

GROUND SUPPORT WORLDWIDE

June/July 2012

Bill Jacob, vice president, airline ground support equipment for UPS Airlines, oversees the acquisition, engineering and maintenance of 32,000 pieces of GSE that support a \$53 billion dollar global brand.

Lifetime Achievement Award: Page 12

BILL JACOB

From turning wrenches to advocating green technology – and mentoring countless mechanics along the way – Bill Jacob has spent 40 years promoting the GSE industry.



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A Great Leap Forward

Should our aviation industry be more like China's? Or should China's be more like ours?



STEVE SMITH

More planes are flying with passengers in every seat. Mergers have cut costs. Ticket prices are up. Fuel prices are down.

These are good, if not at least better, times for the airlines. So it was interesting to hear a radio interview with Delta Air Lines CEO Richard Anderson who came out in favor of letting the U.S. government adopt a national airline policy.

Not a return to old-fashioned regulation, mind you, but fixes to air traffic, reductions in taxes and, somehow, letting this public policy plan still be nimble enough to let the free market determine the industry's direction.

In other words, we should be more like China.

Today's China is a far cry from the Chairman Mao days. But the country never did give up on its five-year economic plans. Right now, the Chinese are on their 12th five-year plan. And part of this plan centers on turning the country into an aviation powerhouse.

For example, the country plans to build 70 airports in three years and expand 100 existing airports. Chinese carriers are expected to operate 4,700 planes by 2015.

That's great news to Boeing and Airbus, but the Chinese don't want to just be consumers. The plan also includes pouring trillions of dollars into building home-grown rivals to Boeing ... and Airbus ... and Gulf Stream ... and Cessna.

Much of this great leap forward is chronicled in a new book, "China Airborne," by journalist and pilot James Fallows.

Fallows thinks the aviation industry is China's one-way, first-class ticket out of simply being shameless copy cats and day laborers for the world's best-known brand names.

"China's aerospace future is a test case for its economic and technological development as a whole," he writes.

Fallows says China brings two advantages to its rather late start to build an industry that took much of the rest of the world the past century to develop:

- 1.) Its commercial airline fleet consists of new, fuel-efficient planes.
- 2.) The Chinese are skipping over old-fashioned radar and heading straight to "NextGen" GPS navigation systems.

Fallows, however, also points out the stifling contradictions of its regressive political genes.

There's no Chinese FAA, but there is the Chinese military that controls the country's airspace.

Flights out its showcase international airports in Shanghai and Beijing are often delayed for hours for purely military reasons.

If that wasn't bad enough, many domestic flights are kept at altitudes of as little as 10,000 feet.

"The reason this matters is it's a little distillation of the struggle for China in general," Fallows writes. "Almost everything about China's next step up the economic and cultural and technological ladder requires relaxation of some government control, some military control. Question is how that balance will be struck."

In other words, China may have to be more like us.

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Business Buzz

Marketer Applies For Patent:

Armed Forces Marketing Consultants, Inc. has filed a patent for its Impact Energy Absorption System™, a mechanical device that uses automotive-type steering to preclude damage to towed vehicles and tow bars.

Multibillion Dollar Contribution:

Airlines for America and the International Air Transport Association joined forces on a study about the economic effect of the airline industry on the United States. U.S. airlines directly contribute \$64.7 billion to GDP and indirectly contribute another \$70.5 billion.

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Calendar of Events:

June 14-15

Overview of Aviation Safety Management Systems

Tampa, FL

<http://atcvantage.com/>

June 18-20

10th 3PL Summit

Chicago, IL

<http://events.eyefortransport.com/3pl>

July 16-19

FAA National Small Business and IT Shared Services Partnership & Training Conference

Atlantic City, NJ

<https://itissconference.faa.gov/index.cfm?method=conference.overview>

July 23-29

EAA AirVenture

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Southwest Gets OK For HOU:

Southwest Airlines received approval from the Houston City Council for a proposed international terminal at William P. Hobby Airport. United Airlines, which opposed the plan, says \$600 million in planned infrastructure investment at George Bush Intercontinental Airport is now in jeopardy.

Common Security Plan:

The European Commission and the U.S. Transportation Security Administration formally recognized each other's air cargo security programs. The agreement is the culmination of seven years of effort by regulators and industry stakeholders to achieve alignment of air cargo security measures.

ASIG Signs Engine Wash Deal With GE Aviation

ASIG signed an exclusive agreement to become GE Aviation's third-party service provider for ClearCore engine wash systems for commercial and military engines in the United States.

GE Aviation will provide its mobile ClearCore engine wash units to ASIG in support of ASIG's service

provider agreements with many U.S. airports. ASIG's will launch the service at airports in California and Florida and then expand to airports in other major U.S. cities.

The mobile units enable operators to quickly and easily clean surface contaminants, like dust and other environmental deposits, from inner



ASIG will launch the service at airports in California and Florida and then expand to airports in other major U.S. cities.

aircraft engine components to maximize operating efficiency.

TSA Sets Cargo Deadline:

The Transportation Security Administration announced that beginning Dec. 3, all cargo shipments loaded on passenger aircraft must undergo screening for explosives.

PAX Traffic Up: The International Air Transport Association announced global traffic results for April showing that total passenger demand rose 6 percent while freight demand was 4 percent down compared with April 2011.

Jasper Earns Excellence Award:

Jasper Engines & Transmissions was recently recognized for performance excellence as a secondary repair supplier within the Raytheon Technical Service Company for its remanufactured diesel engines and transmissions for military Humvees.

United To Handle Handling: United Airlines announced that ground handling work currently performed by outside vendors at airports in Florida; New York; Michigan and California will be done by United employees.

Servisair Wins Grand Slam: Delta Airlines presented Servisair Dublin with its Grand Slam Award. The award recognizes safety and environmental marks, and is the first time a European station has won the award in two years.



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Partnerships/ Acquisitions/ Contracts

Airline Picks ATS 4th Time: Airport Terminal Services announced Virgin America has appointed ATS as its full service provider for above and below wing handling at Portland International Airport. This is the fourth location that the two companies have worked together.

Swissport Buys Flightcare: Swissport acquired Flightcare Spain and Flightcare Belgium from FCC Versia, expanding Swissport's network in Spain and allowing it to become a full-service provider at Brussels Airport by adding ground handling services to its portfolio.

Velcon Buys Warner Lewis: Velcon Filters, LLC, acquired Warner Lewis GmbH. Headquartered in Germany, Warner Lewis offers aircraft refueling

Lift-A-Loft Ships New Catering Trucks

Lift-A-Loft began delivering 20 new catering vehicles to airports in New York, Atlanta and Chicago.

