Boeing Airborne Satellite Television System Successfully Demonstrated In London

The Boeing Airborne Satellite Television System was successfully demonstrated last month to selected guests during a special event held in London, England.

At this event, Boeing Aviation Information Services (AIS) gave the first public showing of its airborne satellite television system outside of the United States. Over the course of the Nov. 16-20 demonstration, link-ups with more than a dozen European satellite service providers were tested, including such popular television services as Canal+ of France and the newly-launched Sky Digital in the United Kingdom.

"In-country testing with actual hardware and the real satellite and television service environment cannot be replicated in a lab environment. We were very pleased with the results," said Bill Richards, associate technical fellow with the Boeing AIS organization. "We experienced flawless reception with more services than we had expected."

"Both business jet and military customers not only were impressed with the excellent reception under simulated flight conditions, but also with the antenna's aerodynamic design, and the built-in flexibility and robustness of the system architecture," said Arnaud Gautier, AIS sales and marketing manager. "Customers also noted the ability of the AIS system to provide a growth path to future broadband information communications."

The AIS information communication system is based on the phased-array technology developed by Boeing. It allows business travelers access to a variety of live television entertainment and business information, including stock market reports and financial news. The antenna is only 1.2 inches thick, and 2 feet by 3 feet in size. Flush-mounted on the top of the airplane fuselage, its unique electronic steering allows for instantaneous connections with the satellites.

Last month, the system debuted to an international audience attending the 51st annual National Business Aviation Association convention in Las Vegas. The Boeing exhibit included a large static display of the aircraft equipment and a live demonstration of the AIS system receiving satellite television.

The Boeing Airborne Satellite Television System has provided uninterrupted service since first being installed in November 1996 on a Boeing 757 executive jet. "AIS is looking forward to expanding its capabilities to include additional satellite television services worldwide, high-speed e-mail, Internet and Web services in 1999," said Livingston Holder, AIS program manager.

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