Do.328 DESCRIBED

a slow market with speed

He hopes it will contain a "strong commuter
element" since Midway Connection had
been a profitable operation.
Like most manufacturers, Dornier splits
the market into three main segments: the
Americas, Europe and the Far East. Stein-berg says he expects sales of "about 200" Do.328s in North America, comprising 20% of that region's demand for 20- to 39-seaters over the next ten years or so. "The demand we're seeing for the Do.328 is making us very optimistic. We're promoting the speed, comfort and quietness of the aircraft, which are particularly important in that market." The target for selling regional aircraft in
the USA has shifted from the smaller airlines that used to run their own purchas-ing accounts, to their owners, which are the ? large carriers that today dominate US skies. "One and a half years ago we moved our sales effort from the regionals to the major airlines, including their code-sharing part-ners," says Steinberg. The upshot of this is that US orders which materialise are more likely to be for larger numbers of aircraft than used to be the case with the regionals. "We've seen that already," he points out. In Europe the picture is different. Rein-hard Orthmann, Dornier's vice-president for non-US marketing, says: "Most of the equip-ment decisions are taken by the operators themselves, who consult with the majors". Liberalisation, he believes, will produce a number of new regional airlines in which a major would have a stake, but it would monitor the buying decision, not take it. Fleet sizes are much lower in Europe than in America, says Orthmann, "... so you don't expect the orders to be so large". So far, the

only Do.328 customers in Europe are: Swiss airlines Sunshine Aviation, Air Engiadina and UK corporate customer Cayenne, each with one aircraft.
The main problem in Europe is that "... more liberalisation is needed," says Orth-mann. "It is still very difficult for an entrepreneur to start an airline". A much bigger problem, affecting all airlines but more severely the smaller regionals, is the air traffic congestion over Europe, coupled with airport access (a traditional worry of the regionals) and slot allocation. Despite the new rule favouring operators of aircraft below 80 seats, Orthmann believes that the regionals are "... not well supported by the European Commission ... the major carriers are still very strong".
There is, however, a positive trend in Europe that is not yet visible but which Altmann is certain will arrive as borders become more open: the traditional hub-feeding role of the regionals will be ex-panded to include more point-to-point traffic "... which is why high-speed aircrafr like the Do.328 will be in a better competi-tive position". Hub bypassing (direct travel between secondary city pairs instead of via hubs) will become more attractive and will result in much longer range flights. "There will be a free-for-all," says Simmerl, noting that the Do.328 stands to benefit again through its superior range capability.
The regional market in Asia is less

developed than that in either Europe or the Americas, believes Altmann, although there are signs of increasing activity in countries such as Malaysia, India and Indonesia. Australia and New Zealand "... have a tradition of regional operations, but are suffering the same recession as Europe". Their radical approach to liberalisation is also "... not helping the regional airlines," according to Altmann.
The standard Do.328 currently sells for "under $8 million", says Dornier. "We think we're in the right position ... even though the Jetstream 41 is attacking the market at a lower price." On a stretched version of the 328, Orthmann insists that "... very few people will make their decision to buy the basic aircraft conditional on a firm launch of the stretch."

Nevertheless, explains Orthmann, the market expects it: "People rely on Dornier to offer this kind of thing — so there is confidence that we will do it". He adds that the Do.328 is the most suitable for stretch-ing among its competitors because a higher degree of commonality will be preserved. "We can probably use the same wing, definitely the same cockpit, and will retain the same performance."
The market may be slack but Dornier, because of its Horizon order, can reasonably claim to have sold more aircraft in 1991 in the 20- to 39-seat segment than all of its competitors put together. •

the Do.28 proved popular, while Dornier developed a number of prototype designs testing STOL and V/STOL technology fur-ther in the Do.29 and Do.31. The latter, despite showing promise, never matured and, in the 1970s, Dornier's main success was the Dassault-Dornier Alpha Jet. Dornier's 16-19 seat Do.228 commuter emerged in the 1980s, using the results of new-technology-wing experimental aircraft and the functional fuselage cross-section of the Do.28/128 Skyservant.
The 1980s also saw the Dornier family return to the flying boat in the shape of Dornier Composite Aircraft's ill-starred Dornier Seastar CD.2, now cancelled. There was also an increasing consolidation in the German aerospace sector, with Daimler
Benz holding a 20% shareholding in
Dornier Composite and a 57.55% in
Dornier Luftfahrt, the balance being held by
the Dornier heirs. Daimler Benz' holding
has been assumed by DASA. •

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