PREMIER AVIATION CELEBRATES 30 YEARS OF SKY-HIGH ROCK N' ROLL

News / Business aviation

Premier Aviation is marking 30 years' providing charter for some of the highest grossing music tours. With over 250 music tours under its belt, Premier is proud of its heritage within the music industry and can confidently say that none of its clients' artistes has ever missed a gig owing to flight problems.Tour Director Lizzy Templer was Premier's first employee, working alongside founder Adrian Whitmarsh, who sold the business to Hunt & Palmer in 2011.

Lizzy Templer commented: "When the business started out its focus was primarily on European tours. In those early days the major artistes that fill international stadia today were chartering small turboprops, a far cry from the executive jets and VIP airliners they travel on now. These days, in order to serve the worldwide touring market, Premier's reach is similarly global, transporting bands, artists, their crews and even their backline equipment from continent to continent. The genre of artists handled has considerably expanded too. After two years of touring 'on pause' owing to the global pandemic, rock and roll legends, iconic A-listers and emerging artists were back touring again to record audiences last year at festivals, arenas and stadiums

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around the world.

We've seen more demand for country music artists; upcoming Asian artists and an increasing number of comedy artists turning to charter," Lizzy notes. "Sometimes this is driven by safety and security, but also concern around time constraints and airport challenges. Music tours in and around Asia and South America are on the increase right now and here we're able to call on support from our colleagues in Hong Kong, the USA and Australia."

Recently, Premier welcomed several new brokers to the team. They are working alongside an experienced broking team to acquire the specialist knowledge which is unique to this type of air charter. Collectively, the team has amassed some 200 years' experience. Premier Aviation's extensive knowledge has propelled it into prime position when it comes to arranging music tours from the earliest planning stages and working to foresee and mitigate challenges before they arise.

Director Julie Black, of Hunt & Palmer group, an experienced tour charter professional comments: "It takes a uniquely dedicated and energetic team player to become immersed in the challenge of tour charters and Premier Aviation has long been perceived as a market leader, which enables us to attract and retain the best talent."

Brexit has made music tour planning more challenging

"The business of charter has become much more complex owing to restrictions caused by the UK exiting the EU," Lizzy highlights. "Where once it was possible to run a tour with one single operator across the UK and Europe we often have to turn to additional providers when sourcing capacity for internal EU flights, or internal UK flights. "In addition, there are fewer airliners available for typical 6 to 8 week-long music tours. Many business jet operators find tours challenging to accommodate in the busy summer schedule and the larger aircraft that were previously available for such work are now committed to supplemental ACMI lift for scheduled airlines instead.

Some tour managers come to Premier just with show dates. Premier then helps build the flight schedule using its knowledge of airports / curfews, whether it be flying in and out on the day of the show to save hotel changes, or laying over for a few days in the preferable cities. "Others will come to us with a schedule in mind and we will shape the flight itinerary from there," says Lizzy. "We have also been able to look at even earlier agendas and suggest optimum routings for minimising flight time and increasing efficiency. It's our hands on experience from the start of the enquiry to completion of the flights, often many months later, which keeps our clients returning," she adds.

"Premier has always meant "First Class" to us. We have worked with them since the start and we're hoping they will keep answering our calls. Lizzy and the team are the best." -- Tour Manager to Bruce Springsteen

"After 30 years I still get a buzz getting on the road as flight manager on some of the music tours, overseeing the charter and ensuring everything goes to plan. It's a very immersive experience and one that the whole team loves," concludes Lizzy.

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