



LATITUDE

The In-Flight Magazine of SimAirline.net

January 2007

Clipper Arrival at SimAirline.net

ALSO INSIDE:

SimAirline.net's 2007 Operations Plan

Latest Merger and Acquisition News

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Cover Photo: Joe Pries

Pan Am aircraft at New York Kennedy a year prior to the airline's closing



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VIEWPOINT

This is an exciting time for SimAirline.net, as well as for me personally. This is the first issue of *Latitude*, the new medium for me to communicate the important issues facing SimAirline.net, replacing the old Message from Aaron. At the same time, *Latitude* is a major expansion, featuring long-term news relating to our airlines that you might not otherwise read about on our website. For instance, in this issue you'll be able to read about the Italian government seeking to privatize Alitalia after decades of interfering with the airline.

We also opened Pan American Virtual this past month. Pan American is my favorite airline, partially because it laid the foundation for so much of international aviation as we know it today. In recognition of this and the airline's unique role in airline history, Pan American Virtual will offer more features, many unique, than our other airlines. You can learn more about this in our cover story on page 7.

Unfortunately, these happy times come with some sadness. Air Berlin recently contacted me regarding our use of their name and logos. We may be forced to close down Air Berlin Virtual. If so, the virtual airline will be closing sometime this month. This is an unfortunate development, but we would not be abandoning the German market. We would add a replacement German virtual airline once the rest of our virtual airline expansion is complete. To partially offset the present loss, Hong Kong Virtual would begin construction after Frontier Virtual opens in a few weeks. Of course, all of the above are contingent on actually having to close down Air Berlin Virtual.

As I mentioned above, this is an exciting time for me as well. I recently accepted an offer to join Northwest Airlines as an analyst at their headquarters, and will be starting for them in



Aaron Robinson will be joining the management at Red Tail in June.

June. An analysis position at Northwest has been a dream for several years, so I'm very grateful for the opportunity.

We have not yet finalized what *Latitude* will offer, so the content you see here will undoubtedly be evolving over the next few months. Please let me know what you'd like to see in *Latitude*, and thank you as always for being an important part—the most important part—of SimAirline.net.

Aaron Robinson

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NEWS BRIEFS

DOT Denies Virgin America's Operating Certificate

Despite passing the FAA's airline certification review, Virgin America has been denied its airline certificate by the U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT), which ruled that the airline's ownership structure fails to meet with U.S. foreign ownership law. The Federal Aviation Act requires that all U.S. airlines be at least 75% owned by U.S. nationals. DOT felt that Virgin America's brand licensing agreement "impedes the carrier's independent decision-making authority." Virgin America can opt to challenge the ruling and/or restructure its ownership.

Varig to Leave Star Alliance

Varig Brazilian Airlines will depart Star Alliance on 31 January. As part of Varig's restructuring "old" Varig, which maintained the debts of the airline, remained as part of Star Alliance and operated a reduced flight schedule on behalf of the "new" Varig. Because the "new" Varig has now been granted an air operator's certificate, "old" Varig will no longer fulfill the requirements for Star membership.

Dragonair to Join oneworld

Dragonair announced on 13 December that it would be joining the **oneworld** alliance as an affiliate member at a to be determined date. Membership gives Dragonair's passengers full access to the alliance, while offering **oneworld** enhanced coverage in China. Fifteen new cities, twelve of which are in China, will be added to **oneworld's** global network.

Delta First U.S. Major to Serve Africa Since 2001

Delta Air Lines is the only major U.S. airline serving Africa, following the launch of its daily Atlanta-Dakar-Johannesburg service on 4 December and four-weekly New York Kennedy-Accra flights on 11 December, both operated with 767-300ERs. Trans World Airlines served Cairo until it was merged into American Airlines five years ago. The flights are the first by a U.S. major to sub-Saharan Africa since Pan Am, which, coincidentally, ceased service fifteen years ago to the day that Delta began service to Africa.

