

Lufthansa's Internet World Premier in the Sky

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First e-mail Sent Directly from a Commercial Airliner via a High-speed Internet Connection

Adding a new definition to the term "air mail," Lufthansa and Boeing have announced that the first e-mail sent via a broadband Internet connection from onboard a scheduled commercial airliner, successfully reached its recipient.

On Friday, Oct. 25, 2002 aboard the Lufthansa 747-400, "Sachsen-Anhalt," members of the Lufthansa and Connexion by BoeingSM project team simultaneously activated the onboard system and the satellite network for the first time and sent the historic transmission. The long-haul aircraft with the registration D-ABTE was cruising over the North Atlantic south of Greenland at an altitude of 35,000 feet (10,668 meters). With a speed of 910 km/h, flight LH 418 was on its regular route from Frankfurt to Washington, DC.

During the flight, a standard laptop computer was connected to the system via a secure, firewall-protected Internet connection, a virtual private network or VPN, to the Lufthansa corporate intranet. With this connection, the flying online offices of Lufthansa and Connexion by Boeing took a huge step closer to reality. Boeing and Lufthansa personnel have since analyzed the system data to ensure the accuracy of the results.

"Every day we receive 'air mails' now. I am especially delighted about this since they prove that even an ambitious idea can be realized successfully and as planned at Lufthansa," said Wolfgang Mayrhuber, deputy chairman of the Executive Board of Deutsche Lufthansa AG and chief operating officer of Lufthansa German Airlines. "Business travelers especially will value the significantly improved possibilities to communicate while onboard."

"We are profoundly pleased at this pioneering demonstration of this exciting new airborne communication service in conjunction with our customer, Lufthansa," said Connexion by Boeing President Scott Carson. "Continued success will forever change the way we stay in touch with the things that are important to each of us while in flight. We've challenged our team to ensure this success continues and that the entire system is robust, capable and service ready when it's introduced to Lufthansa's passengers early next year."

Commencing with the Lufthansa service demonstration, airline passengers will be able to choose from a multitude of personalized real-time services, including Internet and firewall-protected intranet access, e-commerce, entertainment content, transmission and receipt of data, shopping, travel and destination information.

In the meantime, Lufthansa FlyNet - the working title of the Lufthansa service - has successfully completed the first series of internal tests. All components and functions of the system operated trouble-free, allowing the sending and receipt of e-mails with large text and photo files. Moreover, the Lufthansa portal, developed jointly with Tomorrow Focus AG and presenting news along with stock prices, weather and travel information, has successfully finished its first successful test. In the weeks to come, several more sophisticated tests are scheduled to guarantee reliable and robust operations.

Commercial passengers flying the "Sachsen-Anhalt" aircraft will be able to begin using the system on January 15, 2003. For three months all passengers can use Lufthansa FlyNet with their own laptops or rental laptops onboard without charge on trans-Atlantic flights between Frankfurt and Washington Dulles (LH 418 and LH 419). Lufthansa has intentionally selected two daytime flights to gain as much information as possible about passenger use of the service.

Connexion by Boeing is a mobile information services provider that is bringing the fastest available high-speed Internet, data and entertainment connectivity to aircraft in flight. The service is currently available to the executive services market in the U.S., which includes operators of private and government aircraft. In addition to its service demonstrations with Lufthansa and British Airways, Japan Airlines recently announced its intent to become the Asian launch customer and install the Connexion by Boeing service on 10 of its long-range aircraft serving the Asia-to-Europe routes. For additional information, visit the Connexion by Boeing web site.

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