
Jack Pelton Chairman, President & CEO, Cessna Aircraft Company

Very Light Jet Magazine welcomes Jack Pelton to our Executive Interview series. Mr. Pelton is the Chairman, President and CEO of Cessna Aircraft Company. Listen to podcast [Subscribe](#) [How?]

VLJM: Jack, tell us about your start in flying and your love for aviation.

JACK PELTON: Well, it started at a very young age because I was fortunate enough to have a father and mother who both flew. In fact, we had a Cessna 140A and we went to many air shows and at that time the bug hit me and I'm glad to be in aviation.

Tell us about the Cessna line - you have over 5000 Citations in the field which makes Cessna the largest operator of business jets on the planet.

We're very proud of that. We're in our 80th anniversary this year. Not only do we have over 5000 Citations in the field, but there are over 184,000 Cessnas out there flying today. The Skyhawk celebrated its 50th anniversary last year - it's the plane that taught the world to fly. We are very, very proud of what we have done in the past, but also what we are going to do moving forward.

Jack, you have the keys to more planes than most of us pilots put together, so which plane do you choose to stay current in?

It's tough - not only do I personally have a single engine Cessna that I own and fly, but I fly the Citation X regularly.

When is the last time you flew?

On Thursday, I flew to Washington for a meeting with congress on user fees - 1 hr. and 43 minutes from Wichita to Dulles in a Citation X.

It's a rocket ship! Tell us about the corporate decision to add the Mustang to the stable.

In 2002, when we announced the airplane, it was very hard to bring a jet down-market from the Citation. That technology was centered around the Garmin G1000 aviation suite which provided tremendous values - tremendous features at a much lower cost. At the same time, Pratt was developing the 600 series engine. So we married the two with our known and proven technology relative to the airframe. It allowed us to come in at a price point, at that time, of \$2.4M, come down-market from the Citation, but have all of the values of the Citation. This includes 24/7 service and support worldwide, a variety of direct operating cost programs that are available, and the safety and security that the Citation is known for over the last 30 years.

There are several camps vying for their part of the Very Light Jet business. What are you focusing on for Mustang?

As far as the competitive base, we have tried to keep our head down and ensure that our product meets the requirements we set out to meet. We think that at the end, meeting those requirements will keep us ahead of the competition.

What about your foreign sales? We understand that in Europe there is quite a bit of interest in the Mustang.

It's been very interesting. Since introducing the airplane, half of the order book - now over 260 airplanes - are international, both South America and Europe. We think that the reasons are that at this price point for weight class, the quality we provide for the lift that they need, these operators are able to enjoy more economical operation. They have a fee-based structure. The Mustang is now the choice, where they may have used much larger products in the past.

Certification is on every one's mind with over 400 stops on the road to get there. You guys cruised through and got there first and we want to congratulate you.
Thank you very much!

Jack, tell our readers how they can contact Cessna directly to find out more about your products. To learn more about our company, our products, and our heritage, we have a web site, www.cessna.com. I would like to encourage your readers to peruse the site and learn more about Cessna and all of our products.

Jack, thank you for being a part of the Very Light Jet Magazine Executive Interview series.
Thanks, Bill.