WHEN PASSION BECOMES BUSINESS: THE STORY OF HELITEAM AND ITS FOUNDER

News / Business aviation, Manufacturer



Heliteam is a French helicopter startup born of its founder's love of flying – he is also a pilot – and with promising beginnings. Established less than two years ago, the company currently operates two helicopters for a variety of transport and aerial work missions around the Montpellier-Méditerranée airport, one of which is an H125 from Airbus Helicopters, purchased new.

Heliteam is the first (and currently the only) company offering helicopter services in the Languedoc-Roussillon region of southern France. In the words of Régis Teissonniere, Heliteam's founder and manager, "We actually created the market!" His answers to Airbus Helicopters' five questions provide insight into his journey, and encouragement for aspiring entrepreneurs.

Airbus Helicopters: Can you take us back to that moment when you fell in love with flying? Did you ever imagine you would one day own your own helicopter company?

Régis Teissonniere: Heliteam is the culmination of a project that gradually matured and that arose from my passion for flying helicopters. It all started when I was asked to give a presentation

© 2015-2026 50SKYSHADES.COM — Reproduction, copying, or redistribution for commercial purposes is prohibited.

in school on a topic of my choice. I chose helicopters, and before I knew it I was falling in love with this amazing machine and how hover flight could expand the operational capabilities and missions open to mankind.

After making my maiden flight at age 18, I pursued a private pilot's license. From there I began working for Héli Volcan, where I eventually managed an external base and learned a great deal about running a business to round out my knowledge. These experiences led to others within the industry, including becoming a flight instructor.

It was around that point that I began to think about how I could make a living from my love of flying. Encouraged by some of my trainees who were company managers, I set out to create my own company.

When passion becomes business: the story of Heliteam and its founder

Image not found or type unknown

AH: Did you carry out a preliminary market study?

RT: No! Even if we could have done so, the results wouldn't have been reliable, as, before us, there hadn't been any helicopter (with AOC approval) based in the Languedoc-Roussillon area. Since there was no helicopter service, customers at the time could only charter helicopters from elsewhere. Time has already shown us that we actually created the demand. We now have ten requests where previously there was only one.

AH: You must have encountered many barriers along the way - how did you overcome them?

RT: I didn't start the venture alone, but with the backing and support of my wife, Nathalie. Although we had the technical and management skills required to run a company, we didn't have any financial resources or knowledge of the field, and we didn’t yet own a helicopter.

So in January 2015 we began expanding our network by marketing my piloting skills to operators in the region, and by occasionally hiring a helicopter to provide a transport service. However, just flying a helicopter when your goal is to become an owner is not an end in itself.

By good fortune, I met an investor who showed immediate interest in my project and with whom a climate of mutual trust was quickly established. The E4 Group became a business partner in

© 2015-2026 50SKYSHADES.COM — Reproduction, copying, or redistribution for commercial purposes is prohibited.

Heliteam, providing us with the financial strength and advice we needed. Thanks to the guarantees this group represented, we were able to finance our two helicopters with bank loans and apply for our Air Operator's Certificate (AOC). Our H125 was then delivered new in January 2015.

When passion becomes business: the story of Heliteam and its founder

Image not found or type unknown

AH: Why did you choose the H125?

RT: I've been flying this helicopter for 16 years and I can now say that it is the most versatile helicopter in its class and has optimum engine reliability thanks to its FADEC. This model alone, in the configuration we use, enables us to perform our three types of missions - instruction, transport and aerial work.

AH: How do you feel about things today?

RT: Great! I'm extremely satisfied to see that that we have new requests every day, even from fellow operators who need additional support. Our activities are constantly growing, which has meant that we have already hired a second pilot, and we are rapidly approaching our first goal of 300 flight hours per year and per helicopter. If all these trends are confirmed, we are planning to soon acquire a second H125. In the meantime, we are going to lay the foundation stone of our future facility at Montpelier airport this winter."

11 DECEMBER 2016

ARTICLE LINK:
https://ut.50skyshades.com/news/manufacturer/when-passion-becomes-business-the-story-of-heliteam-and-its-founder

© 2015-2026 50SKYSHADES.COM — Reproduction, copying, or redistribution for commercial purposes is prohibited.