

VIII. MARKETING PLAN

This section identifies the Airport’s target markets, the marketing and sales strategy (and promotional methods) to properly position the Airport within the market and reach the target markets. The Airport’s pricing strategies are described, the Airport’s image development program is outlined, and the process to evaluate the effectiveness of the Airport’s marketing program is discussed.

Product, Price, Promotion, and Place

From a macro perspective, marketing encompasses the entire process of identifying the needs of the customer, providing products, services, and facilities to meet those needs and, determining the price and the place to provide them. As such, the four Ps (Product, Price, Promotion, and Place) serve as the basis for the marketing plan.

Products, Services, and Facilities

The St. Louis Regional Airport encompasses 2,250 acres of land. It has two paved runways: runway 11/29 (8,100’ long by 150’ wide) and runway 17/35 (6,500’ long by 100’ wide). The weight bearing capacity is 80,000lbs single wheel and 140,000lbs dual wheel, which can accommodate the larger corporate aircraft including the Gulfstream V and Global Express. The B-727, B-737, and Boeing Business Jet may also be accommodated depending on configuration. This is excellent capacity for an airport with the size and location of St. Louis Regional Airport.

The Airport is served by precision and non-precision approaches (ILS, VOR, NDB, DME, and VASI) and has an operational FAA control tower, operated from 0600-2200 local.

There are currently two fixed base operators located at the Airport, Langa Air and Premier Air Center. Langa Air offers fuel (Jet Fuel and Avgas), tiedown, hangar, aircraft maintenance, avionics, aircraft rental, and flight training. Langa’s primary business is flight training. Premier Air Center offers fuel (Jet Fuel and Avgas), tiedown, hangar, aircraft maintenance, avionics, aircraft sales, and charter. Premier operates from three large hangars, housing their primary business of aircraft refurbishment and maintenance.

There are 119 T-hangars located at the Airport representing a based aircraft to T-Hangar ratio of 1 to 1.

Current

The airport’s current promotional program is comprised of the following elements:

Element	Frequency
Advisory Board Meetings	Quarterly
Web site	Daily

Future

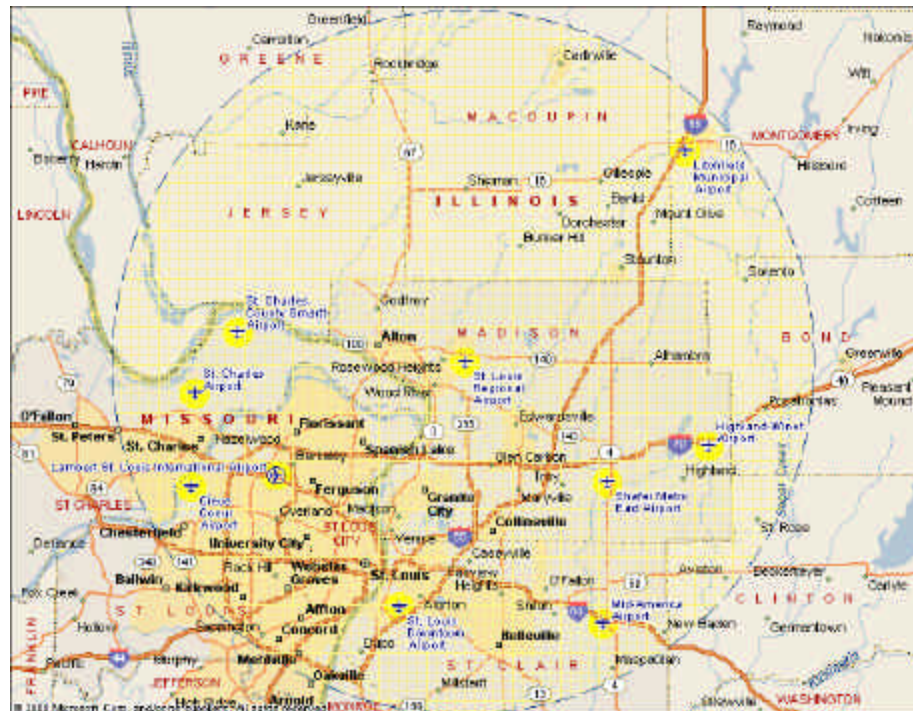
The promotional strategy recommended to properly position the airport within the market to reach the airport’s target markets (and the recommendations for implementing the marketing plan) are as follows.

Place

All products, services, and facilities are provided at the St. Louis Regional Airport.

There are approximately 117 aircraft based at the Airport. According to the market assessment, operations have steadily decreased since 1995. In 2001 there were approximately 74,168 annual operations. Fuel volumes (464,517 gallons in 2000) have increased at the rate of 5.6% over the same time period, which normally indicates a higher use of corporate aircraft.

The location of the Airport (and competitive airports) is depicted on the map that follows.



Competition

St. Louis Regional Airport is one of ten airports located with a 40-mile radius of downtown St. Louis. The airports serve a wide range of consumers and users, from privately owned single-engine piston aircraft that are used solely for recreational purposes to transport category aircraft that are used to provide commercial “air carrier” services, St. Louis Regional Airport competes with each of the airports for consumers (both based and transient) who own and/or operate the full range of general aviation aircraft.

Based upon Aviation Management Consulting Group’s industry experience and interviews and surveys conducted by a range of associations and publications, the following elements have been identified as common airport attributes normally considered by the target customers of the Airport when selecting an airport of choice.

Below is a comparison of the competitive airports and an assessment on the level of competition and in what areas the airports compete with St. Louis Regional Airport.

Competitive Airports (Based Aircraft)

The following list summarizes the desires and preferences for based aircraft operators:

1. Proximity to Passengers
 - a. The primary attribute considered by general aviation aircraft owners, operators, and/or passengers is proximity to the passengers' offices and/or homes.
2. Aircraft Storage Facilities
 - a. Availability of sufficient size, good quality, secure, and well-maintained facilities are important in attracting based business/corporate aircraft customers.
 - b. Future expansion capabilities are important from two aspects:
 - i. Ability to house larger or additional aircraft due to flight department expansion.
 - ii. Additional available land and improvements help suppress rental rates.
 - c. Access to ancillary facilities including office space, shop space, storage, secured vehicle parking, flight planning room, and passenger lounges (with restrooms and telephones) are also important attributes.
3. Runway Length and Strength
 - a. Some general aviation turbojet aircraft can operate from as little as a 4,000-foot runway; however, as a general rule, a 5,000 to 6,000 foot runway is a desired minimum by turbojet aircraft operators. Further, with the development of larger (faster) turbojet aircraft, 7,000 feet has become the minimum design criteria for most airports desirous of effectively marketing to turbojet aircraft of all size. The longer the better.
 - b. Each runway at an airport is limited to a specific aircraft operating weight. An airport must be able to accommodate a wide range of aircraft. Many turbojet aircraft operators operate multiple size aircraft (from light to heavy turbojet). The operators want to use a single airport for all aircraft instead of splitting their operations.
4. Noise Abatement/Restrictions
 - a. Airports that have stringent noise abatement procedures or restrictions can limit access to the airport all together for certain aircraft types, limit access to during certain hours, or increase the potential operating costs of the aircraft. Turbojet aircraft operators typically look for airports with minimal to no noise restrictions.
5. Approaches
 - a. Availability of precision instrument approaches (i.e., ILS – Instrument Landing System) at airports is an important safety feature for turbojet aircraft, especially those operating on a Part 135 operating certificate.
6. Control Tower
 - a. Controlled airspace increases the safety factor for aircraft operating within the airspace. Safety is also dramatically increased when the airspace is controlled utilizing radar. This is especially true when turbojet and piston aircraft are operating within the same airspace.
7. Ancillary Airport Services
 - a. Availability of Aircraft Rescue and Fire Fighting services increase the overall safety characteristics of an airport.
 - b. Availability of Customs services allows arriving turbojet aircraft from international airports clear their passengers with just one stop.

8. Runway Options (i.e., multiple runways)
 - a. Multiple runways are beneficial to turbojet aircraft operators due to varying wind conditions, slower aircraft separation, runway/taxiway closure for maintenance, and availability of multiple approach systems.
9. Security
 - a. Airports operating with a Part 139 Airport Operating Certificate are required to maintain a secure airport perimeter, which increases the security of the aircraft, crew, and passengers and protects the confidentiality of passengers.
10. Airspace Mix
 - a. Turbojet aircraft prefer to operate from airports that have limited (or isolated) piston aircraft operations. Fast turbojet aircraft mixed with slower piston aircraft can be problematic.

