

HD Key APAC Players

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Asia-Pacific is A high-growth region. Ernst & Young has reported in a survey that this region will have 1.7 **billion** people who qualify as middle class by 2020 and that this figure is expected to touch 3.2 **billion** by 2030. That means the region will have two-thirds of the global middle class. It also means that the air travel potential of the growing middle class is enormous.

Another interesting fact that is music to the ears of airlines is that there is large-scale migration from smaller cities to larger cities. The air connectivity for such traffic movement has to be regional and hence some of the Asian countries have begun networking the hinterland with smaller airports. Those who have taken an early **lead** are likely to emerge winners. The key regional airline players in Asia-Pacific are few, but the landscape is soon going to change as there are a number of them entering the fray. Australia which has a fairly large geographical spread, has fairly networked different locations with competitive regional airlines.

Air Costa , Indian Regional Saga

Air Costa , an Indian regional airline based in Vijayawada, commenced **operations** in October 2013 with two Embraer E-170 aircraft leased from ECC.

The airline plans to focus on improving connectivity between Tier-II and Tier-III cities in India and has announced an investment of \$150 **million** by 2015. The airline plans to set up a maintenance, repair and overhaul (MRO) facility at Vijayawada by 2015. It currently has a maintenance centre at the Chennai International Airport.

Air Costa received two more Embraer E-170 jets, one in December 2013 and the other in January 2014. It aims to have ten E-170s and E-190s by the end of 2014 and a total of 25 aircraft by 2018.

At the Singapore Airshow, Air Costa ordered 50 E-Jets E2 aircraft with option for another 50 from Brazilian manufacturer Embraer, a deal worth \$2.94 **billion**. Air Costa will become the first customer in India of the E-Jet E2 with the first delivery in 2019.

Air Costa flies to nine destinations in India connecting metros to Tier-II cities. The cities it connects include Ahmedabad, Bengaluru, Chennai, Coimbatore, Hyderabad, Jaipur, Vijayawada, Madurai and Visakhapatnam.

Regional Express, Australia, Tops The Charts

'Our heart is in the country'. That is the tagline and essence of Regional Express, the largest regional airline from Australia and in the region. It has a fleet of 95 aircraft, 51 of them being Saab 340, followed by 16 Piper Warrior, seven Westwind 1124 and other aircraft including a Brasilia 120 for exclusive freighter service. Regional Express is popularly known as Rex.

After Ansett collapsed, a group of Australian businessmen saw an opportunity in reviving only the regional aviation part of the business. They believed there were sound business reasons for this initiative. Both Hazelton and Kendell, before they were part of Ansett, were profitable entities and enjoyed excellent reputation and support. Both airlines were still in operation under their own brands, the route networks of both operators were complementary and they operated the same types of aircraft.

Rex has its roots firmly in the bush and in country Australia. Rex believes that the bush needs and deserves an air service of quality that provides good connectivity with capital cities at affordable prices. Rex seeks to fulfil these expectations. Since its formation, Rex has steered a course balancing the needs of regional communities for extensive and affordable air services and to be economically viable and sustainable.

Qantaslink, Linking Australia

QantasLink from Qantas operate flights to over 56 metropolitan and regional destinations across Australia and Papua New Guinea, including some of the region's hottest ski, beach and bush destinations. Formerly Airlink, Eastern Australia Airlines and Sunstate Airlines, QantasLink is now Australia's largest regional airline, operating over 2,000 flights each week.

It also operates flights to destinations throughout regional Western Australia through charter service provider, Network Aviation. QantasLink is located at Qantas Terminal 3 in Sydney. QantasLink customers travelling to and from Sydney enjoy exclusive world-class facilities following an upgrade that involved the regional airline moving into the Qantas Domestic Terminal, Terminal 3.

Virgin Australia Regional

Virgin Australia Regional Airlines (formerly Skywest) is an Australian regional airline based in Perth, Western Australia. It services key towns in the state of Western Australia as well as interstate destinations Darwin, Melbourne, Brisbane, Canberra and Sydney. It also serves regional destinations in New South Wales and Queensland and operates charter flights to Bali. In April 2013 Skywest was purchased by Virgin Australia Holdings as its new regional offshoot and renamed Virgin Australia Regional Airlines.

