organizing campaigns. [Read More](#)



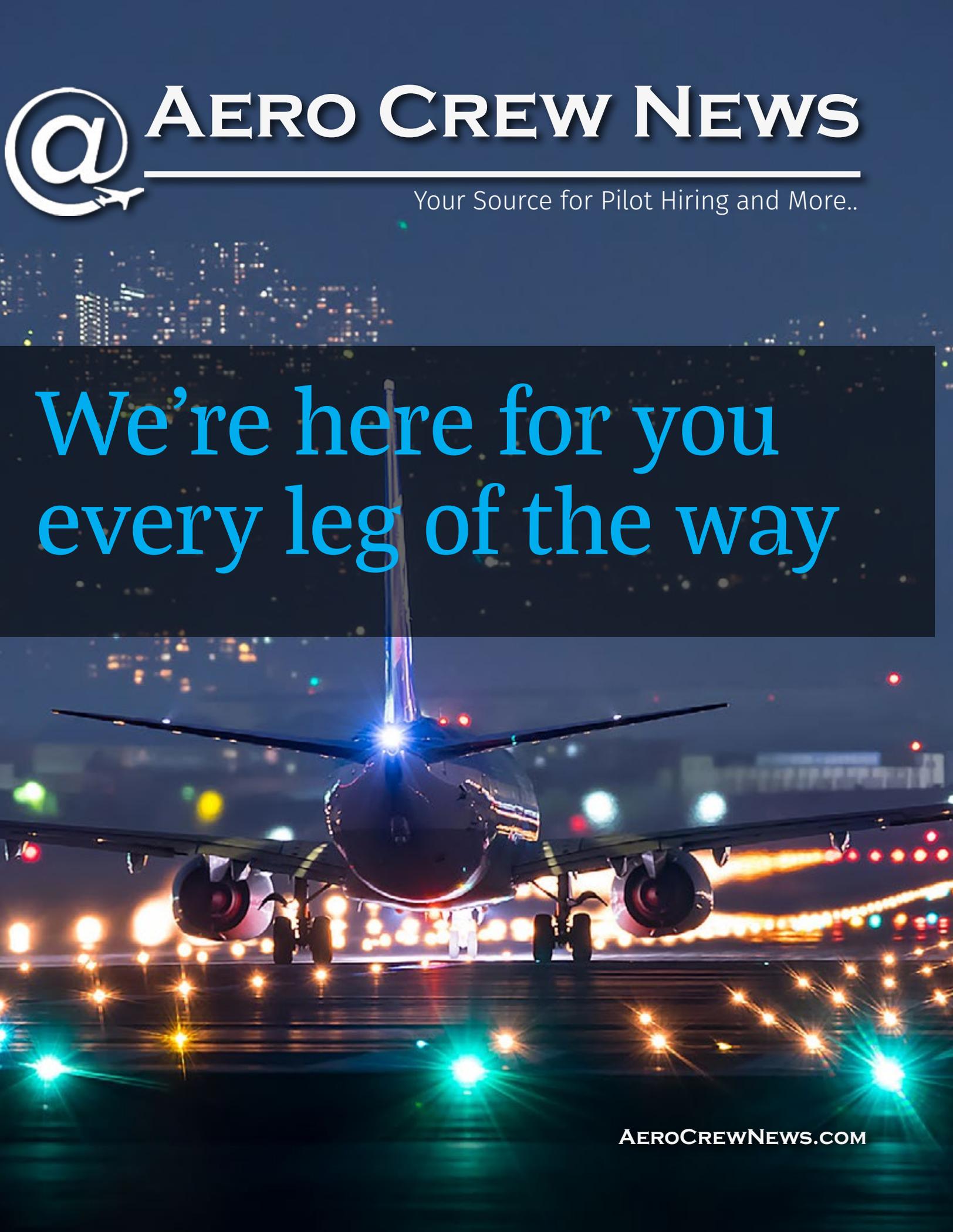
Teamsters File Lawsuit Against Cape Air and Republic Airways

The Teamsters have filed a lawsuit against Republic Airways and Cape Air for unlawfully requiring pilots to sign employment contracts with non-compete clauses that impose penalties ranging from \$100,000 to \$250,000. [Read More](#)



United's New App Feature Helps Customers Re-book and Receive Meal and Hotel Vouchers Automatically

United today announced a new mobile app feature that aims to save customers time and reduce stress if their travel plans get disrupted. [Read More](#)



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Why Mentorship Is Critical

WRITTEN BY: JOHN MCDERMOTT

I'm the only member of my family pursuing a career in aviation. The bug hit me early in high school, and it took me years of research, and persuading my family that I really wanted to fly before I really understood how the aviation industry works and what I would need to do to have a successful career in aviation. I didn't start training until after my first year of college, and it was even longer before I understood what my long-term career image should look like.

Relationships have been critical for my knowledge of and entrance into the aviation industry. Without the friendships I've had, I wouldn't even have been able to pursue flying as effectively as I did when I started training for my private pilot certificate. And even when I did, I didn't quite understand the importance of each step of the process of how to attain my long-term goal of flying for a legacy airline.

I've been able to get a better picture of what my career should be through relationships I've had throughout the years. Different people at different times have helped me understand the best thing for me to do in each moment, whether it was deciding where to train, deciding whether (and when) to switch flight schools, and what each stop in my journey should be.

Up to now, without the guidance of mentors throughout my aviation career I would not have reached the point at which I am with the clarity I have for my continued future in the industry. I have been very lucky to work closely with experienced pilots and industry professionals to continue to grow my confidence and work towards the job I love so much.

I've also been lucky enough to support mentorship efforts for others. Through my work with Professional Pilots of Tomorrow, I've assisted a renowned mentorship organization carry out its mission for years. Mentorship is a

rewarding field. It's incredibly gratifying to see young pilots at the point where I was not too long ago now pursuing the same passion I've had for years.

There is no better way to learn about the aviation industry and how to navigate it than through the crewmembers and professionals who work in it every day. Though many people have varying opinions about each situation, learning from their experiences provides an incredible benefit for new pilots, especially those who, like me, don't have previous exposure to or connections in aviation.

Aviation can, at times, be an intense and tiring career. But many of the people who work in aviation love their work and are, at the drop of a hat, eager to help others advance their careers. I've met plenty of pilots, young and old, who volunteer countless hours to help new pilots pursue flight. Finding a mentor, whether through an organization like PPOT or EAA or through personal connection, is a great way to help new pilots navigate the world of flying and find their place in the industry.

Not only is it important for new pilots to find mentors, but I also believe it's critically important that current pilots mentor new pilots at every opportunity, no matter if they're 40-year industry veterans or just at the start of their journey. Providing mentorship is the best way to give back to the aviation community. It also gives pilots a direct hand in shaping the future of the

aviation industry in the ways they think are important. Thus, older pilots can guide new pilots in ways that improve the industry for generations of pilots to come. Mentorship is an excellent way for all industry professionals to move the industry forward by reinforcing positive changes, instilling effective mindsets, and establishing a culture of safety for the decades to come.

Mentorship is a cyclical process that provides great benefit to the aviation industry. Not only can young pilots, like me, learn a lot from mentorship, but providing mentorship later in your career not only repays the benefits you received but helps you shape a new generation of aviators like only you can.

Find a mentor. Become a mentor. Your future and the future of our industry are counting on you.

To learn more, start with Professional Pilots of Tomorrow, an organization helping pilots make informed decisions about their futures. Visit <https://www.theppot.org>.



About the Author



John McDermott's passion for aviation began in a Michigan bookstore when he found a story about a chance encounter between enemy pilots during World War II. Soon, after watching countless hours of fighter jets and traffic from his home near O'Hare International Airport, he was hooked forever.. [Read More...](#)



Start Today: Improve Your Self-Confidence

WRITTEN BY: REINI THIJSEN

A lack of self-confidence is common. Low self-esteem can affect your motivation and can be damaging to your overall mental well-being and quality of life. But what is self-confidence, what causes a lack of self-confidence, and what can you do to increase self-confidence? Learn about healthy self-esteem and how to improve your sense of self-worth.

What is Self-Confidence?

Self-confidence is your belief in your abilities and worth, the confidence that you can handle tasks independently and cope with setbacks. To be confident, you are aware of

personal strengths and weaknesses and can attribute successes to your qualities, not by coincidence; you are trusting your capabilities without losing sight of reality and overestimating yourself.