The following airports were considered to be competitive to St. Louis Regional Airport.

Creve Coeur Airport: A privately-owned 244 acre facility in Missouri, approximately twenty-four miles west-southwest of St. Louis Regional Airport. A single 3,600-foot concrete runway (presently being lengthened to 4,500') and a non-precision instrument approach, with plans to move the grass strip and construct additional sun ports and install an NDB. 250 +/- based single engine and 13 multi-engine aircraft with operations in 2002 estimated at 32,400. The airport has shade ports and 85 hangars ranging in size from 40' X 40' through 60' X 100', and 3 hangars 80' X 120'. Aviation businesses at the airport include the following: an FBO, flight schools, charters, maintenance shops, aircraft manufacturing, sales, and an aviation museum.

With the population growth in the northwest St. Louis, Missouri area and Creve Coeur Airport's location closer to that population center, the airport may draw additional small (less than 12,500lbs) general aviation based aircraft. While its small size may restrict growth and development the additional sun ports keeps them a competitor for based aircraft.

Spirit of St. Louis Airport: A public operated, 1,300 acre facility, located 31 miles southwest of St. Louis Regional Airport. The airport is owned and managed by St. Louis County, with two parallel runways, 5,000' (asphalt), and 7,004' (concrete) served by a precision instrument approach. A control tower operates from (0600-2200) with an Automated Weather Observation System (AWOS). Aviation businesses at the airport include, national chain FBO's, maintenance, hangar storage, flight training (fixed and rotor), aircraft sales, avionics, parts, and interior service.

There are approximately 478 based aircraft (107 jets). Last year, operations were estimated at 199,440. The airport has 127 T-Hangars (new and old), 58 shade ports, 80 hangars (ranging in size from 40' X 40' to over 10,000 square foot hangars). The County owns 78 T-hangars and 12 hangars that are 60' X 60' or less.

Spirit of St. Louis Airport competes on several levels, primarily in terms of national chain FBOs, proximity and access to downtown St. Louis and high quality services. Its runways can accommodate the majority of the business aircraft fleet. The variety of available maintenance services, a control tower, weather reporting station and precision approaches make it attractive to both based and transient aircraft operators.

St. Charles County-Smartt Airport (312 acres) is 18 miles west of St. Louis Regional Airport. The airport is owned and managed by the County of St. Charles with two runways, the longest is 3,801' (asphalt) and served by a non-precision instrument approach. There is no control tower. Automated Weather Observation System (AWOS) service is available. Aviation businesses at the airport include fuel, parking, hangars, rentals, and maintenance. There are approximately 99 based aircraft. Last year, operations were estimated at 42,490. The airport has approximately 34 T-hangars, 3 corporate hangars, and 1 community hangar. The airport plans to construct additional T-hangars in the near future.

The location of St. Charles County-Smartt Airport makes it attractive to the population base moving towards that part of town, the short runway, non-precision approach and lack of tower make it less attractive to corporate operators. Recreational/pleasure pilots who live nearby are likely to base at this airport unless there is not adequate hangar space. However, the location of the highway makes St. Louis Regional Airport an option for basing aircraft if hangar space is available and fees or lease rates make financial sense for an owner to make the drive.

St. Charles Municipal Airport (97 acres) is 21 miles west of the St. Louis Regional Airport. The airport is owned and managed by PFA Associates, with one runway 3,451 foot asphalt/aggregate paved runway and two grass strips. St. Charles declined federal funds in 2000 to re-construct runway 9/27, due to the long-term commitments required by the FAA. However, they are still eligible for federal and state funding. There is no control tower at the airport. Aviation businesses at the airport include parking, hangar, flight school, rental, charter and maintenance. There are approximately 106 based aircraft. Last year, general aviation operations were estimated at 38,000. There are approximately 40 T-hangars and 1 corporate hangar at the airport.

The location of St. Charles Municipal makes it very attractive to the population base. However, a short runway and lack of a control tower makes it less attractive to corporate operators. Recreational/pleasure pilots who live nearby are likely to base at this airport and probably less likely to drive to St. Louis Regional Airport.

Shafer Metro-East Airport (26 acres) is 15 miles southeast of St. Louis Regional Airport. The airport is privately owned and managed with a single 2,662' asphalt runway. There is no control tower or weather reporting station. Aviation services include Avgas, parking, flight school, and maintenance. There are approximately 41 based single engine aircraft at the airport. Last year, general aviation operations were estimated at 13,700. The airport has a total of 30 T-hangars and 1 executive hangar. The airport is accessible by Interstate Highway 40 east from St. Louis (1 mile north of highway, 2 miles west of Highland).

Shafer Metro-East Airport is not considered competitive with St. Louis Regional Airport due to a variety of factors: no control tower, small runway and no jet fuel availability.

St. Louis Downtown-Parks Airport (940 acres) is 20 miles south of St. Louis Regional Airport. The airport is privately owned and managed with three runways, the longest is 6,997' (asphalt) served by an ILS precision instrument approach. There is a control tower at the airport operated from 0700 to 2100 daily and an Automated Surface Observation

System linked to the airport's website. East St. Louis is part of the American Bottoms Enterprise Zone. Aviation businesses at the airport include fuel, parking, hangars, aircraft maintenance, helicopter maintenance, avionics, entertainment, charters, flight training, banner advertising (towing),

There are approximately 219 based aircraft (34 jets, 10 helicopters). Last year, general aviation operations were estimated at 152,000. The airport has approximately 50 T-hangars (37 owned by airport), 46 small executive hangars (50' X 50' or less) all privately owned, 15 large executive hangars (larger than 50' x 50'). The airport owns 4 of the large executive hangars. The airport is accessible just southwest of Interstate 15 and southeast of 19th Street.

St. Louis Downtown-Parks Airport should be considered a strong competitor to St. Louis Regional. Hangar space, operational control tower and a weather reporting station, adequate runway lengths and a wide variety of services and amenities are available on-site. The airport is close to downtown St. Louis with good interstate access. However, traffic problems in downtown St. Louis and being in an active flood plain could make this airport less attractive to based tenants.

Highland-Winet Airport (22 acres) is 20 miles southeast of St. Louis Regional Airport. The airport is privately owned and operated by St. Louis Soaring Association with one grass strip, no precision approaches or control tower. Aviation businesses at the airport include St. Louis Soaring Association – gliders/sail planes flight school. There are approximately 12 based aircraft. Last year, general aviation operations were estimated at 6,000. The airport does not have any hangars. It is accessible just north of Interstate 70. The Highland-Winet Airport is not considered competitive with St. Louis Regional Airport.

Scott AFB/Mid-America Airport (7,003 acres) is located 23 miles southeast of St. Louis Regional Airport. The airport is owned and managed by St. Clair County and the United States Air Force, with two runways, the longest a 10,000' concrete runway served by a precision instrument approach. The control tower is operational 24 hours per day. The airport was opened to the public in 1998 as a commercial reliever airport to Lambert International Airport. Approximately 4,400 acres are for the civilian portion of the airport. Aviation businesses include fuel and parking with approximately 40 aircraft based at the airport. Last year, general aviation operations were estimated at 3,644. The airport does not have any hangars.

Presently, the area's newest public airport doesn't have the available hangar space to attract tenants who do not desire to build. However, the available land and long runways with a control tower do make it attractive to company's looking to build either corporate facilities or hangars. The airport is designated as a commercial aviation reliever to Lambert International but may see opportunities in general aviation general aviation operations and based tenants.

Litchfield Municipal Airport (163 acres) is 24 miles northeast of St. Louis Regional Airport. The airport is owned and managed by the Litchfield Airport Authority with two runways, the longest 3,901' (asphalt), served by a non-precision instrument approach.

There is no control tower and weather reporting is through nearby AWOS services. Aviation businesses include fuel, flight school, aircraft rental, maintenance, and sales. There are approximately 33 based aircraft. Last year, general aviation operations were estimated at 9,200. The airport does not have any hangars.

Litchfield Municipal Airport is not considered competitive with St. Louis Regional for business traffic due to the lack of a control tower, no precision approaches, and the short runway. However, there may be some competition for based recreational/pleasure pilots, especially those living northeast of St. Louis Regional.

Competitive Airports (Transient Aircraft)

Based upon Aviation Management Consulting Group's industry experience and interviews and surveys conducted by a range of associations and publications, the following elements have been identified as common airport attributes normally considered by the target customers of the Airport when selecting an airport of choice.

