# Boeing Maintenance Documents Join E-Commerce Mainstream

The Boeing Company has given the go-ahead to offer all of its maintenance and flight operations information via the World Wide Web, following a successful trial program to provide selected maintenance documents over the Internet.

The trial effort involved users of the company's Boeing On-Line Delivery (BOLD) service. BOLD was first offered in 1995 as a client/server-based online system that gave airlines and maintenance providers direct access to digitized maintenance information from Boeing. It used an older software standard known as "X-Windows" and required user training and specialized computing hardware and network connections.

For the trial program, Boeing repackaged BOLD for use on the web by taking advantage of web browser technology and newer software standards. Users need only a personal computer, web browser, standard Internet connection and a Boeing password account.

During the trial, customers used the new Web BOLD to access service bulletins, maintenance tips, configuration change data, in-service fleet reports and certain other documents. In addition, it was paired with the Boeing web site known as FTS On-Line, which was developed by the company's Flight Technical Services organization.

With BOLD and FTS On-Line accessible through a common web portal, customers have a convenient way to quickly retrieve engineering, flight operations and maintenance information.

"Now that we've concluded the trial phase, we are formally offering Web BOLD to all of our customers," said John J. Gibson, director of Maintenance Engineering Digital Data Systems. "By the end of this summer all features of BOLD - including detailed technical drawings, all major maintenance manuals, product standards and other information - will be fully migrated to the new web-based version of the service."

Gibson noted that Web BOLD is now the standard on-line offering and will completely replace the earlier X-Windows version by the end of this year. He added that Web BOLD could easily accommodate many more features, and that in the future it will serve as the primary distribution system for a family of software tools, including the Portable Maintenance Aid and Boeing Digital Technical Documents.

"Our goal is to give customers all the information they need to maintain and operate their Boeing fleets through a single network connection," said Gibson. "Web BOLD is a major milestone in that ongoing effort."

Boeing received many compliments from airline personnel participating in the trial program. For example, Jim McQuay, senior staff representative-engineering at United Airlines, commented on the convenience of Web BOLD.

"The search functions get me to what I want quickly and efficiently," he said. "I have almost forgotten what microfilm is."

McQuay's comment underscores a key benefit of digitized information - eliminating the need to distribute, store, file and retrieve huge quantities of paper and microfilmed documents. In addition, with an online system such as BOLD, the database is updated daily, providing customers with the latest, most accurate information.

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