A healthy dose of self-confidence leads to a positive self-image, increasing opportunities for growth and self-development. Expressing opinions, showing initiative, and starting new things is easy. Acting confidently and calmly and preserving this, even in challenging situations. Self-confidence is therefore not only essential for your well-being; it also positively affects work performance. Therefore, maintaining self-confidence is a crucial skill for an ambitious professional.

Lacking Self-Confidence?

Self-confidence develops throughout life, especially in childhood. In addition to your personality, your social environment is crucial in developing self-confidence. For example, someone raised in a protected environment may not have learned to have autonomy or form personal opinions. Bullying and recurrent criticism can also cause self-doubt and a decrease in self-esteem. When getting older, this can manifest in behavior or lack thereof. For example, it can lead to avoiding doing or saying something due to the fear of others' opinions. As a result, it is hard to acknowledge and recognize success, and there is no external validation from others, decreasing your self-confidence even more and resulting in a negative spiral.

Start Increasing Self-Confidence

It is perfectly normal to be insecure now and then. However, a continued lack of self-esteem can be a risk factor for health concerns such as depression or anxiety or lead to challenges in your personal or professional life. For change to happen, action needs to be taken. With the steps below, you can perform immediate, concrete exercises to become more confident.

1. Become Aware of Thoughts + Deconstruct

Self-criticism is one of the root causes of depression. Become more aware of the inner critical voice and be as understanding towards yourself as a good friend. Cognitive therapy teaches you to recognize unhelpful thoughts so you can change them. Practice is vital. For example, for the next seven days, think of a situation in which you felt insecure and answer the following questions:

- What was the situation? What happened? (Event)
- What did you do? (Behavior)
- What did you feel then? (Feeling)
- What did you think? (Thought)

2. Formulate Helpful Thoughts

When you lack self-confidence, you are likely to have unhelpful thoughts regularly. Examples of unhelpful thoughts are, "I can never do that, I am a failure, or I messed up situation X, everyone must think I am bad at my job." These thoughts are not realistic and most definitely not increasing your self-esteem. Therefore,

learning how to redirect these thoughts to have a more realistic view of reality and develop more self-confidence is essential.

Examples of helpful thoughts would be, “I did not handle situation X the best, but that is not a disaster, and I will probably do better next time, or This might not be my strong suit, but I have other qualities, or how could I get better at that?” When catching yourself with an unhelpful thought, try to replace it with helpful, more realistic thoughts.

3. Take on the Challenge

If you dread something or think you cannot do something, do not shy away from them and do it anyway. Positive expectations and setting realistic, achievable goals help ensure that what you will do is likely to succeed. If the bar is set too high for yourself, it will lead to disappointment. This experience teaches that you can do these things and will be able to do them again. The more practice, the easier it gets.

In addition, step out of your comfort zone regularly to try something new and challenging to gain new experiences, develop skills or gain insights. For example, take up a creative hobby, read more books, take a course, or do volunteer work. The more experience you gain in succeeding in challenges, the more confidence you build.

Reminder: Whatever you do or try for the first time, remember that it is expected that it might not go perfectly right away. It is okay to make mistakes now and then; making mistakes is the best way to learn.

4. Know Your Qualities and Accept Yourself
Everyone has personal talents, qualities, and character traits. Everyone is different, which is a good thing. Clarify your qualities and successes by writing down what you are good at and the goals you have achieved. Also, write down the compliments that you receive. In addition, list the things you have accomplished in the past week instead of a to-do list. Again, focusing on the positives increases your self-confidence!

Final Thoughts

While many people can successfully address their self-esteem on their own, many need professional help to do so. Depending on your challenges with confidence, you may benefit from therapy or coaching with a professional working with self-esteem concerns.

Emerald Mental Health specializes in helping pilots and flight attendants via counseling and mental health coaching. Reach out for a free consultation through email at reini@emeraldmentalhealth.com or visit www.emeraldmentalhealth.com.



About the Author

Reini Thijssen is a Mental Health Counselor and avid traveler. She moved to the United States from the Netherlands in 2019 to pursue a career in counseling. She is a writer for Aero Crew News and specializes in helping aerospace professionals. [Read More...](#)



Consume Less Weigh Less

The simple equation of dropping some weight in a reasonable timeframe

WRITTEN BY: ERIC RAY

It's July and Independence Day is here. This time of year usually means barbecues and outdoor activities in mass quantities. I would be willing to bet that healthy eating or losing weight aren't at the top of your list of things to do, but summer also brings weddings, beach vacations, and/or school reunions. So, maybe it could be on your list of goals to accomplish this summer.

When people ask about weight loss it's usually in the form of, "How fast can I lose (insert some unrealistic number of pounds)," or "I have two weeks to drop X amount of weight! Can it be done?" My typical response is, "Yes, it can be done, but you just won't be happy with the process and it won't last." Remember, I am not a doctor or health professional and before you start any diet or make drastic changes to your nutrition needs, consult a medical professional.

First, I want you to ask yourself why you are interested in losing weight. I think it's imperative to understand your motivation. Knowing the "why" of what you want will help keep you on track. When you have that answer, I want you to change the question to, "Wouldn't it be better to lose fat?" In my experience, when you change the question from weight loss to fat loss, it can change the dynamic of what you're trying to achieve. I tell all my clients that if you focus on fat loss, your health will improve and as a result of the fat loss, your weight and size will go down.

Second, before you commit to any diet or nutrition change, don't change anything for one week. Instead, I want you to write down everything food or drink that goes into your mouth. At the end of that week is when you need to take a hard look at what your intake is and make an informed decision about where you can make changes that matter. You'd be surprised at what you actually eat in a week and the caloric content. Usually, we overestimate the amount of protein we take in and underestimate the amount of

carbohydrates we take in. You may also be surprised at the number of empty calories you eat. For it to work, you must be honest with this assessment.

Finally, make small incremental changes with your diet and nutrition. If you make drastic changes all at once, you'll find it's a "diet" you can't sustain. Any change that you make should result in a weight loss of around 1-2 pounds per week. I know, I said fat loss, but reducing the number of calories (caloric deficit of about 500 calories per day) will have a net effect of fat loss which equal weight loss. This process must take place over time.

There are no real tricks to losing fat. It comes down to consuming less. That's also a good life metaphor! As always, if you are interested in any specific fitness related topics, reach out (Ericray4470@gmail.com). Tune in next month for a new article on challenges!



About the Author



Eric Ray is a certified personal trainer and nutrition coach. He is the co-creator of the Hii360 Coaching Method and current president of Hii360 Coaching. [Read More...](#)



GREY MATTER

Value

Knowledge

DATA

Information

Searching for Safety in the Airline Industry

Data mining the Operation, Part 1 of 5

WRITTEN BY: RICHARD SWINDELL

In 1908, the Wright Brothers were working to secure flight-training contracts and sell their Wright Flyer to the U.S. Army Signal Corps. The U.S. Army Air Corps (AAC) did not exist yet and it would be forty more years and two world wars before the AAC would morph into the U.S. Air Force. The U.S. military at this time did not view the new-fangled air machines as having any practical war-fighting capability beyond acting as airborne signaling and reconnaissance platforms. This was why, on September 17, Orville Wright and Lieutenant Thomas Selfridge of the U.S. Army Signal Corps were completing a demonstration flight at Fort Myer, Virginia. Tragically, Orville lost control of the aircraft and crashed. Orville was injured, but Lt. Selfridge became the first fatality in an airplane accident.

Since then, aviation has evolved to become the safest form of transportation, developing along the way measures such as checklists and safety-auditing protocols that have become, not only standard in aviation operations, but have also been emulated by many other industries. In this series, we will take a high-level look at safety data-reporting systems in the airline industry and the information and value each provides in maintaining and enhancing operational safety.

In this first installment, we are looking at the principal level of data collection used to review and enhance aviation operations – mandatory safety reports. Most pilots become familiar with these during primary training. You are required to report anything you see or do that is unsafe or could have caused an unsafe condition. In airline operations, this type of reporting continues, and is based on similar criteria (as well as the occurrence of an incident or accident – the definition distinguished by the loss of life and/or property in the latter). As such, the requirement to report an erosion or loss of safety to a government or law enforcement agency and/or the airline itself is required. In the U.S., this usually means the FAA or National Transportation Safety Board – again, something new flight students become familiar with under reporting requirements for NTSB 830.

