



DON DWYER



MIKE DWYER



MICHAEL MIKOLAY

# Guardian Jet In 2013:

Opening *The Vault* on Client Service.  
by Dave Higdon

**"The core concept has always been to earn the right to buy and sell aircraft on behalf of the clientele by providing great consulting advice, market intelligence and peerless execution."**

- Guardian Jet History

**T**heir booth stood as a 20-by-20 island on the exhibit floor of the 65th Convention of the National Business Aviation Association inside the Orange County Convention Center North. But the 400 square feet was too small a footprint to contain the enthusiasm and energy of the Dwyer Brothers and the other staff of Guardian Jet LLC. As its 11th year in business drew near its end, brothers and managing partners Don and Mike Dwyer and Michael Mikolay, Executive Vice President and Director of Operations, exuded an aura of energy and enthusiasm about the company's prospects and success going into 2013.

Mike Dwyer and Michael Mikolay co-founded the company in January 2002 and Don joined the team after leaving Hawker Beechcraft Corp. in 2010, and the trio has been finding significant interest in a new service development launching in 2013 - 'The Vault'.

"The Vault," Don quickly explained, "is an online platform that provides clients with complete access to all the tools in our kit, 24-hours a day, from anywhere in the world."

It's a facility created in-house by a small, nimble, deep company that offers its clients

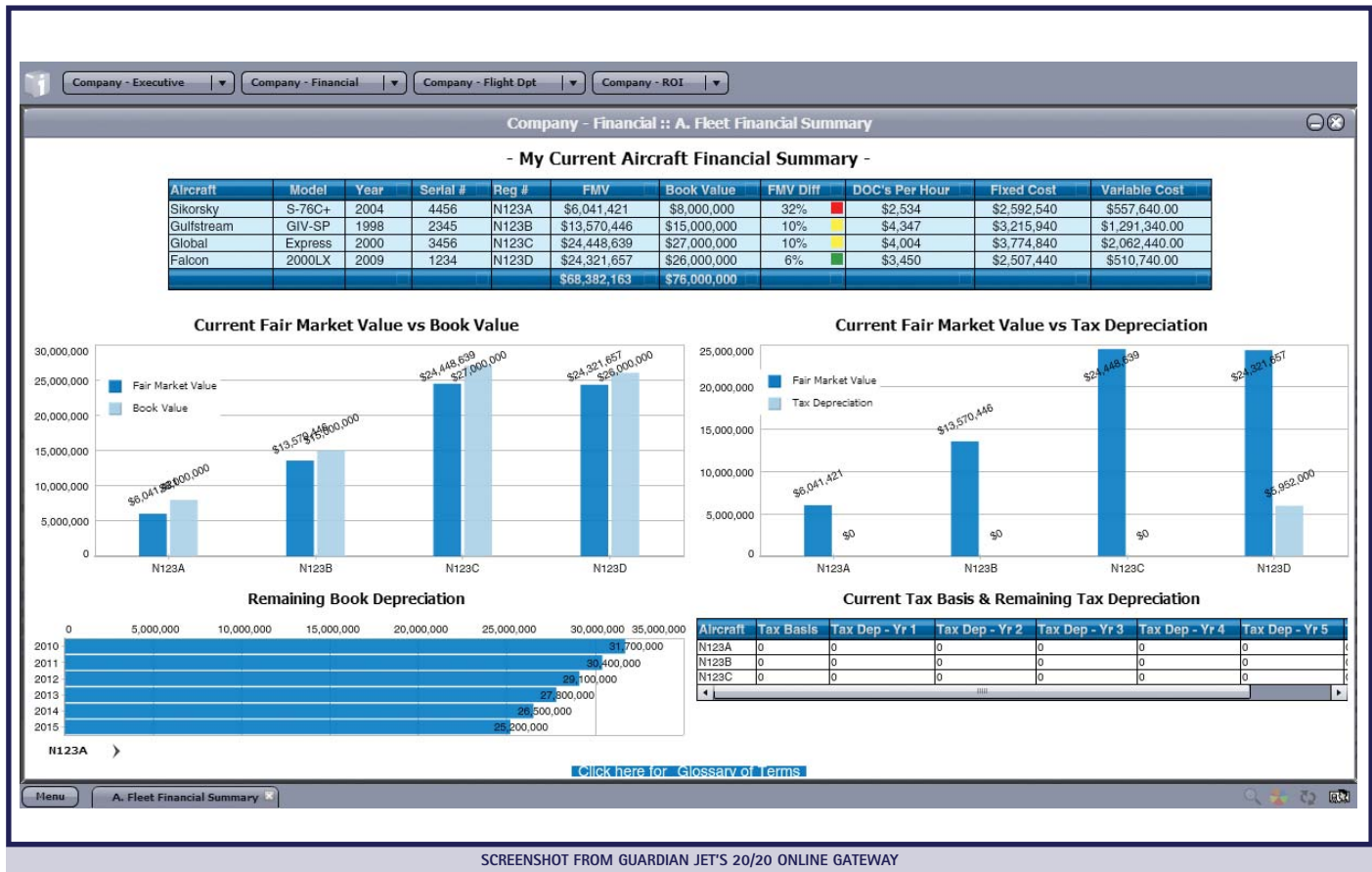
services in fleet planning, transportation consulting brokerage services and acquisition assistance - in whatever a client needs to maximize and rationalize its business-travel dollars.

