

# Acknowledging Our Fellow Industry Professionals

**H**aving just completed the 2014 NBAA Convention in Orlando, I am again struck with what wonderful professionals fill this industry. Not just fellow brokers but a vast network of other service providers in the lending sector, legal and tax, maintenance and modification professionals, and on, and on. So much of the business each of us enjoys - regardless of the segment - comes from referrals. As I walked the halls of the convention center I stopped often to shake a hand and say 'thank you' to those people who have generously referred clients to us. If I did not bump into you in Orlando, then let me use this article to say thank you!

Not to dwell on the success of the show since many articles have been written to do so, I want to offer a few words to express my pride at being associated with such a great industry. I am sure all of you that were in attendance both in the hall and the static display would feel as I do. This aviation industry of ours is not just global but filled with great people. For me, I am filled with pride to have attended this year with our entire staff which just happens to include my wife and sons. It is hard to express the joy of seeing friends who have been in this industry as long as I have and who now also attend with their families who work in their businesses.

Back to the meat of this article: Great relationships. These should provide benefits in both directions. As an aircraft broker we do not always get the opportunity to give attorney referrals or lending referrals. Often the lender has a prior relationship and a large corporation or high net worth individual comes to the table with them. Even the aviation attorney is often sourced prior to the broker being hired. How do you pave the two way street then? How does each person in a relationship give back rather than just take?

I believe there's an easy answer that we all sometimes forget. When we are reminded we realize we are all already enriching every relationship we are in. Recently I had an

aviation attorney that I have worked with for years call me to ask for feedback on a group of very specific niche market brokers. It was clear that he was not considering me for the project and rightfully so, but he did have trust and confidence that I could help him find the best group for the job. He trusted that I would be non-biased with my answers.

The confidence in the answers I could provide for him by tapping into my network was rewarded. The input proved valuable as it helped him speak with a high degree of expertise to his client. So here was a

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situation that allowed me to give back.

I described the help I provided to a friend and he likened it to a term developed in the late 1990s called the 'Expert Network Model'. Developed around institutional investments and consulting, the Expert Network Model is about creating a network of experts, skill-sets categorized, and tapped into when needed. After all, none of us can be well versed in everything. Spending a career developing relationships with other experts to tap into is one of the ways we differentiate ourselves from others.

The strength of our Expert Network is impactful. Being able to use this resource to not just help our clients but equally to help

our fellow industry professionals is huge. In fact one of the main reasons we at our company attend events like NBAA's BACE and other International aviation events is to expand our Expert Network.

Finding aviation, legal and tax professionals who are versed in different regions of the world is critical to our growth beyond our borders. Not to mention the value to our clients as we source and sell their aircraft globally.

Being generous with this network can grow your relationships very positively. When a friend calls with a request for sourcing a specific skill and they ask me for advice or an introduction I always help when I can. This sharing of the Network can have enormous benefit to the friend that is calling as they impart this find on their client to help them create a better outcome.

I wish I had more opportunities to provide actual referrals back to those who refer us. On the occasions that we are asked, we are thrilled to return the opportunity for business.

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