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Boeing [NYSE:BA] recently began final assembly of the first Next-Generation 737-700ER (Extended Range), one of the newest members of the world's most successful single-aisle airplane family.

The wings, shown here, and landing gear are being joined to the 737-700ER fuselage in the Boeing manufacturing facility in Renton, Wash. Last-stage assembly and interiors installation will begin once the airplane joins the moving assembly line. ANA (All Nippon Airways) will receive the airplane in early 2007.

Boeing launched the Next-Generation 737-700ER last January following an order conversion from ANA for two airplanes. The 737-700ER has the longest range capability of any 737 family member in regular commercial service, and is able to serve new nonstop, point-to-point routes profitably. Inspired by the Boeing Business Jet family, the commercial passenger jet features the fuselage of the 737-700 and the wings and landing gear of the larger 737-800. The high-performance derivative can fly up to 2,145 nautical miles farther than the current 737-700. With up to nine optional auxiliary fuel tanks and optional Blended Winglets, the 737-700ER is capable of flying up to 5,510 nautical miles.

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