The following list summarizes the desires and preferences for transient aircraft operators:

1. Proximity to Final Destination
 - a. The primary attribute considered by general aviation aircraft owners, operators, and/or passengers is proximity to the passengers' final destination (distance and/or time). Further, the name of the airport can be a large factor in the perception of proximity. For instance, even though Long Beach Airport is more convenient to downtown Los Angeles, aircraft operators perceive that Los Angeles International Airport is the airport of choice for downtown Los Angeles.
2. Runway Length and Strength
 - a. Some general aviation turbojet aircraft can operate from as little as a 4,000-foot runway; however, as a general rule, a 5,000 to 6,000 foot runway is a desired minimum by turbojet aircraft operators. Further, with the development of larger (faster) turbojet aircraft, 7,000 feet has become the minimum design criteria for most airports desirous of effectively marketing to turbojet aircraft of all size. The longer the better.
 - b. Each runway at an airport is limited to a specific aircraft operating weight. An airport must be able to accommodate a wide range of aircraft. Many turbojet aircraft operators operate multiple size aircraft (from light to heavy turbojet). The operators want to use a single airport for all aircraft instead of splitting their operations.
3. Noise Abatement/Restrictions
 - a. Airports that have stringent noise abatement procedures or restrictions can limit access to the airport all together for certain aircraft types, limit access to during certain hours, or increase the potential operating costs of the aircraft. Turbojet aircraft operators typically look for airports with minimal to no noise restrictions.
4. Approaches
 - a. Availability of precision instrument approaches (i.e., ILS – Instrument Landing System) at airports is an important safety feature for turbojet aircraft, especially those operating on a Part 135 operating certificate.

5. Control Tower
 - a. Controlled airspace increases the safety factor for aircraft operating within the airspace. Safety is also dramatically increased when the airspace is controlled utilizing radar. This is especially true when turbojet and piston aircraft are operating within the same airspace.
6. Airline Service
 - a. Some passengers on general aviation aircraft connect with long-haul domestic or international flights. Airports having a large mix of domestic and international airlines and flights will draw general aviation aircraft traffic.
7. Ancillary Airport Services
 - a. Availability of Aircraft Rescue and Fire Fighting services increase the overall safety characteristics of an airport.
 - b. Availability of Customs services allows arriving turbojet aircraft from international airports clear their passengers with just one stop.
8. Runway Options (i.e., multiple runways)
 - a. Multiple runways are beneficial to turbojet aircraft operators due to varying wind conditions, slower aircraft separation, runway/taxiway closure for maintenance, and availability of multiple approach systems.
9. Security
 - a. Airports operating with a Part 139 Airport Operating Certificate are required to maintain a secure airport perimeter, which increases the security of the aircraft, crew, and passengers and protects the confidentiality of passengers.
10. Airspace Mix
 - a. Turbojet aircraft prefer to operate from airports that have limited (or isolated) piston aircraft operations. Fast turbojet aircraft mixed with slower piston aircraft can be problematic.

St. Louis Regional Airport has a control tower, is served by precision and non-precision approaches, on-airport ARFF services, snow removal and a full range of services to general aviation consumers with two FBO's, flight training, maintenance and available hangar space.

These services are key factors in the decision for both based and transient aircraft operators in deciding where to operate. Therefore, the St. Louis Regional Airport will continue to maintain the standard with respect to:

- Air traffic control tower
- Precision approach
- On-airport ARFF services
- Timely snow removal
- Full range of services (fueling, maintenance, hangar space) to based and transient tenants.

The airport can accommodate – and the FBO can service – the majority, if not all, of the general aviation aircraft in use today. The runways are of adequate length and have substantial weight bearing capacity.

Additionally, the St. Louis Regional Airport will continue to provide a high-quality landing surface, adequate to support the general aviation aircraft normally using the facility.

St. Louis Regional Airport also has available space (via a through-the-fence agreement) for large corporate based operations or manufacturing.

Target Markets

The St. Louis Regional Airport's customers include all airport tenants (commercial and non-commercial) and the community.

The Airport desires to preserve a balance between business/corporate and recreational/pleasure aviation activities, while attracting new business and jobs to the airport and the surrounding communities. The Authority envisions a community that takes pride in the airport and recognizes the economic value the airport brings to the community. Further, the Authority envisions airport expansion that continues to enhance airport operations while maintaining close working relationships with business and residential users in the surrounding communities.

Within this context, the marketing efforts of the Airport will focus on several distinct segments of the market including business/corporate customers, recreational/pleasure customers, tenants, and the community.

The needs, desires, interests, and/or expectations of each of these market segments are identified as follows:

Business/Corporate Customers

The following elements are common attributes desired by the business/corporate segment of the general aviation market (cabin class aircraft or above):

- Runway Length (minimum of 5,000' with 7,000' preferred)
- Approaches (precision approaches preferred)
- Control Tower (radar preferred)
- Fuel (competitive pricing, but focused more on quality and level of service)
- Hangar (availability with the capacity and clearance required to accommodate the aircraft)
- Services (aircraft ground handling/line services, airframe and power plant maintenance, avionics, and instruments)
- Ground Transportation (courtesy cars, rental cars, and limousine service)

St. Louis Regional Airport by comparison with common attributes desired by the business/corporate segment:

Desired Attributes (business/corporate)	St. Louis Regional Airport
Runway Length (minimum of 5,000' with 7,000' preferred)	8100 ft (runway load bearing can accommodate all general aviation aircraft) ¹
Approaches (precision approaches preferred)	Yes
Control Tower (radar preferred)	Yes (no radar)
Fuel (competitive pricing, but focused more on quality and level of service)	Variable dependent on market rates at the time
Hangar (capacity and clearance required to accommodate the aircraft)	Yes – “through the fence”
Services (aircraft ground handling/line services, airframe and power plant maintenance, avionics, and instruments)	Yes
Ground Transportation (courtesy cars, rental cars, and limousine service)	Yes

This highly visible segment of the market, which is viewed as integral to the long term growth and development of the general aviation industry, while not being as significant in terms of the number of aircraft (in comparison to other segments of the market), is comprised of over 17,630 active turboprop and turbojet aircraft registered in the U.S.

Business/corporate aircraft provide a critical and essential transportation service to small businesses and major corporations alike (although the same aircraft may also be utilized for "personal" transportation purposes).

The ultimate benefit that can be realized by employing the use of business/corporate aircraft is directly related to the ability of flight department managers and pilots to consistently meet the on-demand transportation requirements of the business/corporation in a safe, efficient, and reliable manner. As a result, this segment is service-oriented.

Business/corporate aircraft: (1) generate significant time savings as a result of direct point-to-point travel and arrival and departure schedules that meet the requirements of passengers as opposed to meeting the operational requirements of air carriers, (2) provide flexibility with regard to changing passenger configurations, origin and destination points, intermediate stops, or other changes which may result when business itineraries are modified, and (3) provide the opportunity for passengers to conduct business meetings in a comfortable and private environment which is difficult to achieve when traveling on air carrier aircraft.

Business/corporate aircraft are utilized for "non-commercial" or "not for hire" purposes (which operate under 14 CFR Part 91) and/or "commercial" or "for hire" purposes (which require an FAA operating certificate).

¹ The Gulfstream V, Global Express and Boeing Business Jet are restricted from operating at many general aviation airports due to their weight (95,000lbs for the G-V and Global Express and 171,000lbs for the BBJ).

Business/corporate operators also look for certain amenities such as meeting room space, catering or restaurant services and nearby hotels. Access to commercial ground transportation cannot be minimized as the character and nature of business/corporate traffic requires ground access to nearby business and industry.

☐ Therefore, the St. Louis Regional Airport will take steps to ensure the standards outlined in the above table are not compromised, and further that: commercial ground transportation access is maintained in an affordable and convenient manner.

There is a restaurant being constructed in the old terminal building. The restaurant should be encouraged to both advertise their services to the business/corporate market and to provide catering services to the business/corporate aircraft that utilize the airport.

Providing catering services to off-airport companies (or business meetings at the airport) is an effective way of supplementing the income of the restaurant.

Recreational/Pleasure Customers

The following elements are common attributes desired by the recreational/pleasure segment of the general aviation market (single and multi-engine aircraft):

- Runway Length (minimum of 3,000’ with longer preferred)
- Approaches (not essential, but minimum of non-precision preferred)
- Control Tower (not necessary)
- Fuel (competitive pricing and/or availability of self-serve)
- Hangar (availability of T-Hangars)
- Parking (availability of tiedown space)
- Services (aircraft maintenance)
- Ground Transportation (rental cars)

Desired Attributes (recreational/pleasure)	St. Louis Regional Airport
Runway Length (minimum of 5,000’ with 7,000’ preferred)	8,100’
Approaches (precision approaches preferred)	Yes
Control Tower (radar preferred)	Yes (no radar) ²
Fuel (competitive pricing, but focused more on quality and level of service)	Variable dependent on market rates at the time
Hangar (capacity and clearance required to accommodate the aircraft)	Yes – t-hangars availability
Parking (availability of tiedown space)	Yes
Services (aircraft maintenance)	Yes – is this competitive?
Ground Transportation (courtesy cars, rental cars, and limousine service)	Yes

² A minority of recreational/pleasure pilots consider a control tower a detriment due to the operational restrictions.

