AIR PARTNER'S TONY WHITTY COMMENTS ON THE AIRCRAFT SALES AND LEASING MARKET

News / Business aviation, Finance



Air Partner's Remarketing division is seeing high levels of activity in the aircraft sales and leasing market, with some types of aircraft proving particularly popular.

Tony Whitty, Head of Aircraft Remarketing & ACMI at Air Partner, comments on what he is currently seeing in the market, with further detail on specific narrow-body models below.

"We regularly get asked about the market for used aircraft, but the reality is that it varies with every aircraft type."

"Currently, there are probably more enquiries from airlines for B737-400s than for A319s, which some people might find surprising since they haven't been in production since 1999. However, demand for these aircraft is still strong, with a number of the fleet being used for cargo."

"For some airlines with extremely low utilisation, capital cost is the key issue and therefore the 737-400 is best suited to their needs."

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“The operating costs of A319s and A320s are quite similar so airlines are choosing the A320 due to its higher capacity.”

NARROW-BODY MARKET APPRAISAL

A320/A321: Air Partner Rating A

- Good demand from airlines globally
- Early build A320s with V2500-A1 have been selling to airlines replacing MD80s
- European market strong particularly in 180Y charter/LCC configuration
- Partout demand particularly for V2500-A5 powered A320s due to HPT stage1/2 engine AD
- A321 becoming increasingly popular with airlines up-gauging from A320s

B737-800: Air Partner Rating A

- Very popular with airlines, lessors and parts companies
- Many airlines taking older 800s to replace 737 classics
- Freight conversion now starting by GECAS so economic life extended
- 189Y configuration very popular in charter/LCC market

A319: Air Partner Rating C

- Bulk of the fleet are at easyJet and American Airlines
- Less than 80 backlog as airlines move to larger aircraft
- Aircraft as young as 2007 being sold for part-out
- Opportunities mainly with small scheduled carriers

B757-200ER: Air Partner Rating B

- Extremely successful aircraft in both the passenger and freight markets
- Delta Air Lines, United Airlines and American Airlines still operating 250+ 757s
- Fedex, UPS and DHL operating 200+
- Engine time on wing is extremely high due to use on long haul routes; therefore very slow gradual retirement with low capital expenditure required to keep them flying
- A321NEO is closest replacement type but still struggles to do what a HGW B757-200ER can do

B737-900ER: Air Partner Rating B

- Becoming more popular after a slow start
- Still only 21 operators flying 464 aircraft
- Range has been an issue versus the B757-200ER but some airlines see little difference between the range of the B737-900ER and the A321LR

B737-700: Air Partner Rating C

- Nearly 1100 produced, of which Southwest Airlines operate 491

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- Little traction in the charter market
- A popular part out aircraft
- Many orders switched to -800 and -900
- Only 80 remaining on order

B737 Classics: Air Partner Rating C

- Very few remaining in operation in Europe
- Most of the remaining large operators like Southwest Airlines, Sriwijaya Air and Jet2.com are adding new NGs; phase out of classics is taking place quickly
- Freight conversion continuing at reasonable pace; but for how long now the -800 is being converted?
- -400 much preferred

Air Partner's Aircraft Remarketing division (formerly Cabot Aviation), has enjoyed an extremely successful 2017 to date, both winning and fulfilling a number of mandates. Notable transactions have included the sale and delivery of a third Kenya Airways B777-200ER aircraft to Omni Air International; the sale of two B747-400s to Jet Midwest Group on behalf of both China Airlines; and the sale of two of Kenya Airways' B737-700 aircraft to an undisclosed lessor, which were then leased back to the Kenya Airways for continued operation.

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