The FBCT Series will mostly be used for servicing RJs, but a front access lift is also available, allowing the unit to service aircraft with doorsills as high as 12 feet 6 inches.

Offering a very tight turning radius, the FBCT is built on a durable Lift-A-Loft chassis and has a cargo box that measures 12 inches long x 6 feet, 11 inches wide with 76 inches of interior height. The unit can carry 2,500 lbs. of cargo and is equipped with a translucent roof and LED lighting.

Other features include a cab-mounted monitor with backup camera and a remote backup system that is cable-mounted and located at the rear of the vehicle. This system allows an operator full visibility while backing away from the aircraft.

The FBCT Series will mostly be used for servicing RJs, but a front access lift is also available.



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solutions to customers in Europe, the Middle East and Africa.

Cavotec Deal With LED: Cavotec will manufacture and install 90 in-ground electrical power units and converter systems as part of a modernization program at Pulkovo International Airport, one of Russia's fastest-growing airports.

ASIG Renews At SFB: TBI Airport Management, Inc. has renewed its agreement with ASIG for comprehensive airside support services at Orlando Sanford International Airport for an additional term. ASIG provides full ramp handling, cabin cleaning, passenger handling services, commissary services and aircraft refueling to all of the carriers operating at the airport's domestic terminal.

Servisair Buys Handlex: Servisair Holding Canada Inc., bought Handlex,

the ground handling unit of Transat A.T. Inc. Handlex serves 20 airlines at Canada's three largest airports.

People In The News

Mark Edwards has been appointed CEO of dnata's Singapore operation. Edwards succeeds Georgie Ong, who is retiring after more than 30 years with the ground handling firm. Edwards has more than 30 years of experience in the air services industry at some of the world's busiest airports including London Heathrow, Munich, Bangkok and London Gatwick. Prior to the appointment, Edwards was the senior vice president of ASIG and responsible for the worldwide business development of the company.

Signature Flight Support named **Steve Gulvin**, regional vice president



Steve Gulvin

of sales for the EMEA (Europe, the Middle East and Africa) region, and announced the creation of a dedicated EMEA sales team to offer customized fuel, ground handling, concierge and aircraft storage services. Gulvin was appointed regional vice president of sales for the EMEA region in 2011 having previously held the position of regional vice president of European operations since joining the company in 2005. Joining Gulvin, will be **Andrea Hopkins**, sales manager for mainland Europe; **Karl Bowles**, sales manager for the Middle East; and **Julian Moller**, sales manager for the United Kingdom and Ireland.

Edward Neyer was appointed director of dealer operations for Toyota

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David Kuhns

Kuhns comes to PrimeFlight from Eulen America, a supplier of labor and management solutions for the airline industry.

Howard May was appointed president of Schwarze Industries Inc. Joining May is **Greg Heyer** who was appointed vice president of sale and marketing. Also, **Joe Hendrickson**, international business manager will now also lead the dealer and contractor sales force. Finally, **Brenda Bell** was promoted to customer service manager.



Bobby Asbill

Asbill was promoted to station manager at Matheson Flight Extenders' Las Vegas operation. He will be taking over for Luis Cartagena who announced his retirement after 36 years at United Airlines and five years at Matheson.

Bosserman Aviation Equipment Inc. added several new employees to its staff. **Robert Linthicum** joined the company as quality assurance manager after serving in the military in Iraq and Afghanistan. **John Horton** is director of business development and will focus on government and military contracts among other new markets. **Seth Beekman** is an engineer who is credited to introducing Bosserman to 3D assemblies. **Nicole Perkins** is customer service manager.



Martin Sodergard

Thysels who will take the position of vice president of cargo operation for Europe. **Alan Wright** was also named vice president of integrator handling and hub outsourcing.

Martin Sodergard was appointed senior vice president of cargo operations for Swissport International. Sodergard takes over for **Guy**

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Visit AviationPros.com for exclusive online blog content from editor Steve Smith and independent air safety consultant and former NTSB board member John Goglia.

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China's Sky-High Aviation Ambitions

Country's plans go farther than 32,000 feet.

More On Delta's Oil Deal

Should the airline buy a peanut farm to supply snacks?

by Steve Smith

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More staff on the ramp to 'protect' aircraft.

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by John Goglia

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Bill Jacob, vice president, airline ground support equipment for UPS Airlines, oversees the acquisition, engineering and maintenance of 32,000 pieces of GSE that supports a \$53 billion dollar global brand.

All Photos Courtesy of UPS Airlines



Lifetime Achievement Award:

BILL JACOB

From turning wrenches to advocating green technology – and mentoring countless mechanics along the way – Bill Jacob has spent 40 years promoting the GSE industry.

By Steve Smith

Even after 24 years, Bill Jacob knows the exact date he started at UPS – Jan. 6, 1988. “It’s emblazoned in my head,” he says. “It was a monumental change.”

He was 38 years old at the time, had worked for Eastern Air Lines for the past 16 years, turning wrenches and then teaching countless new mechanics to do the same and was supervising GSE operations for the airline’s premier hub at Hartsfield Airport.

Now, here he was taking a job as a GSE mechanic – exactly where he’d started out his career – temporarily leaving behind his wife, a 10-year-old and a 4-year-old, plus a nice house in Atlanta, GA, to move into a rented one-bedroom apartment in Louisville, KY.

“I was a journeyman GSE mechanic all over again,” Jacob says.

But what a place to be one. His new employer, UPS, had just started its own airline and established a hub at Louisville International Airport. And in just a few years, Worldport would open – eventually all 5.2 million square feet of it.

If you were going to work your way up again, this was the time and the place.

UPS also believes in promoting from within. And soon enough, the powers that be, including the executive whose job Jacob currently has, recognized this new mechanic could do much more.

William J. Jacob, vice president, airline ground support equipment for UPS Airlines, oversees the acquisition, engineering and maintenance of 32,000 pieces of GSE and has spent 40 years in the industry.

It was that dedication to the GSE industry that earned him our magazine’s Lifetime Achievement Award.

“Bill was always looking forward with his vision for the GSE industry, especially in the area of environmentally friendly equipment,” said one of his nominators. “As a personal mentor to all new-comers to the world of GSE, he’s shared that vision and has been a leader both within UPS as well as to GSE manufacturers around the globe.”

GREEN GSE

UPS plans to cut its carbon footprint by 20 percent by 2020. The company already boasts the largest private fleet of alternative-fueled vehicles. UPS has experimented with a number of different technologies for its trucks, including electric, CNG, LNG, propane, electric hybrid and hydraulic hybrid.