Don explained, "Sometimes that means a client comes to you to study its needs and to sell an airplane, but after researching the client's needs and situation, we explain to them why now may be a bad time to try to sell and buy something different. They tend to look at you with the question obvious on their face: I thought you were in the business of selling jets...?"

"We're ultimately in the business of satisfying clients by helping them do the most with their assets - and that's not always fulfilled by selling, or buying a different airplane."

## THE SLOW-BUILD OF A SOLID FOUNDATION

Back in 2002, Guardian Jet started out aiming for a high level of service as the key to winning clients and turning a profit. The churn started as slowly as you might expect for a fledgling LLC with a staff of two. Between forming in January and formally opening their doors in April, the



two Mikes pitched their first prospect, landed their first listing and made the “cash register ring” for the first time (to the tune of a \$2,000 consulting fee on a Citation).

Then the doors formally opened, on Tax Day, April 15. By year’s-end the pair had landed their first large-cabin listing, their first Falcon listing, their first helicopter listing – and a project to produce a fleet transition for a new client.

The next year business grew in earnest, and the pair added staff to support their growing listings and expanding successes. By 2011, the company had its first 30-transaction year and in September of last year launched its interactive website and The Vault. (Guardian Jet also launched Market Survey 2013, a ground-breaking turbine-market software tool to support its customers’ needs and its services.)

All the way through those 10 years the company’s Fortune 100 penetration grew from the first year’s two-percent to 27 percent at the end of 2012. All the while, the company’s consulting services have increased hundreds of times over – nearly 400 percent in 2011 alone.

**EXPERTISE, INNOVATION & INTELLIGENCE**

“The key to our success is really in the people on our team,” explained Don Dwyer. “We hire for talent; for attitude and dedication to providing clients with the best of our services - whether it’s consulting, fleet planning, an acquisition or disposition.”

Beyond the Dwyer Brothers and Mikolay, Guardian Jet’s staff also includes Stan Smith, director of technical services and Ben Schiraldi, a CPA and the LLC’s treasurer. Guardian Jet boasts sales and acquisition partners Edward Osgood, based in Florida, and Fred Clarey in Southern California. Alena Shepard, one of the first hires, leads the consulting team while Lenny Huntley spearheads the information technology (IT) and software solutions areas.

Staff today totals 17 people, including Guardian’s consulting team, which boasts five staffers with graduate degrees in business, three Airline Transport Pilots (ATPs), two more CPAs, an IT professional and four Market Analysts. And that’s the consulting side!

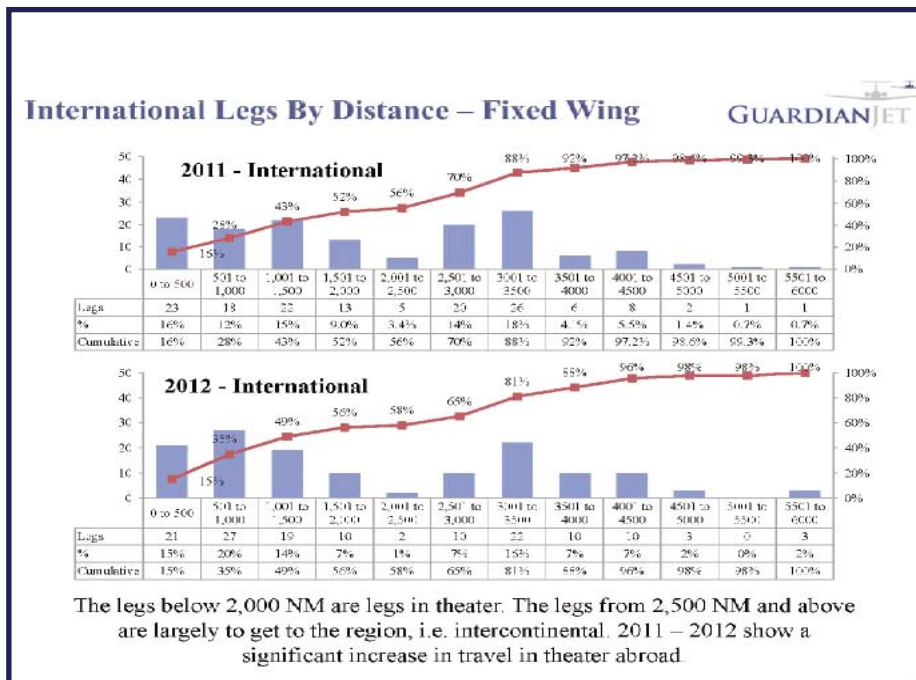
Over on Guardian’s brokerage side, the “transactional experience” includes people

