Boeing Delivers 100th Next-Generation 737 To Continental Airlines

The Boeing Company today delivered the 100th Next-Generation 737 airplane to Continental Airlines. Gordon Bethune, Continental Airlines chairman and CEO, was present to receive the airline's fourth 737-900.

Continental is the first domestic customer to operate three of the four Next-Generation 737 models: the 737-700, 737-800 and the 737-900. The newly designed airplanes fly higher, faster, quieter and with greater fuel efficiency than previous 737 models and the competition.

In addition to its four 737-900s, Continental operates 60 737-800s and 36 737-700s. This is the second largest fleet of Next-Generation 737s in the world behind that of Southwest Airlines.

Continental has an additional 11 737-900s on order, six for delivery in 2001 and five in 2002. Also on order are 33 737-800s and five 737-700s.

"For many decades, Continental has been a valuable customer for Boeing and the 737 program," said Carolyn Corvi, vice president and general manager of the 737 program. "Today's milestone commemorates that history and moves us into the future."

With 231 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 providing 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.

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, and 43 more than its 737-700s. The increased passenger capacity gives the 737-900 the lowest operating costs per seat of any single-aisle airplane in its class.

The 737-900 delivered to Continental today features a fourth lavatory located in the mid-cabin for increased passenger convenience. Since June, deliveries of 737-800s to Continental also have featured a mid-cabin lavatory.

All new models of the 737 family (737-600/-700/-800/-900) feature new, more spacious interiors with larger, more accessible overhead luggage bins, as well as the 737's superior reliability and maintainability. 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 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.

Houston-based Continental Airlines is the fifth largest airline in the United States, offering more than 2,500 departures daily to 136 domestic and 92 international destinations. Operating hubs in Newark, N.J., Houston, Cleveland and Guam, Continental serves more international cities than any other U.S. carrier, including extensive service throughout the Americas, Europe and Asia.

Continental was named the 2001 Airline of the Year by Air Transport World, as well as the 1996 Airline of the Year, making it the only carrier to receive this honor twice in five years. Continental is in the top quarter of Fortune magazine's "100 Best Companies to Work for in America," and it is ranked the nation's No. 1 airline in customer satisfaction for long and short-haul flights by Frequent Flyer Magazine and J.D. Power and Associates.

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