



The Opportunity in Adversity: How Certified Aviation Services Helped a Legacy Carrier Evolve Their Maintenance Resources

Recently a legacy carrier in North America faced a serious issue – over 4,400¹ of their mechanics went on strike. The strike would end up lasting 15 months and change the way the carrier approached maintenance for their fleet. The main priority of the airline management was always to ensure that their operations ran smoothly. The plan was to spend over \$100M² to hire and train substitutes and third party vendors³. The result was an airline that operated with fewer delays than anticipated, fewer cancellations, higher stock prices and better performance ratings⁴.

During the course of the strike, the carrier leveraged 1,200 replacement workers⁵ and outside contractors. The replacement workers had on average 5 to 10 years experience⁶ working on aircraft and maintained the fleet as normal throughout the strike. The ability for the carrier to find quality and professional personnel to perform maintenance needs enabled the carrier to actually improve their performance rate to 98% up from 92%. This was partially attributed to being able to reduce the number of aircraft out of service by 70% due to higher than usual maintenance holds on the eve of the strike.⁴

Certified Aviation Services is one of the maintenance vendors the carrier contracted with to keep their planes flying throughout the strike. Originally contracted to perform Line Maintenance Service in San Diego, San Francisco and Portland, CAS quickly surpassed the expectations of the airline. Due to Certified Aviation Service's consistent and quality work, the airline awarded additional maintenance stations to CAS in Las Vegas, Phoenix and Anchorage. The CAS team continues to perform outstanding service which has resulted in the carrier awarding several Maintenance Station Recognition awards for Top Performing (Portland 3 different times) and Most Improved Station (Las Vegas) and the Gateway Award (San Francisco 2 different times) to Certified Aviation Services.

Our Line Maintenance Services have increased from on-call to dedicated staff teams of over 75 mechanics located in Las Vegas, Phoenix, Portland, Anchorage and San Francisco. Our teams handle line maintenance issues including A checks, line checks, engine changes and extensive troubleshooting while working seamlessly with the carrier's maintenance managers to keep the planes on-time and safe. Our largest station for the carrier is in Anchorage where Certified Aviation Services also handles the increase volume of freight traffic as well as passenger traffic for the carrier in addition to operating a hangar more extensive maintenance requirements on their Boeing-747 fleet.

In the following years after the strike was resolved, the carrier has continued to leverage third party maintenance to continue to reap the benefits. They have created strategic partnerships in lieu of dedicated in-house staff for both heavy maintenance and line maintenance. This allows the airline to balance the

labor costs of low cost carriers with the expertise and experience of legacy carriers; the business reaps the rewards of capturing competitive costs while increasing sourcing flexibility. The future-forward thinking of the airline focuses on the savings they will see as a result of long-term partnerships with their maintenance providers. The carrier is currently ranked the lowest of legacy carriers by maintenance cost per available seat mile as of second quarter 2007. Certified Aviation Services is proud to be a strategic partner to provide quality maintenance and contribute to the ongoing success and profitability of one of the top ranked North American Airline Carriers in the industry.

REFERENCES

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