UPS Airlines, however, is also the world’s ninth largest airline with 500 airplanes engaged in almost 2,000 flights each day. Jacob, a well-known proponent of green GSE, has made sure that his operations play a big part in the company’s environmental initiatives.

Here’s what he had to say in a 2009 interview with *Ground Support Worldwide*:



UPS installed two biodiesel tanks at Worldport last March to provide customized fuel for about 200 diesel-powered GSE.

“The last trend has been coming for many years — the need for transportation companies to consider the environment in daily operations. At UPS, we realize the need for more environmentally friendly fuels, more efficient equipment uses and we are exploring new technologies and methods to reduce our impact on the environment. There are challenges associated with such enhancements, including additional costs, but our industry should continue to find solutions to benefit both the environment and business.”

Here are a few highlights we’ve also covered in past issues:

- Repowered more than 90 tugs running for a decade on their original

Eastern Air Lines

Jacob grew up a self-acknowledged “gear head” who loved the automobiles Detroit was turning out in the 1960s. He spent four years in the Navy (“I wanted to be a mechanic, but the Navy made me a radio man.”) and worked briefly at a chemical company in his native Long Island upon discharge in 1972.

Meanwhile, his father worked for Eastern Air Lines at John F. Kennedy Airport and told his son about 10 GSE mechanic openings. Jacob ended up working for Eastern for the next 15 years rising in the ranks to GSE supervisor:

**1972
to
1977**

1972-1977 – GSE mechanic mostly stationed at the JFK’s old Hanger 9.

GSE maintenance instructor at the airline’s Miami operations. (Jacob gets recognized for the first time for an ability to teach others to turn wrenches. It marks the first opportunity to mentor his fellow mechanics.)

**1977
to
1980**

**1980
to
1988**

GSE fleet supervisor at the Hartsfield Airport. (“Not a lot of people remember this, but Eastern at one time had just as big a presence in Atlanta as Delta does today.”)

- diesel engines with new 2.8-liter, four-cylinder gasoline engines.
- Installed electric GPUs to supply parked aircraft with ground power, eliminating almost 26 mobile, diesel-powered GPUs.
- Stationed electric cargo loaders at Worldport, including models that regenerate their batteries each time the loader is moved up or down.
- Also, repowered more than 100 gasoline-powered vehicles stationed in California with lower-emission gasoline engines per state regulations.

Let's take a look at what Jacob has done lately:

- Biodiesel:** UPS installed two biodiesel tanks at Worldport last March to provide customized fuel for about 200 diesel-powered GSE.

One 30,000-gallon tank holds pure biodiesel made from Kentucky soybeans. The other 5,000-gallon tank holds ultra-low sulfur diesel.

The setup allows the company to blend fuel right at the pump ranging from 5 percent to 20 percent.

"Most companies will typically buy biodiesel that's already been blended directly by their suppliers," Jacob explains. "But we can blend this as we see fit."

Not only does the fuel burn cleaner, but Jacob says biodiesel's lubricating properties help the equipment last longer than straight diesel.

- Electric Cargo Tractors:** Jacob was also working with Corvus Energy and its North American supplier, GTA Aviation, to install the company's lithium ion batteries into two cargo tractors.

"Electric definitely has its niche," Jacob says. "But we haven't found the right performance with traditional lead acid batteries. We pull heavy loads – as much 32,000 pounds – and for long distances, too – as long as two miles."

Jacob plans to test the system at Worldport to see how the batteries stand up to cargo demands.

- LSI Rule:** Jacob is also building on an earlier accomplishment that we noted above in California. While the state's "low spark ignition" rule

UPS worldwide hub Worldport processes as many as 2 million packages a day. Support comes from more than 6,000 pieces of GSE.



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UPS Airlines

By the late-1980s, Eastern wasn't the company it once was. Competition and management misdeeds ultimately drove the company into bankruptcy. Jacob joined UPS, which had just launched its own airline in 1988. He starts out as a GSE mechanic in Louisville, KY. Four months later, however, he returns to teaching GSE mechanics.



Bill Jacob, Vice President, Airline Ground Support Equipment, UPS Airlines.

required the retrofit, Jacob is implementing it at Worldport, swapping out old Ford 300 cubic-inch gas engines for four-cylinder versions. "We're doing it in Louisville because we know we can save fuel – as much as 30 percent," he says. "Plus, the engines produce 85 percent less harmful emissions. So we can save money and it's the right thing to do for the environment." ■



Held various management positions, including another stint at teaching GSE repair and maintenance.

**1988
to
1990**

GSE division manager for the company's West Zone. The area included 50 airports in the country's West Coast, plus the Pacific Rim region. Jacob helped open new operations in South Korea and Japan.

**1990
to
1994**

GSE engineering manager.

**1994
to
2001**

**2001
to
2005**

Manager of UPS South New England District. His workforce was behind the wheel of one of 1,100 delivery trucks rather than tugs. ("That gave me an entirely different perspective by seeing the other side of 'air.'")

Vice President, Airline Ground Support Equipment, UPS Airlines.

**2005
to
Present**

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Bhadra Modernizes Ground Handling In India

Firm plans to replace the farm tractors commonly used at Indian airports by investing in talent, training, technology and \$75 million in new GSE.

By Steve Smith

Bhadra International India Ltd. is playing a major role in bringing world-class security and quality to ground handling services at India's international airports.

"Bhadra stands committed to provide the most professionally competent ground handling services by employing the most highly skilled staff and supplying ground support for our customer airlines that is efficient, safe and always on-time," says Prem Bajaj, the company's chairman.

Bhadra has bagged 15-year contracts for ground handling and cargo and even general aviation services with airlines at seven airports in Chennai, Kolkata, Calicut, Coimbatore, Trivandrum, Trichy and Mangalore.

The New Delhi-based company employs more than 2,500 trained, full-time workers and invested in \$75 million worth of new GSE stationed at its airports with much of the equipment powered by rechargeable batteries.

Before any aircraft arrive, the company holds a roll call to review

Bhadra employs more than 2,500 trained, full-time workers and invested in \$75 million worth of new GSE stationed at seven airports.



Uniformed ramp agents stand in line for a plane's arrival. Prospective recruits undergo a detailed selection procedure and then attend training according to specific roles once hired.

everyone's duties and schedules for the day ahead. Afterward, operators move to their respective vehicles and position them at the ready. At its Chennai facility, staff at a control room will be able to monitor and allocate GSE throughout the day thanks to onboard microchips that pinpoint locations. Uniformed ramp agents stand in line to prepare for the plane with military precision.