Airlines are obliged to report certain occurrences to the authorities, and in turn, require pilots involved in specific events to provide the associated operational

information. Typically, a report is completed and submitted via the company's intranet site and is often referred to as an irregular operation report (or a similarly named form). The company's flight-operations manual usually outlines the types of events for which a pilot must submit an "irreg report" as a method of providing this frontline information to the company. Airlines not only use this information for their own reporting to federal agencies, but also to track a multitude of operational events from go-arounds to tail strikes, looking for patterns (versus one-off events) that need to be addressed. In other words, they monitor for actionable trends within the data to make positive, safety-enhancing changes – be it in a checklist, training, company communication, or other processes or procedures.

Next month, we will consider voluntary reports (as opposed to the required reporting addressed above) that are optional (though highly encouraged) that pilots, dispatchers, mechanics, controllers, and others involved in aviation operations complete when things go wrong or hazards are observed.



About the Author



Richard Swindell left active-duty military service and transitioned to the airline industry where he flies and works as a line check airman for a major airline. [Read More...](#)



Optimists: The Secret Weapon in Investing

WRITTEN BY: CHARLIE MATTINGLY

Optimism Makes You Sound Stupid

“For reasons I have never understood, people like to hear that the world is going to hell,” economic historian Deirdre N. McCloskey told the New York Times in April 2023.

If you say the world has been getting better, you may get away with being called naïve and insensitive. If you say the world is going to go on getting better, you are considered embarrassingly mad. If, on the other hand, you say catastrophe is imminent, you may expect a McArthur genius award or even the Nobel Peace Prize. [Matt Ridley, from his book, “The Rational Optimist”](#)

In a recent podcast on the [Pilot Money Guys](#), we covered one of my favorite topics - Reasons to be Optimistic. Check out the podcast- Flight #57 for the Top Ten Reasons to be Optimistic about the Future.

As I read and prepared for our discussion on the podcast, I was fascinated by what the research has to say about why most of us are naturally wired to be somewhat pessimistic. Interesting note: because of that wiring, pessimists tend to live longer too! ([Inc. "The Quirky Reason That Pessimists Tend to Outlive Optimists, According to Neuroscientists"](#))

On the other hand, being a pessimist can be a drag on your quality of life. Who wants to live a longer, more miserable life? Plus, every news agency in existence works really hard to capitalize on our natural bias toward pessimism, which tends to exacerbate pessimistic feelings. Have you seen any good news in your Google newsfeed lately?

Luckily, we get to choose our outlook on life. However, in this day and age, it takes serious intentionality if you want to stay positive. If we don't make serious efforts to stay somewhat optimistic, we can become a negative influence on the people we care most about in our lives. I'm not saying we should be naive and ignorant of what's going on around us, but overwhelming, negativity can leak into other aspects of our personal and professional lives.

Admittedly, I struggle sometimes as well. For example, I work really hard to be a positive influence and say encouraging words to our young kids - even when they leave a trail of messes wherever they go! (See, I went negative.) Studies show that saying five positive things for every correction is the best balance for raising healthy children. That's not easy with our children sometimes, but maybe we could apply that rule to everyone in our lives - even those with whom we fly!

[Optimism is a Secret Weapon in Investing:](#)

"...if you're optimistic, you're more likely to stick with your plan, and markets have tended to reward people who have stuck with it over the longer term. But it's hard to be optimistic about the long term given how unknowable things are..." - Morningstar's Christine Benz

Why am I talking about optimism regarding investing and your quality of life? What good is a fancy-schmancy investment portfolio if we're constantly feeling stressed out due to negativity and pessimism? Money, investments, and financial planning are simply a means to an end. That end is living a contented, joyful, and fulfilling life now, as well as in retirement.

When an investor loses faith and no longer believes companies know how to innovate, solve problems and make profits, they will sell their investments at the first sign of trouble because they do not believe the current state of economic and market difficulties can be

overcome. Unfortunately, this results in a pattern of selling investments when they are down and buying them when they are high.

I believe that once a person loses all optimism and hope in basic human ingenuity, they should no longer invest in equities. We must maintain a basic belief in our ability to create businesses, products that solve problems and add value to consumers. These companies in turn add value to stockholders by sharing in their profits. Optimism and a little bit of faith in human problem solving are what allow capital markets to survive and thrive.

We Can Train Our Brains to be More Optimistic

The good news is we can learn how to be more optimistic. Here are a few ideas: ([adapted from an article written by Brianna Steinhilber at NBCnews.com](#))

“Science shows that those with an optimistic outlook have better cardiovascular health and a stronger immune system, earn a higher income and have more successful relationships.”– Brianna Steinhilber

1. Take a look at the bright side.

- Even when there is bad news or difficult circumstance, we can always find a reason to be grateful and positive.
- Research shows seeing events in a positive light can “...train our brains to fire up circuits in different regions,

eventually altering our response to negative experiences.”

2. You become the average of the five people you hang around with most.

- Negativity is contagious. Luckily, positive emotions can be contagious, too.

3. Turn off the news.

- News media outlets must sell commercials to stay in business and be profitable. If it “bleeds, it leads!”
- I recommend reading the news instead of watching it on your device or TV. This can help remove the negative emotion.

4. Journal or write down what you are grateful for.

- “...writing down what you’re grateful for comes with some pretty impressive physical benefits as well, including better sleep, improved heart health, reduced aches and pains, and fewer depressive symptoms.”

5. Acknowledge what you can and cannot control.

- None of us deal well with uncertainty. However, acknowledging that there are things beyond our control can provide a sense of freedom and relief.

6. Acknowledge the negative.

- There is a good reason we all tend to be a bit pessimistic at times. It helps us find and solve problems that could hurt us.

“Optimism is the faith that leads to achievement. Nothing can be done without hope and confidence.” – Helen Keller

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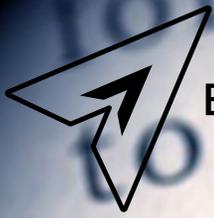
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About the Author

Charlie Mattingly earned his Bachelor of Science degree in Mechanical Engineering from the University of Tennessee. He then entered the United States Air Force where he served for ten years as an officer and F-16 fighter pilot. [Read More...](#)

