Boeing Harnesses E-Commerce to Support WorldWide Fleet

The Boeing Company is using electronic commerce to deliver a rapidly growing share of the technical information needed to maintain the world's largest fleet of jetliners.

By the end of 1998, operators of a large majority of the more than 10,000 Boeing airplanes in service worldwide used the Internet or dedicated network facilities to access key Boeing support services.

The Boeing PART Page is the aviation industry's first web site for ordering and tracking spare parts shipments. Last year, the site handled 1.6 million transactions - more than double the volume of the previous year. Boeing launched the PART Page in late 1996 as a means for smaller airlines in particular to benefit from electronic commerce without having to invest in costly mainframe systems.

A password-protected, secure site, the PART Page now accounts for well over half the volume of all transactions received by the Boeing spares organization, dramatically reducing reliance on phone, fax, telex or mail.

Also, Boeing is the only jetliner manufacturer to offer its customers an on-line means of retrieving technical drawings, service bulletins, maintenance manuals and other vital maintenance data. Boeing On-Line Data (BOLD) is much faster and more accurate than conventional paper or microfilm-based retrieval methods.

BOLD users have real-time access to Boeing databases via standard computer workstations linked to high-speed, wide-area-network providers. Last year, 65 airlines - including the world's largest carriers - generated nine million BOLD transactions, twice the volume of the previous year. The number of customers using BOLD grew by more than 50 percent in 1998.

"More and more of our customers are taking advantage of our digital on-line systems," said Rich Higgins, Boeing Commercial Airplanes Group vice president-Maintenance Engineering and Publications. "Ultimately, we want our customers to be able to get all of the information they need to operate their Boeing aircraft through a single network connection."

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