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The Boeing Company will take its newest twinjet on a six-country marketing tour in Latin America, citing growing interest in the 717-200 among airlines in the region.

The tour, beginning March 27, will take the 717-200 to Bogota, Colombia; Santiago and Los Cerrillos, Chile for the FIDAE 2000 air show; Cordoba and Buenos Aires, Argentina; Sao Paulo and Rio de Janeiro, Brazil; Caracas, Venezuela; and Mexico City, Mexico.

The 717 last year made its international debut at AeroExpo Acapulco '99, one of the largest air shows in the region, where airlines and the media had a close-up look at the new airliner. Since then, the 717 has been taken on major marketing tours in Europe and Asia.

"The 717-200 is ideally suited for Latin America's regional market," said Dan Da Silva, Boeing Commercial Airplanes Group vice president sales - Latin America. "We're seeing strong interest in the 717 among airlines in the region, and it's only fitting that we again showcase the airplane in the region."

Da Silva noted that Boeing continues to be the primary supplier of airplanes for the region, where more than 90 percent of the fleet consists of Boeing airplanes. The company has identified Latin America as one of the highest growth markets for commercial jetliners during the next 20 years.

"This is the third major marketing tour for the 717 in less than one year," said Rolf Sellge, director, 717 Product Marketing. "I believe we can expect the same results on this tour as we realized from our tours in Europe and Asia last year when we received a number of requests for proposals from airlines. The 717 is the profitable choice for airlines serving the high-frequency, quick-turnaround market. Now that the airplane is demonstrating itself in revenue service, airlines are recognizing how it is meeting their high expectations."

The 717 is being delivered to customers with better fuel efficiency, lower airplane noise and lower weight than original estimates, which makes it the quietest and lightest new airplane in its class with the lowest fuel burn.

"At cruise, the 717 has up to eight percent better fuel consumption over our pre-flight-test estimates, and this means important cost savings for operators," Sellge said.

Sellge added that airport communities will be very impressed with the low noise characteristics of the 717.

The 717 provides a new level of comfort for passengers who typically fly on short routes served by smaller airplanes. A spacious interior design gives passengers extra-large, overhead stowbins, illuminated, full-grip hand rails, and five-across seating in economy class.

"The 717 offers an exceptionally high level of comfort," Sellge said.

A two-crew flight deck incorporates the industry's most modern and proven avionics technology. And the airplane's two advanced Roll-Royce Deutschland 715 engines are clean, quiet and efficient.

The company has recorded 143 firm orders and 132 options, including airplanes already delivered to customers.

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For further information:
Fernando Vivanco

206-766-2229
Warren Lamb
562-593-3269
