

A great start

StartupBoeing helps new airlines prepare for service, success

By BRIAN WALKER

When one thinks of scheduled airlines in the United Kingdom, UKIA (United Kingdom International Airlines) is unlikely to come to mind. Still, this recently launched airline has become only the fourth scheduled commercial carrier based in the U.K. The carrier in October conducted its first flight, from East Midlands Airport in Sheffield, England, to Islamabad, Pakistan.

The story of how the airline was launched demonstrates how Lean+ principles can be applied to streamline a challenging and complicated process. By working from the outset with a prospective new airline's launch team, StartupBoeing—a BCA service for fledgling airlines made up of a Web site and people who specialize in working with such carriers—is the catalyst for building strong, successful relationships with potential new customers. It begins with the StartupBoeing Web portal, which helps customers grasp the complexities of starting an airline.

“Boeing’s expertise in airplane and fleet analysis, finance, material management and airplane sourcing, coupled with our experience with airline operations around the world, gives us unique insight into what’s required to launch a successful airline,” said Sheila Remes, Commercial Airplanes manager of StartupBoeing.

StartupBoeing’s comprehensive checklist partners Boeing experts with an airline’s launch team. Together, they collaborate to work through detailed and essential planning steps—each of which has been identified as being fundamental to an airline’s success.

“While we knew a lot about airline operations in general, Boeing’s ability to put forth a detailed and logical process for us to follow proved invaluable,” said Manawar Khaliq, chairman and CEO of UKIA. “We believe the work we did up front with Boeing will pay dividends as our operations grow, and that our preliminary planning has put us on a course for long-term success.”

StartupBoeing’s team engages prospective new airlines on such matters as market analysis, business planning, airplane selection and sourcing, airplane configuration, staff training, general maintenance and spare-part management. Boeing also points clients toward numerous outside resources

for help with such tasks as route planning and dealing with regulatory authorities.

Following the initial engagement with UKIA and some months of working closely with the carrier, StartupBoeing interfaced with Miguel Santos, a BCA International Sales director in the Middle East and Africa Sales region. UKIA is Pakistani-owned and falls within the scope of that sales region. Santos has taken lead sales responsibility with the airline, pulling in Boeing Capital Corporation’s Anil Patel to assist the airline with accessing equity and debt financing. Now the team is working to place additional Boeing airplanes with the carrier.

With resources tight in BCA Sales, the idea for a team that addresses inquiries from entrepreneurs looking to launch new airlines came about primarily as a vetting process. However, it was quickly discovered that there are a number of viable plans that could be enhanced by the StartupBoeing team’s expertise. UKIA stands as a shining example of the team’s first success.

“It’s always rewarding to see a Boeing strategy play out successfully,” said Lee Monson, BCA vice president of Sales for the Middle East and Africa. “We look forward to future opportunities to work with the StartupBoeing team, and we congratulate them on a job well done.” ■

brian.d.walker@boeing.com

United Kingdom International Airlines (UKIA) recently began operation with two used 767-200s. StartupBoeing helped the carrier fulfill the many tasks needed to begin service and position itself for success.



ERYL CRUMP PHOTO