Aviation Partners Boeing Launches 737-900 Blended Winglet Program

737-900s now have the option to receive winglets, with the first available in December. Alaska Airlines, Continental, and KLM were the first to order winglet conversions, with plans to convert their entire 737-900 fleets by the first quarter of 2008.

British Airways 767s Cleared After Radiation Probe

The three British Airways 767-300ERs that had been removed from service as part of the investigation into the death of former Russian spy Alexander Litvinenko have been returned to service. Two of the three 767s were found to contain very low traces of a "radioactive substance." British Airways contacted all 33,000 passengers who had flown on these aircraft to advise them of the risk.

Northwest to Retire Last DC-10

Northwest Airlines will operate its final DC-10 flight on 7-8 January, an overnight flight from Honolulu to Minneapolis/St. Paul. Northwest began operating the DC-10 in 1972, and operated as many as 45 DC-10s at one point. The aircraft type is being replaced by the A330-200 and -300.

A LOOK BACK AT 2006 AND FORWARD TO 2007



Thai Virtual was one of three virtual airlines that opened in 2006.

Frank Doering

2006 was an impressive year for SimAirline.net in many ways. At the organization level, the new roster system, in planning and construction for eighteen months, finally opened. A revised SimAirline.net logo, featuring the globe on a pair of pilot's wings, was released. In addition, three virtual airlines, Pan American, Thai, and Varig opened, with Frontier coming early in 2007.

At the virtual airline level, numerous Discontinued Flights were added following the acquisition of several old timetables. Highlights include:

- British Airways: additional global routes, especially in Asia and Australia
- Delta: additional flights to Asia and regional flights from Los Angeles
- Hawaiian: South Pacific service
- Northwest: numerous routes to Asia and from Milwaukee

2006 also saw more codeshare routes, as a new partnership with CSA Czech Airlines Virtual was formed, and our long-standing relationship with the Lufthansa FlightSim Pilots Group expanded. Virtual airlines also received attractive new advertisement banners replaced on a regular basis to alert pilots about exciting new routes or unusual destinations. The addition of sounds packages and the highly successful route maps round out the enhancements made to individual virtual airlines.

SimAirline.net also expanded the features on the main site, including an improved Screenshots Contest, recommending AI Traffic for our virtual airlines,

more terminal maps, and the new Routes page to allow pilots to easily learn about new and expanded services and to view the new route maps.

Helping to ensure our success were pilots who made financial contributions to the organization: Nick Anderson, Reto Annen, Andrea Antonangeli, Jonathan Barron, Stuart Baxter, Kyle Bjorklund, Andrew Capewell, Stuart Clelland, Charlie Clothier, Ian Dennison, Lars-Gunnar Strandberg, Glenn Hall, Jeff Hansen, Shaun Harper, Nate Heffley, Gary Henry, Mark Hubbert, Roy Kaiser, Andrew Keig, Kevin Kienast, Roger Knott, Kevin Krehmeyer, Mike Lewis, Bob Marston, Clarence Miller, James Moreland, Stephen Murphy, Rick Parkin, John Parkinson, Stewart Pearson, Brent Reeves, Whitney Roberts, and Hugh Urquhart combined to contribute \$1031.89, meeting our contributions goal of \$1000, and shattering 2005's fundraising effort of \$686.84.

Finally, credit goes to those pilots who graciously stepped forward and offered their time and talents to help manage the organization this year: Ali Abou-Zeid, Nick Anderson, Paul Anderson, Samuel Arnold, Remy Attig, Jonathan Barron, Kyle Bissell, Kyle Bjorklund, Lee Bowersox, Sam Brown, Andrew Capewell, Casey Dalal, Sebastien Devogele, Marten Feddersen, Ben Guest, Mark Jahnke, Gregg James, Fred Johnson, Brandon Jones, Yaroslav Malyshev, Jackson Miller, Manuel Okolisan, Brandon Olson, Jon Ostrowski, Stewart Pearson, Gabe Pfeiffer, Josh Plave, Aaron Robinson, Lee Schreiber, Andrew Vipond, Tyler Vuong, and Chris Wohlgenuth.

