

Marubeni Aerospace Corporation

JAPAN'S
LEADING
AVIATION
COMPANY



- Gulfstream Representative
- Aircraft Management
- Aircraft Charter Service
- Aircraft Maintenance



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SERVICES FOR ALL AVIATION REQUIREMENTS

INTERVIEW WITH **CHIE MATSUOKA**, ASSISTANT GENERAL
MANAGER, MARUBENI AEROSPACE CORPORATION

Interview by Litalia Yoakum

Marubeni Aerospace Corporation was created in 1998 when one of the world's largest trading companies, Marubeni Corporation, inherited the trade rights to the aerospace division of Okura & Co. Today, the Tokyo-based aerospace company specializes in business jets, engines and equipment for helicopters and aircraft, advanced materials, and space and defense equipment, all to further develop the Japanese business aviation market.



“We started cooperating with the US authority for air operator’s certificates (AOC), as many of our owners have US-registered aircraft, to assist with our owner’s aircraft operations,” explains Matsuoka.

On a local level, the company pleaded with local airports and prefectures, on behalf of the industry, for more business aviation space. “In 2009, with the cooperation of Chubu Centrair International Airport in Nagoya, a business jet-dedicated hangar was built, where we now help to provide line maintenance and AOG support

through MJ Jet Center. These mechanics can be dispatched to the other local airports including Narita and Okayama. Additionally, MJ Jet Center has secured hangar space at the Haneda airport, where AOG maintenance can be performed round-the-clock, as well.”

“As a one-stop-shop supplier, Marubeni Aerospace provides multiple services to meet the requirements of all our customers, including consulting on aircraft acquisitions, aircraft sales and aircraft management support through Jet Aviation Flight Services,” says Assistant General Manager, Chie Matsuoka. “We can also arrange hangar space and aircraft charter.” A partnership with the local maintenance company Japcon Inc., branded as MJ Jet Center, further supports aircraft owners’ maintenance needs.

As the only Gulfstream Aerospace Corporation sales representative in Japan, Marubeni Aerospace began as one of the few companies that saw the potential in the country’s business aviation market.

“When we started out, only a few aircraft owners had Gulfstream jets,” says Matsuoka. “The infrastructure was not friendly and there were no hangars available to store our Gulfstream jets in the country. Haneda Airport, which is one of the largest airports in Japan, did not allow for business aviation use during daytime hours. We had to locate a hangar in Guam, for Japanese owners. If a client required a long-range aircraft charter, we needed to arrange that from the US.”

After seeing new aircraft owners left to fend for themselves, Marubeni Aerospace realized the need for additional support. “There was no operator available to support owners, just as there was no hangar or mechanic. Japanese owners purchasing a Gulfstream jet were first-time buyers, who did not have experience on how to manage and operate their new aircraft.”

Helping the industry grow and helping clients enjoy their jet, stress-free, led to the company’s present-day services.

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With Marubeni Aerospace the help doesn't stop there. As a representative of Jet Aviation, which provides maintenance, completions and refurbishment, FBO, aircraft charter, management and staffing support, Marubeni can truly provide all the services a client requires.

"Apart from the rotary market, business aviation in Japan is still immature and in a developing stage," explains Matsuoka, discussing the work that still needs to be done in the industry. "Over the past few years the market has grown. The number of JA-registered aircraft is increasing, albeit in limited numbers, while the number of ultra-long range jets continues to grow."

Even with increased activity and operational support, the challenges remain. "The public image of the [fixed-wing] business aviation sector is still negative," says Matsuoka. "The business jet is vilified by the public as a luxury for select wealthy people. Because of this, several publicly-listed companies are hesitating to purchase a business jet, with the impression that shareholders may find a business jet to be an excessive luxury."

With the Japanese Government now more aware of the economic impact of business aviation, Marubeni Aerospace is working toward educating the public, particularly businesses, on the benefits of a business jet as a business tool, used for efficiency, with the potential to save time and money.

Working closely with the Japan Business Aviation Association (JBAA) since 2010 has allowed the aerospace company to continue its effort in promoting the use of business jets and the subsequent need for business aviation infrastructure in Japan.

Continuing the endeavor to develop this industry, Marubeni Aerospace is committed to providing its clients with the best expertise and customer service. "No one is able to provide tip-to-tail support like us. As representatives for both Gulfstream and Jet Aviation, two global leaders in the industry, we provide world-class, quality service, along with local expertise."

The upcoming 2019 Rugby World Cup and 2020 Olympic and Paralympic games in Japan are major events in the country, providing the industry an opportunity to showcase its full capacity. "We expect the industry to grow by the time these big events arrive. The growing industry will then give Marubeni Aerospace the opportunity to further enhance our capabilities and services for our customers."

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