

Air Molokai Decides Not to Merge Now

Air Molokai has decided not to merge with Air Hawaii, a new commuter airline in operation since Sept. 1.

Hank Younge, owner and president of Air Molokai, said his decision to remain an independent air commuter has "nothing to do with the performance of Air Hawaii at this point."

Younge said he "felt an obligation" to the people of Molokai to continue serving them until the new commuter is more established. He said he wanted to make sure his customers would be served "as well or better as I have served" them on Air Molokai as they will be on Air Hawaii.

Younge said some of his customers were unfamiliar with the new airline and were "naturally afraid" of possible changes.

But he said he and Air Hawaii owner Bruce McKenzie are on amicable terms and will continue to talk about the merger possibility in the future.

McKenzie said Younge's decision will not affect Air Hawaii service. The airline has 20 flights daily to Molokai, he said.

He said Younge apparently did not like the company's marketing and sales strategy.

Air Hawaii had planned to use four of Air Molokai's planes but instead will purchase four planes elsewhere, McKenzie said.

"I would still like the deal to go through," McKenzie said.