The Indian aviation market could use this precision. Here's what the headlines tell: Strikes. No paychecks for months. Pilots who call in "sick." Past due bills. Bankruptcy. Government bail-outs. Even COD for fuel delivery.

But it's been a mess on the ground for much longer. Until recently, the airlines primarily "self handled" ground handling. Most hired operators who did not comply with International Air Transport Association's standards and would be more accurately described as "Manpower" companies.

"Most airlines operating at our airports had resorted to cutting corners and outsourcing the work to fly-by-night operators who used absolutely untrained, part-time workers using outdated equipment," Bajaj explains.

Since most operators were essentially in the manual labor business, they had little need to invest in expensive GSE.





As a result, farm tractors were a common site on the apron.

Most importantly, however, this patchwork of temporary ground workers created a security nightmare for Indian airports. There was no way to effectively monitor personnel who had full access to a terminal to say nothing of the apron, hanger, cargo and aircraft.

Modernizing Indian ground handling would require millions of investment dollars, which the cash-strapped airlines did not have.

As a result, the government ultimately dictated that only Air India (a state-owned airline), its subsidiary Air India SATS Airports Services Private Ltd. – a joint venture between the airline and ground handler SATS – and Bhadra could carry out ground handling activities of foreign airlines at the country's airports.

TRAINING

As the government announced in 2007 its plans to update national ground handling standard, Bajaj partnered with Novia, a well-established 50-year-old Danish ground handler for technical and administrative support.

His staff undergoes a thorough selection procedure before being hired, and then attends step-by-step training according to specific roles once on board. Regular personal appraisals and incentive pay plans – something Bajaj says is not common to Indian business – ensure that dedicated and motivated workers produce their very best.

“This is truly a new work culture for us,” Bajaj adds. “We need to generate a professional approach among everyone to meet the expectations of airline customers and provide total satisfaction.”

Take, for example, Bhadra's approach to its safety management system. A dedicated officer oversees safety and undertakes internal audits every three months. In addition, external audits are done by airline customers every six months to grade performance levels. Feedback from these audits is then implemented at various levels of company operations.

“This has resulted in maintaining high standards of safety and on-time performance at all seven airports in our network,” Bajaj adds.

The company is also in the process of implementing the IATA's Safety Audit for Ground Operations to further boost its SMS efforts.

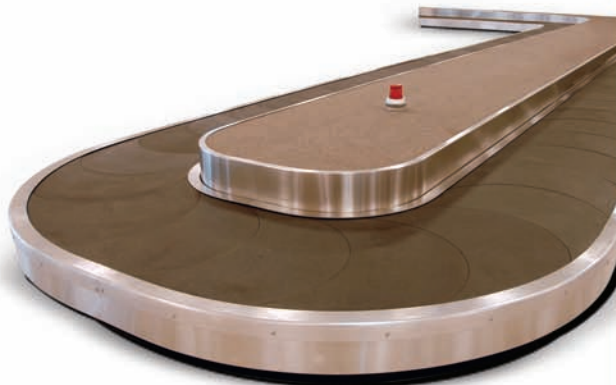
Bajaj has also invested in technology with “BhadraTech,” an online system that keeps better track of cargo and

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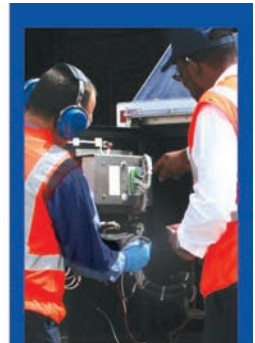


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equipment, and makes administrative duties, such as human resources and billing, that much easier.

BRAND-NEW GSE

Bhadra's GSE fleet includes new equipment such as Schopf pushbacks; Hitzinger GPUs; Rheinmetal air starts; TLD conveyors and auto steps; Hydro towbars; Trepel cargo loaders and transporters; and Trepel tugs.

To give you some sense of scale for this large GSE investment, here's the inventory at Chennai Airport:

- Fifteen passenger coaches.
- Fifteen pushbacks.
- Twenty step ladders.
- Fifteen conveyors.
- Fifteen main deck loaders for wide-body aircraft, eight low deck loaders for narrow-body aircraft.
- Forty-five tow bars.
- Ten GPUs.
- Fifteen cargo transporters.
- Seventy-five battery-operated tugs and tractors.

Despite current economic woes, India is one of the world's fastest-growing economies averaging an annual GDP growth rate of almost 6 percent over the past 20 years.

The Airports Council International expects the country to be the third largest aviation market by 2029.

For Bhadra's part, Bajaj says that the government's new ground handling policy covers some 40 airports throughout the country. And while he doesn't have a monopoly on the business, his inclusion in the government's initial ground handling plan of sanctioned vendors does put him in an advantageous spot to earn more business from what industry analysts estimate to be a \$540 million market.



Bhadra's GSE fleet includes these Trepel electric baggage tractors as well as Schopf pushbacks; Hitzinger GPUs; Rheinmetal air starts; TLD conveyors and auto steps; Hydro towbars; and Trepel cargo loaders and transporters.

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How To Play By The Same Rules

Regulatory inconsistency makes the simple act of ‘following procedures’ difficult.

By Katrina Avers, Ph.D., Research Scientist, FAA

In ground services, we strive for standardization and safety optimization in all procedures. But regulatory inconsistency contributes to documentation issues and failure to follow procedures.

There seems to be regional and even “inspector-specific” interpretation and enforcement of regulatory requirements.

For instance, regulatory oversight of technical publications in Kansas might not have the same documentation requirements as in Kentucky. Meanwhile, requirements in North Carolina may differ from North Dakota.

A panel of aviation industry and government officials recently met to identify challenges and prioritize solu-

tions for issues surrounding technical documentation and following procedures. (See “Procedures 101,” in the April 2012 issue of *Ground Support Worldwide* by Dr. Bill Johnson for more.)

After the two-day summit, the participants identified five challenges and discussed what could be done to solve them:

- FAA consistency regarding technical documentation.
- Content accuracy for users.
- Industry culture and professionalism.
- Business case for documentation improvement.
- Industry standards.

I’ll cover all of these challenges in future issues of *Ground Support Worldwide*, but let’s start with the first

on regulatory consistency – or, rather, inconsistency.

Panel members insisted that we all need to play by the same rules. They identified two key improvements for realizing solutions:

INFORMATION QUALITY

Aircraft, engine and ground support manufacturers have studied documentation quality and tried to use industry standards to create technical instructions. But many engineers who write technical directions, FAA inspectors who write evaluation guidelines and FAA inspectors who evaluate documents in the field are not consistent in their practices.

What these groups need is a valid, reliable and straightforward way to produce and evaluate technical documentation.