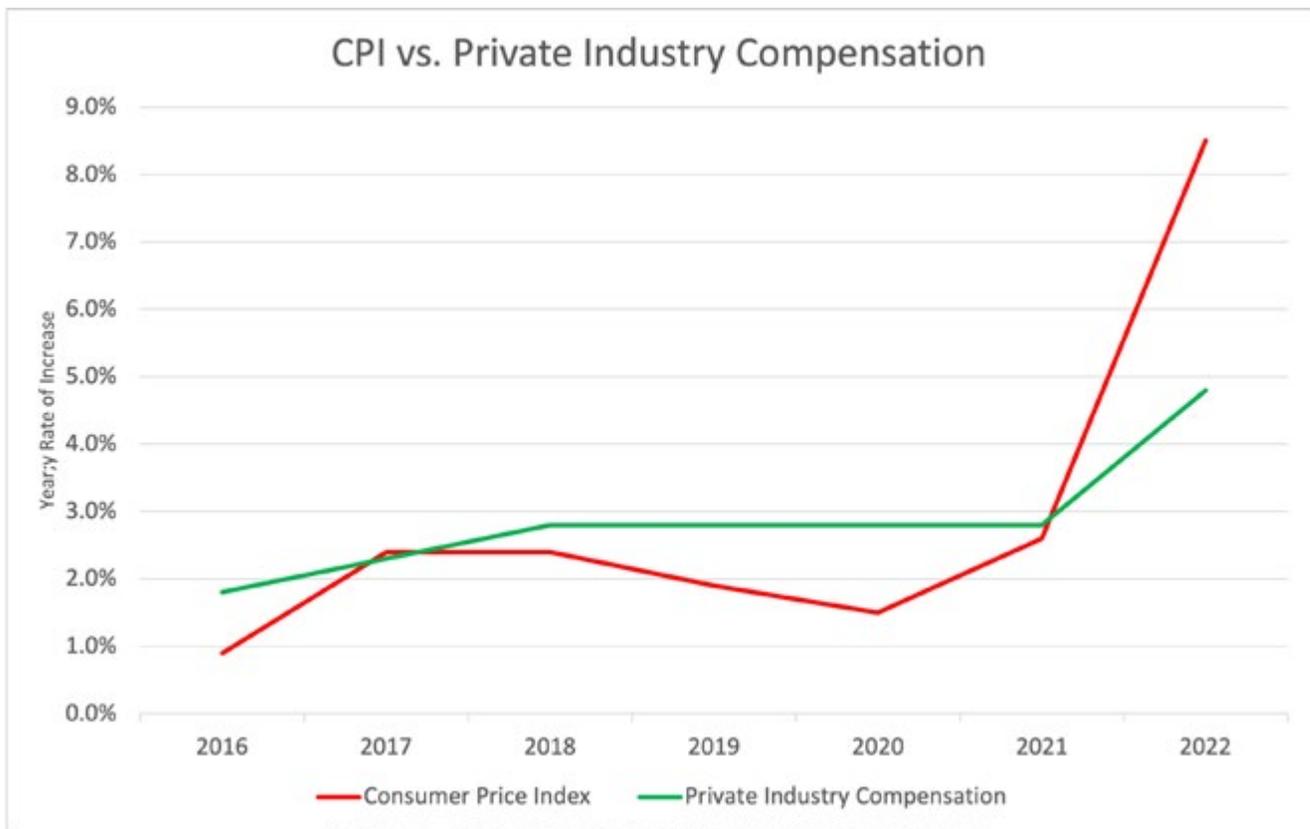


Lessons from Apples and Oranges

WRITTEN BY: CHRISTOPHER M. BROYHILL, PH.D., CAM

Editor's Note: Please join the Aero Crew News team in welcoming Dr. Chris Broyhill to our pages. His new column, Business Vector (a not-so-subtle play on "business sector"), will bring insights into compensation models, trends in remuneration and tactics to help you make the best decisions about the companies you're considering. Information is power and Dr. Broyhill's column is going to make us all smarter and more powerful in our careers as aviators.

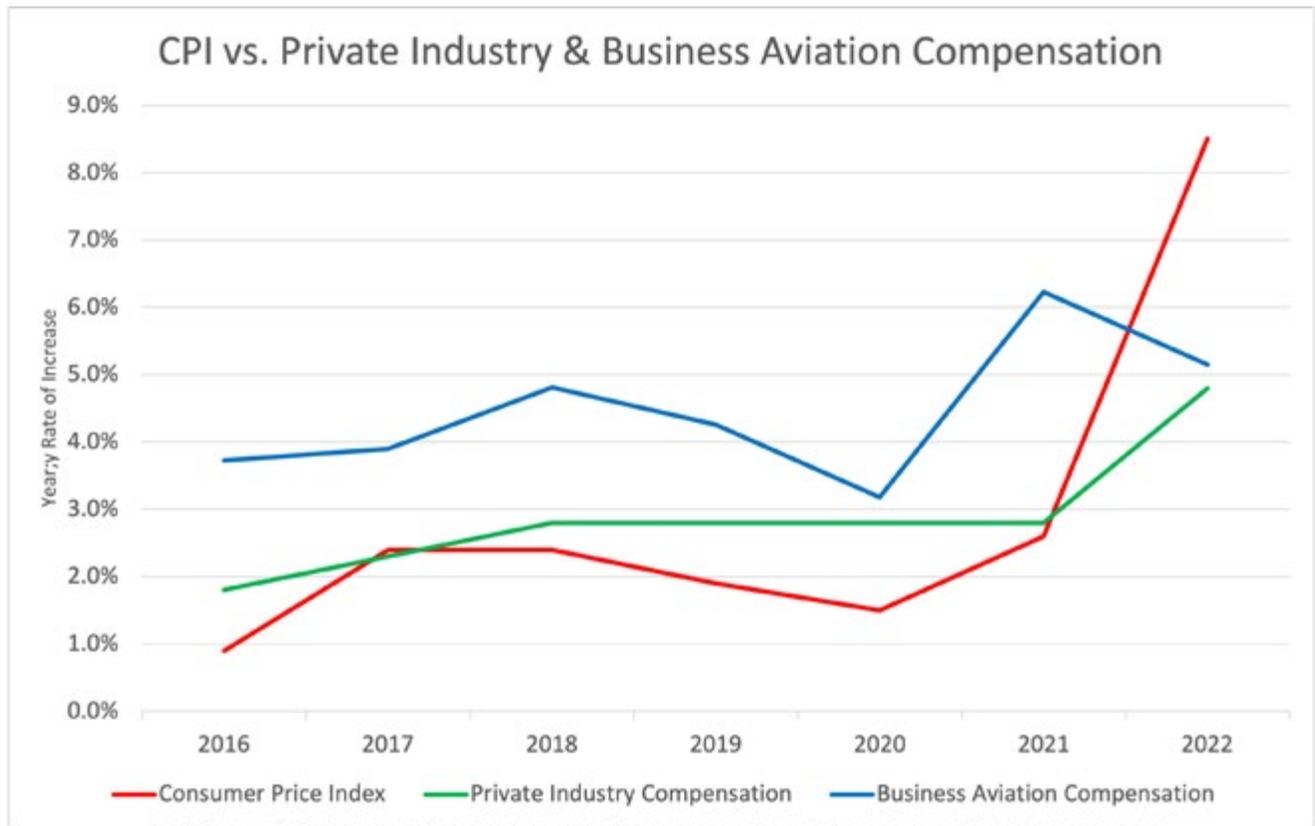
As a compensation expert, I'm often asked how comp levels vary between areas with higher and lower living costs. Typically, I give the standard reply, "We're talking apples and oranges here. Compensation levels are based on the cost of labor, not the cost of living. The two indices often correlate for particular areas but don't always." Yet given how much we read and hear about inflation in the current economy, I decided to look at this apples-and-oranges comparison and see what it could indicate.



In the graph above, the red line shows the yearly rate increase for the consumer price index (CPI) since 2016, as calculated by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS). The CPI is probably the most robust statistic we can use to capture the cost of living. The green line on the graph depicts another stat from the BLS, the yearly rate of compensation growth for all workers who are not paid by the government or the military. Note how the two lines remained roughly parallel from 2016 to 2020, indicating that while consumer prices were increasing, the rate of compensation increase was staying constant, i.e., keeping up. The compensation professionals in private industry were looking at the economy and making appropriate yearly adjustments to their companies' compensation levels. But from 2020 to 2021, even as the CPI began to rise, the rate of compensation increase stayed at previous levels. Perhaps compensation professionals were convinced that the rate of CPI increase was only temporary. Certainly, that's what government officials were saying at the time. But, from 2021 to 2022, as the rate of CPI increase tripled, compensation professionals understood that corrections were necessary, and we see the rate of compensation increase rising as well, although not nearly at the rate of CPI increase.

This brings us to one of the basic lessons we learn in the world of compensation – pay rates never keep up with the cost of living; they always lag it, both locally and nationally. Companies will never raise compensation rates until they are forced to and will only raise those rates by the minimum required to retain their personnel. That may not be true for all companies in the private space, but it is true for most of them, hence the behavior of the averages we see in the graph.

But now let's look at something important to us in the business aviation industry – the behavior of business-aviation compensation over this same period and in comparison to the two indices we've discussed.



Here, the blue line illustrates a multi-survey average of 14 positions common to all corporate flight departments, and the trend here is interesting indeed. From 2016 to 2020, the average rate of business-aviation compensation increase outpaced the rate of increase in private industry by an average of 1.5%, an average of 4% for business aviation versus an average of 2.5% in private industry. But, from 2020 to 2021, while private industry compensation increase remains constant at 2.8%, business aviation compensation increases to 6.23%, more than twice that of private industry. This increase is especially intriguing because this one-year period was the heyday of the COVID-19 pandemic when the economy was reeling, and the airlines were parking aircraft and furloughing pilots. Then, from 2021 to 2022, something odd happens. The rate of CPI growth is tripling, the rate of private industry compensation is (finally) rising, and yet, the rate of business aviation compensation increase falls over a percent to 5.23%, less than half a percent above the rate of increase for private industry at 4.8%. This while the airlines are recovering rapidly and trying to hire pilots to fill the slots vacated by pilots to whom they offered early retirements.