The aircraft that are used for recreational/pleasure flying are typically based at “general aviation” airports (like St. Louis Regional Airport). For the most part, the recreational/pleasure fleet is comprised of single and “light” multi-engine piston-powered aircraft although some “medium” to “large” multi-engine aircraft (including turbine-powered aircraft) are also utilized for recreational/pleasure purposes. Typically, the aircraft that are utilized for recreational/pleasure purposes are powered by reciprocating (piston) engines that burn aviation gasoline (Avgas).

Currently, the St. Louis Regional Airport provides services adequate to meet the needs of the recreational/pleasure market. The Airport will continue to meet the needs and standards already established.

Tenants

The following elements are common attributes desired by airport tenants:

- Responsive airport management (timely and streamlined communications)
- Entrepreneurial spirit (having a strategic business plan that covers all the key areas including development, operations, management, marketing, financial, etc.)
- Consistent and fair application of airport policies, rules, regulations, standards, and guidelines
- Resourceful airport management (particularly with regard to obtaining funding and developing infrastructure)
- Understanding market trends, changes, and dynamics (and the needs and desires of tenants and customers)
- Integrity (making and keeping commitments)

The Airport will establish a timely communications system to communicate to the airport tenants, about activities at the airport. The Airport will also establish a once-a-year “State of the Airport Address”, whereby the Airport Manager will make a presentation to the tenants (and other invited guests, i.e. media, the community) on the status of airport projects, upcoming improvements and the overall condition of the airport. This is a good opportunity for the airport tenants to provide feedback to the Authority and the Airport Manager on their needs and desires.

The Airport Manager and Authority members will implement a program whereby they individually will “meet-and-greet” airport tenants through planned social activities and by conducting “walk-arounds”. Walk-arounds involve the board members and manager actually walking around the facility, visiting tenants and discussing airport issues important to them.

The Airport Manager will further become (and stay) abreast of the local, regional and national economy and how the economy affects the Airport.

Community

The following elements are common attributes desired by the community:

- Facilitate safe, convenient, and affordable air transportation (connect the community to destinations throughout the U.S. and the world)
- Build and maintain local economies (promote business growth and create jobs)
- Support a full range of aviation activities including important public services (medical transport, law enforcement, fire protection, etc.)
- Provide convenient business access to the community
- Maintain a balance between the needs of aviation and the requirements of the community (be compatible with the community)
- Protect and/or enhance the environment (minimize ecological impact and intrusion of noise and/or air pollution in the community, be a good neighbor)
- Efficient and cost effective management of the airport and related assets (and resources)
- Achieve a high level of customer satisfaction by providing quality customer service and support

Through the annual State of the Airport presentation the Airport will have taken an important first step in bridging a communications gap with the community. To further solidify the Airport – Community link, the Airport will take the additional step of implementing a weekly one-page briefing. The brief will be drafted by the Airport Manager (or staff with management approval and oversight), and will highlight activities at the airport, operational (and other critical) statistics, activities of the Authority and other related information. When there is not sufficient Airport related activity, safety advice and tips can be featured.

The briefing must be available via fax, email, posted around the airport and only be one-page in length. The distribution list should include the airport tenants, the media, governing agencies (both over the Airport and neighboring jurisdictions) and other individuals interested in the Airport's activities and operations. It is important that the briefing be produced on a consistent basis, that the information is accurate and distributed widely.

The weekly brief should be summarized into a two-page (double-sided) mailer, and sent to those tenants without email or fax capability. The brief is an excellent method of generating positive public relations to the tenants, the community and the media, in addition to providing a higher benefit of advertising the airport without paying for advertising.

Estimated Size of the Target Market

Aircraft Owners

Based upon 2003 FAA data, we have compiled a zip code database of aircraft owners located within approximately 20 miles of the St. Louis Regional Airport. The area contains approximately 336 aircraft owners, 101 residing within 10 miles of the St. Louis Regional Airport and the balance (235) residing between 10 and 20 miles from the Airport.

Map of Registered Aircraft Owners (by ZIP Code)



As depicted in the map by the dark green areas, the highest density of registered aircraft owners is located southeast of St. Louis Regional Airport. The next highest density is located in (and/or around) southwest of the Airport. There is a widespread area of owners to the northwest.

The majority of based aircraft owners reside within the southern area.

Summary of Registered Aircraft Owners (by Distance from St. Louis Regional Airport)

Number of Aircraft Owners (by Distance from St. Louis Regional Airport)				
Distance from St. Louis Regional Airport	Piston	Turboprop	Jet	Total
Less than 10 miles	79	19	3	101
10 to 15 miles	66	7	2	75
15 to 20 miles	118	35	7	160
Total	263	61	12	336

Percentage of Aircraft Owners (by Distance from St. Louis Regional Airport)				
Distance from St. Louis Regional Airport	Piston	Turboprop	Jet	Total
Less than 10 miles	23.5%	5.7%	0.9%	30.1%
10 to 15 miles	19.6%	2.1%	0.6%	22.3%
15 to 20 miles	35.1%	10.4%	2.1%	47.6%
Total	78.2%	18.2%	3.6%	100%

As noted in the market assessment only 149 of an estimated 458 aircraft market (approximately 32.5%) are based at the St. Louis Regional Airport. However, the majority of registered aircraft owners in the market (69.9% or 235) are located between 10 and 20 miles of the St. Louis Regional Airport. Therefore, these registered aircraft owners most likely are within the market of other airports and are competitively targeted by competitive airports.

- The Airport will create a direct marketing campaign to attract the aircraft owners not currently at the Airport, but within the 20-mile range of the Airport. The campaign will consist of a fact sheet on the Airport and a brochure highlighting the features of the St. Louis Regional Airport. A copy of the weekly/monthly briefing should also be included along with a method for the recipient to be included on the email distribution list.

Marketing and Sales Strategy

A comparative analysis of the marketing and sales strategies utilized at medium/smaller general aviation airports and leading general aviation airports was used as the basis for establishing the marketing and sales strategy for the St. Louis Regional Airport. Summaries of the results of the analysis are provided in the Appendix.

Airports

Smaller general aviation airports (similar to St. Louis Regional Airport) tend to have a less costly approach to marketing particularly in comparison to the leading airports.

The primary obstacles at this level generally include lack of staffing and financial resources. Most smaller/medium airports have limited staff – generally one to five people – with the majority of personnel involved with operations and/or maintenance related functions and in many cases, the Airport manager is fully responsible for all aspects of the operation of the airport from answering the telephone to applying for federal and state grants. Airport managers of small or medium airports are also responsible for developing and implementing the airport’s marketing and promotional program. Assistance from either the airport commissions, the governing body (or support personnel) is the exception rather than the rule.

As is the case with the leading airports, the term “marketing” can create some discomfort. The feeling that public monies should not be used for “marketing” is evident in industry circles; most airport managers are more comfortable with the terms “public relations”, community relations or “advertising”.

Characteristics of Marketing at Small/Medium Airports

It is erroneous to compare general aviation airports with commercial service to general aviation airports without commercial service due to the difference in primary missions of the airports.

Smaller general aviation airports governed by airport authorities without commercial service often have small marketing components.

At airports smaller than St. Louis Regional, marketing is the responsibility of the airport manager who is also responsible for all operational and managerial matters. Administrative Assistant’s are typically not available to handle some of the marketing responsibilities. This suggests the need for some creative mechanisms to enable airport managers to enlist other community resources to assist with marketing and promotional efforts. A number of these mechanisms are discussed in the Promotional Methods and Mix section of this plan.

Airports of the same size and character as St. Louis Regional often have additional staff to help with the operations, maintenance and administrative duties, including marketing and its’ various components (public relations, community relations, advertising and promotion).

Small airports often do not have a website, or have websites designed by friends or family members as part of a hobby. Many times these websites are not frequently updated and are often forgotten about once the site is constructed, leaving old and outdated information. Medium and large general aviation airports often have professionally constructed websites, or an “airport” section is included as part of the governing body’s website.

