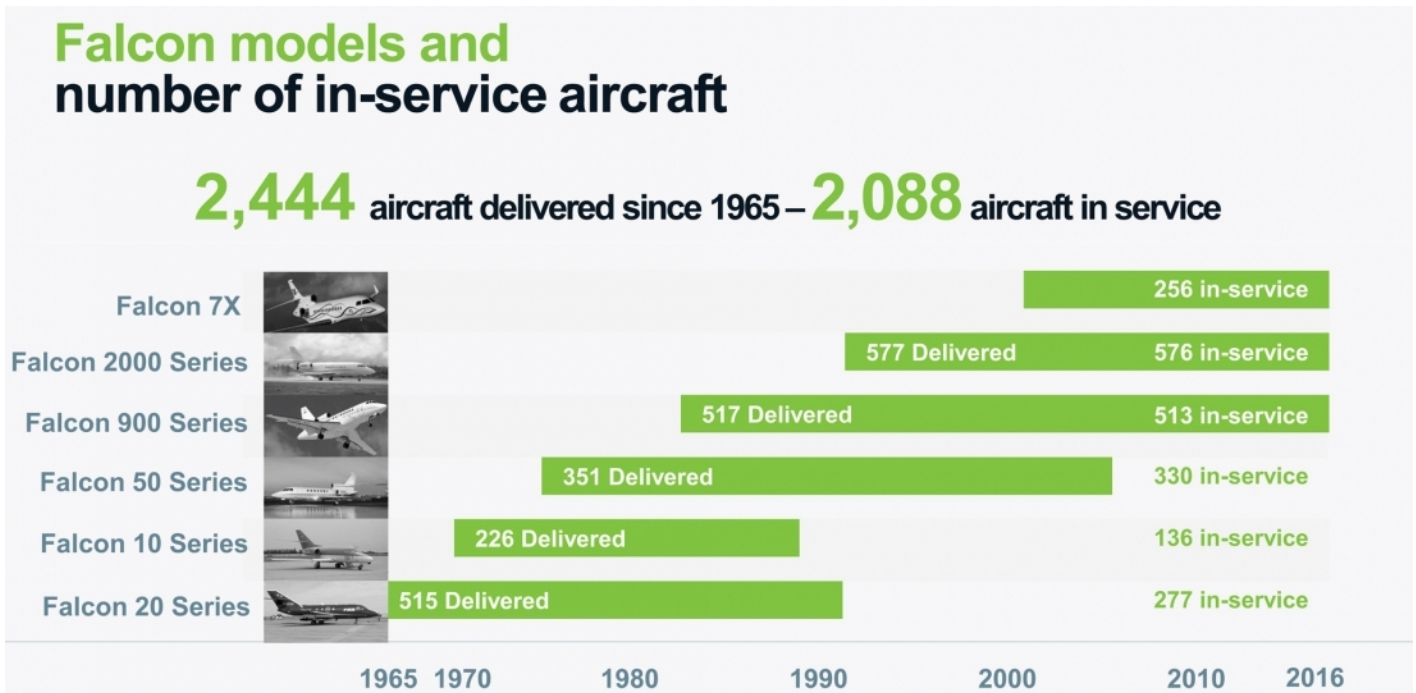


DASSAULT HAILS FALCON CUSTOMER SUPPORT INITIATIVES

News / Business aviation, Events / Festivals, Manufacturer



This year's annual Dassault Falcon community get together was a bigger than usual event, in part as the company is marking the 100th anniversary of its origins. The gathering near the Eiffel Tower in Paris on April 13 drew some 500 customers and Dassault employees from around the world.

Before champagne flowed for the 100th birthday party, presentations from key Dassault Falcon officials offered a comprehensive overview of the new services developed by the company for its worldwide operator community. Meet and greet sessions gave delegates a chance to meet the companies that are behind the Falcon family, including suppliers of satellite communications services on board, and other manufacturers of key components. Facing some heat for schedule delays was Snecma (part of the Safran group), provider of the Falcon 5X's Silvercrest engines.