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While 2006 was another good year for the organization, 2007 looks to be even better. SimAirline.net's 2007 Operations Plan, the fourth such Operations Plan, will build on the success of 2006's additions while still offering new features. Below, Managing Director Aaron Robinson offers his thoughts and reasoning for each of the nine sections of the 2007 Operations Plan.

1. Complete the Transition to the New Pilot Roster System

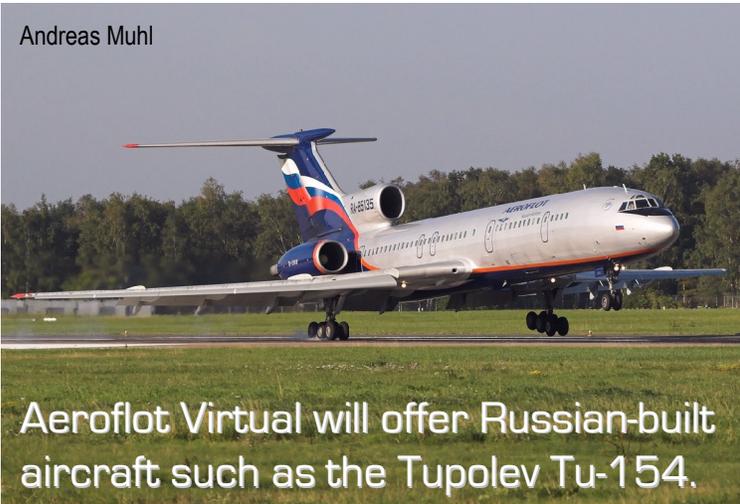
“Even though the new roster system has been open since April, there’s still a great deal we want to add to it to improve the SimAirline.net experience even further. From our original roster system testers to pilot feedback to the 2006 Annual Survey, we compiled a list of many features that were desired, and we’ll be working to implement them. Some of the most notable and visible include live user and organization statistics, automatic logins, the ability to view comments in logbooks, and easier editing of returned PIREPs.”

2. Conclude Virtual Airline Expansion

“SimAirline.net has always been about variety and flying opportunities around the globe. We have six more virtual airlines to add before we end expansion, and it’s a very exciting list.

Frontier Airlines was selected because it will give us a needed boost in the Western U.S., our only U.S.-based low-fare airline, and our only A318 operator.

Andreas Muhl



Aeroflot Russian Airlines was the logical choice for our Russian representative, one of three countries (along with China and India) we committed to having a major virtual airline in. India’s Jet Airways, the country’s most successful airline and third largest, is a highly respected airline with a modern fleet and extensive network.

To the east, China Southern Airlines is the largest airline in the country, and is only one of two airlines in the world to order both the A380 and 787.

Finally, Aeromexico will offer additional service in Latin America to complement Copa Virtual and the numerous flights to Mexico already flown by Continental.

Outside of our regular expansion, Virgin America will be included if Virgin America begins flying from San Francisco, along with a replacement for Air Berlin Virtual in Germany.

I do want to explain further why expansion does, unfortunately, need to come to an end. SimAirline.net is, for all of us, a hobby, not a job. For this reason I must treat it as such, and therefore can not

devote the full time I would prefer. While it is certainly sad that expansion has to stop, the demands on my time require that I make the decision that is best for me and for the organization. I hope you understand this, and please keep in mind that we will eventually offer thirty-six virtual airlines, whereas most organizations only offer one.”

3. Begin the Transition to FSX

“Results from the 2006 Annual Survey suggest that our pilots will be slow to move over to FSX because of its high performance needs. We’ll be testing and offering FSX-compatible downloads, but will continue to offer FS2004 files for the majority of our members, who will be continuing to use the older version.”

