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## 2009 - A Vibrant Year for Oman Air A Look at the Eventful Year It Was for Oman Air

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Despite the recession when most airlines are cutting their operations, Oman Air is soaring high with its expansion plans. The National Carrier of Oman has reported a 17% rise in passenger turnout last year with 2,325,805 over the previous year figure of 1,984,853. With new destinations and the introduction of the new A330 aircrafts, Oman Air Cargo too surged ahead posting an impressive result of 67% increase on revenue during the last year, as compared to 2008.



The airline boosted its fleet by 8 aircrafts to a total of 21, launched five new destinations and expanded its flying program with extra frequencies on key routes. Oman Air currently flies to 32 destinations.

The positive results and achievements augured well with the increase of the company's capital from RO 50 million to RO 300 million by the Government, which was announced during the Oman Air extraordinary general meeting and annual general meeting held on April 12th, 2009, that eventually, brought to focus the long-term strategic expansion plan intended for both in structure and performance.

The year 2009 started off with the unveiling of Oman Air's Business Class seats on board the new A330 fleet at the ITB (International Tourism Bourse) Berlin. The seat received rave reviews and was also showcased at the ATM (Arabian Travel Market) in Dubai where it was again the cynosure of all eyes.

The Business Class Seat came to its grand finale, when Oman Air welcomed its first A330/200 during September 2009. This was soon followed by the 3-class configured A330/300 that joined the fleet on October 2nd. Oman Air's exclusive new first class cabins, luxurious, lie-flat business class seat, spacious economy class seats and the latest in-flight entertainment system brought new levels of comfort to air travel.

This was the year that Oman Air introduced new uniforms that matched with the livery of Oman Air. The new design follows an international style and is designed by the house of Balenciaga.

Within 2009, Oman Air commenced operations to Frankfurt and Munich in Germany and to Paris in France. This was soon followed by the Maldives and Sri Lanka in October and November respectively. Furthermore in 2009 Oman Air introduced their new 3-class service to London that was received very well by the travelling community.

2009 also saw Oman Air joining the International Airlines Technical Pool Association (IATP). Made up of over 100 member airlines, and about 30 suppliers including aircraft manufacturers such as Airbus and Boeing with over 400 members from the aviation industry on its roll, IATP gathers twice yearly to discuss sharing of resources, reducing costs, while improving operating efficiency.

Another highlight of 2009 was the IATA Operational Safety Audit (IOSA) renewal, which followed a five-day evaluation in all areas of organization and management system, flight operation, operational control, flight dispatch, aircraft engineering and maintenance, cabin operations, aircraft ground handling, cargo operation and operational security.

Despite a global downturn in the cargo sector, Oman Air Cargo has enhanced its capacity utilisation and revenue with the company's fleet growth, while developing its global network, with high-frequency services to 32 on-line and 41 off-line destinations around the world. The introduction of A330 routes further gave Oman Air Cargo an excellent opportunity to sell beyond Muscat and become a network transshipment carrier in its own right.

On the technical side, Oman Air and Lufthansa Technik signed A Letter of Intent at the Dubai Airshow on 16 November in Dubai. The plan is to form a joint venture to provide technical support for the airline's modern and growing fleet and for other customers in the region.

Oman Air ended the year with a landmark contract signed with Embraer, for the purchase of five EMBRAER 175 aircraft from the E-Jets family, and taken options for five more. The first delivery is scheduled for the first quarter of 2011. The E-Jets will play a significant role in the airline's strategy to develop air services both within and to and from the Sultanate of Oman.

Looking ahead, 2010 is going to be another significant year for Oman Air with more destinations planned and two more A 330s joining its expanding fleet this year. Coming up ahead on the destinations front are Kathmandu, Kuala Lumpur and some points in East Africa.

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