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In A First, Vancouver International Airport Deploys New Common Use Self Service "CUSS" Kiosks From IBM And ARINC

RICHMOND, CANADA – (INTERNET WIRE) 10/10/2002 – In an industry first, Vancouver International Airport (YVR) today unveiled a new type of self-service check-in kiosk from IBM and ARINC that is designed to make the check-in experience faster and more convenient for travelers and more cost-effective for airlines.

Based on a new industry software standard called "CUSS," or common use self-service, the new system allows passengers to access many different airlines' self-service check-in applications from a single kiosk. As Vancouver began to roll-out 80 of the new kiosks this week, it became the first airport in the world to deploy its own common-use kiosk system for the airlines.

Air Canada's Express Check-in is the launch customer for the Vancouver International Airport's CUSS system, and the Airport Authority expects several other airlines to add their check-in systems to the kiosks over the next few years. Later this year the Airport Authority also plans to install some of the new kiosks in its parking areas and at curbside valet parking locations, allowing passengers to check-in before entering the airport's terminals. In the future, the Vancouver International Airport kiosks may also be installed in off-airport locations such as hotel lobbies and cruise ship terminals.

The potential for airlines to save money by sharing common use kiosks is expected to drive the rapid adoption of the new CUSS standard, which was recently ratified by the International Air Transport Association (IATA). The new kiosks can also alleviate some of the space constraints airports are facing today as a result of new security procedures and equipment requirements. IBM, ARINC, Air Canada and Airports Council International (ACI) have participated in the CUSS technical development activities for IATA since 1998.

"The Airport Authority has long been a leader in adopting common-use technologies. We see the CUSS kiosks as a natural extension of the common-use philosophy already working at the airport," said Kevin Molloy, vice president, Information Technology for Vancouver International Airport Authority, and ACI's representative on IATA's CUSS management group. "For airports, the benefits are clear. The kiosks allow us to increase our passenger processing capacity without having to add significant terminal space while also giving our customers an additional check-in choice."

As a leader in self-service check-in services, Air Canada was the first to introduce the convenience of check-in kiosks in Canada. The carrier has 153 of its Express Check-in kiosks, that it jointly developed with IBM, at eight Canadian airports. These kiosks typically enable passengers to check-in in less than 60 seconds. Air Canada views CUSS kiosks as a cost effective way to further expand the availability of self service check-in.

"Since Air Canada first introduced Express Check-in Kiosks in 1998, the response from our customers has been very positive and usage rates continue to rise," said Chris Quintal, Air Canada's manager for Business Systems Strategy & Innovation in Airports, and Chair of IATA's CUSS Steering Committee. "Our customers in Vancouver will continue to experience the same convenient Air Canada Express Check-in service on any of Vancouver International Airport's new CUSS kiosks. Through our active participation in IATA, Air Canada has helped lead the development of CUSS standards. As other airports follow Vancouver's lead, we look forward to making available our award-winning Express Check-in service to even more customers elsewhere in our network through this cost-effective, shared hardware solution."

The kiosk implementation at Vancouver International Airport was delivered jointly by IBM and ARINC Incorporated. The CUSS kiosks were built by IBM which also provided technology including the kiosk platform, common launch application, remote

management tools, integrated LCD signage and Air Canada software development. ARINC is responsible for project management, on-site integration and testing, and network connectivity to Air Canada's application as well as ongoing maintenance.

This initiative marks one of the first joint projects to come from a recent teaming agreement between the two companies through which they will collaborate on developing and deploying self-service check in kiosks for the worldwide travel industry.

"IBM has been involved in the CUSS steering committee since its inception, and it's very fulfilling to help pioneer the evolution of this technology from concept to reality," said Rob Ranieri, e-Access practice lead for IBM's Self -Service Kiosk group. "The Vancouver International Airport CUSS kiosk deployment represents a world first, and demonstrates that the CUSS standard is ready for use in airports around the globe."

"The CUSS standard represents a win-win-win for everyone -- space savings for airports, cost savings for airlines and time savings for travelers," said Mike Picco, vice president of ARINC's Airport systems Division. "We have always been focused on saving airline and airport costs through shared systems and look forward to contributing more savings with this important new offering."

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