

Airport Beacon Report



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THE ROMANCE OF AVIATION - WHY WE ARE HERE!

By: Randy Bisgard, Senior Vice President

I love aviation, and have thoroughly enjoyed every path this industry has taken me during my thirty some years in the business. When I visit airports and airport businesses around the country, I always see a common thread in most everyone I meet, and that thread is the romance of an industry that is inherent in the basic history and nature of aviation. Whether you are an airport manager, airline employee, FBO owner, line service specialist, aircraft mechanic, snow plow operator, security worker, pilot, or consultant, there is a common belief that we are each a part of an industry that makes the world smaller, and better, because of airplanes and airports.

If you go to any aviation convention, whether it's for business aviation, airports, or air carriers (and I go to a lot of them), when you stand back and view the big picture of activity, the overall theme is always about business, as it should be. However, every once in a while you see or hear something that reminds you that underneath it all is this common bond of the "magic of flight". Recently, I had one of these epiphany moments at the NBAA Convention in Orlando. About every two hours of the convention, set up in one of the meeting halls of the Convention Center, they were showing a film entitled "*One Six Right*." I decided to take a break from the hard concrete floors and rest my weary feet. I got a small bag of popcorn and sat down to view the movie. A little over an hour later I came out of the darkness of the improvised theater, not only rested, but absolutely rejuvenated. The film left me with a lump in my throat and feeling of exhilaration, reminding me why I started in this business over three decades ago.



Prior to the Convention, I had heard a little about *One Six Right* in passing or in aviation publications, and I basically discounted it as just another aviation video. There are a lot of them out there, so I didn't pay much attention to this one until I saw the film. As I exited the theater, first of all I bought the DVD immediately. Secondly, it hit me how this film about a strip of pavement at the Van Nuys Airport (VNY) would appeal to every person who works at an airport, no matter their job. In approximately 75 minutes, this film covers so many realms of aviation, including flying, aviation history, general aviation, and most importantly, how critical airports are to local communities and our national economic machine. This film celebrates the unsung hero of aviation, the local airport.

This is not your typical full-length feature film, although it will appeal to everyone whether they are interested in aviation or not. And I would not personally categorize it as a documentary, even though it is about a particular airport runway. The producer/director of the film, Brian Terwilliger, a self-proclaimed aviation fanatic and pilot, produced this

film as a love story about what aviation means to him through the venue of this landing strip at VNY. Through endorsements from local businesses, aviation groups and manufacturers, the film was developed using state-of-the-art graphics, images, air-to-air photography second to none, top shelf Hollywood production values, and sweeping emotional music written just for this film. The score to the film is most impressive and establishes an emotional tone to the film that sets it apart from any other presentation I have seen about aviation. I even have a copy of the music CD to listen to in my car. A quote on their web site from Harrison Ford says “*One Six Right* captures the spirit, joy and beauty of flight. One of the finest aviation films ever made.” The story of *One Six Right* is *not* told via a monotonous voice over narration, but rather through a series of interviews, and historical vignettes, highlighting the airport people who work, or once worked, at VNY. Considered to be such a valuable representation of aviation’s role in the country, the film was recently screened for members of Congress on Capitol Hill.

You may be asking, what does this have to do with me, other than an article that sounds like a testimonial to the film? I truly believe that everyone that works in our industry should see this film. It will “rev-up” your enthusiasm for aviation, regardless of your job in the industry. This film is particularly relevant to anyone who manages an airport, because it reinforces the critical role that the airport plays in every community. The opening graphic of the film is a quote from Norm Crabtree, former Aviation Director of Ohio: “The airport runway is the most important **main street** in any town.” This is absolutely true, and I firmly believe this statement. If you work at an airport that is in danger of closing, has noise issues, or lack of community support, then you must see this film. If you are the owner of an aviation service business, you must see this film. Regardless of what you do in aviation, I believe watching this film will change the way you look at your business and/or airport, and how you relate to your clientele and employees. It will reinforce the value of that strip of pavement at the field you call home.

