A veritable order bonanza totaling an estimated $420 million, a new attendance record (7,667) and some industry surprises were the highlights of the fifth annual European Business Aviation Convention & Exhibition, held May 18 to 20 in Geneva. But the decidedly upbeat event lacked announcements of clean-sheet, new aircraft designs.

Accounting for almost half of the order value (based on estimated basic prices), Airbus announced sales of four $50 million ACJs: one to India’s UB Group; another to Khaleefi Group of Kuwait, which was the first customer for the type; and two for Saudi Arabian VIP/charter specialist National Air Services, which expects to order a third by year-end.

Bombardier secured an order for a Learjet 40 ($12 million) from California-based Air Max, the charter opera-
tor’s second. The deal followed the sale of a Special Edition Learjet 60 ($11 million) to Challenger 604 ($24 million) to Madrid-based Ondo 2000.

Pilatus Aero sold three PC-12s, which typically have a price tag of about $3.2 million a copy; two to Luxembourg-based fractional operator JetFly and the third, the aircraft on display at EBACE, to an unnamed Portuguese operator.

Gulfstream recorded an order from NetJets Europe for two more $40 million G550s after the fractional operator had sold all the shares in its first. The Savannah, Ga.-based OEM also secured a letter of intent for three G520s ($27.5 million each) from Nat Avi Servs of Jeddah, which already operates three of the type.

The count of 7,667 registered attendees at EBACE 2005 translates to an 18.2-percent increase over last year’s three-day total of 6,487. Attendance has more than doubled since the first EBACE in 2001, when 3,620 visitors turned out for the event. In addition, a record 278 exhibitors increased the exhibits on display by more than 20 percent, and 51 business aircraft were on static display at Geneva International Airport, a more than 40-percent increase over last year.

These positive numbers notwithstanding, the major aircraft manufacturers chose to give a low key to sales only new derivative models or to highlight airplanes currently under development. Bombardier launched a family of corporate/executive shuttles, dubbed the Challenger 850, 870 and 890, which have prices of $28.2, $49.2 and $68.2 million each.

In the Cabin

Coming just one month after it announced receipt of the supple-
cntent type certificate (STC) for installation of Iridium Broadband Multi-Link(BML) high-speed data system in the G500 and G550, Gulfstream Aerospace announced at EBACE it had received approval for installation of the high-speed data system in the G450 and G550, its fourth such STC. The first installation of the system on a customer G500 will be completed next month.

Danish satellite communications service provider Satcom1 demonstrated its Satcom Monitoring, which provides a visual indi-
cation of channel status. This way users know when to switch from one channel to another, when the channel is down or when a new, more economic MPSD packet mode for low-data-rate applications, such as text e-mails. One-number Dial gives callers the choice of U.S., the Netherlands or Norwegian options to call the aircraft and asking them to choose the least expensive option for their location.

Rockwell Collins announced that the first Bombardier Global 5000 received an STC for installation of the Airborne 21 integrated cabin electronics system. The airplane, which is in service with a Middle Eastern operator, is the first to receive the new Collins equipment designed to support a suite of features from entertain-
ment and cabin controls. The company has also tested AirCell’s ST3100 Iridium satcom system as a qualified data channel for the Airborne 2000 in-flight information system.

B rapid Switzerland displayed its Sky Office system for the first time at an airshow. The equipment combines in-flight office func-
tions, such as phone, fax, Internet and e-mail, with audio and video cabin entertainment, including Air Show display, and a class 3 cockpit electronic flight bag.

Providing only a brief glimpse, AirCell gave a sneak preview of Axxess, a new wireless data hardware package that the company said will let passengers talk on wireless “smart phones,” surf the Internet on their wireless telephone or actually use their personal cellphones to place calls in flight. Expect an official launch of Axxess at this year’s NBAA Convention in New Orleans.

A new satcom antenna from CMC Electronics is optimized for business jet, regional and narrowbody aircraft applications, the Canadian company said at EBACE. The top-mounted SatLite antenna is based on the proprietary technology and architecture used in CMC’s CMA-2102 high-gain antenna system.

Thrane & Thrane of Denmark introduced its Aero-HSD+ Flex program, which allows customers to specify the level of satcom capability they want and upgrade later as needed. Users may choose any combination of voice, fax, cockpit- and high-speed data from a single channel of SwiftBroad at a list price of $78,500 up to the full five-channel system at $322,000.

Lufthansa Technik is bringing to market some of the devices it has developed as part of its networked interactive cabin environ-
ment in-flight entertainment and communications program, including the Mobile Access Router produced with Thrane & Thrane, new digital LCD screens of its own design and a trim panel developed from UK Interactive.

Rockwell Collins announced that its Tailwind 550 satellite tele-
vision system has gained an STC for installation in the Boeing Business Jet. The equipment includes a 45-inch high-definition terminal and four channel of SwiftBroad, which the certification allows Collins to deliver “global telecommunications for current and future IBE buyers.”

Finally, the Piaggio Avanti II has a three-screen version of the Collins avionics system.

