

MCDONNELL DOUGLAS (MDC) MD-12 VERSUS THE AIRBUS A380®

by Dan Pemble, McDonnell Douglas/Boeing Employee – (retired September/2009) – May 6, 2023

As I have written before: Just after the 1st quarter of 1992, MDC began discussing the proposed MD-12 with potential Customers. This double-decker airplane as conceived at the time would carry 430-511 passengers and would have a 7170-mile range; it would indeed be a “Super Jumbo” - the largest passenger-carrying plane in the world! Realizing that the development costs for such a behemoth would be astronomical and there was basically no airline interest at all for such airplane, this program was dealt an early death by MDC! Today’s Airbus A380 very closely resembles the MD-12 concept. The A380 first entered service in 2007 (15 years after the MD-12 was conceived). A total of 254 A380’S were built and it has indeed proven itself to be a truly impressive airplane! However, in spite of the financing from several countries and other sources to cover its extremely prohibitive research & development and production costs, no profits at all from A380 sales have been or will ever be realized. As “prestigious” as the A380 may be around the world, it appears MDC made the correct decision in not going forward with the MD-12 - even though its design was years ahead of the A380 and probably could have eventually dominated the market!



If you are interested in learning more about both these aircraft, following are some web site addresses that provide additional commentary and details:

Simple Flying: <https://simpleflying.com/md-12-vs-airbus-a380/>

Wikipedia (MD-12): https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/McDonnell_Douglas_MD-12

Wikipedia (A380): https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Airbus_A380

