

# REDjet flies into Norman Manley

## REDjet's US\$9.99 fares sell themselves, says Burns

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REDjet, the Caribbean's low fares airline, celebrated its inaugural flight into Jamaica on Monday, the first step in its planned expansion in the region.

The aircraft arrived at the Norman Manley International Airport (NMIA) in Kingston from Barbados, just before eleven that morning, with 149 passengers, its capacity.

With tickets priced as low as US\$9.99 (\$860), Ian Burns, chairman and chief executive officer of the company, said REDjet was committed to proving the best service to the region and as such promised to provide unbeatably low fares for every flight, reliable and safe travel and non-stop flight services.

Speaking at the airline's local launch at NMIA, Burns said there are clear differences between his low-cost airline and larger ones, which allow REDjet to be competitive.

A simple business plan, operating one type of aircraft, point-to-point service and a single class of service are among the factors that allow REDjet to limit costs and maximise efficiency, said Burns.

Some still question the pricing of REDjet's tickets. The executive said 15 per cent of tickets (about 22 seats on each flight) are sold at the promoted US\$9.99. Fares increase moderately as seats are filled and as the flight date approaches. "Once you make a decision to travel, book now" he said.

He also said little needs to be spent on marketing as the tickets sell themselves.

"We don't spend a huge amount of money on marketing because once you hear US\$9.99 fares, you don't need much more marketing. It says that we are looking at the consumer. We want the consumer to fly with us."

Burns said travel issues which people usually worry about aren't as bothersome with REDjet as you can pay for bags when you get to the airport. Similarly, you can pay for food and drinks onboard.

The decision was taken to remove these amenities in favour of reduced fares based on their market survey, done prior to operations beginning earlier this year, he said. The survey found that people would rather have cheap and affordable fares than tickets' built-in 'luxuries' such as an in-flight movies and snacks.

Unlike the flight on Monday, the company's entrance to Jamaica was "bumpy", said Burns.

Speaking with the Business Observer in September, he said REDjet had been trying unsuccessfully to fly to Jamaica for the past four years, citing the divestment of the national carrier, Air Jamaica, as the major challenge. He said the Government had wanted to hold off any undue competition to Air Jamaica.

The government denied those claims, saying permission for REDjet to fly to Jamaica was withheld until there was satisfactory resolution to safety concerns.

The airline plans to add more routes to Jamaica, in addition to establishing a base here once <http://activepaper.olivesoftware.com/Default/Scripting/ArticleWin.asp?From=Archive&Source=Page&kin=JObserver&BaseHref=JMO%2F2011%2F11%2F23&ViewMode=HTML&PageLabel=4B&EntityId=Ar06800&AppName=1>

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permission has been granted by the relevant authorities.

REDjet currently operates two aircraft, but a third has been purchased and will be put into service next month, said Burns. “REDjet is here to stay, to develop as many routes as possible, (and) to develop as many jobs as possible.”