A great deal of human factors literature is available, some of it funded by FAA, regarding the design of paper and electronic documentation. If you develop or evaluate technical documentation, check out these resources on <https://hfskyway.faa.gov>.

CONSISTENT STANDARDS

Inconsistent communication of expectations regarding technical information is a key contributor.

Participants said the solution requires new regulations and guidance materials. These materials must be developed collaboratively with industry groups. Tools and training should be developed and applied in a manner that empowers both government and industry personnel to create and validate technical instructions.



Documentation issues and failure to follow procedures are among the most frequent error-prone hazards in the aviation system.

There must be more reliance on industry to assist in internal validation and acceptance of information systems.

The FAA has committed to improving relationships with stakeholders and communicating with employees exactly what is expected in its interactions with stakeholders and the public as part of the Aviation Safety (AVS) Consistency and Standardization Initiative (CSI).

The goals of the AVS CSI are to:

- promote early resolution of disagreements;
- promote consistency and fairness in applying FAA regulations and policies;
- encourage stakeholder feedback, including complaints;
- and enhance stakeholder satisfaction.

TO DO LIST

Documentation issues and failure to follow procedures are among the most frequent hazards in the aviation system.

Unfortunately, this problem is ingrained in aviation culture.

Solutions will require significant action by all stakeholders, including manufacturers, operators, government and individual employees. What can you do?

INDUSTRIAL ACTIONS

Commit to using existing guidance material to review and revise technical documentation – especially those known to be problematic.

- Strive for standardization among all documents.
- Use voluntary reporting systems to collect documentation challenges and their root causes.
- Manufacturers should strive to validate their written procedures.

GOVERNMENTAL ACTIONS

- Assign responsible parties to work the issue as a collaborative process.

- Analyze voluntary reporting data to identify common traits of poor documentation.
- Renew Advisory Circulars and other relevant guidance material for industry and inspectors.
- Fund research and development to reintroduce proper documentation practices.
- Create training courses for documentation development and evaluation.
- Create training courses for aviation safety inspectors involved in technical documentation development and oversight.
- Report all suboptimal work cards or manufacturer’s instruction to your management and to FAA.
- Use the Aviation Safety Action Program (ASAP), the Aviation Safety Reporting System (ASRS), Line Operation Safety Audit (LOSA), and other voluntary reporting systems to highlight all documentation challenges.

Methods to address hazards associated with poor documentation and work procedures are clear. Join together, take responsibility for problems, identify the root causes, develop viable solutions and implement them. ■

INDIVIDUAL ACTIONS

- If documentation is unavailable or incorrect, notify your supervisor that it isn’t possible to complete the task or complete an Aviation Safety Action Program report. Workers by regulation must follow written instructions.

Dr. Katrina Avers is a Research Scientist at the Federal Aviation Administration in the Civil Aerospace Medical Institute Human Factors Research Lab. Dr. Avers takes a practical, science-based approach and has worked to develop applied solutions that can be used across the industry.

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Premier Takes Control Of Repairs

Premier Engineering & Manufacturing takes a direct approach to back up its one-hour service promise after receiving a multiyear contract from Southwest Airlines.

By Steve Smith

We didn't expect a manufacturer of deicing trucks to tell us that last winter, mild if barely there in most parts of the country, was actually good for his business.

For Premier Engineering & Manufacturing, Marinette, WI, however, last winter marked the first deicing season the company went the extra step to directly manage repairs for its Southwest Airlines account with 24/7/365 service within an hour of a call.

"It was a little daunting considering we're a small company," says Jerry Derusha, president of sales. "Luckily, the mild winter gave us an opportunity to get the service off to a good start."

Derusha took us for a tour of his 23,000 sq. ft. production facility



Premier's plant is farther north than even the well-known "frozen tundra" of Green Bay, WI, giving it a suitably harsh testing ground for its finished trucks.

located about 50 miles north of Green Bay, WI. His crews were busy welding torsion bars, twisting tubing for fluid heaters and fabricating the heater boxes and cabinets that would hold the guts of the truck's deicing machinery.

Another part of the plant held the paint booth and fabrication station for the enclosures to the lifts.

The finished trucks are prepped for delivery in a final section in the back of the building. In its best year, the company turned out 134 trucks. But Derusha will gladly take 75 trucks a year, which keeps quality and profits humming along.

The company also offers after-market service to keep its workforce sharp throughout the year. During our visit, for example, employees were starting to refurbish the first of what could be more than 90 United Airlines' deicer trucks in service almost as long as Premier's been in business.

"About five months of the year, the place is the right size," he says. "For four months, it's oversized and

Equipment Provider Honors

Southwest Airlines' GSE department named Premier Engineering & Manufacturing its Equipment Provider of the Year for 2011 as a result of the direct service procedures the company started overseeing last year for its deicer trucks. The award started in 2007 as an expansion of the GSE department's employee recognition program. The entire GSE staff nominates and then selects the winner based on the following:

- Customer support and services.
- Equipment reliability.
- On-time deliveries.
- Parts support.
- Product quality.
- Providing an excellent value.
- Training.
- Warranty program and support.

"I almost couldn't get my head on the plane when I was flying back," Jerry Derusha, Premier's president of sales, told us shortly after receiving the award. "We are very proud of the confidence that Southwest has put in Premier.



Larry Laney, director of ground support for Southwest Airlines, congratulates Jerry Derusha, Premier's president of sales, for earning the GSE department's award for top equipment provider.

for three months, we could really use the extra space,” he says.

Derusha started the company in 1991 to service existing deicers, primarily the 500 trucks he helped get out the door at a former employer. But Derusha also started manufacturing his own line of trailer deicers shortly after opening and assuredly re-entered the new deicer truck business when he sold 64 units to United Airlines in 1996.

3 YEARS, 1 HOUR

Derusha knew he had to offer something different so his trucks come with a full three-year warranty that covers parts and labor.

“That is a bumper-to-bumper, top-to-bottom warranty,” he adds. “If even a light goes out, we give you a new one.”

Plus, Derusha backed up his service by guaranteeing that a trained service professional would start making repairs within one hour of a call, 24 hours a day, seven days a week and 365 days a year.

“Three years can be a very long time,” Derusha explains. “With 85 percent of our components off the shelf, we went to our suppliers to help us back up the warranty and that one-hour promise.”

That helped the company build a dependable network of techs who knew every mechanical component of the truck. More importantly, it helped the company know how to diagnose a mechanical problem properly over the phone no matter the time of day (or night).

That skill came in handy after the company won a multiyear contract to supply Southwest Airlines with deicers at 63 locations around the country. Currently, the airline operates about 175 Premier deicers.

