

Customer-driven focus

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MANAGING DIRECTOR, MALDIVIAN



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has been with the company from the very first day, leading the company to where it is today and providing a clear vision for the future. Mr Saleem was already a well-established and respected business man within the country with a reputation for turning around poorly performing businesses. His drive, dedication, enthusiasm for his work and love for all types of challenge are the very qualities that he is recognised for within the industry.

Maldivian came into being in August 2008 as the re-branded identity of the airline division of Island Aviation Services Ltd (a state-owned company that was incorporated in April 2000).

The reason behind the airline division's re-branding was to distinguish the airline within the existing market that it operates in and also to establish a brand name that reflected its origins; the Maldives and its people. The name 'Maldivian' was chosen for its simplicity and effectiveness and it was a name that gave the airline immediate recognition as the nation's airline. Re-branding also came as a natural step as the airline expanded its routes beyond the domestic network into other neighbouring countries.

Graduating from its role as the dominant domestic carrier in the Maldives servicing the four domestic airports from Malé International Airport, Maldivian commenced its regional operations on 26th January 2008 with its first daily regional flight to Trivandrum, India. The route proved to be a major success and soon the airline increased its frequencies to 14 flights a week in order to cater for demand.

Trivandrum is a popular destination for Maldivians who travel throughout the year for medical reasons and for family vacations during school holidays. In order to cater for the additional demand during the holiday season, the airline operated numerous additional flights to Trivandrum in the past year. In addition, the airline worked in partnership with the Ministry of Education to help Indian teachers living in the Maldives travel for their annual vacation. One reason why the airline has been able to effectively establish itself on this route is the fact that it has been able to work in close partnership with all its customers to cater for their requirements well during peak-and off-peak seasons.

Following the success of its operations to Trivandrum, Maldivian focused its resources on adding a second regional destination to its portfolio by commencing operations to Colombo, Sri Lanka on 6th November 2008 with five weekly flights. Similar to Trivandrum, Colombo is another popular destination for Maldivians.

It goes without saying that the majority of Maldivian's customer base are locals who use the services of the airline to travel between the domestic routes of the country and to the two regional destinations. The

airline is strongly committed to providing safe and convenient travel and connectivity that is so essential for life and businesses in the Maldives.

Maldivian also provides air transfers for many special interest tourist groups who travel to the Maldives for diving, surfing and fishing adventures. This is a niche market that Maldivian has managed to develop very effectively in partnership with many local operators and with foreign special interest travel operators. They are able to provide the visitors with an experience that is different from the standard resort experience. Tourists are able to travel by boat within some of the most aesthetically amazing atolls, visiting the best spots in the country for diving, surfing and fishing.

The other key tourist segment that Maldivian caters to are the tourists who travel to the country to enjoy the experience of staying at a unique resort island. It is now government policy to introduce tourism to all regions of the country in order to facilitate regional development. As tourism expands to other far away atolls, Maldivian is able to conveniently cater to the resorts which are located near the domestic airports. The resorts that Maldivian caters for are: Island Hideaway at Dhonakulhi Maldives, Cinnamon Island Alidhoo and The Beach House at Manafaru in the Northern Atolls. In the Southern Atolls, Maldivian caters for: Equator Village, Shangri-la's Villingili Resort & Spa and Alila Villa's Hadahaa.

As the airline is expanding its operations to cater for more customers, commencing additional routes and increasing frequencies within the existing routes, the management is simultaneously working to ensure that the airline fleet is increased accordingly. The airline, began its operations with one Dornier 228 (16 seats) and one Dash8-200 (37 seats) in 2000 and today has increased its fleet to one Dornier 228 (16 seats), two Dash8-200s (37 seats) and two Dash8-300s (50 seats) aircraft. In addition to this, the airline is looking forward to welcoming its third Dash8-300 (50 seats) by end of 2009.

Maldivian is very proud of its achievements and strongly believes that this is due to the company's commitment to investing in its employees and in resources such as new reservation systems. Maldivian is able to provide a service that is efficient and meets customer expectations. It is this focus on customers that is the driving force behind all areas of the airline. **F**