



EBACE 2022 - INTERVIEW WITH GENEVA AIRPARK GENERAL MANAGER SOPHIE MABIRE

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Back to EBACE 2022 – long awaited, it was a busy running event. A perfect opportunity to catch up with General Manager of Geneva Airpark, Sophie Mabire in real – not on the phone, zoom or teams, but just sitting and discussing. First day impressions, Geneva Airpark during pandemic, business aviation trends and women in bizav – we had a very interesting discussion.

We are glad to share both versions of our discussion: Video for all French speaking and Video plus text transcription for English speaking colleagues. Thus, everyone can enjoy the best possible way.

CLICK ON THE PHOTO, enjoy the interview:

Q. After first day spent at EBACE 2022, after waiting for 3 years, what are your first impressions, first trends, can you tell us how it was for you?

A. First day... first thing I have to say it was such a pleasure! To be back at this exhibition in fact after long years. I felt a very good ambience, people are glad to see each other again, joy, a true enthusiasm and dynamic. There is a bit less of visitors and exhibitors, but for sure we found the feeling of the event "before COVID". A true enthusiasm to finally find each other, without masks, not in Zoom, in real life.

Q. Your first impression – is there less of American visitors, is the event more European this time? Running all over the exhibition I heard much more French speaking people this time. Maybe it is just an impression from our media point of view?

A. This is exact. I heard just few of Americans. Maybe they will be back next year I think there was an uncertainty regarding the event till the end of March. So, it was far from easy to planify the participation at the very last moment.

Q. We had a pleasure to feature several news from Geneva Airpark, even during the pandemic, are you happy with the development of new services, are there any teasers you can share with us? EBACE is like a Christmas for business aviation, a lot of companies are presenting latest achievements and future steps.

A. It is true, we turned the pandemic period into benefits, when obviously there were less of activity. We've developed our Part 145 activity, being certified was an important milestone for us. We used this time to review the diversification of our activity, developing different services. First results are definitely positive and encouraging, our clients are very receptive regarding these new services. We need to give ourselves a bit more time to make any strategic conclusions. It is too recent. Let's say we need more observation time to reinforce and promote. We've worked a lot on the flexibility of our offers to adapt to market demands. The market has changed during these last two years. At Geneva Airport we've noticed clients coming but staying a short time, they are not staying for one or two days. A lot of them are doing quick turnarounds. We need to be flexible, to continue to offer the best service, at a bit different way.

Q. First feedback from clients? It is always very interesting to have this feedback from a client once he tested new service. Do you hear from them? Because sometimes they are just using without giving any feedback.

A. Actually, one of our new services – dry aircraft cleaning – we have very positive feedback from clients. They are very happy, the product is truly effective, the result is amazing. High quality service.

Q. All I know regarding Geneva Airpark and what I am saying to colleagues – it is a Five Star residence for the aircraft, so services are at the same quality level. What would you say regarding business aviation world after pandemic – is it different, is it going back to what it was before Covid-19? Two years when we all were locked down in a way, were we forced to reinvent the industry?

A. In a certain way – yes. We can see here at Geneva Airport the traffic is back. But this is different profile let's say. Long range flights are not back for 100%, as I said we have more of quick turnarounds, more clients are quickly passing by. We must adapt ourselves at this new configuration to continue to offer services, being more flexible, being even faster than before. We have to react instantly.

Q. A question, which is quite trendy let's say. This topic was discussed during the opening session and media events – women in business aviation. It is known as men dominated industry. You, as one of rare women on Top position, what you think can be done to attract girls in the industry to assure next generation of women in business aviation? So that wouldn't be only flight attendants, to explain all job possibilities and variety? Do you think it is just a trendy question, or there is a real need to have more women in the industry?

A. I think that it is not only in business aviation that women are less present. We must promote, to explain what we do as women in business aviation, as well as in another activity sector. We need to share our experience, so mentality would not change but evolve. My personal case, I think I was quite lucky to meet people who trusted me, when the issue to be a man or a woman was not even on the table. But it is not always the case. Again, our goal is to promote the job, not the gender, to share with young and less young people. It is a magical universe – there are so many different jobs. So each of us we should share the experience and inspire and motivate.

It was a pleasure! We are ready to inform our audience about future secrets you will share, news you will announce. See you next year EBACE 2023!

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