

MEETING THE MODERN FOOTBALL CLUB TRAVEL NEEDS.

Long gone are the days when supporters travelled with the players and management staff to games. The separation between the common fan and those working in football clubs has transpired through the commercial gains the game has experienced and the introduction of the 'corporate image' clubs now have to don. It's more than understandable as well; Sponsors, corporate clients and exclusive guests pay hundreds, thousands if not millions to be affiliated with clubs and expect a certain treatment when travelling with the club they have spent money with.

It's not all glamour and there are real business reasons why the modern club has had to evolve their travel strategy within the football industry that they operate in. Take for example the huge amount of revenue streams and business lines there are now in clubs compared to yesteryear. How can these all be serviced correctly unless executives can travel quickly from place and place in a safe, relaxing manner? Secondly, as clubs extend their business arm to other countries, quick and safe access is also required there. Thirdly, many sponsors are now non-UK based organisations so dealings with them must be on going and often occur in the host country. This is all before you add in the fact of how many more European games are now played in the Champions League, UEFA Cup and the Inter Toto Cup and the increase in clubs participating in these competitions.

One company that has dealt with this increase on all levels is V-One Aviation. They are specialists in Air Chartering. I spoke to Rob Moore from V-One about the challenges facing clubs and how V-One could help.

1. With the football industry so commercially lead these days what flexibility does V-one offer the power brokers of the game?

V-One Aviation offers a unique on demand service when and where you want it 24/7. One-phone call results in a minimum of 3 options delivered to you via email. Sms, Fax or phone normally within 20 minutes. Concise and simple.

2. The corporate arena offers huge incomes for football clubs. How can



your company extend the experience they get and make future spend with clubs more attractive?

Champions League and Uefa cup away fixtures for one has brought popularity to the corporate fan of football however in this day and age taking 2 days off to catch commercial flights and travel to away fixtures in mainland Europe or eastern Europe is not viable. We can facilitate a flight late afternoon from the closest airport to the office. Fly you directly to a private airport sometimes closer to the ground than the main airport and are ready to head back home straight after the match to be in the office at normal time the following morning all in first class luxury. When taking clients to matches, nothing comes close to travelling privately.

3. You state on your site that you can facilitate the transport of Directors right the way through to supporters - how bespoke can you make the service?

As long as it can be done on a jet then we can arrange it be it livery for a supporters association on the side of an airbus through to custom head covers and personalised in cabin service through to a branded light corporate jet with champagne reception for taking clients on away games. We have even provided a celebrity football speaker on board one flight going to an away England match.

4. Do you think the football industry will continue becoming a more executive lead industry in every aspect?

As much as we all love football, as a sport the reality is each club is a business and each player a commodity. Capacity for fans cannot increase due to size of stadia so outside investment is inevitable however we can make everyone's experience that much more enjoyable and easier to get to.

5. How important is it for club executives to have the facility to be able to travel in style and at almost a drop of a hat?

Very important - Of course executives involved in football or any business appreciate and love the service and luxury however private aviation is as much as a tool as a perk or treat. It is a time saving device and a lot of top execs save time and money using our services. 20 minute check in. Everything done. Sit back and relax or catch up on email or schedule a conference call at 40000 feet. A private jet makes it all possible whilst shaving hours off using commercial flights.

For additional information about V-One see their advert opposite. A good point of call is also their award winning Virtual Airport VIP lounge which gives a fantastic insight to how they help your club on every level, whether its purely footballing matters or business needs.

One thing is for sure, as clubs now compete not only the playing field but also in the board rooms having the weapon and flexibility specialist executive travel offers the club as a business tool is critical.

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