

System Speeds Data Access for Jet Plane Broker

ROCKVILLE, Md. — The need was simple and straightforward: a computer system with a data base that could be accessed and updated by non-DPERS while being overseen by a data processing department consisting of one person.

Meeting that need was the task facing Omni International Jet Trading Corp., a trading company whose main commodity is jet

planes.

According to Wayne Hilmer, company chairman, Omni needed to provide its brokers on the trading floor with easy access to a myriad of information about the jets they were selling. Those departments at Omni responsible for providing up-to-the-minute information about jets, such as purchasing, research and sales, would be charged with responsibility

for entering the information themselves, as there were no data entry clerks when the system was planned.

Up until that time, brokers, researchers and marketing department employees kept separate paper files of information, none of which was as timely or as thorough as management wanted it to be. Nor was the information easily obtained. A broker had to ask a caller to wait un-

til the information he sought was retrieved from a file. Time was wasted while the broker searched for the file needed.

In some cases, the information had never been compiled because it was too time-consuming or awkward to use.

After scanning hardware offerings from several vendors, Omni settled on the purchase of an IBM System/

38 mid-range business computer, which DP Manager Deborah Reynolds described as "very user-friendly." Other hardware in Reynolds' shop includes 32 CRT terminals, including IBM 5251s and 5291s, two IBM 5256 Model 3 printers, a Nippon Electric Co. letter-quality printer and an IBM 3370 disk drive.

Proprietary software called Omni-Tel was designed in-house by Reynolds. Omni-Tel helps brokers track the data they need to build sales, Hilmer said. For example, when a jet's owner engages Omni to market his plane, the company can use the System/38 to prepare and print a written message called an Omni-gram to previously identified prospective buyers.

Or perhaps a salesman needs to know the number and availability of a particular make of jet with no more than 1,200 hours of flight time logged. He can summon the information he needs from one of Omni's 27 terminals, selecting the file he wants from a limited menu after inputting simple log-on commands.

By pressing two keys, the salesman can produce a list of all such jets available. Also displayed are the present owner, hours flown, location of the planes and their histories of past sales and equipment installed.

This type of information is valuable to the client as well, Hilmer said. The owner of one make of jet, for example, may want to buy a larger plane whose manufacturer will not accept a trade-in. Omni will act to sell the trade-in and underwrite the transaction. The plane owner wishing to sell may be asking too high or too low a price. But he won't have to wait long to find that out, Hilmer said, since the information is readily available to Omni with the history of sales and purchases of this type of plane a few keystrokes away.

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