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The first Boeing 757-300 airplane powered by two Pratt & Whitney PW2040 engines takes off from Renton, Wash., for its first flight. This maiden flight coincides with the first flight of the first 757 -- a 757-200 -- 20 years ago. Known for its versatility and exceptional fuel efficiency, the 757 was the third best-selling Boeing airplane model behind the 737 and 767 last year. Until now, all of the 757-300s have been built with Rolls Royce engines. This airplane is destined for Northwest Airlines, the first Boeing customer to select Pratt & Whitney engines for the 757-300. The single-aisle jetliner embarks on a three-month flight-test program that is scheduled to end in May with U.S. Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) certification and Europe's Joint Aviation Authorities (JAA) validation. A higher thrust version of the engine-the PW2043-also will be certified to provide additional performance capability.

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