Maintenance & Completions

Dassault launched FalconCare at EBACE, the French OEM’s new “pay as you go” fixed-cost maintenance program. The six-year renewable program covers scheduled and unscheduled mainte-
nance for both parts and labor costs.

Cessna reported it has more than 1,000 customers for its ProParts program, which provides fixed monthly charges for Citation airframe and avionics based on the number of hours flown. The minimum charge is $500 hours.

Bombardier Business Aircraft announced a goal to deliver high-
priority spare parts within 12 hours of AOG (aircraft on ground) notification to operators in Europe and North America.

Operators of Pratt & Whitney Canada and some Williams turbine engines can benefit from the total healthcare program JetCare International and sister company Spectro Oil Analysis launched at EBACE. The comprehensive service is already available for Honeywell TFE731s.

Rolls-Royce announced it had signed agreements with Jet Aviation and European Flight Service adding the companies to its Corporate Care program, which covers scheduled and unscheduled engine maintenance and repair at shops under contract.

Lufthansa Technik signed an agreement at EBACE with Bom-
bardier making the German company a preferred provider of cabin refurbishments for Bombardier’s newly announced Challenger 850, 870 and 890 Corporate-Shuttles (see page 44). The green airplanes will be flown from the Bombardier factory in Montreal to the Lufthansa Technik site in Hamburg for interior completion.

TAG Aviation USA approved Jet Aviation’s four FBOs in North America, located at Boston/Bedford, Mass.; Dallas; Palm Beach, Fla.; and Teterboro, N.J., as preferred service centers. The agreement allows Jet Aviation to perform scheduled line and base mainte-
nance, refurbishment and heavy airframe maintenance, modific-
tions and painting on aircraft operated by TAG Aviation.

Raytheon Aircraft selected Honeywell for supply chain management and parts bin replenishment services for the next five years, a contract valued at $86.5 million, according to an EBACE announcement.

Jet Support Services (BSS) and Piaggio Aero signed an agree-
ment to make JSS’s Tip-to-Tail maintenance-by-the-hour program available to Avanti and Avanti II operators. The 50-line program covers both engine and airframe, or either, at the customer’s choice.

Jet Aviation has won an order from a repeat customer to outfit an Airbus A319 Corporate jetliner, its fifth such completion. The airplane is expected to arrive at the company’s Basel facility next month and to be finished in December.

For Pilots Only

Jeppesen of Engwood, Colo., introduced new weather maps that provide forecast information on icing and turbulence. The maps are available in four Jeppesen software applications.

Flightsafety International announced that the Bombardier Challenger 300 flight simulator will enter service in the fourth quarter of this year. FAA Level-D approval of the device will follow its installa-
tion at F53 Great Philadelphia/Wilmington, Delaware Learning Center at New Castle County Airport, Del.

Construction of a Dassault Falcon 7X simulator is underway at CMI’s plant in Montreal. The new unit will be installed at CMI’s new training center for Falcon crews at Burgess Hill, England.

Safe Flight Instrument’s angle of attack computer system has been integrated into the Universal Avidyne E11/809 R+Rat-
panel display to create a low-cost, high-end motion display. Other successes for Safe Flight include the installation of its AutoPower automatic throttle system on 70 percent of new Gulfstream G200s and a new distribution deal for its helmet Powerline Detection System.

Cessna said it has selected the GH-3000 electronic standoff instrument system from L-3 Communication Avionics Systems as standard equipment in the Citation CJ1+ and CJ2+ light business jets. The backup unit is already flying aboard the Citation CJ3, Encore, Encore XLS and the Citation CJ2.

CMC Electronics has signed a contract to supply its SureSight M-series enhanced-vision system (EVS) to Pilatus for installation in the PC-12NG. The EVS sensor will interface with the airplane’s panel-mounted multifunction display.

Several OEMs featured Rockwell Collins’ Pro Line 21 avionics systems at EBACE. Raytheon Aircraft trumpeted upgraded versions of its Hawker 800XP and Beechcraft Premier IA, and Cessna too showed off the Collins gear, which is standard equipment in the Cessna C14, an adding the CJ3+ and CJ4. Finally, the Piaggio Avanti II has a three-screen version of the Collins avionics system.

Compiled by R. Randall Padfield

EBACE 2005
Now in its fifth year, business aviation’s annual European meeting keeps getting better
Raytheon Tweaks the Hawker 800 and Premier I

At its EBACE press conference, Raytheon Aircraft took the wraps off two improved jets, the Hawker 800XP and Beechcraft Premier IA. The newly designated models feature upgraded cockpits, redeigned interiors and a complement of other enhancements that customers have long been asking Raytheon to incorporate into the designs. These improvements come at a cost. In the case of the Hawker 800XP (up 110 pounds for longer-range improvements), the standard upgrade items add $250,000 to the model’s published list price, which now starts at $13.45 million.

Hawker division president Brad Hatt said the improved 800XP boasts a newly redesigned passenger compartment, Rockwell Collins Airshow 21 cabin electronics and an upgraded version of the Collins Pro Line 21 avionics system. Raytheon is testing the waters for potential applications of new technology in the cockpit. As an example of its developing Avionics Demonstration System (ADS), it has developed a new cockpit software application that simulates four-engine transport operations by combining airspace modeling with a flight simulation. The system is currently being used to assess potential cockpit supplements for four- and eight-engine transport configurations.