4. Publish a Monthly In-Flight Magazine

“*Latitude* was created to replace the old ‘Message from Aaron,’ improving its attractiveness while adding a fun new product to the organization. The Virtual Airline of the Month has also been transformed into the ‘VA Spotlight.’ Hopefully this will be something that pilots can enjoy and use to learn more about the airline industry and about SimAirline.net.”

5. Construct a “Creative” Section for the Site

“As part of broadening the variety in what SimAirline.net offers, our to-be-named creative section will feature several kinds of SimAirline.net themed downloads for your computer and simulator, such as desktop backgrounds, splash screens for Flight Simulator, and at some point, a SimAirline.net-themed aircraft to fly. There’s a lot we can do with this, so we’re hopeful that pilots will give us feedback as to what they’d like to see.”

6. Offer Retired Aircraft in Discontinued Flights

“The last few years have seen numerous aircraft types at our virtual airlines go into retirement, and many pilots have expressed interest in being able to still fly those types. We’ll be making these aircraft available for flying, but in order to preserve the accuracy of our operations, they’ll only be available for flights discontinued in real life.”

7. Form Additional Codeshare Partnerships

“Codeshare partnerships have traditionally been a secondary concern at SimAirline.net, but something that a number of pilots enjoy as a nice change from the ordinary. We’re very hopeful that we can expand our offerings further, but of course, it takes two to tango, and many codeshare partners are already in SimAirline.net’s virtual airlines.”

8. Clarify Timetables with Flight Durations

“This is a small addition, but one that many pilots have requested in order to help them be sure that PIREP flight times are correct. This process has already begun with its introduction in all timetables at Pan American Virtual.”

9. Finish Other 2006 Initiatives

“Unfortunately, we were unable to finish everything we had hoped to from our 2006 Operations Plan. We’ll be working further to market SimAirline.net, especially on non-English websites. We’ll also complete our route maps by offering them for British Airways, Continental, and Delta, our largest airlines. Finally, we’ll offer additional terminal maps. The terminal maps we currently offer cover over 75% of the operations that our pilots flew last year.”



Pan Am makes the going great

Pan American Virtual is noticeably different from other SimAirline.net historical virtual airlines. Midway, Sabena, and Swissair are all based off their airlines' final timetables in 2001, and Concorde and Varig both use flights from the last ten years. Pan American, however, is set in 1967.

"Finding the exact time we wanted to set Pan American was not easy at first," says Managing Director Aaron Robinson. "We knew we wanted to offer classic aircraft not currently offered at SimAirline.net like the 707 and 727, but we also wanted to be sure to offer the DC-8." The airline started phasing out the DC-8 in late 1967, with all but one sold by 1970. Robinson adds, "1967 also served our purposes very neatly in other respects: it was the first year the airline had an all-jet fleet, was the final year of Panagra operations [Pan Am's service to the West Coast of South America], was right between the airline's most profitable years of 1966 and 1968, and finally, [long-time president] Juan Trippe had not yet retired."

Pan American Virtual's era was a very different time from today, and the virtual airline reflects that. For instance, one doesn't fly to Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam but rather to Saigon, South Vietnam. The airline offered free R&R flights to American soldiers during this time, flights that will soon be available.

During the Cold War, Lufthansa was not allowed to serve Berlin because of its multi-power occupation. Instead, British Airways and Pan American had exclusive rights to fly from West German airports to Berlin, but only through designated corridors over East German airspace.

"We've worked very hard to ensure historical accuracy when creating Pan American Virtual. Of course, many of the major airports of the world today like Paris CDG didn't exist, so pilots will need to use the older equivalents," says Robinson. Perhaps the biggest benefit of this is that pilots will be able to fly into Hong Kong's famous Kai Tak Airport, which offers the most dangerous approach in the world. "Unfortunately, some airports and the 727-100 are not available in FS2004. We're working on how to make those available."

Pan American Virtual has many interesting historical facets, such as its flight to Rock Sound in the Bahamas, which was served because it was a weekend home for Trippe. "It's gems like these that we need to determine how to expose to pilots," Robinson muses.

