

**Datestamp:** 07/31/2005

### **Swensen heads up Alaris**

Kara Swensen is sometimes mistaken as the secretary for Alaris Aviation when she answers the phone.

But secretary she is not.

Swensen is the founder and president of Alaris, an airplane brokerage company.

The other thing she is is one of the few women who are owners of aviation businesses.

"Being a woman, I think, has been a tremendous advantage for me," Swensen, 30, said.

What makes her brokerage business — think real estate for airplanes, bringing buyers and sellers together across state lines — unique is that Swensen puts the logbooks of the planes she sells online.

Swensen founded Alaris in 2001.

Having those logbooks available for customers, she said, "builds integrity within my business and the planes I represent."

Four years later, Swensen's brokered the sales of 150 airplanes, hired one employee and gained a solid reputation for selling planes.

She's now getting repeat customers and a business that's growing through word of mouth.

The climb to being the president of her own company was no easy journey for Swensen.

In the early days, she was waiting tables at night to raise the capital she needed.

Swensen's fascination with planes began when she was a child with the loss of the Space Shuttle Challenger and the release of the movie "Top Gun" and father, a former fighter pilot, who taught her about engines, horsepower and other aviation topics.

"I like going the extra mile for my clients," Swensen said.

"I wouldn't want to work this hard for anybody else."

Bethany K. Warner: (920) 426-6668 or @thenorthwestern.com">{dc/adc }