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Wednesday, October 24, 2007

Kingfisher one of five airlines to watch: Ascend

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International aviation consultancy Ascend has today released its predictions for global aviation's future stars. Ascend has looked at the current crop of younger, smaller airlines: assessing their order books, routes, expansion plans, pricing, passenger numbers and all aspects of their business. Using its own analysis of the industry's prospects for the next decade, Ascend has filtered these assessments to predict which airlines have what it takes to join carriers such as British Airways, Singapore Airlines and American Airlines in aviation's big league.

Ascend's ones-to-watch list:

AirAsia - currently the largest low-cost carrier in Asia, the airline has aggressive expansion plans including launching low-cost long-haul flights to both Europe and Australia later this year.

Kingfisher Airlines - currently operating internal routes within India it has confident expansion plans including offering long-haul routes using wide-body aircraft. As with Virgin the Kingfisher brand is strong and diverse.

Air Berlin - has rapidly grown to become Germany's second largest airline following takeovers of dba, LTU and Condor. It currently offers a mix of low-cost and charter flights and has placed orders for Boeing's 787.

Virgin Blue - has established itself as a low-cost carrier mainly operating routes across Australia and New Zealand. The airline is planning to launch low-cost transpacific flights in 2008. This is the first time that any airline has challenged the established carriers on the Australia-USA route which is currently very limited in terms of choice of airline and fares.

TAM - the oldest of the five airlines, the well established Brazilian carrier started out by offering mostly internal flights and routes within South America. However it has recently stretched its wings and now has the largest fleet on its home continent. It now also offers long-haul routes to Europe and North America.

According to Ascend, the focus of the global aviation industry is set shift dramatically away from the North America and Europe to Asia. Its data shows that of the current global aircraft fleet 38% are registered in North America, 26% in Europe and 18% in Asia. But when it comes to the backlog of aircraft on order Asian airlines outstrip these traditionally dominant markets: 32% have been ordered by Asian carriers, against 25% in North America and 24% by European airlines.

24/10/07 Business Wire/PR-Inside.com (Pressemitteilung), Austria

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