It is important to have an individual on-staff that ensures the information on the website, regardless of how or where it’s located, is up-to-date and provides comprehensive information on the airport.

Smaller airports that do not have a website, still have a web presence through www.airnav.com, an exhaustive database of nearly all of the airports in the United States. Airport managers without their own airport website should ensure that the information posted on their FAA 5010 forms and the airnav.com website is timely and accurate.

Small/Medium Airport Marketing Funds

There are typically limited financial resources available and almost zero funds allocated to “marketing” for many small or medium airports. When such resources are available (usually under a combination of “membership,” “advertising” or “staff travel” line items) the totals tend to represent a half or one percent of the total airport budget. It is not uncommon at even larger general aviation airports for the “marketing” budget to represent less than 0.01% of the entire airport’s operating budget.

Many airport managers feel that the chances of successfully approaching governing bodies – most of which have more immediate needs – for “marketing” or “public relations” monies would not be productive. It is often difficult to measure the effectiveness of a marketing program, which makes it difficult for airport owners to justify the expenditures. This further suggests the need for low or no cost mechanisms to supplement an airport’s marketing and promotional efforts. Some options are discussed in the Promotional Methods and Mix section of this plan.

Airport Websites

The website has become the business brochure for the modern era. Most companies are not considered up-to-date or even a legitimate business without a website presence. Although the “dot-com” bust of the 90s demonstrated that not everyone can make millions of dollars off Internet sales, it did prove that a businesses website was as essential to the success of the business as marketing brochures and other public and customer relations tools. The Internet-savvy buyer of the 2000s always checks a businesses website before conducting business with that company.

While websites are essential to any successful business, particularly a government service agency such as an airport, just like a poorly designed and produced marketing brochure can send customers to another provider, a poorly designed website can have the same result.

Basic guidelines for website development:

- Have the site professionally designed and maintained, or have a pathway constructed so that the airport manager or staff can maintain and update the website as needed.
- Include the following sections:
 - Basic airport information including runway lengths, widths, strengths, nav aids, automated weather reporting and/or control tower (plus hours of operation).
 - This section should include a caveat that the information is not for official use, to protect the airport from liability.
 - Airport operational information including annual and monthly operations, fuel sales, enplanements (if applicable), and noise complaints.
 - Directions to the airport and an airport map
 - Airport business directory with links to airport business websites
 - Airport administrative information including the airport managers name and contact data, key staff members, organizational chart, board meeting agendas and schedules.
 - Public relations information including press releases, backgrounders and fact sheets.
- Other “value-added” information can include:
 - Community section featuring fun facts about the airport, interesting aircraft, fly-in’s or upcoming events (airshows, open houses).
 - Development information including available property, standard lease rates, hangar availability and an aerial photograph.
 - Other resources including eating facilities and other amenities, conference room availability, flight planning resources, community off-airport amenities (restaurants, hotels, recreation)
 - Information on the economic benefit of the airport

Assessment of Current Airport Website

Airport Website Assessment	Assessment Scale					Weighting	Score
	Poor (1)	Fair (2)	Average (3)	Good (4)	Excellent (5)		
General Information and appearance					5	x5	25
Airport Information (maps, etc)					5	x4	20
Business Directory				4		x3	12
Administrative Information (org chart, staff)			3			x2	6
Public Relations (contact data and information)		2				x2	4
Community Section			3			x1	3
Development Section				4		x1	4
Amenities and off-airport services (hotel, restaurant, ground transportation)			3			x2	6
Economic benefit	1					x1	1
News and Events	1					x2	2
Score							83

Scale

Score: 115-103 = Excellent, no improvements suggested

Score: 102-92 = Good, minor improvements suggested

Score: 91-80 = Average, improvements suggested and should be made

Score: 79-69 = Fair, major improvements suggested and should be made immediately

Score: 69 < = Poor, major improvements needed, immediately

The St. Louis Regional Airport's current website was rated as Average. Some specific suggestions for improvement are:

- Accessibility page: Include specific directions to the airport from the major access points.
- Home to Business page: The airport site map is Good as is the information on this page, but the name of the link "Home to Business" doesn't directly specify what information is on the page. Recommend this page be changed to "Development" or "Building on St. Louis Airport".
- Include information on the Authority, members, agenda and meeting schedule.
- Include press contact and media information.
- Add information on off-airport amenities, hotels, restaurants, services, and recreation.

Some good airport websites to use as a reference include:

- East Farmingdale, New York
 - <http://www.republicairport.net>
- Morristown Municipal Airport
 - <http://www.mmuair.com>
- Jefferson County Airport, Colorado (good example of website merged with County website)
 - www.co.jefferson.co.us (select Index/Departments/Airport)
- Centennial Airport, Colorado
 - <http://www.centennial-airport.com>
- Santa Monica Airport, California
 - http://www.santa-monica.org/resource_mgmt/airport
- Pensacola Regional Airport, Florida
 - <http://www.flypensacola.com>

Other Marketing Strategies

Another focus is on the economy of the operation. For example, there are relatively few newsletters and glossy airport brochures. Both are relatively expensive (for general aviation airports) to produce and distribute. It doesn't cost a great deal to host a school tour, speak at a local chamber of commerce, or pursue some of the less expensive promotional alternatives.

A common characteristic of marketing and promotional programs (within the comparable airports group) is collaboration and co-hosting. Sharing responsibility for a school tour with teachers and parent chaperones, for example, not only helps in terms of managing the group, it provides the airport manager with the opportunity to reach an additional and perhaps more significant audience.

Co-hosting an open house or air show with the FBO or flying club also involves sharing responsibility with other organizations and, if properly organized, relieves the pressure on an already time constrained airport staff. This can be a key element in light of the staffing realities discussed herein.

There are, of course, marketing and promotional elements – other than the Internet – that have been developed or which have evolved, to increase or maintain awareness and support of general aviation activities.

Some of these – in no order of importance – include:

- Involvement in representational activities. Examples include attendance at meetings of community organizations, taking advantage of speaking opportunities, and generally keeping the public and clientele aware of the importance of general aviation to the community, and the products, services, and facilities that are available at the airport.
- Airport tours. The emphasis is typically on school groups although tours for civic and fraternal organizations, senior organizations, etc. are not uncommon.
- Airport open houses. Frequently held in collaboration with airport tenants.
- Air shows and fly-ins. Frequently held in collaboration with local flying and sky diving clubs, local chapters of the EAA, etc. While the issues of cost, sponsorship, and insurance tend to complicate these events, they still remain popular and viable programs from a promotional standpoint.
- Make airport facilities available for community walk-a-thons and fund raising events for a variety of community non-profit organizations. These are normally co-sponsored events, where the community organization takes care of planning, management and staffing, and the airport gets the press. Safety and operational considerations must be closely coordinated with pilots, the FAA, and air traffic control.

The focus of most of these efforts is clearly trying to reach the greatest number of people. The underlying theme seems to be that the more people that are reached, the greater the understanding of general aviation will be, and that – ultimately – leads to support in all kinds of unforeseen ways with the key being the opportunity to generate support for the airport as an integral and important community asset.

☐ The St. Louis Regional Airport will engage in a variety of the above listed activities each year. For the Airport to better develop its available property it is important for the Airport Manager to become involved in and participate in local chamber of commerce and other business related activities.

It should be noted at this point that if the Airport proceeds with development in the safety areas of the runways, airshows will no longer be a part of the marketing for the airport, due to the necessary safety parameters.

Leading Airports

The larger, more progressive general aviation airports utilize a wide variety of marketing and promotional tactics. The leading airports typically have larger staffs and in many cases, have dedicated marketing personnel who are able to generate high quality and very focused marketing and promotional materials on an on-going basis. It is useful to study these airports to get ideas of a few programs or parts of parts of programs that could be adapted to the medium/smaller airport category.

It is significant to note that many of the representatives of the leading airports are uncomfortable using the word “marketing” and the descriptions or phrases “community affairs or relations”, “public relations”, “educational programs”, and “self-promotion” were frequently used instead.

It seems that this practice is influenced primarily by the FAA mandate not to fund “excessive” marketing activities and the general rule that “non profit public entities” should not be using taxpayer’s monies for “advertising”. However, it is clear that representatives of the leading airports felt that “marketing” is extremely important and essential to the success of an airport.

