

## Boeing 720 Starship One

## ФОТО 1

Масштаб 1:144

На початку 1950-х років фірма Boeing створила один із найвеличніших літаків XX сторіччя – Boeing-707, котрий, без сумніву, став потужним поштовхом у розвитку пасажирських авіаперевезень. У 1957 році керівництво фірми вирішило модифікувати літак задля можливості його використання на маршрутах середньої протяжності та в міжконтинентальних сполученнях меншої довжини. Так з'явився Boeing 720, котрий у порівнянні із «старшим братом» був дещо коротшим (загальна довжина – 41,25 м, розмах крила – 39,9 м) і мав меншу вагу, що забезпечувало кращі злітні характеристики. У цій конструкції встановили дещо іншу паливну систему та використали більше повітрязабірників, проте загалом дизайн мало чим відрізнявся від Boeing-707. На літак встановлювали турбореактивні двигуни Pratt & Whitney JT3C7, що давало змогу виконувати рейси на відстань до 6820 км, а при використанні додаткових паливних баків дальність збільшувалася ще більше. Загалом протягом серійного випуску побудували 154 машини. Дещо пізніше декілька літаків Boeing 720 було перепродано до Німеччини, Ізраїлю, Пакистану, Ірландії та низки інших країн.

Історія експлуатації Boeing-720 як пасажирського літака загалом була досить звичайною, як і в більшості інших авіалайнерів, проте принаймні одна машина з відносно невеликої їх кількості залишила яскравий слід не лише в історії авіації, а і в історії рок-музики XX сторіччя.

Перший серійний Boeing 720, що отримав номер N7201U, спочатку був переданий до авіакомпанії United та з 1960 року використовувався на внутрішніх авіалініях. У 1973 році колишній відомий американський актор і оскароносний режисер Боббі Шерман разом із своїм менеджером Уордом Сильвестром (вони були співзасновниками агентства «Contemporary Entertainment») придбали цей літак у компанії United із метою переробити його на своєрідний «літаючий готель-студію», в якому найвідоміші музиканти того часу могли б одночасно записувати свої нові альбоми та відпочивати під час перельотів. Серед перших, хто зацікавився такою ідеєю, була легендарна британська хард-рокова група «Deep Purple», яка на той час перебувала на піку кар'єри. Велика кількість їхніх концертів проходила поза межами США та Великої Британії, тож виникла думка зробити з Boeing 720 VIP-транспорт для музикантів. Агентство «Contemporary Entertainment» запропонувало свої послуги й назвало літак «Starship One». Незабаром він став відомим у рок-середовищі, і такими ж VIP-пасажирами були учасники груп «Led Zeppelin», «Rolling Stones», «Alice Cooper», «Allman Brothers Band» та інших – практично всі, хто хотів отримати максимум комфорту просто на борту.

У 1974 році група «Deep Purple» орендувала цей літак для свого чергового турне Північною Америкою, відвідавши з концертами Каліфорнію, де проходив знаменитий фестиваль «California Jam». Однак сталося непередбачуване: через фінансові проблеми організаторів концерту виникли великі затримки з оплатою, і «Deep Purple» мусили повернути «Starship One» власникам, які, по суті, вилучили літак за борги. Пізніше Boeing 720 використовували й інші рок-гурти, зокрема «Led Zeppelin», проте на початку 1976 року літак уже перебував у вкрай зношеному стані. Завдяки клопотанню менеджера «Led Zeppelin» Пітера Гранта він ще деякий час залишався в експлуатації, але через технічні несправності постало питання про його подальший продаж. Зрештою «Starship One» повернувся в розпорядження «Contemporary Entertainment», але високі витрати на ремонт (у кілька мільйонів) фактично поставили хрест на майбутньому авіалайнера. У 1977 році його було продано на брукс. Варто зазначити, що роком раніше один із двигунів цього Boeing 720 спалахнув під час перельоту, коли на борту перебувала інша відома рок-група, що також ледь не закінчилося трагедією.

