

Contact: Patrick LaMoria, VP Sales: 206-830-7299
Dick Friel, VP Marketing: 206-762-1171

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Virgin Express Orders 4 Boeing 737-300 Blended Winglet™ Shipsets

First Operator to Purchase Classic Series 737-300 Blended Winglets Looks to Enhance Low Cost Advantage

October 31, 2005, Seattle, WA. Virgin Express, the Brussels-based low cost airline, will upgrade its first 737-300 with Blended Winglets in December at Sabena Technics. The remaining 3 Blended Winglet options will be installed at Sabena Technics during 2006. Payback, in fuel savings alone, is anticipated at about 2.5 years, on a per aircraft basis, or more than 100,000 gallons per year.

Beyond the substantial fuel savings, Virgin Express is looking to measurably decrease engine wear, reduce noise and environmental emissions and project the image of an all-new fleet.

"A church steeple in the takeoff path from Brussels airport presents an obstacle that under certain conditions requires 22,000 pounds of thrust for clearance," says Aviation Partners Boeing Sales Director Troy Brekken. "Aerodynamic improvements resulting from the Blended Winglets produce greater lift with lower thrust thereby improving obstacle clearance. Utilizing less thrust allows engines to remain on the wings longer between overhauls, significantly reducing engine maintenance costs."

Capt. John Robertson, Operations Director of Virgin Express, adds: "We are very pleased and proud to be the launch customer for this significant upgrade. At Virgin Express we are constantly looking for new ways to enhance our product and to reduce costs. The introduction of winglets to our Boeing 737-300 fleet will not only help us to remain competitive in the climate of increasing fuel costs, it also links in seamlessly with our concern to protect the environment".

Although Virgin Express leases its Classic Series 737s from GECAS, Blended Winglets will be purchased directly by the carrier. "The fact that Virgin Express is buying Blended Winglets themselves, and installing them on leased aircraft, is a further testament to the value of Blended Winglet Technology," says Aviation Partners CEO Mike Marino. "The Blended Winglet Payback is typically under 3 years but, once an aircraft has Blended Winglets installed, the fuel savings will be realized for the entire life of the aircraft."

Blended Winglet Technology will help Virgin Express save on fuel and reduce engine wear in order to remain as cost efficient as possible within Europe's highly competitive airline market.

Today over 800 Boeing aircraft are in service with Aviation Partners Boeing Blended Winglets. Next year approximately 80% of new Boeing 737-700/800 aircraft will be delivered with Blended Winglets. Blended Winglets are also certified for the Boeing 757-200. The company has plans to certify Blended Winglets for the 737-600 and 737-900 and is negotiating with prospective launch customers to certify Blended Winglets for the 767-300ER, 717, and MD-80.

About Virgin Express

At present, Virgin Express offers flights from Brussels Airport to Athens, Barcelona, Berlin, Catania, Faro, Geneva, Lisbon, Madrid, Malaga, Milan-Orio al Serio, Murcia (Alicante South), Nice, Palma de Mallorca, Rome, Toulon-St. Tropez and Valencia. The Belgian low cost airline, which was founded in 1996 by Sir Richard Branson, operates 10 Boeing 737 aircraft.

www.aviationpartnersboeing.com

*Patent No. 5348253

www.virgin-express.com

#

NEWS RELEASE NEWS RELEASE NEWS RELEASE