For more information on the film you can go to www.onesixright.com and if interested you can purchase a DVD for \$20. You can also get information regarding on how to acquire the approval rights to show this film to your local airport board or community group, which I highly recommend. View the film, and enjoy, because I believe it will re-ignite your emotional feelings of “why we are here” in this complex world of aviation.

ASK ABS

A monthly part of our newsletter is a section called "Ask ABS", where we answer aviation-related questions from our readership. (If we do not receive a question, we make one up.) Each month we publish one question that we receive with a joint reply from our professional consulting team. Please submit any questions via e-mail to Mark Davidson at: mdavidson@airportbusiness.net

This month’s question comes from a General Aviation Airport Manager that would prefer to remain anonymous.

Dear ABS: Since our current commercial tenants are not interested in providing general aircraft maintenance, we are considering allowing off-field providers to come on to the airport to conduct business. To manage the situation the best we can, we are in the process of issuing annual permits and requiring a payment and insurance coverage. This has caused an outcry from our current tenants and the individuals that want to provide maintenance. They advise that it is cost prohibitive to ask for insurance. What justification does the Airport have to require the insurance?

Dear Anonymous: First of all, your issue is not that unique. Having a maintenance provider at the airport (not to mention a qualified one) is a significant problem for many airports. The risks are high and the margins are low. So unless you have a large maintenance operation, or an individual that just likes to work on airplanes (eating is optional), you fit into the category of 95% of the airports out there.

Initially, we encourage you to check with the City/County/Airport's risk manager or insurance carrier. However, for what it is worth, it is our understanding that if you permit work to occur on your airport, you are incurring the risk of being held liable if something happens. In today's litigious society, if the first in-line does not have insurance (or adequate insurance), the lawyers will automatically go to the next deepest pockets in line. In fact, the airport is certainly at risk if work is being done that creates damage to hangars or other airport property. Fires have a funny way of spreading, especially with a lot of flammable things around (fuel, oil, oily rags, etc.). Moreover, if engine work or oil changes are being done, environmental liability can be a risk. As such, it just makes good business sense to make sure that every business on the airport has insurance, and that the airport is named as "additional insured." In addition to insurance, the airport should require that the individuals performing the work are certificated by the FAA to perform that type of work, and that they provide a copy of their certification.

One significant piece of information to pass along, the Professional Aviation Maintenance Association (PAMA) offers assistance with insurance for the single mechanic or small maintenance shop. In summary, it is a question of who has the most to lose, the mechanic or the airport.



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The BCS Championship Game

A guy named Bob received a free ticket to the BCS Championship Game between Ohio State University and the University of Florida. Unfortunately, the seat was in the last row in the corner of the stadium closer to the Goodyear blimp than to the field. About half-way through the first quarter, he noticed an empty seat ten rows off the field on the 50-yard line. He decided to take a chance and made his way down to the empty seat. As he sat down, he asked the gentleman sitting next to him, "Excuse me, is anyone sitting here?" The man said "No." Now, very excited, Bob said, "That's incredible, who in their right mind would give up a seat like this?" "Well actually, the seat belongs to me", the gentleman stated. "I was supposed to come with my wife, but she passed away. This is the first Ohio State game we haven't been to together since we got married in 1967." "That is sad," said Bob. "But couldn't you find a friend or relative to come with you?" The man replied, "No, they're all at the funeral."

Airport Business Solutions is recognized as the leader in providing valuation, analysis, and consulting services to airports and aviation businesses, and offers a diversity of backgrounds and experience which provides a new, creative, and "outside the box" perspective on a myriad of aviation issues and problems.

In addition, our international affiliate, Airport Business Solutions International, AEC, has helped numerous airports worldwide with a variety of airport management and operational issues and problems. Problems at international airports are no different from those experienced at airports in the U.S., and the diversity of experience and breadth of knowledge of Airport Business Solutions International has been extremely valuable in achieving comprehensive solutions to those issues.

For More Information

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