Classifying the Leading Airports

In terms of marketing, the leading airports surveyed could be classified as follows (a complete list of these airports is provided in the Appendix):

- High level
 - Airports that are focused on expanding the business/corporate aviation activities by attracting new and/or retaining existing customers. Examples include Morristown Municipal Airport in New Jersey and Republic (Farmingdale) Airport – both are located near New York City.
- Moderate level
 - Airports that have superior (or strategic) locations compared to competitors. Representatives from these airports have indicated that as a result of the advantage of “location, location, location”, an extensive “marketing” or “promotional” program was not needed. Examples include Teterboro Airport in New Jersey (located in the New York metropolitan area) and Santa Monica Airport in California (located in the Los Angeles metropolitan area).
- Low level
 - Airports who have ongoing noise issues and/or elected officials who want to maintain the “status quo” were not interested in growth and engaged in very little, if any, marketing or promotional activities as a result.

Marketing, Staffing, and Program Implementation

At the largest leading airports, usually at least one full time employee is dedicated solely to marketing. This individual typically manages a wide variety of marketing and promotional programs including web sites, collateral materials, community/educational programs, and air shows.

In other cases, marketing functions are performed by the Deputy or Assistant Airport Manager (who has other “operational” and “managerial” duties) and/or the airport sponsor provides marketing services at low or no cost to the airport (e.g., web site design, development, and support; design and printing of collateral materials; direct mailings, etc.).

At some airports, the governing city or county, or the city or county the airport is located in, have economic development agencies willing to promote the airport. Often, if these agencies are present and are not currently marketing the airport, an educational program and meetings with the airport management can bring them on-board. Teaming up with an economic development agency multiplies the resources available and the benefits to the airport; the municipality the airport is located in and spreads the cost of marketing among more agencies.

The Airport will make efforts to team up with local economic development firms as identified in the Market Assessment to pursue joint-marketing activities.

Cost of Marketing and Budgeting

In most cases, the total cost of marketing was not known which can be attributed, in large part, to the work that is being performed “in house” or by the sponsor’s staff in which case, the costs associated with such work are not typically allocated to “marketing”, but are charged to the “airport” instead.

At a few airports, the cost of a major marketing and/or promotional activity such as an air show (e.g., \$600,000) or specific new advertising and public relations campaign (e.g., \$90,000) was budgeted.

Leading Airport Marketing Effectiveness

Many airports acknowledged that the success of a marketing program is subjective and difficult to measure. A majority feels that a variety of programs targeting the community and aviation consumers is necessary to be competitive in today’s dynamic and ever changing marketplace. Several programs were specifically mentioned as being the most important and/or effective, as follows:

- A strong Internet web site with extensive and current information about the airport, the products, services, and facilities provided at the airport, the management of the airport, and local (community) issues. While web site maintenance can be a challenge, it is essential to ensure that “all” information is continually updated and timely, as previously discussed.
- An annual air show and/or open house.

- Participation in NBAA conventions/trade shows/conferences to promote the airport to the business/corporate segment of the market. Frequently, the cost of participation (e.g., developing an exhibit booth, exhibiting, and staffing the exhibit booth) is shared with airport businesses and community organizations such as the Chamber of Commerce, Business Council, or Economic Development Council.

Case Study of Republic Airport, Farmingdale (Long Island), New York

In conducting research in support of the development of another plan, Aviation Management Consulting Group located a larger general aviation airport that was launching a campaign to increase business aviation business. As St. Louis Regional Airport may be having a similar goal now or in the future, the following case study was included in this plan.

Now in its 17th year of service, Republic Airport was originally developed in support of the aircraft manufacturing activities of Fairchild Corporation. Over the years, an emphasis was placed on flight training and then subsequently on supporting the business/corporate segment of the market (both based and transient aircraft owners and operators). Today, airport management (and the FBOs at the airport) made marketing to this segment a priority.

Among the strengths of Republic Airport are excess capacity, less congestion (in comparison to the competitive general aviation airports in the area including the Teterboro and Morristown Airports), and good proximity to downtown New York. However, Republic Airport needed a program to create (and/or increase) the awareness in the business community and communicate the message that the airport was indeed “a serious player” in the industry. But most importantly, a program was needed to change the impression that Republic Airport was just a “small” general aviation airport catering primarily to the recreational/pleasure segment of the market.

Within this context, over the last few years, airport management has developed and implemented a targeted marketing program consisting of the following elements:

- Airport name and logo. While the possibility of changing the name of the airport to something like “Long Island Executive Airport” was considered, the historical significance of the “Republic” name and resistance from local businesses nixed this option. Instead, an advertising and graphics firm was engaged to address the name and image issue.
 - The tag line of “Long Island’s Executive Airport” was added to the Republic Airport name.
 - A new logo was developed using a colorful red, white, and blue format.
 - A graphic standards manual was developed to provide guidelines for stationary, business cards, brochures, signage, and other related uses of the new scheme.
- Web site
 - A new web site was developed (<http://www.republicairport.net>).
- Advertising
 - New advertising copy was developed for targeted ads in Aviation International News and other similar industry trade publications.

- Public Relations
 - A major New York City public relations firm was engaged. Several principals of the firm have an interest in aviation (and the Republic Airport in particular) which helps keep fees/costs down.
 - An ongoing public relations program was developed and implemented with articles being placed in local, regional, and national media.
- NBAA Participation
 - Airport management is now a member of NBAA for the first time ever.
 - The airport is planning on having an exhibit booth (in conjunction with the airport's FBOs) at the NBAA Convention for the first time.
- Airport Improvements
 - A second FBO (Long Island Jet Center) is now operating at the airport
 - The airport runways and taxiways have been recently overlaid
 - Enhancements are currently being made to several hangars

Promotional Methods and Mix

Based upon a comparative analysis of the marketing and sales strategies utilized at “comparable” and “leading” airports, the promotional methods and mix that should be utilized by the Authority to properly position the airport within the market and reach the airport’s target markets (and the recommendations for implementation) are identified in the table that follows.

ITEM	FREQUENCY	COMMENTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ST. LOUIS REGIONAL AIRPORT
Airport brochure	Review/update every year	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create a simple tri fold brochure using copy from the web site (see Web site comments below) • Develop a distribution strategy (i.e., supply the Chamber/Business Council, Economic Development, area businesses, and the community)
Signage/entryways (graphic standards, maintenance)	Review/update every year	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Audit – signage copy, maintenance, lighting, and landscaping • Many communities and highway departments provide free directional signs to airports (i.e., the signs have an airplane logo, the name of the airport, and directional arrows).
Overall airport appearance, housekeeping and maintenance	Continuous	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plan, schedule, and budget for correcting critical deferred maintenance and general housekeeping. This can demonstrate to both the aviation and general communities that the airport “means business” and “positive changes are in the wind.”
Joint (co-op) marketing campaigns with tenants	Review/update every year	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explore a joint marketing (co-operative) campaign (and budget) with the FBO.
Target mailing (tenants, aircraft owners, etc.).	Every quarter	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As a partner with FBO or maintenance operator(s), consider a program that targets potential based customers such as “try us” specials on fuel or maintenance services and/or provides news about current events at the airport. • As a partner with FBO, consider a program that targets potential transient (business/corporate) customers using NBAA and/or other contact lists. • As a partner with flight school(s) host student tours from local high schools to encourage new flight students and overall promotion of the airport.
Local telephone listings (Blue Pages)	As published	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue (review and update)
Print advertising (ProPilot, AIN)	Once or twice a year	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider in the future as a supplement to announce a new image and as a draw for potential business/corporate customers. As this is expensive, consider a few well-placed ads, full or half-page, color, rather than smaller ads that aren't as easily seen.

ITEM	FREQUENCY	COMMENTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ST. LOUIS REGIONAL AIRPORT
Updated information/comments in AIRNAV.com and other aviation directories (Internet and other)	Every month	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review current information and update. This is a free service and widely used by throughout the aviation industry. The “comment” section, which is really designed for users of AIRNAV, can be used creatively by the airport and the FBO to make announcements and do some “light” self-promotion.
Broadcast media-radio and TV	Immediate and twice a year	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ? Explore opportunities with public TV and radio talk shows, these free sources may respond favorably to promoting events at the airport. Explore the idea of linking the weather station at the airport for use by public TV and radio (“the current weather conditions at the St. Louis Regional Airport are...”).
NBAA Annual Convention and annual Schedulers and Dispatchers conference (attend and/or exhibit)	Every year	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Become an Associate Member. Consider attending and/or (preferably) exhibiting at the Annual Convention. Encourage the FBO to take the lead with regard to covering costs and providing staffing. Attend the annual NBAA Schedulers and Dispatchers Conference. This is a target market for airports, FBO’s and charter operators and is lower cost than the Annual Convention.
Air show/Airport open house	Every year	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> High priority (open house). Identify the best time of year (weather, other area/regional events, etc). Design a program (events, demonstrations, food, restrooms, air and ground traffic control, signage, barriers, and weather contingencies). Consider hosting the Warbirds like the touring B-24 and B-17’s to build community support.
Club sponsorship (Boy/Cub Scouts, CAP)	Continuous	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consider, but low priority (as time permits)
Communication database (phone, e-mail, fax, mailing address) for community leaders, important neighbors, airport tenants, repetitive customers, NBAA and other sources	Immediate and every quarter thereafter	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> High priority. There are a variety of software programs available. Lists are often available through Chamber of Commerce/Business Council, Economic Development, NBAA, and others. A possible task for a college intern. Facilitates targeted communication to the airport universe of customers when needed to promote, inform, or deal with airport issues.

