

Airbus replays the ACJ model name and number game

by Bill Carey

Airbus has rebranded its corporate jets division as Airbus ACJ, with new aircraft colors and clearer, more consistent names. Each model in the company's stable of corporate jet offerings will now be preceded by "ACJ," with the A318 becoming the ACJ318 and so on, all the way up to the mega-mother of all bizliners, the ACJ380.

The branding was updated "to show the commonality we have throughout the family," Francois Chazelle, Airbus Corporate Jets vice president, said yesterday. "The length of the fuselage may change, but you're still in an Airbus corporate jet."

The rebranding includes a new color scheme, with metallic blue shading on most of the ACJ fuselage and tail, "highlighted by flowing curves that echo the color schemes often chosen by Airbus corporate jet customers," the company said. The jets also will sport a new Airbus Corporate Jets logo.

Airbus (Stand 7071) delivered 15 corporate jets in 2010, valued at \$1.5 billion. Total orders for Airbus corporate and VIP aircraft have surpassed 170, with 110 A320-family jets and 60 VIP and government widebodies.

Accompanying Chazelle at the announcement were Andrea Zanetto, chief executive of VIP charter operator Fly Comlux and Eric Scheidt, flight operations manager with K5-Aviation. Airbus at EBACE is featuring on static display an ACJ320 Prestige managed by Comlux Aviation of Kloten, Switzerland, and an ACJ319 operated by K5-Aviation of Gammelsdorf, Germany—the first joint appearance of these aircraft.

Comlux says it is the largest Airbus VIP charter operator, currently fielding six Airbus corporate jets, with two ACJ319s on order.

The VIP cabin of the ACJ320 Prestige was the first delivered by Comlux America of Indianapolis, Indiana, the Comlux Group completion center established just over two years ago. Fokker Services completed K5-Aviation's cabin.

Airbus Corporate Jet Center of Toulouse, France, which provides cabin outfitting for the ACJ family of aircraft, reported delivery of its first VIP cabin to a Chinese customer, Deer Jet Co. of Beijing, which it said is the largest VIP charter provider in the People's Republic of China. The Deer Jet ACJ319 was "ferried to China just a few days ago," and features 20 flat-bed, cocoon seats manufactured by B/E Aerospace, all with dedicated video screens.

The Airbus completion center said



MARK WAGNER

Displaying the new color scheme and model number designations of the Airbus Corporate Jet line are, left to right, Andrea Zanetto, CEO of ACJ operator Fly Comlux; Francois Chazelle, VP of Airbus Corporate Jets; Habib Fekih, president of Airbus Middle East and Corporate Jet; and Eric Scheidt, CEO of K5-Aviation.

it is the first in the VIP cabin market to offer ACJ customers high-definition displays based on the latest HDMI interface standard. The center "also believes that it is the first on the market" to offer customers

full HD quality on up to four screens in each private area simultaneously, either from a local HD source such as a Blu-Ray player or from an external device with an HDMI plug, such as a video game console or laptop.

Nextant's 400XT bows in here

by Chad Trautvetter

The first production-conforming Nextant Aerospace 400XT is making its public debut on the EBACE static display, just days after the type's Williams FJ44-3AP engines received U.S. FAA technical standard order (TSO) approval.

With this approval out of the way, supplemental type certification (STC) for the 400XT is expected next month. Nextant president James Miller said yesterday at an EBACE press conference. FAA officials are expected to wrap up their flight tests by early next week, and function and reliability testing is planned to be completed by June 15, paving the way for STC approval by June 30.

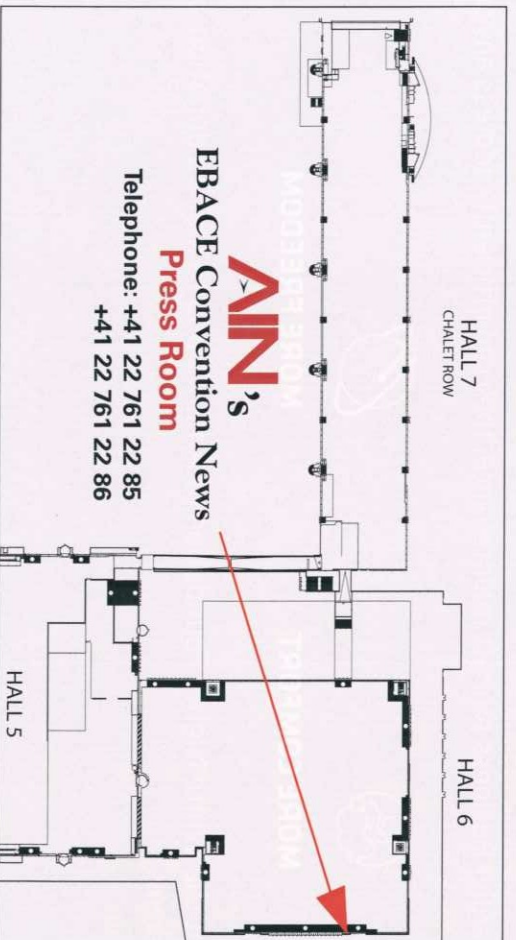
The 400XT is a remanufactured Beechjet 400A/Hawker 400XP with the FJ44-3AP engines. Rockwell Collins Pro

Line 21 integrated avionics and a zero-timed airframe complete with new paint and interior. During the remanufacturing process, the aircraft undergoes A through D checks and is brought up to compliance with the latest service bulletins and airworthiness directives. In addition, all primary wiring harnesses are replaced and life-limited parts are swapped out with new or zero-timed components.

Aerodynamics refinements are also included in the upgrades. This includes a redesigned pylon, streamlined engine cowling and a one-piece milled engine mount/beam, the latter of which reduces parts count by 100. The horizontal stabilizer has also been tweaked on the 400XT.

After the conversion, the aircraft is 88

Continued on page 8 ▶



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