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Boeing [NYSE: BA] and Austrian Airlines said today that the airline's fleet of four 777-200ER s will be monitored by Boeing's Airplane Health Management (AHM), a software system that helps airlines improve the management of unscheduled maintenance events. The maintenance operation center, engineers, and mechanics at Austrian Airlines will use AHM to gather and evaluate critical in-flight data in real-time.

The additional visibility enables airlines to begin working faults while an airplane is in the air and can help turn unscheduled maintenance events into planned ones. For example, a fault identified by AHM and relayed to ground controllers can prompt preparation that allows an airline to turn a potentially costly on-ground maintenance delay into an easily addressable repair that minimizes or eliminates disruptions to passenger flight plans.

"We expect Boeing's Airplane Health Management to address a variety of issues for us," said Walter Hechenberger, Austrian Airlines' executive vice president, Technic. "We want to increase both the availability of the airplanes and our efficiency in maintaining them. If we succeed, we can obviously improve the flying experience of our passengers as well as our own economic performance. We are happy to have Boeing as a partner in this win-win arrangement."

Airplane Health Management has particular benefits for Austrian because the system aggregates data from all AHM customers to create a body of information shared across enterprises. That means the experience of one airline can guide repair decisions, based on history and fleet experience, at another airline operating the same airplanes. Austrian began operating 777s in 1997. In all, roughly 28 percent of the world's 777 fleet is now being monitored by AHM.

"The addition of Austrian Airlines strengthens an already respected set of customers for Airplane Health Management," said Dan da Silva, vice president of Sales and Marketing for Boeing Commercial Aviation Services. "Boeing is proud to offer a system that helps such strong customers improve efficiency and on-time performance."

Airplane Health Management is a key component in Boeing's larger vision of the e-Enabled airline, where information technology, connectivity and strategic integration promise greater efficiency and improved airline operations.

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