Boeing Delivers First 737-900 To Continental Airlines

The Boeing Company today delivered Continental Airlines' first Next-Generation 737-900 airplane, making it the second airline this month to receive the newest model of the 737 family.

With this delivery, Continental becomes the first domestic customer to operate three of the four Next-Generation 737 models: the 737-700, 737-800 and the 737-900. The airline has 15 737-900s on order. Boeing will deliver 10 of the new airplanes this year and another five in 2002.

At 138 feet 2 inches, the 737-900 is the longest of the four Next-Generation 737 models and seats the most passengers. As configured by Continental, the airplane carries 167 passengers in a two-class configuration, 17 more seats than its similarly configured 737-800s with a mid-cabin lavatory, and 43 more than its 737-700s.

"The additional seats in the 737-900 come with minimal additional costs due to the extensive commonality the airplane has with Continental's existing fleet of 737s," said Seddik Belyamani, Boeing executive vice president of Sales. "The combination of using the same flight crews across three models, having a common spare parts inventory as well as common maintenance practices translates into increased profit for the airline. Boeing is proud to be a partner in Continental's success as evidenced by the airlines' 24th consecutive profitable quarter."

Belyamani said the increased passenger capacity gives the 737-900 the lowest operating costs per seat of any single-aisle airplane in its class. In addition, the 737-900 is the most fuel-efficient single-aisle jetliner in its class.

The 737-900 provides Continental with the perfect complement to the airlines' existing fleet of 737-700s and 737-800s. Continental operates 59 737-800s and 36 737-700s, the second largest fleet of Next-Generation 737s in the world behind that of Southwest Airlines. The airline has an additional 34 737-800s on order, 14 for delivery in 2001 and 20 in 2002.

With more than 225 737s at the core of its domestic fleet, Continental is gaining cost efficiencies from reduced fuel consumption and spare parts inventory commonality. In addition, a larger 737 fleet is giving the airline the flexibility to choose from 737s with different seating capacities to match forecasted demand for a given flight, without changing the scheduled crew.

Continental plans to use its new 737-900s to serve a variety of routes, including Houston to Cozumel and Cancun, Mexico, and to New Orleans, Denver and Chicago/O'Hare. Continental also intends to use the new airplanes on its Northeastern routes to Florida.

The 737-900 that Boeing is delivering to Continental features a fourth mid-cabin lavatory for increased passenger convenience, as will Continental's 737-800s beginning with deliveries in June.

Three other airlines are adding the 737-900 to their fleets this year. Alaska Airlines received its first three 737-900s earlier this month, KLM Royal Dutch Airlines takes delivery of its first in late June; and Korean Airlines will receive its first in early November.

All new models of the 737 family (737-600/-700/-800/-900) feature new, more spacious interiors with more accessible overhead luggage bins, as well as the 737s superior high dispatch reliability. The 737 models also have advanced flight decks featuring the latest large flat panel display technology - one that permits operators to configure the display for maximum commonality with existing fleets. The airplanes are designed to fly higher, faster, farther, quieter and with greater fuel efficiency than previous 737 models and the competition.

The 737 is the best-selling commercial jetliner in history. To date, more than 3,900 737s have been delivered to more than 200 customers around the world.

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