In order to promote its aircraft, faced with the stiff price competition initiated by Bombardier, Dassault (BoothU056) worked hard last year on its customer service department to support the 2,088 aircraft currently in operation worldwide. Eloi Dufour, chief of the services department explained how, in July, a Falcon rapid response unit – including a company-owned and operated Falcon 900 emergency delivery jet – was established at its New York-area Teterboro base, mirroring the one already in place at Le Bourget Airport near Paris.

That initiative was soon followed up by introduction of the Falcon Response App in November. This app for iPhone and Android allows customers to alert Dassault Falcon of a problem and get a

quick response, 24/7.

As for helping its customers with more efficiency, the company opened seven new maintenance sites last year in Teterboro, Dallas, Helsinki, Lagos, New Delhi, Libreville, and a Sabena Technics Center in Dinard, on the French west coast. In addition, a new factory-owned Dassault Falcon Service (DFS) center will open in Merignac (near Bordeaux, southern France) before the end of this year.

Service capacity for the Falcon 7X has also been expanded at Paris Le Bourget, with seven aircraft parking spots now available.

The service success rate reached 98.6 percent in 2015, Dassault said. The company performed 116 missions in 2015, with “43 customer flights saved,” said Jacques Chauvet, Dassault Aviation’s senior v-p worldwide customer service. The 15 Falcon spare parts warehouses around the globe store about \$800 million worth of spares for all types of Falcons. “We will continue to increase this inventory,” the company stated, in particular in Russia, despite the current political tensions. In April, the company promised that 100 percent of parts to support the developmental 8X were to have been purchased and stored,.

The Falcon Internet portal, launched in 2014, now has 13,600 registered users and 2,500 visits per day. It offers 24/7 support to customers, backed up by the new mobile application. The app, available on the Apple iPad, provides a library section, service documentation, tutorials and FAQs. To date, more than 1,000 customers have registered for the Dassault app on the iPad since its launch.

During the general seminar, many topics were addressed. The company offers help for customers to prepare for upcoming new regulations. It also offers insight in the new EASy III avionics flight deck for the Falcon 8X. There will be a new Honeywell 3D RDR-4000 weather radar, an autothrottle for one-engine-out situations, a graphicalCPDLC and the core software of NG FMS is to be fully redesigned, along with a new-generation Electronic Flight Bag (EFB) and “Falcon Eye” as an option for a new head-up display. The EASy avionics suite is a success for Dassault, with 693 aircraft already flying with it. EASy II’s third certification round is still ongoing, covering the 900X, the 2000X and the 7X.

The general session closed with an impressive illustration of Dassault Falcon’s new virtual training, which allows the trainee to use virtual glasses to explore throughout the aircraft.

Dassault also gave some guidance on its roadmap for 2016. The company will focus on four main points: the 8X entry in service; customer relationships, as shown during the seminar; responsiveness; and operational availability; the latter two addressed through the new services.

Dassault plans 16 M&O (maintenance and operations) seminars worldwide in 2016. The most recent ones took place just before EBACE, one in San Jose, California on May 11, and two on May 19, one in West Palm Beach, Florida, and the other in Mahwah, New Jersey.

The seminar was also used as an opportunity by the company to invite all the participants to a celebration of Dassault’s 100th anniversary, held a couple of days later at the Grand Palais, a luxurious 19th century glass and steel light framing hall just off the Champs Elysees in Paris. Dassault also invites EBACE attendees to visit its booth, chalet and static display to help celebrate this momentous milestone.

At the seminar, a video was also presented on the history of Dassault Aviation, which began with

founding patriarch Marcel Dassault's design of the revolutionary "Éclair" ("Lightning") propeller. The young aeronautical engineering student created an all-new design that greatly enhanced performance of France's SPAD pursuit ships during World War One.

23 MAY 2016

SOURCE: AIN

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