

October 10, 2007



# **Southwest Airlines Redesigns Its Gate Area; Customizing the Airport Experience to Meet the Needs of Each Customer**

## **Same Southwest You've Grown to LUV - Only Better**

DALLAS, Oct. 10 /PRNewswire-FirstCall/ -- Southwest Airlines unveils today an updated gate design to customize and enhance the airport experience for Customers. The carrier's new boarding, which was announced last month, alleviates the need for Customers to "camp out" in line at the gate. Now, the airline is providing Customers a comfortable and productive space to enjoy their preflight moments. Combined with the airline's new organized style of boarding, Southwest continues to upgrade and refresh its brand-while keeping its Maverick character intact.

"We recently announced a change to our boarding that will give Customers back their time in the gate area -- no more standing in line," said Gary Kelly, Southwest Airlines' Chief Executive Officer. "The new gate architecture we are introducing is designed to improve the airport experience for each type of Customer-families, leisure travelers, and business road warriors alike."

As part of the "gate makeover," the carrier will eventually install stainless steel columns and television monitors to support its new numerical style boarding at all of the airline's 64 airports. The enhanced gate area also exhibits new elements that cater to different types of Customers, including: a family area containing small-sized tables and chairs, "kid friendly" programming displayed on a flat screen television, and low to the ground power stations for charging electric devices; and a business/leisure section with padded seats, tables with power outlets, power stations with stools, and flat screen televisions with news programming. San Antonio International was the first airport to adopt the new look, and Dallas Love Field Customers will reap the rewards of the new boarding system and gate redesign on Oct. 15, 2007. The airline will implement its new boarding at its other 62 airports in early November 2007 and anticipates a full gate makeover in the first half of 2008. For a virtual view of the new gate design, please visit <http://www.southwest.com/makeover> or <http://gallery.swamedia.com/photos/value=open/type=jpg> for photos.

"We understand that the Southwest experience begins the minute you step into an airport," Kelly said. "Our Employees work hard to safely and efficiently fly our Customers to their destination. We are confident that the new gate design will provide the most comfortable and productive lounge area while they wait to board."

The new boarding will start systemwide in early November. Southwest tested the new gate design this summer in San Antonio International Airport and tweaked the elements based on Customer and Employee feedback. The fine-tuning included changing furniture colors, increasing the number of power outlets, and installing stools to provide more comfortable charging stations for Customers.

"We do not take change lightly, and we depend heavily on input from our Customers and frontline Employees to make sure we are making the right choices," Kelly said. "As far as costs are concerned, we consider the expenditures to refresh our gates as an investment for our Customers. And of course, in typical Southwest fashion, we've successfully created a design that is bold in look and functionality but not in costs!"

Southwest Airlines announced a plan to enhance its product in late June 2007. Today's announcement is the second step in a list of items the carrier will introduce before the end of the year (last month's enhanced boarding announcement was the first). The carrier plans to announce additional initiatives that will allow product customization and additional incentives for the business and leisure traveler.

Southwest Airlines is one of the most honored airlines in the world. Among Southwest's recent honors was being named to Business Week's first ever list of "Customer Service Champs," which ranks the best providers of Customer Service. For eight years in a row, Southwest Airlines was named to Business Ethics magazine's list as one of America's "100 Best Corporate Citizens" for excelling at serving a variety of stakeholders and for leadership roles in corporate citizenship. And, for an impressive 11 consecutive years, FORTUNE magazine recognized Southwest Airlines as one of America's Top Ten most admired corporations.

<http://www.southwest.com>

SOURCE Southwest Airlines