Anything mechanical is bound to have issues. Premier offered, however, a better way to resolve those issues – and along the way won the recognition of the airline’s GSE department by winning its Equipment Provider of the Year award.



Beforehand, here was the airline’s protocol for managing repairs. The operator would notify the station manager; the station manager would notify his supervisor – who likely was located in another zip code and time zone – and then one of the airline’s subcontractors would roll out to fix the problem.

That sounds like a problem to fix a problem. And there’s nothing worse if you’re Derusha, who’s poured all his



Premier stocks and rebuilds a wide range of parts for all makes of deicers and also offers after-market services from custom paint to fiberglass repairs.

Premier also refurbishes and upgrades deicer trucks, such as these 16-year-old units from United Airlines.

energy into his company and its products, and told your trucks don’t work.

“We said to Southwest, if one of our trucks doesn’t work, you call us directly and we’ll take care of it,” Derusha says.

Although the company’s 24-hour service pledge wasn’t new, past a certain hour the calls went to a pager and a cell phone. Now, callers reach a real person who can triage the emergency calls from what might wait until morning.

If it’s an emergency, Derusha talks directly with the operator to identify what the real problem might be. Nothing against the operator, but Derusha says the operator knows just as much as the typical driver knows about a car.

Operator error can’t be ruled out as the cause of “mechanical” problems, particularly with a new vehicle.

“In that case, the operator can get the truck operating again after he realizes the honest mistake he made,” Derusha says.

When the problem is indeed a mechanical failure, Derusha has access to the list of all of the airline’s subcontractors – typically ground handlers who have personnel stationed right at the airport – who are cleared to make the repairs.

Warranty or not, the bills all go to Premier first for review. As part of

the new service plan, Premier also has access to the airline's central database for equipment and can input the repairs made.

MORE HELP

Premier's three-year warranty was unheard of when Derusha originally put it in place. He says some of his competitors have since added another year to their typical one-year warranties.

The company also offers other help to all its accounts:

- **Summer Inspections:** While under warranty, Premier provides two annual check-ups to each unit during the summer months for warranty inspections, and will replace worn components prior to the upcoming season at no charge.

The summer work is vital. Deicer trucks have to work in the worst weather.

"The rest of the time the truck just sits – and that's the worst thing you can do to a mechanical piece of equipment," Derusha says.

Derusha's No. 1 summer maintenance tip: Start the engine at least once a month.

Also, Premier will train or retrain any personnel during the warranty check-up.

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Premier buys most of its components from OEMs, but still fabricates its own torsion bars that reduce the sway of lift operations.

- **Spare Parts:** New trucks leave Premier with a box of spare parts, such as a blower motor, fuel pump or temperature switch, on board. That way, subcontractors always have the parts they need for the usual repairs, and Premier saves considerably on shipping those parts next-day air. Premier owns the parts and won't bill for their use until installed.

- **Delivery Service:** Anyone who delivers a Premier truck is also qualified to train the operators, too. All delivered vehicles are also given a thorough inspection since a thousand-mile trip isn't out of the ordinary.

About the only extra service Premier says a firm no to is offering advice on spraying glycol. That one it leaves up to the airlines and regulators. ■

Vestergaard Celebrates 50 Years

Godtfred Vestergaard started manufacturing a lifting device for pianos, but soon found his expertise better suited for deicer trucks.

By Steve Smith

It's about 4,200 miles from McHenry, IL, to Vestergaard Company A/S headquarters in Gevninge, Denmark, and June isn't anywhere close to deicing weather in either place.

But if you wanted to see one of the company's Elephant deicer trucks go through its paces as it was prepped for delivery, all you needed to do was drive into the parking lot of the company's North American office.

"I was a customer before I started working for Vestergaard," says Brock Crocker, business manager for North American subsidiary, Vestergaard Company Inc.

While the company opened the McHenry office in 1996, Vestergaard started selling its deicers in 1989 in this country. One of its first North American sales was to Crocker's old employer, United Airlines.

Crocker managed the airline's very busy deicing operations at O'Hare International Airport. When United first considered purchasing Vestergaard

trucks, Crocker helped the purchasing executives see the long-term value of the higher-priced equipment.

"Return on investment has to be proven for vehicles like ours that carry a larger price tag" Crocker says.

To prove that ROI, Crocker pointed out the obvious to us in the parking lot. The Elephant trucks aren't called "Elephant" for nothing. A telescoping boom with a reach of more than 30 feet is what delivers the fluid.

"The boom gets the fluid right next to the skin of the airplane," he says. That minimum distance does two things. Operators use less fluid to deice aircraft. But more importantly, the heated fluid travels less of a distance in the air and retains more heat compared to its competitors' models.

"It's the heat of the fluid that breaks the bond of the ice with the aircraft," Crocker says. "That was a key decision back then with United – to not only use less glycol, but deice aircraft more effectively."



Over the past 50 years, Vestergaard has made more than 1,000 deicers from its production facility in Gevninge, Denmark.

One more benefit of the truck is the maneuverability of the boom.

"An operator can deice one side of the plane without repositioning the vehicle," Crocker says. "And that maintains a safe distance between truck and aircraft."

Right now, the boom extends to a maximum length of 10 meters (33 feet). But vehicles coming off the assembly line in Denmark have a boom that can reach 12 meters (39 feet). Company literature says the added length can keep the nozzle within 1 meter (3 feet) of the surface of virtually any aircraft.

Crocker says Vestergaard has around 260 deicer trucks at airports in North America. Apart from sales efforts, the North American subsidiary employs eight people and maintains a parts and service operation for the



All photos provided by Vestergaard Company A/C.

In 1981, Vestergaard built a new type of deicer, the Elephant Alfa, equipped with the now familiar telescopic spray boom. The Elephant MY and Elephant Beta and Elephant BETA-15 and Elephant SIGMA and Elephant Beta NG follow.

United States and Canada from the McHenry site.

While our focus was on deicing, the company also makes water service trucks and vacuum toilet service trucks, and recently sold almost 50 VSUs to a U.S. carrier – one of the largest one-time sales for the product line.

For deicers, however, Crocker says the latest proposals from the EPA on deicing fluid should play to the favor of his equipment.

“I think those proposals are all about paying attention to the amount of glycol used in deicing,” he explains. “If airports can turn that amount down at the source, that is a good thing.”

50 YEARS OLD

Vestergaard Company A/S recently marked its first 50 years in business.

“We’ve made more than 1,000 deicers in the past 50 years, and the company has expanded considerably in just the past few years,” says Helle B. Vestergaard, the company’s marketing and communications manager.

