

Emirates throws Airbus A380 a lifeline with jumbo order

Emirates Airlines struck a \$16 billion deal to buy 36 Airbus A380 superjumbos just days after the European manufacturer said it would have to halt production without new orders.



The deal with Emirates will give Airbus "at least 10 years of visibility", the European manufacturer's CEO Tom Enders said in an interview recently.

The deal is "excellent news" and "a sign of confidence on the part of a company that has built its strategy on growth around the plane", Enders told France's Journal du Dimanche newspaper.



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Emirates said it had placed firm orders for 20 of the double-decker aircraft with options for a further 16. Deliveries are scheduled to start in 2020.

The airline is already the world's biggest customer for the A380 with 101 in its fleet and 41 more firm orders previously

placed.

Airbus hopes that by continuing the programme for the next 10 years or even beyond, potential customers of the A380 will decide to order the aircraft, especially in China.

The group's decision in 2007 to pursue the A380, capable of packing in 853 seats, was diametrically opposed to rival Boeing's bet on the Dreamliner, marketed as a more efficient plane that could be used for both medium and long-distance flights.



Airbus overtakes Boeing, says could halt A380 programme

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But the economics of the four-engine A380 have proved daunting, with airlines having to operate every flight at full capacity in order to make a profit.

Airbus sales director John Leahy had said on Monday that the company would have to halt the A380 programme unless Emirates placed another order.

Enders, 59, told the Airbus board of directors last month that he would not seek reappointment as CEO when his current term ends in April.

Source: AFP

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