Beechcraft division president Randy Groom explained that the Premier IA includes a new interior model after that of the 800XP, as well as better soundproofing, LED downwash lighting and more luxurious appointments.

At the flight deck, Raytheon is adding an optional IFIS-5000 system to the standard Pro Line 21 avionics suite and graphical weather. A single-file-server version of the IFIS-5000 system will cost $50,000 for XM Satellite for U.S. customers and $73,000 for global weather coverage through Universal Weather. Raytheon has incorporated an improved 1,200 design changes in the revamped light jet into its construction, many of them the direct result of customer requests and complaints.

First deliveries of the Premier IA to U.S. customers will begin in September of this year and to international buyers next year.

—Stephen Pope

Raytheon Aircraft brought a completed Hawker Horizon to Geneva for the first time. Full FAA certification of the super-midsize jet is expected by the end of this summer and EASA approval next year. The Wichita OEM has firm orders for 32 Horizons, and a seven-aircraft final certification test flight program from Airbus Farnborough.

AADS Socata showed an example of its TBM 700C turboprop single with a spare pilot door on the left side. Socata expects to break a production record this year after starting with a backlog of 23 aircraft, which covers 65 percent of its planned production.

AEDT, the former Beechcraft business, has potential buyers and others to experience the flying characteristics of its Falcon 7X in a simulator at its EBACE booth. Said AEDT avionics editor Stephen Pope, “Flying the airplane was a cakewalk thanks to the fly-by-wire control, which react to pilot inputs to the stick and throttle to make the airplane do precisely what the pilot wants it to do.”

Adam Aircraft, making its first appearance at an international airshow, said it will meet with EASA officials in Geneva to discuss European approval of its A500 piston twin (which received FAA certification on May 11 for VFR flight at 12,500 feet, and its under-development A700 twinjet.

The $3.97 million Avanti II, an upgraded version of the current Avanti twin turboprop, will enter the production line in October. Piaggio Aero officials said at EBACE. Engine improvements will provide better efficiency between 28,000 and 37,000 feet.

The idea of an emissions-trading program for air transport.

Third, the EC wants to extend the EU aviation rules through agreements with other countries. “We want a more integrated approach. Bilateral agreements are no longer acceptable,” stated Crespo. The EC is already in negotiations with the Balkan states, Morocco, China and Russia to obtain greater market access while extending the area of application of EU regulations. Talks with the U.S. authorities about an open aviation area are also in progress.

Finally, the fourth priority is infrastructure, the main challenge to growth, with airport capacity being insufficient

The airplane’s 6,460 sq ft of cabin floor area provides more many opportunities than a traditional aircraft. The design shown in the model is just one of many the company has developed as part of its preparatory work. Said Conrad, “For example, you could have an aisle with rooms on both sides. The company has had dedicated rooms as a movie theatre or a real gymnasium with work-out machines that don’t have to be folded away under beds or seats.” At the EBACE 2005 opening general session, Daniel Calleja Crespo, director of air transport at the European Commission (EC), outlined the new strategy of the Euro-
to cope with the increase in traffic demand forecast through 2025. “About 75 percent of the 133 top European airports cannot build new runways in the next 20 years,” Crespo said.

Brian Humphries, EBAA chief executive and co-chairman of the joint EBAA/NBAA Industry Working Group on Business Aircraft Operations, said in a special session on the topic that the aim of the group is to develop a set of recommendations to harmonize rules for private and on-demand charter operations within Europe and between the U.S. and EU. (See story on page 28.) There is an urgent need for such recommendations because no regulatory framework for fractional operations in Europe now exists and European states view fractional operations as more similar to commercial than to private operations.

**Fractional Compromise**

In the interim, European authorities may be ready to accept the operation of U.S. fractionals under private rules (FAR Part 91 Subpart K), without requiring a commercial license to operate within Europe. However, an ECAC official insisted that approval of this compromise would depend on finding a satisfactory solution to the lack of security oversight by the U.S. government. ECAC states would also consider favorably a decision by U.S. authorities to reduce the administrative burden put on European charter operators seeking to obtain a permit to conduct occasional flights into the U.S. These flights are currently restricted to six per year, whereas there is no such restriction on U.S. charter flights in Europe.

**NBAA Wants Grass-roots Effort against User Fees**

NBAA president and CEO Ed Bolen, at his first EBACE as leader of the association, rallied business aviation’s grass roots to counter the threat of user fees. The airlines have a common agenda, he said, and that is to reduce the taxes they pay into the Airport and Airway Trust Fund (see story on page 8).

NBAA counters that the fuel tax business aviation now pays is the most logical, efficient, progressive and environmentally friendly. Bolen said a grass-roots effort needs to generate tens of thousands of letters and e-mails to Capitol Hill. To facilitate this, NBAA has added to its Web site (www.nbaa.org) a “Contact Congress” function that helps users quickly contact their federal representatives by e-mail.