## Технічні характеристики

- Довжина загальна: 41,25 м
- Розмах крила: 39,90 м
- Пасажиромісткість: 167/40
- Вага зльоту: 100000 кг
- Крейсерська швидкість: 1000 км/год
- Дальність польоту: 6820/7100 км
- Двигуни: 4×Pratt&Whitney JT3C-7, 53,3 кН

At the beginning of the 1950s the Boeing company created one of the greatest planes of the Twentieth Century – the Boeing 707, which undoubtedly initiated the era of passenger jet travel for the masses. In 1957 the company's management decided to modify the aircraft for possible use on medium-distance routes and shorter intercontinental flights. Thus the Boeing 720 was developed, which in comparison with its "elder brother" the Boeing 707, was somewhat shorter (overall length 41.25 m, wingspan 39.9 m) and had a generally lower weight, providing better take-off performance. A different fuel system and more air intakes were installed in this design, but overall it did not differ greatly from the Boeing 707. Pratt & Whitney JT3C7 turbojet engines were fitted to the plane, allowing it to cover distances of up to 6820 km, with even longer trips possible thanks to additional fuel tanks. A total of 154 machines were constructed during its production run. Some time later, several Boeing 720s were sold to Germany, Israel, Pakistan, Ireland, and a number of other countries.

The history of the operation of the Boeing 720 as a passenger plane was mostly unexceptional, as was the case with most airliners, but at least one example out of the relatively small total left a bright mark not only in aviation history but also in the history of rock music of the Twentieth Century.

The first production Boeing 720, registration number N7201U, was initially delivered to United Airlines and was used by them on domestic routes from 1960. In 1973, the famous former American actor and Oscar-winning director Bobby Sherman, together with his manager Ward Sylvester (they were co-founders of the "Contemporary Entertainment" agency), acquired this airplane from United with the idea of converting it into a kind of "flying hotel-studio," where the most renowned musicians of the day could record their new albums and rest comfortably during flights. Among the first who found this idea appealing was the legendary British hard-rock band Deep Purple, who at the time were at the peak of their career. Many of their concerts were held outside the USA and Great Britain, so they wanted to turn the Boeing 720 into VIP transport for the musicians. "Contemporary Entertainment" offered its services, calling the plane "Starship One." Soon it became widely known in rock circles, and the same VIP arrangements were used by members of Led Zeppelin, The Rolling Stones, Alice Cooper, The Allman Brothers Band, and others – basically anyone who wanted maximum comfort right on board.

In 1974, the band Deep Purple rented this airplane for another North American tour, which included concerts in California where the famous "California Jam" festival took place. However, an unpredictable situation arose: due to the concert organizers' financial problems, major payment delays occurred, and Deep Purple were forced to return "Starship One" to its owners, who effectively seized the plane for unpaid debts. Later the Boeing 720 was used by other rock groups, including Led Zeppelin, but by early 1976 the plane was in an extremely worn condition. Thanks to the efforts of Led Zeppelin's manager Peter Grant, it remained in operation for some time, but due to technical issues its future sale became a question. Eventually, "Starship One" reverted to the ownership of "Contemporary Entertainment," yet the multi-million-dollar repair bill effectively ended the airliner's further career. In 1977 it was sold for scrap. It should be mentioned that a year earlier one of this Boeing 720's engines caught fire during a flight with another famous rock band on board, which nearly led to tragedy.

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## **Performances**

- **Length:** 41.25 m
- **Span:** 39.90 m
- **Passenger:** 167/40
- **Take-off weight:** 100000 kg
- **Cruiser speed:** 1000 km/h
- **Range:** 6820/7100 km
- **Engines:** 4×Pratt&Whitney JT3C-7, 53.3 kN

## **Made in Ukraine**

LLC "Roden Tool Factory"

Here's the current timeline I've assembled which may be of interest:

