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Extended wait for firm CSeries order could smart: analyst

By [Mary Kirby](#)

Bombardier's CSeries programme could suffer a blow to its image if the manufacturer does not secure a firm order for the airliner in the relatively near future, a senior aerospace analyst for Forecast International predicts.

Raymond Jaworowski says current turmoil in the world's financial markets and its knock-on effects to the airline industry gives Bombardier "a little bit more time from a public relations point of view" to lock down CSeries orders.

Uncertainty in the economy, he notes, means "it is a little bit more difficult" for aircraft manufacturers to secure firm orders right now and this provides Bombardier with some "cushion".

However, Jaworowski adds: "I think they could probably go into next year without a firm order but not much more than early [next] year."

Bombardier in July formally launched the CSeries with a letter of interest for 30 aircraft from Lufthansa. The Canadian airframer has said it is confident it will ink firm orders for the 110/130-seat aircraft this year, including from Lufthansa. Bombardier's fiscal year ends 31 January 2009.

The manufacturer is targeting an entry-in-service (EIS) of 2013 for the CSeries. "The timing of the CSeries is very important," says Jaworowski, noting that if Bombardier meets the 2013 EIS "or even if it's pushed to 2014", the company will "get in a few years ahead" of the narrowbody successors that are expected to come from Airbus and Boeing.

"With the ambitious CSeries project, Bombardier is doing more than playing catch-up to Embraer in the 100-plus seat regional jet market. The CSeries will also directly challenge Airbus and Boeing in the narrowbody airliner market," says Jaworowski.

Should the CSeries programme experience any serious delays, however, Bombardier would enjoy less of a timing advantage, he says.

Connecticut-based Forecast International in a newly-released study called "The Market for Regional Transport Aircraft" predicts that the top three regional aircraft manufacturers during the 2008-2017 period will be Embraer, Bombardier and ATR.

Embraer is projected to build 1,440 regional jets valued at \$47.1 billion, while Bombardier is expected to produce 1,189 regional aircraft, including both jets and turboprops, with a production value estimated at \$41.5 billion. ATR is forecast to build 458 regional turboprops valued at \$8.3 billion.

Even in the face of current airline challenges, the market for regional aircraft continues to grow. "While the market is certainly not booming, manufacturers are continuing to find opportunities to increase profits and expand market share," says Forecast International in its report.

"Regional turboprop airliners are experiencing a marked resurgence in demand, particularly for those models seating 70 passengers. Meanwhile, demand for regional jet airliners has been shifting upward to larger-capacity aircraft. As airlines increasingly park inefficient 50-seat regional jets, many of these aircraft will be replaced by 70-seat and larger aircraft."

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