

LOW COST & REGIONAL airline business

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E2

The prophesied return

Transavia French style



High-tech power



Ryanair delivers



Pilot training



Nick Godwin

Managing Director, Commssoft

Nick Godwin graduated from Southampton University in the UK with a degree in mechanical engineering. His career started in 1980 with British Aerospace, where he worked for 23 years.

Nick was part of the team that helped create Aero International Regional, a joint venture with ATR, based in Toulouse, France. Nick also served for nine years as an elected board member of the European Regions Airline Association. In 2004 he became Marketing Director at Civil Aviation for Data Systems and Solutions, a subsidiary of Rolls-Royce.

Nick joined Commssoft as Business Development Director in May 2008, where he was responsible for winning new customer business, growing the existing customer base and securing professional relationships.

In November 2011, Nick was appointed Managing Director of the company.



(photo: Commssoft)

What is your earliest memory in aviation?

Aviation has been in my blood from an early age. At around four years old, I vividly remember clambering around an RAF Avro Shackleton in Luqa, Malta, where my father was active aircrew. Then there were various passenger flights to and from Malta, including on a British Eagle DC-6, complete with a shut down of one engine once during flight (the DC-6A is now, I believe, with Atlantic in Coventry), an RAF Blackburn Beverley, BEA Comet 4Bs and Viscounts. Since then, I have amassed almost 5,000 passenger flights and 10,000 hours travel, from over 550 airfields, during the various stages of my career.

What attracted you to the aviation industry?

I was surrounded by aviation with my dad being in the RAF, my uncle an air traffic controller and my aunt a hostess with British Midland at Glasgow Airport. My early career was spent as a Sales Engineer with British Aerospace on the BAC1-11 and BAe 146 at Brooklands, Weybridge. I then progressed to the launch of the Jetstream 31 and 41 regional airliners to Prestwick, Scotland, and I spent time with BAe Inc in Washington DC. My career took me back to Scotland and then to Toulouse in a joint venture with ATR, before returning to the Derby area with a Rolls-Royce subsidiary.



Somon Air, a private airline based in Dushanbe, Tajikistan, has selected OASES (photo: Boeing)

I have been blessed to have been able to enjoy the dynamic mix of both business and technical content, along with travel and the chance to experience many cultures worldwide.

Which other aviation industry Chief Executive Officer do you admire and why?

There are several CEOs or industry leaders that one can admire in our business, but for me, Sir Richard Branson at Virgin Atlantic serves as a reminder that surviving in a tough business, with oppressive competitors, can be done effectively with the right customer approach and a friendly, differentiating USP.

There are many parallels with Commssoft's approach to business in the MRO IT sector, where some of our main competitors have forgotten what business value looks like to the smaller start-up or fast changing customer, forgetting the importance of fairness with a friendly face when doing business. For me, it is critical to retain personality in doing business, whilst offering a response that is agile to customers' needs, whether they are facing happy or seriously challenging circumstances.

At Commssoft, this is central to our business ethic and is engrained in all of the team. We do not hide behind expensive catalogue prices or dispassionate robotic processes, as all of our customers are valued as friends.

How significant are MRO IT systems for airlines today?

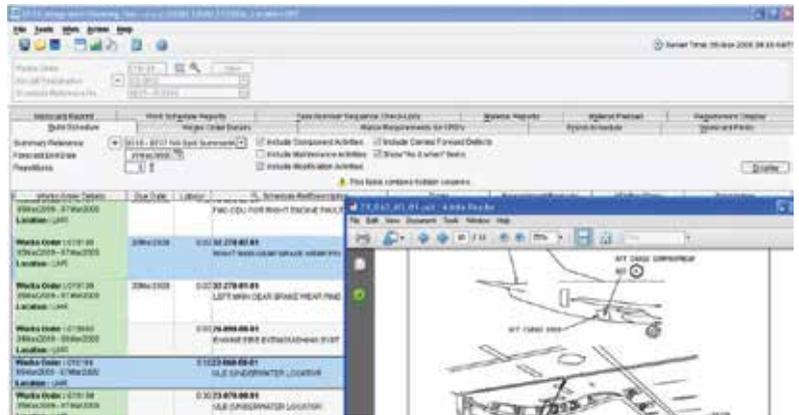
MRO IT systems like OASES have become central to maintaining effective aviation maintenance and engineering operations. Key to this is the ability to demonstrate compliance with a strict regulatory environment, covering: maintenance planning; airworthiness directives and service bulletins; inventory controls; reliability; production tracking; and financial management for all aspects of line and base or heavy maintenance.

MRO IT systems have become critical to business integrity, often interfacing with operations, HR and finance systems, as well as mobile devices such as electronic tech logs, which significantly increase data accuracy and speed. This, alongside the ability to present information in user-customised formats, allows aviation operations to better predict events, thus avoiding expensive failures and providing the ability to optimise efficiencies.

Closed-loop design principles mean that extensive auditing and quality control tools can be embedded, allied to powerful reporting to various stakeholders, such as lessors, owners, aviation authorities and senior management.