- November 23, 1959: Made its first flight in Renton, Washington. Painted in black, grey and white colour scheme with red "Boeing 720" titles (Source: This Day In Aviation, eBay photo)
- October 1, 1960: Delivered to United Airlines, named "720 Jet Mainliner Walter T. Varney". Repainted with blue, grey and white colour scheme with "United" titles
- 1961: Renamed "720 Jet Mainliner Capt. F. M. Crismore"
- January 1967: Seen in San Francisco (Source: Bill Larkins on Flickr)
- September 17, 1970: Seen in New York (Source: AirHistory)
- August 14, 1972: Contemporary Entertainment applies to the Civil Aeronautics Board for permission to operate a Boeing 720 plane to transport music groups (Source: Civil Aeronautics Board Reports, Volume 60)
- August 24, 1972: Capitol International Airways files an objection to Contemporary Entertainment's application (Source: Civil Aeronautics Board Reports, Volume 60)
- September 6, 1972: McCulloch International Airlines files an objection to Contemporary Entertainment's application (Source: Civil Aeronautics Board Reports, Volume 60)
- November 28, 1972: Contemporary Entertainment given exemption by the Civil Aeronautics Board to operate the plane. Limited to 100 flight hours per year, charging no less than \$2,000 per flight hour, interstate service only (Source: Civil Aeronautics Board Reports, Volume 60)
- January 15, 1973: Purchased by Contemporary Entertainment for \$750,000, renamed "Starship 1" and repainted with gold and brown colour scheme. Interior refit designed by David E. Bell and carried out by World Air Center in Oakland. Stored at McCarran Airport in Las Vegas, Nevada.
- July 6, 1973 - July 29, 1973: Led Zeppelin use the plane for the second leg of its 1973 US tour. Plane given "Led Zeppelin" titles.
- July 16, 1973: Contemporary Entertainment given permission to operate flights to Canada for the next two years (Source: Civil Aeronautics Board Weekly Summary of Orders and Regulations, Issue 29; Issue 73)
- August 15, 1973 - October 21, 1973: Used by Elton John. Plane given "Elton John - 1973 Tour" titles.
- September 1973: Used by Sonny and Cher, seen in Los Angeles. Plane given Sonny and Cher logo (Source: Ron Monroe on Flickr)
- October 24, 1973 - November 8, 1973: Used by The Moody Blues
- December 8, 1973 - December 31, 1973: Used by Alice Cooper. Plane given "Alice Cooper" titles and logo on tail.
- January 3, 1974 - February 14, 1974: Used by Bob Dylan. No titles on plane.
- March 3, 1974 - April 9, 1974: Used by Deep Purple. Plane given "Deep Purple" titles
- June 1, 1974 - August 24, 1974: Used by The Allman Brothers Band. Plane given "Allman Brothers Band" titles.
- July 30, 1975: Seen at Atlanta (Source: Airlines)
- September 25, 1974 - December 3, 1974: Used by Elton John (unclear when he stopped using it). Plane repainted with red, white and blue colour scheme and given "Elton John Band Tour 1974" titles.
- October 1974: Seen at Boeing Field (Source: Bob Harrington on Flickr)
- November 13, 1974 - December 18, 1974: Used by Deep Purple (unclear when they began using it). Plane given "Deep Purple" titles.
- January 18, 1975 - March 27, 1975: Led Zeppelin use plane for 1975 US tour. Plane given "Led Zeppelin" titles.
- April 1, 1975 - May 23, 1975: Used by John Denver. Plane given "John Denver" titles.
- June 1, 1975 - August 8, 1975: Used by The Rolling Stones. Plane given "Tour Of The Americas 75" titles and logo.
- July 25, 1975: Leased for at least 6 months by McCulloch International Airlines
- September 29, 1975 - October 26, 1975: Used by Elton John. Plane given "Elton John Rock Of The Westies" titles.
- October 1975: Seen in Las Vegas (Source: Paul Thallon on Flickr)
- November - December 1975: Used by The Allman Brothers Band
- January 12, 1976: Seen in Manchester, UK