Vestergaard currently employs around 250 people worldwide with much of the work centered at its production facilities in Gevninge. Vestergaard also operates offices in Japan, Russia for the CIS market and

The company’s first deicers were nicknamed “Beanstalks” and consisted of a vertical, telescopic tower with a platform on top. An operator applied fluid to the aircraft using a spray gun.



The key purpose of the telescopic boom is to bring the nozzle to a minimum distance from the aircraft for maximum deicing fluid efficiency, while keeping the deicer truck, its cabin and boom at a maximum distance from the aircraft for maximum safety.

Italy. This year, the company plans to expand with subsidiaries in France and Thailand. The Thailand operation will also manufacture GSE especially for the Asian market.

In addition to equipment, the company also offers customers a data transmission service, which records important deicing data throughout the season and easily stores the documentation on a Vestergaard server.

The Vestergaard Academy provides “tailored” training to its customers’ operators and service personnel (as well as its own employees). Courses are either held at a customer’s facility or in classrooms at Vestergaard headquarters.

Here are a few highlights of the past 50 years:

- **1962:** Godtfred Vestergaard starts “Ingeniørfirmaet G. Vestergaard” at his home outside Copenhagen. The company’s original product was aluminum molds for constructing mattresses. Later, the company started making lifts for a university near Copenhagen. Also, the company manufactured a piano lifting device for a music academy, a stage platform for a theater and attractions at the Tivoli Garden.
- **1966:** SAS asks Vestergaard to modify existing deicers. As a result, the company received an order to make new deicers.

Nicknamed “Beanstalks,” the units consisted of a vertical, telescopic tower with a platform on top. An operator applied fluid to the aircraft using a spray gun. But SAS was soon buying larger American deicers with the advent of wide-body aircraft. The American units, however, suffered from several serious deficiencies, and once more Vestergaard was asked to make a number of modifications on the units.

- **1981:** Vestergaard starts building a new type of deicer, the Elephant Alfa, equipped with the now familiar telescopic spray boom. The Elephant MY and Elephant Beta and the Elephant BETA-15 will follow.
- **1996:** Godtfred Vestergaard retires as CEO. His son Stefan takes over.
- **1997:** Vestergaard Company Inc. (North American operations) established.
- **2002:** Company celebrates 40th anniversary and changes name to Vestergaard Company A/S.
- **2009:** First Elephant SIGMA introduced.
- **2012:** Vestergaard Company Asia established and Elephant Beta NG introduced. ■

1966 — 1962 — 1966 — 1981 — 1996 — 1997 — 1996 — 2002 — 2009 — 2012

Renewable Deicing

The aviation industry can cut its carbon footprint before an aircraft even taxis to the runway.

By Gary Lydiate, CEO, Kilfrost

There is no question that the aviation industry plays an extremely important part in the world's transportation infrastructure. According to its latest figures, the International Air Transport Association announced global traffic results for April showing that total passenger demand rose 6 percent year-over-year.

Despite continuing economic weakness in some parts of the world, demand for air travel continues to grow. The 6 percent overall growth recorded for April is above the 20-year trend.

At the same time, the aviation industry has responded positively to the need to sustain the world's resources and environment.

New aircraft entering today's fleets, for example, emit 50 percent less carbon monoxide and 90 percent less smoke and unburned hydrocarbons than they did 50 years ago, according to the International Aerospace Industries Association.

Total in the huge 15 percent of sales that aircraft and engine manufacturers devote to research and development, and you could argue that the aviation industry is already doing more than its fair share to combat climate change.

INCREASING SCRUTINY

However, legislation and voluntary agreements that aim to further reduce the environmental effects of flying will increasingly affect the aviation industry. Ever-increasing scrutiny will force airport operators and ground handling providers to further reduce the carbon footprint of their operations and also comply with increasingly stringent pollution controls.

Suppliers have a real responsibility to support the industry with green alternatives. Most of today's green news for our industry reports on advances to traditional combustion engines that power ground support equipment or that do without the engine entirely and use electricity to move heavy loads and even push back planes.

Less well publicized are advances in deicing/anti-icing fluid. The Kilfrost research and development team, for example, in partnership with DuPont Tate & Lyle developed the company's "Sustain" line, the first glycol made from corn sugar. Kilfrost DF^{Sustain}™

is qualified to SAEAMS 1424, and is currently manufactured in the United Kingdom as well as the United States, with plans in place to also manufacture in Asia.

DF^{Sustain} is a Type I deicing fluid that is manufactured using a sustainable, bio-derived 1,3-propylene glycol called Susterra®. Using a sustainable source for glycol has a dramatic and immediate impact on aviation's carbon footprint and greenhouse gas emissions, by and large, in two ways:

- Estimates based on design data suggest that the consumption of 1 million liters (264,100 gallons) of DF^{Sustain} represents a savings



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of 20.9 million passenger kilometers (12.9 million miles) in terms of non-renewable energy, and a savings of 10.1 million passenger kilometers (6.2 million miles) in terms of greenhouse gases compared to standard glycol-based products. In terms of carbon emissions, 1 million liters would see a potential but significant carbon reduction of 6,558 metric tons (7,228 tons).

- Producing the fluid uses 40 percent less non-renewable energy than standard glycol.

As an added overall benefit, the product itself is readily biodegradable and has low toxicity.

OTHER ADVANTAGES

But these environmental savings do not come at the cost of efficiency since DF^{Sustain} performs better than all existing propylene glycol deicers at

Ever-increasing scrutiny will force airport operators and ground handling providers to reduce the carbon footprint of their operations and also comply with increasingly stringent pollution controls.

low temperatures and can cope below minus 40 degrees Centigrade (which is also minus 40 degrees Fahrenheit). This in itself can also have cost and environmental savings since less product needs to be applied, and it has a longer holdover.

In addition, DF^{Sustain} also offers a unique performance enhancement in comparison to Type I fluids manufactured with regular 1,2-propylene

glycol. Susterra® (1,3-propylene glycol) has a slightly different chemical structure to 1,2-propylene glycol and this results in DF^{Sustain} being characterized by lower viscosities at lower temperatures. This means that DF^{Sustain} has improved aerodynamic/flow-off properties at lower temperatures than Type I fluids that contain regular 1,2-propylene glycol.

This opens up the application of DF^{Sustain} to more extreme climates that are typically dominated by ethylene glycol-based Type I products.

Other suppliers to the aviation industry are also working to provide sustainable alternatives and soon, major greenhouse gas savings will be made before an aircraft even taxis to the runway.

Certainly, the environmental issues that we all face are increasing and urgent, and while as an industry we are certainly far from the worst offenders, we still do not have the luxury of waiting for other areas of commerce to catch up with us.