ITEM	FREQUENCY	COMMENTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ST. LOUIS REGIONAL AIRPORT
Host business organization at airport ("after hours")	Every quarter	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High priority. • Most Many Chambers/Business Councils have an "after hours" function to permit socializing and networking. If the Chamber does not have this function, consider making an airport "after hours" function as a special event. • Schedule and plan this event and encourage the FBO and the restaurant to participate (contribute food, beverages, and/or cover related costs).
Involvement in local Chamber of Commerce/Business Council	On-going	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue and consider increasing participation in leadership and/or on committees. • Host a monthly meeting at the airport four times a year • The synergy between the airport and economic development agencies should be enhanced and expanded. • Consider quarterly meetings with staff and/or Board to update and plan cooperative efforts.
Involvement in local Economic Development	Immediate and on-going	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High priority. Increased interaction and participation is strongly encouraged. • The natural synergy between the airport and ED should be enhanced and expanded. • Consider quarterly meetings with Director and/or Board to update and plan cooperative efforts.
Press releases	Every quarter	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High priority and excellent free publicity. Expand topics beyond "need to know" or "current events". Emphasize the role of general aviation (and the airport). There are many great stories that need to be told involving the use of general aviation aircraft. • Recognize the "ongoing" nature press releases and issue them frequently based upon public interest in newsworthy ("general aviation") events at the airport (the weekly briefing serves as a natural press release).
School tours	On-going	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proactively market school tours (contact local schools and promote the opportunity) • Consider recruiting volunteer "Ambassadors" from the community to plan, organize, and conduct tours.

ITEM	FREQUENCY	COMMENTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ST. LOUIS REGIONAL AIRPORT
Speaker or speakers bureau for service clubs	Every quarter	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proactively solicit invitations to speak. Consider Airport Advisory Committee member involvement. Set a goal of 2 presentations per year (or 1 per quarter) and increase by 1 presentations per year. These speeches build support for the Airport among the established business owners in the community.
Tenant meetings	Every quarter	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conduct tenant meetings in combination with FAA Safety add 1 meeting (every quarter). Consider creating a "State of the Airport" annual address that provides an overview of the progress of the airport and where things are headed for the future. Utilize a Powerpoint presentation and full-color slides of airport projects.
Website		
Airport business services (tenants)	Immediate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide an updated list of all businesses on the airport. Link to Airnav and make sure list and copy is complete
Airport staff (and contact information)	On-Going	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure that e-mail is checked regularly (and responded to promptly). Frustration and problems can occur if e-mail is not acknowledged (at a minimum) and answered (preferably) in a timely manner.
Aviation associations logos (NBAA, AAAE)	Immediate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Add logos for those associations that the airport is a member.
Fix broken links	Immediate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fix "Services" link and implement a program to routinely check and update links and information.
Calendar of events and Current events - what's happening (Air Fair Open House, notices)	Immediate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Update this section frequently (which can serve in lieu of a written newsletter or may be printed and distributed to those who do not have or may not use web access).
Current time and weather (Weather Channel)	Immediate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Add a linked insert.
Educational tours information and booking contact	Immediate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide information about the tour program. See www.ci.hickory.nc.us/airport/School_Tours.htm.
Employment opportunities	As needed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In the future, this can be used to advertise available positions

ITEM	FREQUENCY	COMMENTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ST. LOUIS REGIONAL AIRPORT
Links (local, regional, and some national information)	Within 3 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Add helpful links (i.e., tenants, local, regional and national information). • Attention to finding and listing useful links will increase the utility (and use) of the airport's web site.
Maintain web site (timely, accurate)	On-going	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitor regularly for accuracy and timeliness • Many airport web sites suffer from old information making a poor impression.
Nearby industrial park and/or commercial developments	Immediate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expand reference to nearby industrial park and add link
Weekly one-page update or monthly update	Within 3 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide a weekly or monthly one-page update to tenants, media, politicians and others interested in airport issues via email or fax.
Pilot information	Within 3 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Link to AIRNAV or create a special section for pertinent pilot information.
Travel and tourism - area information (hotels, cars, sightseeing)	Within 3 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Link to local informational sites.
Special Comments		
Transient aircraft market potential	Within 3 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participate with FBO in research. • Develop a "transient aircraft identification" program that identifies the n-number of transient aircraft using other area airports and then contact (or send a letter to) the owner/operator of the aircraft and invite (and/or provide some enticement for) them to visit the St. Louis Regional Airport during the next visit to the St. Louis area. • Conduct an informal survey to determine whom the transient customer is doing business within the local market (and contact them to promote the airport). • Consider marketing incentives such as reduced fuel rates, 3M Sticky-Note ATIS cards, pens, coffee mugs, flight bags.
Synergy/relationship with FBO	On-Going	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The full cooperation of the FBO and maintaining a positive (and productive) relationship or partnership with the FBO are both necessary for this program to be successful (and for the airport to advance to the next level).
Based aircraft retention program	Within 3 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish an exit interview program to determine why customers are leaving or no longer using the airport and take corrective steps for retention. • At tenant meetings and one-on-one's with Airport management, discuss what's most important to them as based tenants.

ITEM	FREQUENCY	COMMENTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ST. LOUIS REGIONAL AIRPORT
Targeted market survey to increase business aviation traffic	Within one year	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct a “business to business” survey to identify business connections and develop new transient customers.
Marketing program development (personnel/staffing)	Immediately	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with City Department dealing with Public Affairs and economic development
Marketing program implementation (personnel/staffing)		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local college or university marketing departments³ • Volunteers⁴ • Part time professionals⁵
Web source for marketing ideas		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A good reference for ideas and stimulate discussion is http://www.smartbiz.com/sbs/cats/mktggen.htm.

³ An alternative might entail an effort to involve the local academic community in a revitalized marketing undertaking. Faculty members might be interested in serving in a consultative role to the Director, Aviation Services or the Airport Board on an intermittent basis, particularly in the initial design phase by compiling and presenting research. Another potential might exist in the area of assigning student interns, particularly to assist in the implementation phase of the new marketing program. Recommendation: Approach the university business/marketing schools to determine the feasibility of involving the marketing faculty in the design of a new marketing program and student interns to assist in the implementation phase.

⁴ There are a number of community volunteer programs that have a roster of volunteers with a variety of skills and backgrounds. These volunteers are often made available without cost to public or private not-for-profit organizations requiring specific skills. Some of these programs offer volunteers on a short-term basis; others can provide continuing assignments. Local United Way organizations typically operate volunteer programs. It is also possible to develop the airport’s own volunteer effort (e.g., the “Ambassador” program discussed above). Recommendation: Continue to utilize county resources while also approaching local volunteer organizations such as United Way and others with a request for short and/or long-term volunteer assignments in the area of marketing.

⁵ The future marketing program requires a dedicated individual with some experience in marketing, sales, or promotion. The individual needs to devote time on a regular and continuous basis to maximize the marketing opportunities. At this point, St. Louis doesn’t likely require a full time employee. However, recruiting for a part time position within the local community may get results. The arena of “stay at home” mothers and/or fathers, second jobs, school teachers on leave, and others seeking additional income can be an excellent source of talent. These individuals could work from home using a computer and related equipment. After start-up, we estimate that this work load might be in the range of two –one half days (or 8 hours) per week.

In combination, the promotional methods (and mix) recommended for the airport are designed to achieve a number of key objectives including:

- Increase customer awareness by clearly identifying (and keeping customers informed about) the products, services, infrastructure, and facilities that are available at the airport
- Communicate the mission, vision (direction), and values of the airport
- Strategically position the airport in the regional marketplace
- Create an image and identity that distinguishes (differentiates) the airport from its competitors and captures the interest of prospective customers
- Create an environment that generates new customers and conditions that result in sales to both new customers and existing customers
- Promote the use of the airport, attract businesses to the area that is served by the airport, and enhance the value (economic impact) of the airport to the community

But even more importantly, to be successful, it is essential that the airport be “marketing” oriented. Having a marketing orientation means operating and managing the airport with the focus on the customer. It is a viewpoint that recognizes the dependence of the airport (and the businesses located at the airport) upon customers and the sale of products, services, and facilities to customers. As a result, airport management and staff (and businesses at the airport) have to make decisions based upon the impact on the customer.