So, what does this mean for business aviation? As a compensation consultant and statistician, two things occur to me. The first option is what I'd prefer to believe – changes and/or anomalies in the data set are driving the dip in the rate of increase. Different organizations responded, or different incumbents occupied the surveyed positions. Promotions and turnover within organizations substantially changed the sample. But I'm not sure that's what happened. The second option is more troubling and perhaps more likely. The personnel making compensation decisions in business aviation organizations weren't paying attention. With prices rising and compensation increasing in the general economy, along with the upward wage pressure being generated by higher airline compensation, the need to pay competitively in business aviation has become more important than ever. Maybe there are some folks who didn't get the memo.

When you live in the world of statistics and data, you rarely pay attention to anecdotes about compensation. When I began consulting work in this field several years ago, I'd talk to clients, and from time to time they'd relate that one of their pilots was complaining about compensation because that person had heard that someone "across the field" was making more money. But today, those anecdotes have become both more numerous and more specific. I regularly hear about pilots being recruited to fly long-range aircraft with compensation levels in the \$300,000s. I hear about senior captains poached from other operators to fly the newer, ultra-long-range aircraft with compensation levels well into the \$300,000s. The scary thing is that, at the moment, the mid-range 50th percentile data does not support that level of compensation. Why? The data is lagging the market. Just as it always does.

What does this mean for the business aviation managers out there? I'll give you the same advice I give my clients. The data is lagging and if you pay at the 50th percentile, you're accepting risk. Pay your personnel in the 75th percentile to stay ahead of the market. Because if you don't, someone else will.



About the Author



Dr. Chris Broyhill is an industry veteran with over 40 years in aviation. He graduated from the United States Air Force Academy in 1982, served with distinction for over 20 years in the Air Force and flew multiple aircraft. [Read More...](#)



Maintaining a Positive Intra-Cockpit Gradient

WRITTEN BY: SERGIO SOVERO

“Good leadership consists of motivating people to their highest levels by offering them opportunities, not obligations.” – Lao Tzu, Chinese philosopher

A gradient can be thought of as a slope, a non-linear surface. Translated to the flight deck, often the level of experience among crew members is not linear and varies significantly. For soon-to-be captains, the goal is to maintain what I refer to as a “positive intra-cockpit gradient.”

A positive cockpit gradient is critical to preserving the captain’s leadership. If you’re the captain and you have a negative cockpit gradient, your first officer is running the show; meaning you have become a follower – not ideal when your role is leader of the team.

It is not uncommon to have an unbalanced gradient. Experienced captains flying with new-hire first officers will result in a steeper, leader-focused, gradient. On the contrary, a senior first officer with more flight time than the captain on the equipment, would denote a shallower gradient.

It is paramount to acknowledge both shallower and steeper gradients can still be positive. Positive meaning, that you as the PIC maintain the leadership role at all times. Think of it as finding a balance. The extreme of a steep gradient consists of an “authoritative” style. Such leaders make decisions independently and degrade CRM – a manner most flight-crew professionals resent. Equally as detrimental are the extremes of the shallow gradient, where the experienced first officer executes tasks and duties with minimal input from you or makes decisions on their own. This is not ideal either, given that you have just deferred your responsibility to others. This is known as the “delegative” style.

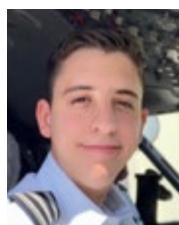
The challenge (and hopefully a skill you will learn) is knowing when and how to exercise an appropriate level of authority. Or, per this article, knowing when to adjust the gradient scale. For example, non-normal emergencies and time-critical scenarios will require the PIC to step up. The PIC will have to make decisions, assess risk, and manage flight-deck workload. Naturally, the gradient will be steepened – AS IT SHOULD! Direct and blunt verbal tone and style may be necessary in circumstances where time and options are limited. Without a more “authoritative”

approach, it may not be possible to manage a deteriorating situation from further degradation. Simply put, be flexible.

If you don’t want to be authoritarian or delegative, what are you striving for? A participative style is when the leader is clearly defined at all times and preserves final authority but accepts input from the followers. This style is the best to promote effective CRM and fosters a learning environment. Think of it as the perfectly balanced scale in an ideal world. Keep in mind, even with uneven experience levels (shallower/steeper gradients), you can still achieve a positive intra-cockpit outcome.

Embarking on the journey to become a captain is the goal to which most professional pilots aspire. Be the captain, think like the captain, and remember – keep a positive cockpit gradient!

“Good leadership consists of motivating people to their highest levels by offering them opportunities, not obligations.” – Lao Tzu, Chinese philosopher



About the Author



Sergio Sovero was born and raised in Lima, Peru, and is currently a captain for Delta Air Lines. [Read More...](#)



In Prague, Czech Republic

A vast castle complex, my favorite beer, and more

WRITTEN BY: LIA OCAMPO

My favorite non-English expression is, “Na zdraví,” pronounced nah z-drah-VEE. It is likely the most famous expression in Czech which is their toast that means to health.

Drinking beer is important in the culture of the Czech Republic. Czech are proud of their celebrations and drink a lot of beer. As a tourist, you must understand this culture and know how to say Na zdraví and toast each other correctly. But wait, there’s more to this drinking culture. Before you start drinking your beer, it is essential to applaud each other while you



make eye contact. If you don't follow this rule, they say you will have "seven years of bad sex." I recommend we all follow their cultural cue, otherwise, we now know what will happen (or not happen).

According to statistics, the Czech Republic consumes more beer per capita than any other country! Beer is cheaper than tap water! What? Yes, I was a witness to this many times. Beer is their default beverage. Even if you don't like beer, not having a beer in Prague is a mistake! Remarkably however, there is a law that there must be one alcoholic beverage on every menu that is cheaper than beer!

During summer, the best way to enjoy beer is in a beer garden. There are many beer gardens, but the most recommended one is the Letná beer garden where you can enjoy your favorite

beer with a picturesque view of the Old Town. This is indeed part of a perfect itinerary.

So, what beer should you drink in Prague? There are many options to sample, but perhaps the best is Pilsner beer. There is a town in Prague called Pilsen where Pilsner originated. I've never been a beer drinker, because most of the time I find it bitter, but I am glad my friend, Dr. Rysa, who lives in Prague, introduced me to Radler. It's a beer mixed with citrusy fruit flavors, or with Sprite. Because of the sweetness (which compliments my taste buds), I was hooked, and it is now my favorite beer. The truth is, I've been to a couple of pubs in the U.S. and when I've asked for Radler, they have no idea what I am talking about. So, I get to explain to them what Radler is. In Tampa, Florida a man once told me he would try it at home. I gave him a good recommendation but I often wonder if he ever tried it. Enough about beer

Prague is one of the jewels of Central Europe. It is one of the largest cities in Europe and has the largest castle complex in the world. It was nicknamed the "city of a thousand spires" because of its 1,100-year-old skyline, consisting of domed churches and old towers. Hence Prague is considered one of the architectural gems in the world. You can explore Prague's metropolis and beautiful landmarks on foot or by tram. Here are a few of my favorite places:

Prague Castle

This is the symbol of the Czech Republic and the largest castle complex in the world. It was once the home of Bohemia's kings and today is the official residence of the President of the Czech Republic. Because of its vastness, I suggest you spend a day here to maximize your visit. You'll be able to claim that you've explored the largest castle complex in the world. The most popular sites in the castle are the St. Vitus Cathedral, St. George's Basilica, the Powder Tower, the Old Royal Palace, and the Golden Lane. The most interesting sites in the palace include the main hall, the Vladislav Hall, and the Royal Garden. In addition, the Royal Garden has Ball Game Hall, the Royal Summer House with its Singing Fountain, and the Lion's Court. The Prague Castle is overwhelming yet magnificent and decidedly one of a kind.



Charles Bridge

The most recognizable old bridge in Europe was built in here in 1357. There's a superstitious belief that the builders laid the bridge stone on the 9th of July at precisely 5:31 a.m. It was a precise set of numbers (135797531) and was believed to give additional strength to the bridge. It was constructed in perfect alignment with the tomb of St. Vitus and the setting sun on the equinox. The bridge is famous for its old statues. The most prominent statues are Roman Emperor Charles IV and St. John of Nepomuk, the country's most revered saint. Another superstitious belief I learned is that if you touch the Lorraine Cross, where St. Nepomuk's body was thrown into the river, and make a wish, your wish will come true. Make sure to touch the right cross; believing is up to you. Walking on Charles Bridge in the late afternoon is the best. If you're there for an equinox, you would have a perfect view of the sunset.