Virgin Australia Regional was formed in 1963 as Carnarvon Air Taxis flying charter flights with small general aviation aircraft out of Carnarvon, Western Australia. In 1979 it changed its name to Skywest Aviation and moved to Perth's Jandakot Airport. In 1980 Skywest Airlines was formed at Perth Airport and acquired Stillwell Airlines and its routes. The combined fleet included 39 aircraft, making it the second largest commuter airline in Australia at the time. The Skywest Airlines /Aviation fleet included a mix of general aviation types and small airliners including GAF N-24 Nomad, Embraer EMB-110 Bandeirante, Beechcraft King Air 200 & Fairchild SA-227 Metro-III as well as smaller types such as Cessna 182 and Piper Aztec. As of March 2014, the Virgin Australia Regional fleet consisted of 34 aircraft, 19 Fokker 50 and 100, 13 ATR-72 and two Airbus A320.

Tianjin Airlines, Networking **China**

Formerly Grand **China** Express Air, Tianjin is a regional airline headquartered at Tianjin Binhai International Airport passenger terminal building, Dongli District, Tianjin, in **China** operating domestic scheduled passenger and cargo flights out of Tianjin Binhai International Airport.

The airline was established in 2004 in an effort to **merge** the major aviation assets of Hainan Airlines, **China** Xinhua Airlines, Chang'an Airlines and Shanxi Airlines and received its operating licence from the Civil Aviation Administration of **China** in 2007. Scheduled flights were launched under the brand name Grand **China** Express Air, using 29 to 32 seat Dornier 328-300 jets. At that time, the **company** was **China**'s largest regional airline, operating on 78 routes linking 54 cities. On June 10, 2009, the **company**'s name was changed to Tianjin Airlines.

As of August 2011, 63 destinations were connected (excluding those operated on behalf of Hainan Airlines), though by 2012, the airline was flying on more than 450 routes linking at least 90 cities, taking more than 90 per cent of the domestic regional aviation market.

Tianjin Airlines fleet consists of 85 aircraft with an average age of 4.1 years that includes 12 Airbus A320, 23 Embraer ERJ-145, and 50 Embraer 190. Additionally, Tianjin Airlines operates 11 Dornier 328 aircraft which are owned by Hainan Airlines.

Juneyao Airlines

Juneyao is a regional airline based in Changning district, Shanghai, **China**, operating domestic services out of the two Shanghai airports Hongqiao and Pudong. The **company** was founded in 2005 as a

subsidiary of Juneyao Group. As of August 2014, the Juneyao Airlines fleet consists of 36 aircraft with an average age of 3.1 years. It has 32 Airbus A320-200 and four Airbus A321-200.

Silkair, Spreading Wings

SilkAir, the regional wing of Singapore Airlines, flies one of the youngest fleets in the Asian region, with an average age of

seven years. It currently operates 26 aircraft, 16 Airbus A320-200, six Airbus A319-100 and four Boeing B737-800 aircraft.

It is a wholly owned subsidiary of Singapore Airlines and operates scheduled passenger services from Singapore to 44 cities in Southeast Asia, the Indian Subcontinent, **China** and Australia. As the regional wing of Singapore Airlines, it serves the short-haul destinations in the Singapore Airlines Group network. In the year to March 31, 2013, the airline flew 3.3 **million** passengers and made an operating profit of Singapore \$96.7 **million**.

Ana Wings Spreading Across Japan

ANA WINGS is an airline of ANA group based at Tokyo International Airport (Haneda) in Ota, Tokyo. The airline was formed on October 1, 2010. As of March 2014, the ANA Wings fleet consists of 36 aircraft with an average age of 11.8 years. ANA Wings has 16 Boeing 737-500 and 20 Bombardier Dash-8 Q-400. It operates to major provinces such as Kanto, Chubu, Kansai, Chugoku, Tohoku, etc.

Maswings, Malaysia's First Commuter Airline Maswings, Malaysia's first commuter airline was officially launched on October 1, 2007. It caters to the air travel needs of Sarawak and Sabah's travelling population by providing affordable fares, convenient schedule and connections within the two states in the Malaysian Borneo.

Being a subsidiary of Malaysia Airlines, MASwings takes advantage of its link with Malaysia's national carrier to provide Sabah and Sarawak with greater connectivity to the global network already serviced by Malaysia Airlines. MASwings is governed by direction and policies set by the government in providing rural air services within Sabah and Sarawak. MASwings provides two types of aircraft for passenger charters, ATR 72-500 and ATR 72-600 and DHC-6-400 Vikings.

There are other regional players who provide exceptional connections to and from within their countries, a trend that is growing significantly.

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