Airport staff must adopt the concept promoted by Edward Deming PhD of constantly looking for ways to improve the product or service, in this case the airport’s services, and implementing those methods or procedures.

In the end, a properly designed marketing plan that is focused on the customer (and realistic, complete, and detailed) can dramatically improve communications and provide management with a versatile tool that can be used to make such decisions.

Pricing Strategies

The Airport’s pricing strategy is to charge “market” rents for land and improvements (as mandated by the FAA).

Establishment of Rents, Fees, and Other Charges

Rents

Three approaches are typically utilized throughout the FBO industry to establish rental rates for airport-based properties: (1) negotiation, (2) appraisal, and (3) market rent study.

Negotiation is self-explanatory, but even so, a thorough understanding of the appraisal and market rent study approaches is essential to negotiating an appropriate rental rate.

An appraisal should only be performed when a value is needed (i.e., to facilitate the sale, acquisition, or financing of airport property or if a value is required by the lease, use, or operating agreement to calculate a rental rate). While an appraisal may be a common means of establishing a rental rate at many airports in the United States, it is not considered representative of best management practices.

Airport appraisals often do not make comparisons to other airport properties. Appraisers are more likely to make comparisons with non-aeronautical properties in close proximity to the airport, or closely related in use. For example, it is not uncommon for an appraiser to make a comparison between an aircraft storage hangar and a public storage facility located off airport property. The difference in rental rates can be extraordinary. Appraisers often do not take into account the limitations associated with developing airport property (and operating on airport). These differences in appraisal methodologies can reduce the accuracy of the value determined in the appraisal.

A **market rent study**, on the other hand, is a streamlined approach, which derives a rental rate without valuing the property. While the identification of comparable airports and a comparative analysis of rental rates are still required, the valuation process and associated appraisal report are both eliminated (i.e., neither are necessary if the lease rate analysis approach is utilized).

Once established, rents are typically adjusted (on a periodic basis) using three primary approaches (methods), as follows:

- *Fixed* (rents are adjusted at periodic intervals to a “fixed” rate)
- *Index* (rents are adjusted at periodic intervals based upon changes in a specified “index”). While CPI is commonly utilized throughout the industry, CPI adjustments may not be reflective of the changes which may have occurred in the “airport-based real estate marketplace” (which is driven primarily by what is occurring at comparable airports). As a result, artificial rents (or rents that regularly escalate regardless of industry/market conditions) may be established. Aviation Management Consulting Group has developed a special index (i.e., the Airport Economic Index or AEI), which is designed to more accurately reflect the local conditions at the airport.
- *Appraisal or Market Rent Study* (rents are adjusted based at periodic intervals based upon the value or rental rate conclusions reached by the appraiser(s)).

Adjustment frequencies vary from none (fixed throughout the entire term of the lease) to every year (although both are uncommon). Most commonly, rental rates are adjusted every five years. If properly performed, the information compiled and analyzed through the market rent study process is more than sufficient to establish an appropriate rental rate.

The Airport will conduct a Market Rent Study to determine the current fair market rents for properties at the Airport, and implement a regular schedule to conduct future Market Rent Studies.

Fees

The “current” industry standards and practices for establishing general aviation rates and charges follows:

- **Fuel Flowage Fees**

This is, by far, the most common and certainly, the most predominate general aviation fee charged by airport owners/operators today. By way of agreement with the airport owner/operator, FBOs are typically required to pay a fuel flowage fee for each gallon of fuel sold (and self-fueling entities are typically required to pay a fuel flowage fee for each gallon dispensed) at an airport. This fee is typically paid on a “cents per gallon” basis. Air carriers, who pay landing fees (under agreement with the airport owner/operator), are typically exempt from paying fuel flowage fees. Government aircraft may also be exempt (from paying fuel flowage fees) although that is not always the case. The flowage fee is relevant to any airport developer as aircraft owners are sensitive to the costs of operating an aircraft; the flowage fee is passed directly on from the FBO to the end-user.

- **Landing Fees**

Historically, general aviation landing fees have not been charged by airport owners/operators. However, today, more airports are charging general aviation landing fees as a supplement (or as an alternative) to fuel flowage fees. Landing fees are most commonly charged on a “cents per 1,000 lbs.” basis although some airport owners/operators have established schedules (sliding scale) that charge a flat fee for all aircraft within a specified weight range (e.g., \$5.00 for aircraft weighing less than 4,000 lbs. and \$7.00 for aircraft weighing between 4,001 and 8,000 lbs. etc.). In addition, in some cases, based aircraft and/or aircraft under a specified weight (e.g., 6,000 lbs) are exempt from payment.

An airport owner/operator may have an agreement with an FBO to collect and remit landing fees (for which a portion of the fee may be retained by the FBO as an administrative fee) or the fee may be collected directly by the airport owner/operator.

- **Ramp (Parking) Fees**

For the most part, general aviation ramp (parking) fees have not been charged by airport owners/operators with exception of those cases where the ramp/apron area is being used by a commercial operator (or an airport customer) or operated/managed by a commercial operator on behalf of an airport owner/operator as opposed to being leased by the business (or an airport customer).

When charged, a flat rate schedule for all aircraft within a specified weight (and/or size) range may be utilized (and a minimum fee may or may not be specified). In the alternative, ramp (parking) fees may be charged on a “cents per 1,000 lbs.” basis (like landing fees) with or without a minimum fee specified. In addition, airport owner/operators may exempt aircraft under a specified weight (e.g., 6,000 lbs.) from payment and/or have different rates for “day” parking (with or without a grace period) and “overnight” parking.

As with landing fees, an airport owner/operator may have an agreement with a commercial operator to collect and remit ramp (parking) fees (and a portion of the fee may be retained by the commercial operator as an administrative fee) or the fee may be collected directly by the airport owner/operator.

- Percentage of Gross Receipts

Despite being charged by some airport owners/operators, over the years, this fee has become less common. In those instances where a percentage of gross receipts is charged, fuel sales are typically exempt from payment (especially when fuel flowage fees are being charged by the airport owner/operator). In addition, other sales (e.g., aircraft sales, parts, charter, etc.) may also be exempt.

The amount of the fee and any exceptions or exemptions are typically stipulated in the agreement between the airport owner/operator and the commercial operator (FBO or SASO).

- Permit Fees

Historically, general aviation permit fees have not been charged (or assessed) by airport owners/operators. When charged, permit fees are typically based upon the type of business or activity.

General aviation airports typically charge fees to cover the costs of operating the airport. This requires that the airport manager have a clear understanding of the costs of operating the airport. In some cases, the airport may charge a percentage of the gross profits for the public access created by the existence of the airport.

Considering the Airport desires to attract new business, it is not the intent of the Airport at this time to add new fees, nor raise the current fuel flowage fee. A study will be conducted in three to five years to determine if the fuel flowage fees should be adjusted.

Image Development

Some of the key program elements that are designed to improve and/or enhance the image of the airport throughout the aviation industry and the community include improved signage (entryway and directional), co-operative marketing campaigns, target mailings, updated directory listings, NBAA membership (and convention/conference participation), open house, business/community events, press releases, speaking engagements, and web site enhancements.

- In addition to these elements, the city might consider adding a second tag line to more accurately reflect its “location” in the region and the county’s “vision” specifically with regard to serving the business/corporate and recreational/pleasure segments of the general aviation market.

Program Effectiveness

There are a number of ways to measure the effectiveness of the airport's marketing program including monitoring (tracking) changes in the number and type of:

- Based aircraft (fleet mix)
- Aircraft operations
- Gallons of fuel sold/dispensed at the airport
- Tenants
- Revenues (rents and fees)

The best way to measure the effectiveness of the specific elements of the program is to determine how people found out about the airport (i.e., what medium or promotional materials or program did they see or read?). For this reason, all inquiries and/or leads should be tracked and recorded. This information should be utilized to determine what mediums or promotional materials (or programs) should be continued (or discontinued).

Additional benchmarking elements are:

- The number of based aircraft tenants as compared to the number of aircraft owners living within a 20-mile radius of the airport
- Use of the US Customs facility can help determine if the airport is getting higher numbers of international operations