

ADVANTAGE

Live Unconventionally



EMBRAER QUARTERLY
VOL 11 → 2021

Life-Changing Travels
Embark on the journey
of a life time

Introducing ROAAS
Embraer's Phenom 300E
revolutionizes in-flight technology

Secrets From Sardinia
A food-lovers' paradise
worth exploring

BEYOND THE SUMMIT

Summit Aviation provides the opportunity of a lifetime for clients as well as students and pilots. We sit down with President Ben Walton to discuss the Summit difference.

What do you believe sets Summit Aviation apart from other aviation service companies?

Our people, core values, discerning customer selection and modern cutting-edge aircraft. Many of our charter pilots learned to fly at Summit and have been part of our family for well over a decade. We are very selective when it comes to adding both new employees and customers. Employees and customers must embody our core values; having a positive attitude, taking an active interest in the success of others, sharing our aviation passion, being honest with integrity and professionalism, always finding a way, being compassionate and embodying the trait that nothing is beneath them. This similarity of character traits has paid off in volumes with increased productivity on the employee side and increased profitability for our clients and aircraft owners.

From the flight school to the charter department, we have always maintained a modern fleet of aircraft. This has provided us with a tremendous advantage by improving the customer experience, maintenance downtime, safety, fuel efficiency and other costs. It is a great thing when both pilots and mechanics love the aircraft—I consistently receive positive feedback of interactions with our professional crews and modern aircraft.

On top of private jet charter, aircraft sales and acquisition, and aircraft management, you also offer flight training services. Can you tell us about the particulars of mountain flying and how your company came to specialize in this field?

Being nestled in a valley surrounded by multiple mountain ranges, every day is a mountain flying day for us. After years of tracking wildlife in a Super Cub over Yellowstone Park and surrounding ranges, I became passionate about teaching others how to be safe in the mountains. Summit believes strongly in playing our part in making aviation a safer place. Living and operating in the mountains has given all of our pilots a skill set we can pass on to others flying aircraft large and small.

What advice would you give to a new customer wanting to become a pilot?

Put your all into it. Take it seriously. Know you can do it. Have fun and enjoy every minute of it. If possible, budget both the time and money to accomplish your pilot certificate in a relatively short time. That way, you can focus and succeed.

Your fleet of aircraft includes eight Embraer Phenom 300 series and you recently acquired three brand-new 2020 Phenom 300E aircraft.

Can you tell us why you feel Embraer is the right partner for your company and what made you chose the Phenom 300E?

Embraer is a forward-thinking company on the cutting edge of technology while remaining customer-focused. Charter passengers love the comfort and performance of the Phenom 300E, and our aircraft owners are pleased with the predictable and low cost of operation. The Phenom 300E covers a large area in terms of missions. Small hops into small airports are just as doable and economical as a non-stop flight from Denver to New York. The performance it offers during take-off in mountainous terrain on one engine was a critical deciding factor. We have built a strong partnership with Embraer over the years and now consider them part of our family. We plan to continue working with them long into the future.

How has demand for your services changed since inception? And are there any possible disruptors you see ahead that could affect the luxury travel industry?

Demand has improved since our inception. It takes years to build a solid foundation and reputation as a world-class operator. Our commitment to safety, our people, and a laser-focused specialty in Embraer aircraft has shined a light on us in the industry.



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We can now be selective with our customers, giving us the ability and devotion to focus on their needs.

While COVID-19 has and will continue to be a major disruptor in the luxury travel industry, it has also shown the need for private aircraft. Above all, it has taught us to adapt and cherish every day.

Looking ahead, what are the emerging growth areas and opportunities that you would like to capitalize on in the future?

Growing one aircraft, one customer at a time. We believe in steady and sustainable growth so we can continue to deliver the highest quality experience. Summit's reason for existence is "improving lives through extraordinary experiences." If it's the right customer, right aircraft, with the right expectations, then it is a growth opportunity for us.

What is the most unconventional or unexpected story you can share about your company?

Probably the most unconventional and unexpected story is our Annual Cancer Survivor Flight Camp. Unconventional in that through a partnership with Eagle Mount we can offer a once in a lifetime flight experience for four young adults from all over the country battling or surviving cancer. Every summer, four very special individuals spend a week with us taking flight through the mountains of Montana and Yellowstone, learning to fly,

visiting small mountain airports, aviation museums, warbirds, private aircraft, and experiencing many other aspects of aviation. By the end of the week, they perform an incredible flight over Yellowstone National Park and the Teton Range, are able to take-off and land unassisted and have seen some of the most amazing scenery on the planet.

Unexpected was the long-term impact on the participants, the volunteer flight instructors, support personnel and pretty much everyone in the company. These young adults have a unique quality, a spark, a love for life beyond anything I've ever seen. The comradery built between the participants over a short week is amazing, and the close relationships built with the instructors are life-long. Lives have truly been changed through this program. Participants were able to experience the freedom of flight and finally take control. Some have even pursued a career in aviation that before would have never dreamed it possible.

Volunteer CFI's (certified flight instructors) are also forever changed by the experience, with new friends, and a new outlook on life. This week embodies the mission, purpose and passion of Summit Aviation, "improving lives through extraordinary aviation experiences." ←

For more information on Summit Aviation and the Cancer Survivor Flight Camp, please visit: flysummit.com

A TESTIMONIAL FROM JASON GRAFEL, CHARTER CAPTAIN, SUMMIT AVIATION

"At 34, I began studying for flight training after leaving active military service. I completed my training at Summit Aviation and worked towards an aviation associate's degree at Montana State University. A year later, I graduated and earned my flight instructor certification. Summit Aviation hired me, and over the next few years, I taught students how to fly. During my tenure as an instructor, I had the opportunity to learn about safety management, mountain flying and became an assistant chief flight instructor.

When Summit expanded its Part 135 charter operation and was looking for pilots, I jumped at the chance. I spent 2017 in the Middle East with the Montana National Guard aboard a medical evacuation helicopter, after which I trained on the Embraer Phenom 300, flying as First Officer. In 2019, I upgraded to Captain and flew the Phenom 300 for Summit's Part 135 charter operation. Currently, I am Co-Captain on the Praetor 600.

I recently celebrated my 10th anniversary of flying, and on reflection, I haven't had to 'go to work' in over 10 years because I love what I do. I am surrounded by the most professional and safety-conscious people I have ever known and I am flying a top-of-the-line airplane in a well-maintained fleet. As a pilot, I couldn't ask for anything more."



Left page
Summit Aviation President, Ben Walton during Summit Aviation's Annual Cancer Survivor Flight Camp

Right page
The Phenom 300E can cover small and large distances while offering great performance during take-off in mountainous terrain