Another exciting feature of Pan American Virtual is its Historic Voyages, allowing pilots to fly some of the most famous flights in the airline's history. Because Pan American was the biggest innovator in international airline history, there will be numerous voyages to choose from. Currently, only "Voyage 8: Dawn of the Jet Age," the first 707 flight in the world, is available. Other flights will include the world's first 747 flight and the flight of the *China Clipper*, the world's first transpacific service.

"I really think our pilots will enjoy the Historic Voyages," says Pan American Manager Kyle Bjorklund. "The aircraft are a little harder to fly since some have no autopilot, but it's definitely worthwhile."

But there's more to Pan American Virtual than what's available so far, Robinson hints. "There's a lot we can do with 'The World's Most Experienced Airline.' We still have a few exciting surprises left."



Qantas



Michael F. McLaughlin

Qantas Sold for A\$11.1 Billion

Qantas Airways has agreed to be bought out by Airline Partners Australia (APA), a consortium led by Australia's Macquarie Bank and U.S.-based Texas Pacific Group. The airline's board accepted the consortium's second offer, worth A\$11.1 billion (\$8.74 billion US).

The transaction will require 90% approval of shareholders and represents a 33% premium above the 6 November closing price, the date before "the first speculation about the offer." The company would be de-listed from the Australian Stock Exchange and retain the current management team. Qantas' low-cost Jetstar subsidiary will continue its operations.

Qantas will remain Australian-owned, as Australian law prohibits foreign ownership in an airline above 49%. However, including foreign ownership of APA investors Macquarie Bank, Allco Finance Group, and Allco Equity Partners would push the foreign ownership share well over 49%.

Australian Treasurer Peter Costello warned the prospective buyers that the government would not bail out Qantas like it did for Ansett Australia in 2001, and that the airline must continue to offer service on all domestic cities. The new owners will need to remain in the government's favor in order to maintain Qantas' dominant position in overseas services, routes that Emirates and Singapore Airlines have expressed significant interest in.

Qantas pilots are considering investing in the airline to try and block the takeover, believing that the company will shift more business to Jetstar, lowering salaries and shifting jobs overseas. Australian Prime Minister John Howard echoed those concerns.

The second offer for Qantas was for A\$5.60 per share, A\$0.10 higher than the original bid. The original bid was restructured so that no entity will own more than 14.9% of Qantas, removing mandatory scrutiny by the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission. Macquarie Bank is the largest shareholder in Sydney Kingsford Smith Airport.

Rome Seeks to Reduce Alitalia Stake

The Italian government announced its plans to further privatize Alitalia by reducing its stake in the airline from 49.9% to no more than 20%. The sale comes in an attempt to try to reverse Alitalia's negative profits by partnering with other carriers.

Alitalia CEO Giancarlo Cimoli insisted on a strategic partner for the future. "The only strategic direction for Alitalia is to integrate itself in a big international group," he said.

The Ministry of Economics has set a bid deadline of 29 January, and all bids must offer to buy between 30.1% and 49.9% of the company.

Air France-KLM currently holds a 2% stake in Alitalia, but some government officials have express reservations about such a tie-up, despite Alitalia's partnership with both airlines and management's desire to join their 2004 merger.

Air France-KLM CEO Jean-Cyril Spinetta confirmed that "exploratory" talks were taking place, but maintained that Alitalia would need to improve its financial position. The airline has lost €3.1 billion (\$4.1 billion) in the last ten years.

Alitalia and KLM began a cross-border merger years before, but broke it off after KLM insisted upon Alitalia focusing its operations on Milan. The Italian government required as part of the sale that potential buyers preserve the company's Italian identity, guarantee jobs, and maintain the existing two-hub system of Milan and Rome that most analysts agree is inefficient and undesirable.

The airline was forced to cancel hundreds of flights on 15 December as a result of a 24-hour strike by workers protesting the carrier's privatization. A second 24-hour strike has been set for 19 January.

