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No more jets for now say Delta

Delta Air Lines, which ordered 100 Boeing 737s last month, said on Tuesday it was not planning any more aircraft orders in the next couple of years. "We wanted to put to rest any thought that we're in the market considering a new aircraft position," Delta President Ed Bastain said during a presentation at an aviation conference in New York. He said the Atlanta-based airline was intent on keeping to its capital spending plan as it looks to pay down the balance sheet. In late August, Delta announced its order for 100 Next-Generation 737-900ERs valued at USD\$8.5 billion. Delta had said it was talking to major plane makers as it looked to replace older aircraft with fuel-efficient models.

Citing industry chatter that Delta could be planning another order including the purchase of the Air Tran 717 fleet, Bastain said the company was not considering plane buys for the near to medium term. "There's no second step of aircraft whether it be with Bombardier or Embraer or Boeing or Airbus," Bastain said. "We'll be talking in the future about aircraft but nothing in the next couple of years," Bastain added.

Virgin also eyeing bmi

Confirming industry speculation Virgin Atlantic has said it is keen on combining with bmi, the UK carrier that Lufthansa may be looking to sell. "We continue to have a close interest in a combination with bmi," Virgin said in a statement sent to reporters on Tuesday.

International Airlines Group, formed by the merger of British Airways and Iberia, on Monday said it was still keen to get hold of bmi's coveted slots at London's Heathrow airport. bmi controls about 11 percent of the take-off and landing slots at Heathrow, making it second there only to BA, which has around 42 percent of the slots. Lufthansa has said that it is considering finding a partner for the loss-making bmi, and a source said on Sunday that it had mandated bankers to sound out a potential sale.

Interjet considering Mexicana takeover

Mexican airline Interjet said it could consider taking over the operation of troubled carrier Mexicana, a bold move that would give it access to attractive international routes. "We are evaluating it, but with precaution," said Miguel Aleman Velasco, head of Interjet's board of directors, when asked if Interjet

was looking at Mexicana. "It is very complex." He declined to provide details. Several companies have tried to buy Mexicana without success. But a lack of deep pockets has dented any serious attempts to bid for the near century-old airline, which is under creditor protection in Mexico and the United States.

Interjet pulled the plug on its planned initial public offering earlier this year due to uncertainty in the world economy. But it has aggressive expansion plans that call for more routes and a larger fleet. The airline signed a USD\$650 million contract in January with Superjet International for 15 aircraft to help expand operations. First deliveries are scheduled for the second half of 2012 and the contract includes options for five additional Superjet 100ss, which seat 98 passengers.

Turkish continues fleet expansion with Boeing order

Turkish Airlines (TK) said Tuesday it placed a firm order for 20 Boeing 737-800s and 15 737-900ERs. Two 737-800s and two 737-900ERs will be delivered late this year. Delivery of all 35 737s ordered should be completed by the end of 2015, the carrier said. TK said the additional 737s are needed for ongoing fleet expansion. According to its website, the airline currently operates three 737-400s, 14 737-700s and 52 737-800s. TK plans to install two additional fuel tanks on each of the 737-900ERs to increase aircraft range since it plans to use these aircraft primarily for African routes.

Piece of Aviation History for September 14

No notable anniversaries today

Quote of the Day

They always say time changes things, but you actually have to change them yourself.
Andy Warhol (1928 - 1987)

A Bit of Light Relief

A band performing at an outdoor concert kept playing although the crowd had dwindled down to one man. Finally, the tired musicians told the man that if he left, they could all go home. "It's up to you," he answered. "I'm just waiting to put away all those folding chairs."

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