During my visit in September 2021, I checked off an item on my bucket list – to have my portrait done by an artist. It was a memorable

experience, but sadly, I thought I looked different in the portrait. I wasn't happy with the outcome but decided that the money I had paid was for my experience. Take my advice, don't necessarily trust the samples pinned to the artist's board.

Old Town Square

The Old Town Square is the most significant square in Prague, and the Old Town Tower is the most dominant feature of the entire square. The astronomical clock is located on the southern side of the Old Town Hall Tower. The clock strikes the hour from 0900 to 2300. You'll see a crowd of tourists gathering, waiting for the clock to strike. It is a good place to relax while people-watching.



John Lennon Wall

After the death of John Lennon, this stone wall was transformed into a memorial with a painting of his face and words from his songs about world peace and freedom. I am a John Lennon fan, and obviously of his songs, so I love this site.

Troja Chateau, St. Claire Vineyard, and Botanical Garden

Troja Chateau is a 25-minute bus ride from the city center, far from the tourist crowds. Vineyards, botanical gardens, and the Prague Zoo surround this chateau. To best enjoy this beautiful place, it's a good idea to dedicate a half day or even a whole day of your itinerary so that since you're in a vineyard, this time, you can enjoy wine not beer.

There are so many attractions to see in Prague. This charming city has the most picturesque architectural landmarks in Europe and is not an expensive place for travel where you can enjoy good food and great beers. The best season to visit Prague is this summertime. Remember, you're in a beer country and will not run out of drinks. Quench your thirst, and say, "Na zdraí!" And try Radler and let me know if you become a fan of my favorite beer.



About the Author



Lia Ocampo is a passionate flight attendant and author. Her flying experiences give her the opportunity to meet amazing people and create wonderful memories. [Read More...](#)



Bogart's Cafe

Breakfast for the sweet tooth

WRITTEN BY: VICTOR SOLER

I've been fortunate enough to experience a few delightful overnights in the beautiful city of Honolulu, Hawaii. As a tourist destination, Waikiki offers an abundance of mouthwatering dining options. For crew members like me, time off the aircraft is incredibly valuable and wasting it on a mediocre meal is simply not an option. That's why I'm always on the lookout for hidden gems.

Another of the best parts of this job, aside from meeting new people during our layovers, is having the opportunity to share a meal with friends and family on the road. During my recent visit, for some local insight and great company, I reached out to my friend Jamie and his family, who are currently serving our great country in Hawaii. He enthusiastically recommended one of his family's favorite breakfast spots, Bogart's Cafe.



Though there were several options closer to the hotel, Bogart's stood out for a number of reasons. While it's just a short walk or bike ride from most hotels, it also happens to be conveniently located near the zoo and enroute to Diamond Head, a must-visit spot for adventurous hikers seeking breathtaking views of the island.

Bogart's may not catch your eye at first glance, but don't be fooled by its unassuming exterior. Their diverse breakfast and lunch menus will exceed your expectations. From açai bowls and bagels to waffles, sandwiches, seafood, and an entire section dedicated to egg-based dishes, there's something for everyone. Personally, I usually go for the Hawaiian favorite, Loco Moco (rice and a hamburger patty, a fried egg with brown gravy), but this time, I decided to try their Hawaiian Waffle.

This culinary masterpiece consisted of a perfectly cooked Belgian waffle – crispy on the outside and fluffy on the inside. Stacked atop were slices of ripe bananas, juicy strawberries, and plump blueberries, all generously

smothered in haupia sauce, a popular coconut pudding found on the island. Here, it was transformed into a delightful syrup that left me kicking myself for not discovering it sooner. As much as I love leftovers, this delectable waffle disappeared from my plate without even a trace. But fret not, my friends, on my next trip I won't leave the island with any regrets.

On my next trip to Honolulu, I have a plan. I'll start my morning with a leisurely walk to Bogart's, treating myself to a protein shake or a simple açai bowl, and then continue to hike Diamond Head. It's not just about the breathtaking views, but more importantly, it's about working off breakfast so that I can fully indulge in a delicious lunch at Bogart's on my way back, with the Loco Moco tempting me from the menu.

I invite you to please share your recommendations (in the comments section) for other hidden gems in Waikiki, because after a five-hour flight from California, this hungry traveler is ready to explore and savor all the culinary delights this vibrant city has to offer. Recommendations for memorable meals in other cities are welcomed, too.

Bogart's Cafe
3045 Monserrat Ave
Honolulu, HI, 96815



About the Author

Victor Soler is a retired Army UH-60 helicopter pilot with a Bachelor's of Science degree in Occupational Safety and Health. Currently, Victor is a 767/757 first officer. [Read More...](#)



Ashton Johnson Memorial Scholarship Foundation

Revisiting the 2022 Gala and announcing the 2023 event

Saddle up folks and come boot scootin' at this year's GALA, scheduled for **October 14, 2023 at 6:00pm at the spectacular Hilton Austin Ranch**. Located just minutes from DFW, this venue for our event is situated on 90 acres of rolling hills and woodlands. This location is guaranteed to deliver an epic night of fun and memories. In keeping with this year's theme at the Austin Ranch, the suggested dress code is formal western attire. We can't wait to see all our guests in their black ties and boots!

Last year's Black-Tie Gala was the first annual event for the CloudDancer Scholarship held at American Airlines' CR Smith Museum. The foundation was created in memory and honor of U.S. Army Specialist Ashton Johnson. Among other things, Ashton enjoyed flying and the country/western lifestyle. He was especially fond of country dancing and had become somewhat of a local staple on the dance floor. In the first year of operations, four scholarships were awarded to deserving veterans to help them achieve their goals of becoming career pilots. To date, two of those four have obtained their private-pilot certificates and have since moved onto the next steps in their aviation careers.

Last year, in keeping with the aviation theme, we had several dignitaries from the military-aviation divisions to include Lt. General Steven Polk, USAF Ret., Col. Scott Tekell, US Army Ret., Capt. Shawn Noyes, USAF (active), CWO/Lt. Neil Raaz of the U.S. Army and U.S. Navy, plus many other active and retired military members. Corporate aviation was represented by Kansas-based Airshare's Vice President Troy Welch with his family also in attendance. And let's not forget our cable-TV celebrity, Kevin Lacey of Airplane Repo.

Several of the silent- and live-auction items were aviation related, including a charter-jet trip donated by Chairman Airmotive. Overall, last year's Black-Tie Gala generated just over \$60,000 for the scholarship foundation.

As a direct result of that success, this year, the CloudDancer Scholarship will award five

recipients \$10,000 each towards completing their FAA private-pilot training in memory of and to honor U.S. Army Specialist Ashton Johnson. Eligibility is limited to current or prior U.S. military service men and women (including active-duty, Guard or Reserve) who serve(d) honorably. Applications are being accepted now. To find out more, checkout our link at www.clouddancerscholarship.org.

#supportourveterans #thankyouforyourservice
#helpingveterans #supportingveterans
#veteransusa #trend#positivevibes
#helpingothers #fundraiser#donatetoday
#giving #goodcause #makeadifference
#givingback #instagram #repost #donatenow
#inspiration #donations #goals #socialgood
#follow #charity #scholarshipfundraiser
#charityfundraising #donationsneeded
#donation #charityevent



Amberjack, the Modern Shoe Company

Rethinking how dress shoes are made

WRITTEN BY: GARRETT ANDERSON

Ever have a nice pair of leather dress shoes wear through the sole? Or have aching feet at the end of a long day? Amberjack, a men's dress-shoe company, was founded by John Peters because he felt like the men's dress-shoe market was missing shoes that were both stylish and comfortable.



While working as a consultant for McKinsey & Company, Peters said that he spent a lot of time on the road traveling and that most of the dress shoes he could buy ended up hurting his feet by the end of the day or they started to wear out quickly.

“So I thought, could there be something better?” asked Peters, who graduated in 2014 from Cornell University with a Bachelor of Science degree in Applied Economics and Management. **“I ended up working with some of these big footwear brands as a consultant,”** said Peters, explaining that there was not a lot of customer satisfaction in the dress-shoe category. Peters realized after working with some of the larger shoe brands, that many of the issues he had with the typical men’s dress shoe resulted from an undeveloped area of the market. Developing and selling men’s dress shoes was not as profitable as doing the same with athletic shoes.