Also in Europe, Ryanair's hostile €1.48 billion (\$1.95 billion) takeover bid for Aer Lingus is undergoing review by the European Commission, a process expected to take 3-5 months.

Ryanair CEO Michael O'Leary blasted regulators of bias against his carrier, citing that the Air France-KLM merger was a much larger merger, but subject to less scrutiny and fewer restrictions.

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AirTran Bids for Midwest

AirTran Airways, the third largest LCC in the U.S., announced a hostile takeover bid of \$290 million for Milwaukee-based Midwest Airlines. The two airlines are the largest 717 operators in the world, but have little in common otherwise. AirTran operates a low-fare, no-frills model while Midwest focuses on premium service, operating an all-first class cabin on most flights.

Midwest Airlines Chairman Timothy Hoeksma declined to accept AirTran's offer, reasoning that it "would not be in the best interests of the company, its shareholders, and other stakeholders - including customers, employees, and the communities the airline serves."

In a presentation to investors, AirTran rationalized the merger by pointing to the airlines' common fleets and complementary route networks. Midwest operates primarily from Milwaukee with a small hub in Kansas City, while most of AirTran's flights are from the East Coast, two-thirds involving Atlanta. AirTran has made no secret of its desire to expand west over the last few years, trying to buy bankrupt ATA's gates at Chicago Midway, a goal thwarted by Southwest's buying ATA in its entirety.

AirTran CEO Joe Leonard foresees \$60 million annually in cost synergies, adding that "similar cultures, compatible low-cost business models, complementary networks and fleet commonality" make the two "as close to a perfect fit as anyone can imagine."



AirTran and Midwest operate the largest 717 fleets in the world.



Delta Rejects US Airways Takeover

Delta Air Lines' creditors supported the company's recently submitted reorganization plan, which values the company at between \$9.4 and \$12 billion. However, the creditors' committee indicated it "will continue to consider potential alternatives" such as a higher bid from US Airways or another takeover offer.

Delta's board of directors formally rejected US Airways' offer to buy the airline for \$8.6 billion, pointing out that the merger would face significant labor and antitrust hurdles. Delta is currently on track to emerge from bankruptcy in spring 2007. US Airways Chairman and CEO Doug Parker affirmed that his company remains "fully committed to our proposal to merge with Delta," claiming that the merger "will create a strong, healthy airline able to compete long into the future in any industry scenario." Parker declined to increase his company's offer, calling it "more than fair" and without a "need to amend it at this point."

Delta CEO Gerald Grinstein told analysts in a recent conference that the merger would be a "bad deal for Delta and its creditors" compared to the reorganization plan's offer 63-80% returns on original investments, and called US Airways "the worst of all potential merger partners," citing the two's overlapping East Coast networks, the likely loss of thousands of jobs, and the difficulties in "essentially merging labor forces of three carriers."

Delta further added that even if the merger were to receive Department of Justice approval, the year-long review process would remove all the restructuring progress achieved thus far. Delta's lead antitrust attorney believes that divesting duplicative assets such as the Shuttles would be insufficient to allay competition concerns, since numerous international routes would also be affected.

Delta employees are firmly against the merger and have launched several grass-roots campaigns and public initiatives. Public officials from numerous communities with both Delta and US Airways ties have also come out against the deal, citing job losses, reduced air service, and higher air fares.

The proposed United-US Airways merger of 2000 was cancelled after the Department of Justice concluded that combined airline would not be in consumer's best interests. Continental Airlines' mergers with Frontier Airlines, New York Air, People Express, and Texas International from 1982 to 1987 led to severe financial distress until the mid-1990s because of poor and swift integration.

SimAirline.net has stated that "is committed to offering Delta Virtual as one of its virtual airlines regardless of the fate of the airline in real life" because its "loyalty first and foremost has always been to the Delta brand and the qualities it represents."

