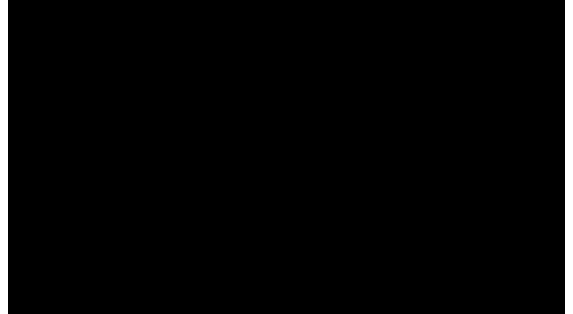


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Ryanair And IAG May Be Renaming The 737 MAX, But Boeing Says It Isn't



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Aerospace & Defense

Deputy editor for Industry; eyes on the skies

f A 737 MAX awaiting delivery to Ryanair has been spotted with a different name painted on its nose, sparking further speculation on whether Boeing and airlines are rebranding the plane after two deadly crashes that claimed 346 lives.



A photographer who has been tracking the production of the 737 MAX at Boeing's factory in Renton, Washington, [published photographs](#) on Twitter on Sunday evening showing a Ryanair plane marked as 737-8200.



At Boeing's factory in Renton, Washington, a 737 MAX 8 in Ryanair's livery has the name 737-8200 painted on the side, in a photograph posted on Twitter by Woodys Aeroimages.

COURTESY OF WOODYS AEROIMAGES

A Boeing spokesperson told *Forbes* no name change is in the works for the 737 MAX, which has been grounded worldwide in the wake of the second of the crashes in March. “We remain open minded to all input from customers and other stakeholders, but have no plans to change the name of the 737 MAX,” he said in an emailed statement.

737-8200 is not a new name: Boeing lists that on [its website](#) as a designation for a variant of the 737 MAX 8 designed for low-cost carriers that increases the maximum number of seats on the plane from 178 to 210. However, the plane was previously referred to as the [737 MAX 200](#) by Ryanair, as well as by Boeing. Ryanair is the launch customer for the plane, with 135 on order.

It's possible that Boeing retains the MAX name in its marketing while allowing airlines to choose different nomenclature. When Boeing scored a letter of intent from International Airlines Group last month for a [major 200-plane order](#) at the Paris air show, Boeing's

announcement referred to it as the 737 MAX while IAG, the parent of British Airways and other European airlines, issued a press release describing the order as a mix of 737-8 and 737-10 aircraft.

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Ryanair did not respond to a request for comment.

Airline market research is likely showing negative sentiment and that customers may try to avoid flying on the plane, posits Ernie Arvai, a consultant with AirInsight.

The airline industry consultant Michael Boyd says it would be unwise for Boeing to try to rename the plane before aviation regulators approve the fixes and adjustments to training that will allow it to return to service. Once that hurdle is cleared, and Boeing can credibly claim it to be an improved product, a rebranding would be in order, “but semi-quietly, with limited fanfare,” he says.

Boeing CFO Greg Smith suggested in an [interview with Bloomberg in June](#) at the Paris air show that the plane maker could be open to a name change, however the company has poured cold water on the idea since.

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