In 2019, Peters stepped back from his job as a consultant to focus on starting his own company to solve some of these problems. Two years later, Peters officially launched Amberjack in 2021.

The name Amberjack is a nod to Peters’ past. He said that most people mistakenly confuse the name with a fish (which shares the same name). However, the real story behind the name pays homage to his grandfather Jack who was a **“... successful guy in business and just someone I really looked up to – was kinda my role model. I just thought he was the coolest guy and super innovative.”** The name takes his grandfather’s name and the word amber, that represents fossilized resin, said Peters, thus, representing the old with “amber” and the new with “Jack.” Peters said, **“Amberjack is an apt name for what we’re trying to do, which is modernizing kind of a traditional space. And so that’s where Amber and Jack came together.”**

Each shoe is meticulously crafted with premium full-grain American steer hide which is shipped to Portugal where the shoes are manufactured.

Because Amberjack is vertically integrated with an ISO-certified, sustainable American tannery, ***“We get really quality full-grain leather. It’s from American steer at a price that you probably wouldn’t get elsewhere. And obviously we pass that on to the customer. That’s how we’re able to offer a hand-finished, full-grain furnished shoe, for \$180, which otherwise would be quite a bit more,”*** said Peters, noting that without their partnership with the tannery, a pair of shoes would probably cost approximately \$300.

Shortly after launching their shoe products, Amberjack started specifically developing,

testing, and marketing their shoes for pilots. This began with an email exchange between Brett Oldfather and John Peters asking for feedback. Oldfather recounted that he remembered researching shoes trying to find a good pair to wear as an airline pilot. Besides Amberjack, which he stumbled across via an Instagram ad, there weren’t very many good pairs of shoes that were readily available.

Oldfather, who had spent close to 20 years in the Army as a Warrant Officer and was transitioning to flying for United Airlines, responded saying, ***“I’d like to help with this somehow. I know you guys are a startup ... but I’d like to help get this going.”*** Oldfather pitched the aviation community as an untapped market for Amberjack and started, in his own words, “torture testing” shoes. While testing the shoes, Oldfather explained



that he spent time walking through de-icing fluid and put salt on the shoes (among other things) to simulate some of the environments that pilots might deal with on a routine basis.

“They were super good,” summarized Oldfather, who was based out of Chicago. The airplanes ***“de-ice right at the gate ...When you’re walking around, you’re gonna get de-ice fluid all over your feet ... when you’re out on the curbside, after it snowed, you’re gonna get salt all over ... nothing ever broke down the shoes or anything.”***

According to Amberjack’s website, the shoes feature a non-FOD carrying tread that is slip resistant; a supportive insole which forms itself to the shape of the owner’s foot; and a non-pointed, wide toe box to help keep feet from feeling cramped. Additionally, the shoes have a non-metal shank which helps them



to be TSA compliant. Oldfather noted that he never had an issue with the shoes while going through TSA at the airports.

Each part of the shoe is designed for long-term comfort, making them ideal for people who spend a lot of time on their feet. According to Amberjack, their outsole is crafted with their own proprietary TPU (thermoplastic urethane) material. This can be compared to other outsole materials such as EVA (elastomeric polymer) or a stacked leather outsole, which Amberjack says can be durable but cause foot pain at the end of long days.

Because the shoes are made with high-quality leather, Oldfather highly recommended spending a little bit of time breaking the shoes in before going on a long trip or walking a for a long time. ***“It’s the nature of the materials and design ... you actually have to break in the shoes.”***

On the outside, the shoes are a nice high-end, perforated leather, explained Oldfather. On the inside, they have a heat-activated insole that molds to the owner’s foot.

The typical shoe design process for Amberjack starts with an idea which is shared with their suppliers. Several samples are then created, tested, and revised until the company is satisfied with the quality of the shoe and is something that their customer base will enjoy.

Each shoe has several technical tests, such as durability and abrasion resistance, that



they are subjected to during the design phase and for quality assurance. However, Peters emphasized that they value feedback from actual customers over lab-based test results. ***“For us, the most important by far, is not what a lab says; it is getting the product into the hands of the people who actually use it. Hearing their feedback and what they say is always the best thing.”***

Peters said that a version of the shoes for women is on their horizon and that they are working on a plan to eventually integrate a women’s shoe into the brand.

Besides creating comfortable shoes, Amberjack is proud to sustainably source their materials, manufacture the shoes in a fair-wage factory, and utilize carbon-neutral shipping because they believe it is the right thing to do.

Amberjack promises to stand by their product with a one-year warranty. They will replace the shoes immediately at no cost to customers if there are any issues. They also offer free returns within 30 days and free exchanges within 60 days to help customers find the perfect fit.

From sustainably sourcing materials to ensuring quality at every stage of the manufacturing process, Amberjack’s goal is to produce a comfortable and stylish shoe. Their shoes promise to stand the test of time and live up to the company’s motto: ***“Obviously good, secretly great.”***

For a personal recount of his experiences wearing shoes made by Amberjack and their customer service, read the review written by Craig Pieper, owner and publisher of Aero Crew News and commercial pilot. Use the following discount code to purchase your own pair of Amberjack shoes.



About the Author

Garrett Anderson is an aviator, introvert, and a country boy at heart. Garrett has flown gliders since he was 14 and started his powered flight training in a Citabria with his dad. [Read More...](#)



Amberjack Review

As a pilot, I have never really thought too much about the shoes I wear provided they are the right color, can clear TSA without setting off the alarm, are affordable and comfortable. My first three requirements really were not that hard to come by. The last pair of pilot shoes I found came from one of those national stores, and I thought that they were comfortable enough. They were the right color and able to clear most security metal detectors without having to remove them. They were relatively inexpensive and their durability was unmistakably questionable. They scuffed and wore out very easily. I paid for what I got.

Recently, I was introduced to a shoe company that takes serious pride in the quality and comfort of their shoes. Better yet, they started a line dedicated to pilots. They currently offer three different styles: namely the Original, the Chelsea and the Loafer. I have always been a fan of the loafer style, but I have fallen in love with the comfort of the Chelsea. While there is a break-in period for Amberjack shoes owed to the high-quality leather, after two weeks of normal wear, they have to be the most comfortable shoes that I have ever worn. They also have a different insole option for additional comfort. I have now been wearing the Chelsea for about two months and they still look brand new (except for a little dust). Last month, I had the chance to wear them up to Canada where my former shoes seemed to always need to be removed for the metal detectors, but the Chelseas even passed the “Canadian-metal-detector test.” The price tag is a little higher than what I have been used to paying, but the quality of leather, the design and the comfort definitely make them worth the \$179 to \$195 price tag.

I highly recommend giving these shoes a try, and to sweeten the deal, [click here](#) and type in the code **AeroCrew** to receive 10% off.

The Grid

Airline Contract Comparison

Amerijet International vs Kalitta Air

Product Name	Amerijet International	Kalitta Air
Product Image		

01 Date Issued		
		
Last Updated	28 June, 2023	04 May, 2023
Last Update	Pilot Pay Rates	Pay Details (Pilots), Expenses (Pilots), Work Rules (Pilots), Paid Time Off (Pilots)
Last Update Notes	2023 TA updates	2021 Contract Updated
Grid Updates	Send updates to GridUpdates@AeroCrewNews.com Send updates to GridUpdates@AeroCrewNews.com	

You can generate any airline contract comparison that you like. Just select the airlines and click compare. Visit AeroCrewNews.com/acn-grid

02 General Airline / Company Information ✈		
		
ATC Call Sign	AMERIJET	Connie
Aircraft	Boeing 767-300 (11) Boeing 767-200 (6) Boeing 757-200 (6)	B747-400 (24) B767-300ER (8) B777 (3)
IATA Code	M6	K4
ICAO Code	AJT	CKS
Headquarters	Miami, Florida	Ypsilanti Township, Michigan
Maintenance Bases		Unknown
Do Business For	Amazon, DHL, DOD	DHL

While we do the best we can to keep this data up to date, it can be a full-time job when the industry is moving like it is now. Please send updates to GridUpdates@AeroCrewNews.com