In what ways can airlines apply Commssoft's OASES system?

The Commssoft OASES system can be used for all aspects



of line and base maintenance, covering main elements, such as:

- Capture of flight technical and component removal data
- Control airworthiness (CAMO)
- AMP revision management
- Enhance reliability and repetitive defect tracking
- Extensive stakeholder reporting
- Produce maintenance packages, work packs and work scopes
- Buy, sell and control materials
- Hangar maintenance
- Line maintenance
- Warranty management
- Interfaces to operations, HR and finance systems
- Shop floor production control
- Commercial and quotations management

MRO IT systems have become critical to business integrity
(photo: Commssoft)

How does OASES help airlines establish their own AOC and CAMO approvals?

Commssoft employs an expert team of implementation specialists, who are well versed in aviation CAMO requirements from various countries, allied with expert knowledge of OASES and industry work flows and processes. This expertise is central to all new implementations, helping us advise the best and most timely fit of specific OASES features to a customer's operation. Commssoft deploys comprehensive data importation tools which highlight any past data anomalies and errors, thus cleansing the data and ensuring greater accuracy going forward, whilst also saving significant amounts of customer resources and associated costs.

These elements are offered with a very friendly, 'hand-in-glove' fit of value needs to our customers, who we regard as members of an extended family. The softer elements of our business approach, with its transparency and commercial flexibility, have been vital in both building an extensive customer base and in delivering additional hidden value benefits. ▶

Overall, it is this commercial and technical flexibility which sets Commssoft apart from other industry suppliers.

What are the benefits to low-cost and regional carriers?

The key success factors for regional and low-cost carriers have been technical flexibility with fair 'organic' pricing, with customers only paying for the functional modules and concurrent users that they, in effect, utilise every day; resulting in greater engineering value overall.

A start-up customer might start with five concurrent users (with unlimited actual users) with the core, airworthiness and planning modules for critical CAMO activities, then they might add inventory and purchasing capabilities, with line and heavy maintenance aspects following later as the user count grows in line with the airline's maturing growth.

OASES can be offered via private cloud, customer-based standalone servers, or it can be virtualised across an established customer IT network. Pricing is offered as equalised monthly payments for the combination of concurrent users and the modules deployed, with professional web-based support tools and personalised account management included in the base fee, along with continuous FOC upgrades to functionality to modules which the customer subscribes to.

This, allied with Commssoft's core USP of personalised, friendly support, ensures that the customer's OASES system is always current with the latest developments and that pricing is fair.

Commssoft also has an aggressive policy of continuous functional development of OASES, as directed by the OASES user group meetings and supported by frequent structured customer feedback via the OASES Service desk.

Slovakia-based Go2Sky recently chose the OASES application for its Boeing 737 fleet. What focus are you putting on Eastern Europe and emerging markets?

Commssoft's OASES offering has proven to be very attractive to airlines, CAMOs and MROs in Eastern and Central Europe, with over 35 of our customers being in this region.

Commssoft is similarly targeting regions such as Southeast Asia and Africa, which have similar market drivers. This has been aided by a strong network of established CAMO users of OASES, who have helped to expose the system to many new markets, sometimes aiding with start-up operations and the transition to OASES.

The combination of value-generating features and pricing noted above, together with the specialist implementation resources, has been vital to this on-going success.

Maintenance predictability is increasingly vital for all airlines. Does OASES factor this in?

Maintenance predictability is our core *raison d'être* at Commssoft with OASES. Aside from the importance of business value, highlighted before, OASES ensures compliance to regulations with its powerful planning tools, extensive AMP revision management and AD/SB evaluation facilities. This ensures that the airline is always fully in control of airworthiness processes, supported by easy reporting and intuitive ease of use features. As already noted, the aviation records environment demands detailed security controls with allied audit and transaction logging capabilities.

In OASES's case, there is the additional massive benefit of extensive reliability management reporting and tools, including repetitive defect alerting, which can link seemingly disparate events on different aircraft in a multitude of operating locations, thus allowing the identification of urgent rectification actions.

What's next on the horizon at Commssoft?

When I joined the company in 2008 we had around 30 active customers and 22 staff. Since then, we have embarked upon a successful strategy to focus on the customer, with professional support, flexible commercial and technical offerings, coupled with a more aggressive development approach. This has seen us grow to around 70 active OASES sites, supporting over 100 aviation operations, in 42 countries, with around 45 staff worldwide.

Commssoft has committed to new functionality for commercial and quotations management for MROs, new resources optimisation features, plus extensive deployments of new interfaces with other best-of-breed IT systems and mobile devices, all aimed at airlines and corporate aviation users alike. These are designed to keep OASES competitive and we will continue to aggressively respond to our growing customer base's diverse needs.

I would expect to see more successes in new regions and hope to stretch our success from Europe to further build in North America and Australasia, amongst others. ■

Maintenance predictability is also factored in
[photo: Commssoft]

