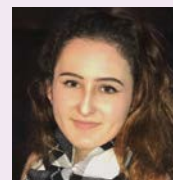




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# Helicopter Sales: How to Play the Current Market

Though the fixed-wing market hasn't been flooded with panicked sellers to date, can the same be said of the helicopter market? How should buyers and sellers approach the market today? Rebecca Applegarth asks Mark Clancy and Michael Roberts...

**A**viation analyst Rollie Vincent recently suggested that aircraft owners are choosing to ride out the COVID-19 environment. Instead of being pressed into a panic sale that feeds a pool of buyers seeking out distressed sale opportunities, they are choosing to hit the 'Great Big Pause' button.

That has particularly applied to the owners of fixed-wing business aircraft. But is the situation similar for the helicopter marketplace?

"It all depends on the type of owner you're referring to," Mark Clancy, president & CEO, Helicopter Buyer suggests. "There are so many helicopter sectors [corporate, charter, HEMS, offshore, law enforcement, utility, tourism and more] than in the business jet market. Each

helicopter sector is having its own economic challenges, and some are more severe than others.

"There are some good helicopter deals available, but it depends on what a buyer is looking for, how much effort they want to go to during the COVID-19 pandemic, and having the right connections to first identify, acquire, and finally deliver the helicopter."

For those looking to sell a helicopter at this time, it's the "bread and butter" models that will fare best on the market, according to Michael Roberts, founder & CEO, JETVEND; in other words those "with good availability of parts and numerous nearby shops and mechanics with specific model expertise."

In particular, Clancy says, "Legacy [i.e. out of





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production] offshore, HEMS and utility helicopters offer unique values to buyers at this time," but he adds that there's also a variety of late-model helicopters in the tourism, corporate, charter and utility sectors which are under-utilized, and some of which "have been idle for several months."

To buyers, Roberts suggests, "It is now more important than ever to evaluate the helicopter model you plan to buy, with the help of the maintenance facility you will primarily use."

#### Lining your Ducks in a Row

Even at a time of uncertainty, "Now is a great time to set up your own corporate, personal and family transportation to the extent that you are able to," Roberts continues.

"As one great corporate helicopter client once told me, 'control the variables'. Owning your own machine gives an incomparable level of control over your schedule and transportation."

Even where the helicopter market is slower, there are things that buyers can be proactive with, making sure they have all of their ducks in a row ready to move quickly on the right helicopter when it comes on the market. "The best strategy would be to identify the make/model that best serves

your interests and needs," Clancy says.

"Make a comparison of the available helicopters that can be acquired and utilized in their current condition, or with some level of Maintenance Repair and Overhaul (MRO), refurbishment, or reconfiguration.

"Select an experienced helicopter agent and MRO service center that specializes in that make/model. They will be able to guide you to acquiring and delivering the best helicopter available on the market."

According to Clancy, while financing is available to qualified private and commercial buyers, insurance may be more of a challenge for private buyers currently.

"This is a good time to think about the utility you will get from your helicopter, or the doors it will open in terms of commercial opportunities if that is your concern," Roberts concludes, "rather than trying to predict the future resale value.

"It's all about having the tool, and its ongoing costs in relation to its benefits to you."

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[www.helicopterbuyer.com](http://www.helicopterbuyer.com) or  
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