

Lufthansa Consulting Targets Latin America

Brazil and Mexico top focus, but the company also aims for business in Colombia, Argentina, Ecuador and Paraguay.

BY CHRONICLE STAFF

Lufthansa Consulting (LCG), a 20-year old, independent subsidiary of Lufthansa German Airlines, hopes to boost business in Latin America. Part of its increased focus on the region includes setting up a new sales office in Miami last fall.

"With the opening of the sales office in Miami ... Lufthansa Consulting wants to be even closer to its clients hoping to generate more and different business while enlarging its client data base," says Mirja Nissen, the company's director of sales for the Americas.

Brazil and Mexico are Lufthansa Consulting's prime focus, but other countries such as Colombia, Argentina, Ecuador, and Paraguay are also of interest and "provide excellent opportunities," she says.

With the Latin American aviation market, especially the domestic travel side, showing strong growth, there's a growing need for local airports to expand, grow and comply with international standards. That provides an opportunity for a company like LCG.

AIRLINE REORGANIZATION

Another is the need for management advice for Latin American airlines. "In some Latin American countries, the airline privatization process has been successfully finalized [and] private investors [have] been found to acquire stakes in formerly government-owned carriers," Nissen says. "These types of developments provide excellent strategic opportunities for Lufthansa Consulting as most of those carriers have to undergo huge organizational changes when it comes to management." And given the fact that more and more of the carriers in the market - more than 80 today - will need to consolidate, LCG also sees future business opportunities there – and not only for the strategic side of its business. "There is also great potential for LCG's operational and technical expertise when one considers the current safety and ATC situation in most countries in Latin America," Nissen says.

She is bullish on the company's outlook in the region. "I am very excited for the year 2008 as I think that Latin America is currently showing a lot of development and positive financial trends," Nissen says. "Especially in the travel sector a lot of positive changes are visible, which [spur] new needs and at the same time business opportunities for us."