AIRBUS WIDEBODY AND SINGLE-AISLE JETLINERS CONTINUE TO MAKE THEIR MARK IN THE DYNAMIC ASIA-PACIFIC REGION

News / Manufacturer

This week's Singapore Airshow is shining a spotlight on Airbus' important commercial presence in the Asia-Pacific region – which is the fastest-growing market globally for new civil aircraft, as well as a key customer base for the company's product line of modern widebody and single-aisle jetliners.

Airbus entered this market in 1974 with a milestone A300B order from Korean Air. Today, more than 2,800 company-produced aircraft are in service with 100-plus Asia-Pacific-based operators, while customers from the region account for approximately 31 per cent of all Airbus orders worldwide.

New-generation appeal

Airbus' latest entrant to the Asia-Pacific market is the new-generation A350 XWB, which has been shaping the efficiency of medium-to-long haul airline operations worldwide since its service entry in

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January 2015. Vietnam Airlines became the second airline to operate the A350 XWB last year, and it currently has four of these modern jetliners in service.

Singapore Airlines is now preparing to receive its first of 67 A350 XWBs on order – which will form the backbone of this international carrier's future mid-size widebody aircraft fleet, and are to be operated on long-range flights, as well as on selected regional services. The carrier's order includes seven Ultra-Long Range versions of the aircraft, which will enable the airline to restart non-stop service between Singapore and New York in 2018.

Featuring an "Xtra wide" cabin, the A350 XWB is especially well-suited to the needs of Asia-Pacific airlines flying to Europe and North America. In addition to Vietnam Airlines and Singapore Airlines, carriers from the region that have already ordered the aircraft are: Asiana Airlines, AirAsia X, Cathay Pacific Airways, China Airlines, Hong Kong Airlines, Japan Airlines, Korean Air and Thai Airways International (THAI).

A widebody tradition

The A350 XWB isn't the first Airbus widebody jetliner to make headlines in the region. The market has long been a driving force for development of the world's largest passenger aircraft, the 21st century flagship A380 – which has now been ordered by seven Asia-Pacific-based carriers.

A total of 62 A380s have entered service in the region since beginning service with launch customer Singapore Airlines in October 2007. Also operating the double-deck jetliner are: Asiana Airlines, China Southern Airlines, Korean Air, Malaysia Airlines, Qantas Airways and THAI.

Airbus' A330/A340 Family also has proven popular with Asia-Pacific customers, as 28 airlines in the region have ordered over 650 aircraft – representing a third of total firm orders for this product line.

Single-aisle success

In the single-aisle category, Airbus' best-selling A320 Family has enjoyed a high level of success across the Asia-Pacific market – with 3,140 CEO (current engine option) and NEO (new engine option) aircraft ordered to date by full service and low-cost carriers, while leasing companies in the region have accounted for an additional 659 orders.

This commercial activity represents 31 per cent of all bookings for Airbus' single-aisle product line, and is expanding upon the 2,000-plus A320 Family aircraft already in service with Asia-Pacific operators.

Major full service carriers that operate the jetliners include Air China, Air India, Air New Zealand, All Nippon Airways, Asiana Airlines, China Eastern, China Southern, Dragonair, Philippine Airlines and Vietnam Airlines. In the low cost sector, the A320 Family is the aircraft of choice for all the major operators in the region, including AirAsia, Cebu Pacific, Indigo, JetStar, Lion Air, Tigerair and VietJetAir.

An eye to the future

Already a major market for commercial aircraft, Asia-Pacific's demand will continue to grow in the coming decades according to Airbus' latest Global Market Forecast – which covers the 2015-2034 timeframe.

Airlines in the Asia-Pacific region will take delivery of around 12,600 new aircraft over the next 20

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years, according to the latest market forecast by Airbus. These deliveries will account for 40 per cent of all new aircraft with more than 100 seats entering service worldwide over the forecast period, with the region growing at a rate higher than the global average.

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