

Private Jets : The Boom

In the past ten years or so, you would have noticed that commercial flights have become more complex, more cumbersome, time consuming, and a pain where it hurts. Commercial flights are so heavily booked that one cannot fly anywhere at short notices. You cannot just go over, buy a ticket to somewhere and hop on an aircraft.

True, larger and faster aircrafts, larger airports mean quicker travel from place to place, but the irony is, one can fly from say, New York to Chicago in about ninety minutes or so, but first of all, to collect your baggage you need to wait at the carousel for ages. With some 300 passengers on a commercial Jet, even allowing two pieces of baggage per person, there would be 600 pieces to be unloaded from the aircraft and fed to the carousel for collection by the passengers.

Once you have the baggage, the next hurdle is to get home or wherever else you are going. This may take a couple of hours in the usual traffic snarls which are the bane of every metropolis.

The worst pain is the threat of terrorism. After the 9/11 attacks on the World Trade Center, airports all over the world have resorted to very strict security measures. You cannot even carry toothpaste in your handbag! In spite of all this, there have been instances of attempted bombing at London and other airports, with result no one is sure when the flight will take off, be either held up, or cancelled, or after take off, even recalled due to some emergency.

Not very comforting, if you are heading for a important business meet!

Due to all these reasons, the private jet bookings have shot up all over the world in the last one year. In the UK, there is an increase of 40% and in the U.S. it is 18%. As a consequence, the number of people flying First Class has dropped by about 50% worldwide in the last one year.

Like in any other business, when the demand for charter is more, the competition hots up too. Aircraft makers like CESSNA, ECLIPSE, MUSTANG, and LEAR are bringing out small and medium jets at very competitive prices like around \$2.0 million which is nearly 30% cheaper than prices quoted two years ago to make it affordable not only for the charter companies to invest, but enable them to charge competitively in the charter business. New companies are being formed to manufacture aircraft to be offered at competitive prices.

Needless to say, this boom private jet's popularity is not good news to Commercial Airlines.

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About the Author

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