with backgrounds at more than seven different manufactures, and the cumulative experience gained through thousands of transactions covering everything from business rotary aircraft to ultra-long-range jets. Depth is important when a company sets its sights as high as Guardian has.

**GUARDIAN 20/20 & THE VAULT**

Late in 2012 Guardian Jet launched a new online gateway geared to improving communications with all of its clients and to help them stay abreast of Guardian’s efforts. Following on from a 2010 launch of 20/20 Guardian introduced The Vault at the 2012 NBAA Convention.

The 20/20 “dashboards” are online interactive displays providing Board-level visual presentations about a client’s flight department, including supporting data right behind the charts in a drill-down format, with five major focus areas: corporate overview; travel data; annual budget data; capital budgeting criteria; and current aircraft-market conditions. The goal, Don Dwyer explained, is to help clients understand their situation so they can make balanced judgments on future operations, travel and expenditures.



SAMPLE CLIENT RESOURCE WEB PAGE

More far-reaching than 20/20 is The Vault, which, as the Dwyer brothers explained it, is a new chapter in Guardian Jet's continuing leadership in consulting and brokerage. The Vault brings to clients the online capabilities of Guardian's 20/20 Aviation Planning and Reporting Software, expanding it to cover the entire Guardian Jet Product Catalog. As company staff explained it, The Vault is powered by a revolutionary new software product.

Market Survey 2013 collects and analyzes aircraft market conditions in what Guardian Jet says is the most comprehensive manner yet seen in business-aircraft transactions. The Vault works as a web-based platform that allows users to access every aspect of their relationship with Guardian Jet, 24-hours-a-day, and it includes real-time access to a catalog of Guardian products, including Aircraft Valuations, Fleet Fair Market Values, Fleet Plans, Market Surveys, Client Updates for Sales and Acquisitions, Contract Negotiations, Pre-Purchase Inspection Oversight and Asset Management.

To employ The Vault, Guardian assigns clients a username for which they create a password which unlocks for viewing every aspect of that client's ongoing relationship with Guardian Jet.

"Think of it as a cloud that you can pull information from," explained Michael Dwyer. "We believe information empowers the customer," Don Dwyer added. "And the more information we give them, the better we can meet their needs. It's a place your client can go in real time to see what we're doing."

Guardian's software design for The Vault

follows the familiar convention of computerized storage and access. Don Dwyer explains, "Once you get into The Vault there's a folder structure covering everything from basic – what the airplane's worth – to a complete fleet plan we've done, and every document we've

used, contracts, offers, the whole sale progression, all the way through it.

"You can log on from anywhere to your account through the company's website and be able to manage the information from there."

Guardian conceived the idea of The Vault as a perpetually updating program so that through continually refreshing its data the information found when accessed is always based on the latest information. That can include market surveys, proposals - even the current value of your aircraft as adjusted by data on recent transactions of similar aircraft.

Don Dwyer explained, "The surveys go into details beyond value and into travel patterns, best options for a client's fleet.

Fractional, charter or jet card all go into the fleet-plan analysis to help clients plan for their travel needs."

### WHY SO MUCH EFFORT?

As Mike Dwyer explained, it's necessary to stay at the cutting edge when dealing with so many businesses that also employ high technology to advance their profits.

"We don't sell airplanes today the way we did 10 years ago, and in 10 years' time we won't be selling airplanes the way we do today," he stressed. The Vault helps Guardian Jet keep up with that. With more than a decade of growth and success to show, who can argue with building on that degree of success?

➤ More information from [www.guardianjet.com](http://www.guardianjet.com)

SCREENSHOT OF 'THE VAULT' HOMEPAGE

