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# Southwest Airlines is Nuts About Blogging

## Southwest Airlines Celebrates One Year in the Blogosphere

DALLAS, April 27 /PRNewswire-FirstCall/ -- Last year, Southwest Airlines boldly went where no other airline and few Fortune 500 companies had gone before -- into the blogosphere. Southwest Airlines today celebrates the one-year anniversary of the launch of its blog, Nuts About Southwest, which allows Customers to take a peek inside the Culture and operations of Southwest Airlines. See what all the nuts are about at <http://www.blogsouthwest.com>.

"Blogging works for us because, as a Company, we know we have nothing to hide," said Southwest Airlines President Colleen Barrett. "Our Employees absolutely ooze authenticity, and our bloggers have been able to bring that same spirit to the blog."

Still a maverick, Southwest Airlines is the only airline to offer its Customers a venue for open dialogue through a blog. With nearly 30 Employee bloggers that represent a mix of frontline and behind the scenes Employees including Mechanics, Customer Service Agents, Flight Attendants, Pilots, Marketers, Schedule Planners, and more, Customers are able to interact with the airline's Employees, participate in meaningful conversations, and build personal relationships.

"When we first started the blog, I often told folks that I considered it to be a great Customer Service 'laboratory,' if you will, but it has evolved into much more than that," Barrett says. "Just as our Station and Inflight Employees develop personal relationships with their frequent Customers, our bloggers have developed personal relationships with Customers they have met on the blog."

Since its launch last April, visits to Southwest Airlines' blog have increased steadily month-over-month. To date the airline has featured 265 posts and generated more than 6,300 comments. The most popular post was written by Southwest Airlines Chief Executive Officer Gary Kelly on the controversial topic of assigned seating. His post generated nearly 700 comments, with more than 80 percent in favor of the Company's unique open-seating policy.

"It takes time to build a trusting audience in the blogosphere," says Barrett. "As we celebrate our first anniversary, we can see that we are really starting to build a strong online community."

Nuts about Southwest is a virtual focus group, allowing Southwest Airlines to obtain immediate and passionate feedback from both Customers and Employees at an extremely low cost. From the debate over assigned seating to the timeframe in which they release their flight schedules, the passionate comments and opinions shared on the blog have shed light on Customer perceptions and even swayed some recent business decisions.

"Honestly, we had no idea how much our loyal Customers loved our open seating policy until they started telling us on our blog," Barrett says. "One thing's for sure, if we do decide to stay with it, we'll never apologize for it again!"

Nuts About Southwest is nominated for "Best Corporate Blog" in this year's Blogger's Choice Awards -- a consumer-generated awards program featuring blogs that are really making an impact in the blogosphere. Vote for Nuts About Southwest at <http://www.bloggerschoiceawards.com>.

#### About Southwest Airlines

After 35 years of service, Southwest Airlines continues to offer the best value in air travel, allowing Customers the opportunity to travel nonstop throughout the country at a very low price. Southwest Airlines offers a very comfortable ride with all premium leather seats and plenty of legroom. Southwest Airlines does not charge an extra fee for changing their reservation and continues to offer free amenities. Customers enjoy complimentary pillows, blankets, snacks, juice, soda, and water on all flights. Since 1987, the airline has maintained the fewest Customer complaints as published in the Department of Transportation's Air Travel Consumer Report. Southwest Airlines (NYSE: LUV), the nation's largest carrier in terms of domestic passengers enplaned, currently serves 63 cities in 32 states. Based in Dallas, Southwest currently operates more than 3,000 flights a day and has more than 33,000 Employees systemwide.

<http://www.blogsouthwest.com>

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