VA SPOTLIGHT

Alaska Virtual



An Alaska 737-400 near Ketchikan

Despite its name, Alaska Airlines is one of the major players on the U.S. West Coast, with its main hub at Seattle/Tacoma International Airport and headquarters in nearby Seattle. Originally confined to just the state of Alaska and Seattle prior to deregulation, Alaska Airlines has become one of the major success stories in the U.S. airline industry over the past quarter century.

Alaska remains the dominant carrier in its namesake state, where transportation by air is vital; most people and goods move by air rather than land due to the state's enormous size and difficult climate. Alaska Airlines is the primary connection with the Lower 48, offering thirteen daily flights between Anchorage and Seattle/Tacoma.

Alaska has been steadily growing over the last few years, expanding eastwards to Boston, Chicago, Dallas/Ft. Worth, Denver, Miami, Newark, Orlando, and Washington. The airline has also announced its intentions to serve Hawaii in the near future with its growing fleet of 737-800s, which are replacing the airline's MD-83s.

On the international scene, Alaska is the biggest U.S. airline from the Western U.S. to Mexico, serving ten Mexican cities from its Los Angeles hub. During the 1990s, Alaska also flew services to the Russian Far East, flights that are available at Alaska Virtual.

At the regional level, Alaska partners with Horizon Air, which are both owned by the Alaska Air Group. Horizon operates a primarily turboprop fleet to serve small communities in the Pacific Northwest from Portland and Seattle/Tacoma.

Horizon has established a dual role as a feeder for Alaska and an independent airline, with most passengers remaining on Horizon flights, Horizon's most popular route is the shuttle between Portland and Seattle/Tacoma, with flights departing every half hour.

Alaska Airlines also partners with Era Aviation and Peninsula Airways (PenAir) to serve smaller destinations in Alaska. Era previously served numerous communities in the Bethel region, but pulled those services after being sold to a new owner. Era and PenAir's services within the state are based in Anchorage.

Interesting Facts:

- The Eskimo on Alaska's tail does not represent a specific person, and originally was not smiling.
- Alaska is one of only three airlines in the world to have a person on its tail.
- Alaska was the launch customer for the 737-900.
- Alaska was the first airline to sell tickets on its own website,



A Horizon Q200 on approach to Seattle/Tacoma



Airbus Formally Launches A350XWB

Airbus parent EADS' board approved the relaunch of the A350 program this past month after an extensive redesign of the original aircraft. The new design, dubbed the A350XWB (for Xtra Wide Body), will seat nine abreast in economy rather than the originally planned eight, the traditional Airbus widebody width.

Airbus was pressured to redesign its market offering after losing numerous orders to Boeing's 787 and public criticism by ILFC chairman Steven F. Udvar-Hazy, calling the A350 "a Band-aid reaction to the 787." The A350 was originally viewed as an improved version of the A330 rather than an aircraft incorporating the latest advances.

The new aircraft will be offered in three passenger configurations: the -800 will seat 270 passengers in three classes with a 8500 nm range, the -900 will seat 314 with a 8300 nm range, and the 1000 will seat 350 with the same range as the -900. General Electric and Rolls-Royce have committed to developing engines for the new type.

The A350 was originally intended to seat 250-300 passengers, but the larger size allows the A350XWB to compete against both the 777 and 787 product lines, with comparable range. In the future the -900R will be available as an ultra-long range aircraft, as well as the -900F, a freighter version.

To date none of SimAirline.net's airlines have placed orders for the A350, although Aeroflot, British Airways, and Emirates have all expressed interest. The first A350 delivery will be in 2013.



Lufthansa First to Order Passenger 747-8

Lufthansa became the first airline to order the passenger version of the 747-8, the *Intercontinental* after placing an order for twenty of the type along with options for an additional twenty, with the first to be delivered in 2010.

Prior to Lufthansa's announcement, four 747-8I's had been ordered by VIP customers as well as 49 orders for the 747-8F from cargo airlines. The 747-8I seats 467 passengers in a three-class configuration with a range of 8000 nm.