03 General Pilot Information



		
Pilot Union	ALPA	ALPA
Current Contract Year (P)	N/A	2021
Number of Pilots	191	655
Number of pilots as of	01 February, 2023	01 January, 2020
Junior Captain Hire Date (Mo/Yr)	1000 hours Part 121 Time or Direct Entry Captains	777: 2.5 Years 747-400: 3.5-4 Years
JCHD as of:		28 June, 2023
Pilot Bases	Miami International Airport	All pilots are home based. Positive space seat to start trip.
Currently Hiring Pilots	Yes	Yes
Pilot Hiring Website (P)	Pilot Hiring Website	Kalitta Air Pilot Jobs Page
EFBs	iPad	iPad
General Pilot Info Notes	Contract Passed 2023	None

04 Pilot Retirements by Year



		
Retirement 2021		Unknown
Retirement 2022	3	Unknown
Retirement 2023	4	
Retirement 2024	2	
Retirement 2025	3	
Retirement 2026	3	
Retirement 2027	3	
Retirement 2028	4	
Retirement 2029	8	
Retirement 2030	5	
Retirement 2031	8	
Retirement 2032	5	
Pilot Retirement Notes	None	None

05 Pay Details (Pilots)



		
MMG Line Holder (P)	74 hours	64
MMG Reserve (P)		Composite Line is 70
Pay During New Hire Training (P)	A new hire Pilot in initial Training for qualification as a Pilot will be paid Minimum Bid Period Guarantee (74 Hours) while in Training.	\$600 per week until OE Paid per diem starting the first day of Initial Ground School
New Hire Bonuses (P)	Unknown	None
Profit Sharing (P)	Unknown	No
Deadhead Pay (P)	50%	50%
Open Time Pay (P)	100%, Whenever a Pilot is awarded an Open Time Duty Assignment, on a Day Off he will be paid for the hours flown, above BPG	150% on days off
Premium Open Time Pay or Overtime (P)	Unknown	
FO International Override	\$3.00	None
CA International Override	\$5.00	None

Redeye Override		None
Ocean Crossing Override		None
Line Check Airman Override	<p>\$20.00 override</p> <p>Check Airman will receive the following stipend for each qualification and checking event they conduct:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Line Check - \$100.00 b. Proficiency Check - \$250.00 c. Type Ride - \$500.00 d. Stand Alone Oral Examination - \$125.00 e. Performing duty in lieu of FAA initial line check for new Captain Observation, observation of new CKA, or 24-month CKA renewal ride -\$350 	\$15.00 per hour
Holiday Pay (P)	On New Years Day, 4th of July, Thanksgiving Day, Christmas Eve, Christmas Day paid 2 PCH per day above guarantee	None
Pay Details Notes (P)	None	Hostile Area Assignments will receive 4 hours of pay at 150% hourly rate

		
Currency (P)	US dollars	US dollars
FO 1st Year Pay (P)	\$100.80	\$117.00
B757-200 FO 2nd Year Pay	\$132.00	
B757-200 FO Top Pay	\$203.95	
B757-200 CA Top Pay	\$301.84	
B767-200/300 FO 2nd Year Pay	\$132.00	
B767-200/300 FO Top Pay	\$203.95	
B767-200/300 CA Top Pay	\$301.84	
B767-300ER FO 2nd Year Pay		\$136.91
B767-300ER FO Top Pay		\$203.23
B767-300ER CA Top Pay		\$300.78
B777 FO 2nd Year Pay	\$153.12	\$140.33
B777 FO Top Pay	\$236.58	\$208.31
B777 CA Top Pay	\$319.95	\$308.30
B747 FO 2nd Year Pay		\$140.33
B747 FO Top Pay		\$208.31
B747 CA Top Pay		\$308.30
Next Pay Raise (P)		01 January, 2024
Next Pay Raise Notes (P)	B777s are currently not operating	New contract as of March 2021

07 Expenses (Pilots)



		
Per Diem (P)	6/24/23: \$3.10 6/24/24: \$3.20 6/24/25: \$3.30	\$2.55 domestic \$3.45 international
New Hire Hotel (P)	Paid for by the company	Paid for by the company
New Hire Hotel Notes (P)		Provided by company during Initial Training
Downtown Hotel (P)	Yes	Yes
Downtown Hotel Notes (P)	None	None
Hotel Points (P)		Yes
Airline Mileage Accrual for Dead Heads (P)		Yes
Uniform Reimbursements (P)	\$450.00 initial reimbursement \$150.00 maintenance reimbursement	Initially paid for by pilot \$250.00 per year after first year
Health Care Costs Medical (P)	A pilot's monetary contribution(s) for life, personal accident, medical, dental and vision insurance, including, but not limited to contribution(s) for monthly premiums and co- pays shall not exceed or be increased more than the monetary contributions required of other Company employees for the same insurance A pilot's monetary contributions for monthly premiums will not exceed 30% of the total required contribution when aggregated across the available plans.	March 1, 2023: Single, \$200.00 Family, \$275.00 March 1, 2024: Single, \$225.00. Family, \$300.00
Health Care Costs Dental (P)	Included in Health Care Cost Above	Included in Health Care Cost Above
Health Care Costs Vision (P)	Included in Health Care Cost Above	Included in Health Care Cost Above
Expenses Notes (P)	For Home Based Pilots, reimbursement up to \$50.00 per calendar month for parking, taxi and/or Ride Share service (such as Lyft or Uber) will be provided without receipts	Health and Dental include opt-out options

08 Work Rules (Pilots)



		
Minimum Days off per Bid Period - Line Holder (P)	Minimum 12 days off per 28 day bid period	13 days in 30 day bid period 14 days in 31 day bid period
Minimum Days off per Bid Period - Reserve (P)	Minimum 12 days off per 28 day bid period	13 days in 30 day bid period 14 days in 31 day bid period
Pay Protection (P)	Unknown	Yes
Maximum Scheduled Duty Day (P)	None	16, 18 or 20 hours domestic 18, 26, 30 hours international Duty time based on number of crews, single, augmented or double.
Minimum Day Credit (P)	None	1 hour or 3.65 on a day off
Minimum Trip Credit (P)	None	None
Duty Rig (P)	1:1.75	None
Trip Rig (P)	None	None

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09 Paid Time Off (Pilots)



Vacation Accrual (P)	<p>0-1 Years: 10 days accrued at the rate of 10/12ths of a day per month 2-4 Years: 18 days accrued at the rate of 18/12ths days per month 5-14 Years: 20 days accrued at the rate of 20/12ths days per month 15+ Years: 26 days accrued at the rate of 26/12ths days per month Maximum of 52 days in vacation bank</p>	<p>1-4 years = 14 Days 5+ years = 21 Days</p>
Vacation Pay (P)	<p>4.625 PCH for each Day of Vacation</p>	<p>4.0 PCH for each day of Vacation</p>
Sick Time Accrual (P)	<p>Day 1: Credited 18.5 hours. After 6 Months: Accrue at a rate of 3.25 hours in each 28-day bid period up to a maximum of 42.25 hours (13 28-day bid periods) in a calendar year</p>	<p>7 Days on first day After 1st year .75 Days per Month Max 42</p>
Short Term Disability (P)	<p>Unknown</p>	<p>A Crewmember may use their accrued sick leave to supplement their short-term disability. Company will provide insurance for a Crewmember who has completed 90 Days of Active Service. Benefits will continue for up to 6 Months</p>
Parental/Maternity Leave	<p>The Pilot may go on maternity leave upon reaching 32 weeks of pregnancy providing the Pilot additional time off before the expected birth of the baby. The pilot may use any available Sick and Vacation time available while on Maternity leave and will continue to accrue Seniority and Longevity while on Maternity Leave. At the time of birth, the Maternity Leave will expire, and the pilot will be able to transition to FMLA and/or Medical Leave</p>	

10 Retirement (Pilots)



401(K) Matching (P)		Unknown
401(K) Direct Contribution (P)	DOS 4% of compensation DOS+1 6% of compensation DOS+2 10% of compensation	Company contributes 6%
401(k) Fully vested (P)	Less than 1: Zero Percent (0%) Completed year 1: Twenty-five Percent (25%) Completed year 2: Fifty Percent (50%) Completed year 3: Seventy-Five Percent (75%) Completed year 4: One Hundred (100%)	Unknown
Pension Plan (P)		Unknown



Aero Crew Solutions is a group of professionals committed to providing you outstanding service to solve your employment needs. We do this by hosting job fairs throughout the United States. We also provide various career services that include career consulting, application review, interview prep and résumé services.

Career Services

Application Review

Career Consulting

Résumé Critique

Interview Prep