- March 1, 1976 - April 6, 1976: Used by Olivia Newton-John. Plane given "Olivia Newton-John" titles. (Source: Aero Icarus on Flickr)
- June 1976: Seen at Long Beach with no titles (Source: Ron Monroe on Flickr)
- June 29, 1976 - August 17, 1976: Used by Elton John. Plane given "Elton John - Louder Than Concorde But Not Quite As Pretty" titles.
- October 26, 1976: Possibly seen at Glasgow with red cheat line, white paint scheme, no titles (Source: Fergus Abraham on Flickr)
- October 8, 1976 - November 8, 1976: Used by Peter Frampton and Gary Wright for US and UK tour. Plane given "Frampton Comes Alive" (starboard) and "Gary Wright" (port) titles.
- October 24, 1976: Flew from Heathrow to Manchester (Source: John Oram on Flickr)
- October 30, 1976: Seen at Heathrow (Source: Paul Thallon on Flickr)
- October 1976: Seen at Frankfurt (Source: Aero Icarus on Flickr)
- November 4, 1976: Seen at München-Riem (Source: Munich-Riem Aviation Photos on Flickr)
- November 1976: Seen at Düsseldorf (Source: Uli on Flickr)
- Seen at Hamburg (Source: A Flying History)
- November 12, 1976: Flown from Heathrow to Gander, Canada
- January 21, 1977 - June 26, 1978: Returned from lease, stored at Miami International
- February, 1977: Seen at Long Beach (Source: Airliners)
- July 1977: Seen at Long Beach (Source: Ron Monroe on Flickr)
- September 23, 1977: Seen at Long Beach (Source: AirHistory)
- November 10, 1977: Repossessed by Bank of America. Seen at Long Beach
- April 1978: Seen at Long Beach (Source: Ron Monroe on Flickr)
- June 21, 1978: Bought by Aero America. Delivered to Boeing Field
- July 1978: Seen in US with "Frampton Comes Alive" and "Gary Wright" titles (Source: AirHistory)
- July 31, 1978: Seen at Boeing Field with red cheat line, EO titles and logo
- August 1, 1978: Seen at Boeing Field
- August 26, 1978: Seen in the UK without EO titles
- August 31, 1978: Seen at Glasgow
- September 2, 1978: Seen at Glasgow with red cheat line (Source: Paul Thallon on Flickr)
- September 4, 1978: Flew from Heathrow to Shannon to Bangor (Source: Malcolm Nason on Flickr)
- September 25, 1978: Seen at Tegel with no titles
- October 26, 1978: Seen at Inverness (Source: Air Pictorial Volume 41)
- October 26, 1978: Flew Cairo to Aberdeen Inverness to Berlin. Possibly for delivery to Private Jet Services
- October 31, 1978: Seen at Inverness (Source: Air Pictorial Volume 41)
- Late 1978: Flew from Tegel to Rome carrying actor Omar Sharif
- November 1978: Flew from Basel to Mulhouse (Source: Airliners)
- January 7, 1979: Seen at Heathrow (Source: Kerry Taylor on Flickr)
- February 14, 17, 21 1979: Visited Heathrow with executive configuration. Possibly wearing "République Populaire Révolutionnaire Linee" titles and used by the Iranian government for flights to Germany
- February 22, 1979: Seen at Heathrow with no titles
- March-April 1979: Seen at Salisbury, Rhodesia with no titles
- March 30, 1979: Seen at Luton (Source: Air Yorkshire April 1979)
- March 1979: Returned to Aero America
- April 1, 1979: Seen at Stansted
- July 20, 1979: Signed over to Connex Aviation Ltd
- August 1979: Seen at Luton with red cheat line, no titles (Source: AirHistory)
- September 1, 1979: Seen at Heathrow (Source: Air Yorkshire September 1979)
- September 5, 1979: Seen at Luton with red cheat line, no titles. (Source: ABPic)
- September 8, 1979: Seen at Luton with red cheat line, no titles (Source: prs1958 on Flickr)
- September 9, 1979: Seen at Luton (Source: AirHistory)
- September 12, 1979: Seen at Luton with red cheat line, no titles (Source: Air Yorkshire October 1979)
- September 14, 1979: Signed over to State of Washington, Attorney General (Source: Mike Zoeller FAA notes)

- November 15, 1979: Aeroamerica's operating certificate was revoked by the FAA
- February 10, 1980: Stored at Luton. Sat tailless on the engine run bay.
- March 5, 1980: Seen at Luton (Source: Teesside Aviation News April 1980)
- April 29, 1980: Open storage at Luton (Source: Air Yorkshire May 1980)
- September 1980: Moved to Luton maintenance area
- December 29, 1981: Flown to Oakland and worked on for an Arab customer till it was found to be riddled with corrosion.
- March 1982: Impounded at Oakland by World Airways due to unpaid parking charges (Source: Mike Zoeller FAA notes)
- May 1982: Released and flown to Luton. Conversion cancelled.
- May 3, 1982: Seen at Luton with red cheat line, no titles. Plane had no tail (Source: Kerry Taylor on Flickr)
- June 4, 1982: Seen at Luton with red cheat line, no titles. Had a tail (Source: Kerry Taylor on Flickr)
- June 14, 1982: Sold to Turks Holdings Ltd registered in Nassau, Bahamas. Bill of sale signed by Joel Eisenberg, President of Aeroamerica (Source: Mike Zoeller FAA notes)
- July 13-17, 1982: Broken up at Luton. Some parts used for OY-DSK Boeing 720-025 (Source: Mike Zoeller FAA notes)