Of SimAirline.net airlines, British Airways, Cathay Pacific Airways, Korean Air, and Northwest Airlines are viewed as the most likely to eventually order the 747-8I. All four operate large 747-400 fleets, and none (except Korean Air, also a 747-8F customer) have ordered the A380.

Lufthansa is also a customer for the A380 and ordered seven additional A340-600s on the same day as the 747-8 announcement.



The 747-8 is 19 ft. longer than the 747-400 and features raked wingtips.

HUB FOCUS

Los Angeles International Airport (LAX/KLAX)

Regardless of the measure, Los Angeles International Airport (commonly known as LAX) is one of the world's busiest airports. In 2005 LAX handled:

- over 650,000 movements, fourth in the world
- 61.5 million passengers, fifth in the world
- 1.9 metric tonnes of cargo, eighth in the world

LAX has nine terminals arranged around a central roadway, with the world-famous "Theme Building," containing a restaurant, in the middle.

Expansion at LAX is limited because of concerns by area residents. A recent compromise allows some modernization to take place, but most growth will have to occur at the regions other airports, Burbank, Long Beach, Ontario, and Orange County.

Interesting Facts:

- LAX has the most origin and destination passengers in the world.
- LAX handles 70% of Southern California's airline passengers.
- The Theme Building was the inspiration for the architecture on the TV show "The Jetsons."



Nineteen of SimAirline.net's virtual airlines serve Los Angeles, the second most of any airport worldwide. From LAX, SimAirline.net offers flights to 115 airports in 28 countries.

United States

57 airports are served domestically by Alaska, Continental, Delta, Hawaiian, Midway, Northwest, and Pan America, including 19 within California, Honolulu alone receives seventeen daily flights.

North America

Alaska, Continental, and Delta together serve eighteen airports in Mexico; Air Canada and Alaska fly to five cities in Canada; Copa, Delta, and Pan American fly to five other Central American and Caribbean countries.

Asia

ANA, Delta, Korean Air, Northwest, Pan American, Thai, and Varig serve eight airports in Asia, including five in Japan. Thai's service to Bangkok is one of the longest flights in the world.

Oceania

Air Tahiti Nui, AOM, and Pan American serve seven countries.

South America

Copa, Pan American, and Varig fly to Argentina, Brazil, Colombia, Peru, and Venezuela.

Europe

AOM, British Airways, KLM, Pan American, and Swissair fly to Amsterdam, London, Paris, and Zurich.

THE TAIL SECTION

Why *Latitude*?

The *Latitude* name was selected for several reasons: first, the name evokes the elegance of flight and reflects upon SimAirline.net's globe and wings logo. In addition, the word *latitude* is part of SimAirline.net's core values, offering an organization centered on freedom of choices.

What is *The Tail Section*?

The Tail Section will feature various odds and ends relating to SimAirline.net and aviation in general, with new content every month.

Turkish Airlines maintenance personnel celebrated the departure of the last of Turkish's troublesome Avro RJ100s from the fleet last month by sacrificing a camel at the airline's maintenance facility at Istanbul Ataturk International Airport.

In Turkey, it is common practice to sacrifice an animal to celebrate a happy event or the completion of a difficult task.

The camel in question was 700 kg, the meat of which was distributed among airline workers present. Turkish Airlines has suspended the head of the group until an investigation into the incident is complete.



Brussels Airlines

The newly formed Brussels Airlines recently added a fourteenth dot to its logo after concerns that the thirteen dots in its logo (above) would concern superstitious passengers. Coincidentally, this is page 13 of *Latitude*.

United Airlines was forced to take a 777-200 out of service last month after a water cannon salute for a retiring pilot went awry.

After arriving in Washington from Paris, the aircraft was accidentally sprayed, not with water per tradition, but foam. Both Pratt & Whitney engines are currently undergoing examination before the aircraft is returned to service.

Congratulations to Brad Banister for having his screenshot of a Hawaiian 767-300ER over Honolulu voted by pilots as Screenshot of the Year.