We need to continue to lead and demonstrate our commitment to develop better, cleaner and more efficient methods of operating our aircraft, as well as managing our ground operations. ■

About the Author: Gary Lydiate is CEO of Kilfroast, which has customers in more than 63 countries on five continents.



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How To Size Up The Best GSE Mechanic

We sometimes forget to look for more abstract mechanical ability that goes way past anything that simple training can teach.

By Chris Fernandez, General Manager of Maintenance, Matheson Flight Extenders

I had the opportunity to visit our Phoenix facility recently to inspect equipment. Our operation at this location is relatively small, but busy and its equipment gets a real work out.

As I walked through the facility, I noticed a shelf holding a container full of caster pallet dolly stops. My inspection proceeded uneventfully, only some minor tug oil leaks and a K-loader that needed some wiring repairs and a coat of paint.

When we reached the pallet dollies, I asked about the shelf full of stops I'd seen earlier. The terminal supervisor informed me the retain pin at the back of the stop often sheared and forced him to replace the whole stop.

I immediately went into mechanic mode and went back to get a closer look at the broken stops on the shelf. After a short time inspecting the pallet locks, I could see that the locating pins that sheared were steel pins inserted into a drilled-out hole.

We discussed the cost of replacing the stops and the "obvious" possibility of just having the pins manufactured and installed by a machine shop. Needless to say, this was going to quickly become a big GSE maintenance savings.

MECHANICAL MENTALITY

But what really makes me recount this story is the fact that it took my visit to bring up the possibility.

It struck me that mechanics just think differently when looking at broken equipment. We're always looking at things in terms of "how

can we fix it" – especially in the GSE arena, where downed equipment can seriously affect daily schedules and R&M expenses have to be watched like a hawk.

Not too long ago, I was asked to inspect a used Stewart & Stevenson pushback tractor for possible purchase. The unit was indeed a "late model" and hadn't been well maintained. But the price was right!

I spoke to the sales representative extensively to get as much history on the unit as I could. We then took it out for a test drive around the field, checking the operation of both steering systems and other components.

I quickly came to the conclusion that we could "fix" this unit well within our budget and produce a reliable piece of equipment. Again, the mechanic mind-set paid off for my employer.

When I'm working with ground service maintenance outfits, I often use this way of looking at mechanical aptitude to size up a contractor. Before discussing the very pertinent details such as costs, experience and availability, I like to ask about what sorts of repairs are currently on the schedule.

I'm looking for repair thoughts that are outside the box. Not just someone who can replace parts, but a GSE outfit that really has the ability to fix and improve our equipment.

The best GSE mechanics not only are able to quickly determine the cause of the issue, but also can see the best way to repair a failure in order to prevent that failure from

happening again. And he is even able to conduct routine service while "looking" at the equipment for a more efficient way of accomplishing the service next time.

It's this way of looking at repair and maintenance that any organization has to find in its repair team in order to succeed in today's ever-tightening airport operation margins. The days of GSE maintenance shooting from the hip are behind us.

We need to ensure that all of our R&M is conducted by the most efficient and cost-effective mechanics who also have the ability to respond in ways beyond just repacking parts.

As our equipment becomes more complex, we sometimes forget to look for the more abstract mechanical ability that goes way past anything that simple training can teach.

The people conducting our repairs and services must be true mechanics who can meet our daily up time requirements by doing more than just replacing parts.

I know it's not always easy to find these true mechanics, but my experience tells me they are out there. We just need to know what to look for. ■

About the author: Chris Fernandez started working as an aircraft tech for United Airlines and over the course of almost 20 years with the airline conducted C checks, wide-body overhaul, special projects and GSE maintenance. He is currently in charge of both GSE maintenance for Flight Extenders and fleet maintenance for Matheson Trucking.

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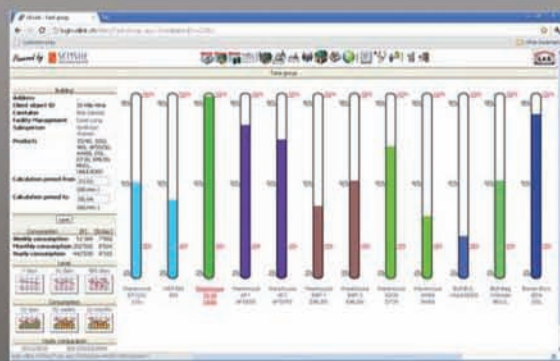
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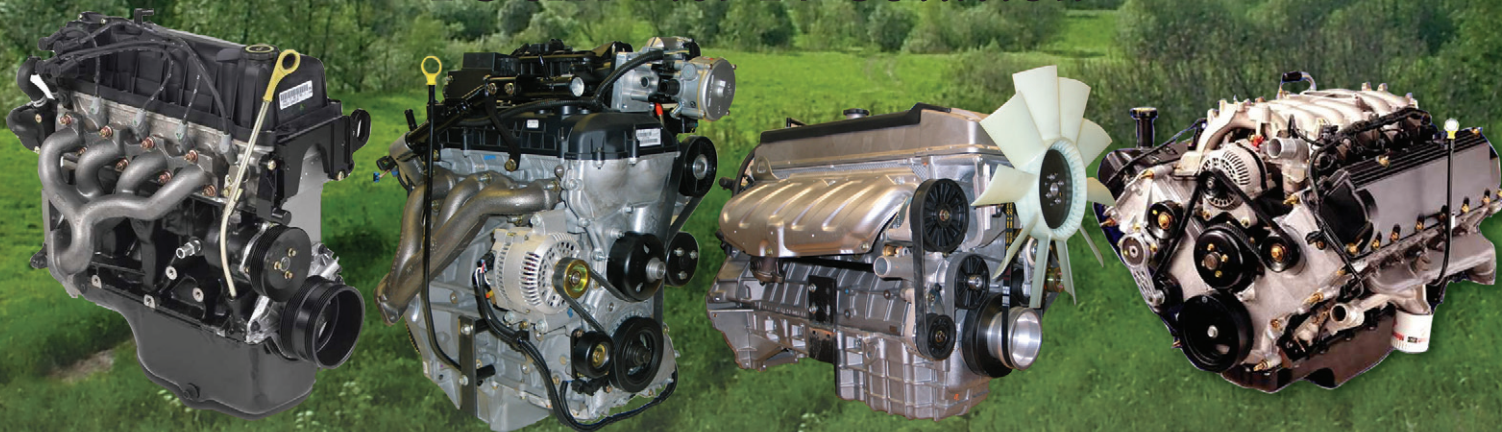
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