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If given a choice, more than 70 percent of Israeli passengers would prefer to fly aboard a Boeing jetliner for international travel, according to a national survey by one of Israel's leading polling firms.

Boeing was the No. 1 choice for 67.6 percent of experienced travelers, and either the first or second choice of 71.9 percent of travelers in the poll, which was released this week in Tel Aviv.

Airplanes made by the Airbus Industrie consortium were the initial preference of 3.6 percent of respondents and the second choice of 19.9 percent. Respondents were asked the following question: "Regardless of airline, if you were to fly overseas today and you could choose the type of airplane in which to fly, which plane would you prefer? And which would be your second choice?"

The strong endorsement of Boeing jetliners would have been even more formidable had the totals included the preferences expressed for the airplanes produced by the company's Douglas Products Division. Boeing, which commissioned the survey, merged with McDonnell Douglas in August 1997.

The results come in the midst of an unusual advertising campaign in which El Al, Israel's national airline, is asking the public to voice its preference as the airline considers the purchase of new medium-range airplanes. The airline intends to acquire five jetliners, and will decide between the new Boeing Next-Generation 737-700 and the Airbus A-320, which entered service in the 1980s.

Strong interest in the campaign from the Israeli public prompted Boeing to launch a special Internet site featuring nearly 50 years of partnership between Boeing and El Al. Visitors can tour the site, which is rich in tradition and features historic photos dating back to 1948. Snapshots taken last month in Tel Aviv during a special visit by the Next-Generation 737-700 feature El Al executives, employees and the Minister of Transportation.

Since the El Al campaign began, web traffic from Israel to Boeing's home page has increased from an average of 850 hits per day before the campaign to an average of 3,000 hits daily. The Boeing home page, attracts approximately 500,000 hits per day from around the world. It features links to the Next-Generation 737-700 -- the world's fastest-selling jetliner -- and other Boeing products.

Teleser, which conducted the survey, is a leading research firm that regularly samples public opinion for Israeli media, political parties and the government. The firm surveyed a representative sample of 980 men and women during November. The sample was large enough to yield a confidence level of 95 percent with a margin of error of +/- 3.2 percent.

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