



## **Qatar Airways and Thales Sign Contract for Next Generation In-flight Entertainment System on the Airline's new A350 Fleet**

**Dubai Airshow, November 16<sup>th</sup>, 2011** – Thales, a leader in In-Flight Entertainment and Connectivity (IFEC) systems, is pleased to announce that Qatar Airways has confirmed the selection of the new Thales TopSeries AVANT™ system for its fleet of 80 A350 aircraft. This next generation Thales system combines the strengths of earlier platforms with advanced technologies, such as high definition video, solid state hard drives and faster processors, to deliver an enhanced passenger experience never seen before. The first A350 is scheduled for delivery in Q3, 2013.

Qatar Airways Chief Executive Officer Akbar Al Baker said that the in-flight offering on the airline's A350 fleet will be a step beyond what is currently available in the sky.

*“Qatar Airways is proud to be at the forefront of adopting the latest technologies available in the aviation industry. Our A350 aircraft will be equipped with the industry's leading in-flight entertainment technology, and we look forward to showcasing to our passengers just why we continue to receive awards and accolades for our in-flight products,” he said.*

The Doha-based carrier, one of the world's fastest growing airlines, will provide a comprehensive selection of entertainment programmes accessed through passenger touch screen displays ranging in size from 10.6 inch to 17 inches. Passengers will also be able to interface their personal electronic devices to the system allowing them to enjoy their own content through the in-seat screen. The TopSeries AVANT system will also feature 3D audio giving the effect of high fidelity surround sound. Thales is working closely with Airbus' A350 programme team to get its' TopConnect Ka-Band solution offerable on the A350 XWB aircraft. This will enable Qatar Airways to provide worldwide broadband connectivity at an affordable price.

In addition, Qatar Airways selected the new, award winning Thales Touch Passenger Media Unit, a revolutionary handheld media device introduced in 2010 by Qatar Airways and Thales. The device out performs all in-seat handheld IFE technologies bringing to the passenger endless applications common to the consumer world.

Based on the Android™ operating system, the unit can be used as a complement device that enables passengers to multi-task just as they do on the ground. Qatar Airways will be the first airline in the world to offer this best-in-technology product bringing new innovation to the sky.

Qatar Airways had previously appointed Thales to provide in-flight entertainment systems for 30 of its A320 family of aircraft.. And, as announced in 2010, 30 Boeing 787 aircraft with 30 options, which include SwiftBroadband cabin connectivity for access to current news, sports, social networks and other mobile applications will also be available. The Qatar Airways' A350 fleet will consist of: 40 A350-900s, 20 A350-800s, and 20 A350-1000 variants.

*“We are very pleased to be working with Qatar Airways. The airline has clearly placed their confidence in Thales and our team is committed to their success and desire to bring innovation to their passengers,” said Luc Vigneron, Chairman and CEO, Thales.*

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### **About Thales**

Thales is a global technology leader for Defence & Security and Aerospace & Transport markets. In 2009, the company generated revenues of 12.9 billion euros with 68,000 employees in 50 countries. With its 22,500 engineers and researchers, Thales has a unique capability to design, develop and deploy equipment, systems and services that meet the most complex security requirements. Thales has an exceptional international footprint, with operations around the world working with customers as local partners.

For more information about Thales In-Flight Entertainment Systems visit [www.thales-ifs.com](http://www.thales-ifs.com) .

### **About Qatar Airways**

Qatar Airways, launched in 1997, operates a young and modern mixed fleet of 98 aircraft to over 100 diverse business and leisure destinations across Europe, Middle East, Africa, Asia Pacific, North America and South America.

The award-winning airline has orders worth over US\$ 40 billion for more than 200 aircraft, including Boeing 787s, 777s, Airbus A350s, A380s, A320 Family of aircraft and Bombardier corporate jets. The rapid expansion of Qatar Airways prompted the State of Qatar to embark on one of its biggest projects – the construction of a brand new international airport in Doha, which is scheduled to open in 2012. For more information on Qatar Airways, visit [www.qatarairways.com](http://www.qatarairways.com)

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