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# Southwest Airlines Says it Intends to Close on AirTran Acquisition May 2, 2011

## Southwest's Bob Jordan Expected to Guide AirTran Through Integration with Southwest Airlines

DALLAS, April 21, 2011 /PRNewswire/ -- Southwest Airlines (NYSE: LUV) said today it intends to close on its transaction to acquire AirTran Holdings, Inc. (NYSE: AAI), on May 2, 2011. Upon close, Southwest also said it anticipates that Bob Jordan, Southwest's Executive Vice President Strategy and Planning, will be appointed as President of AirTran Airways to help guide AirTran through its integration with Southwest.

For a photo and bio of Bob Jordan, please click here: [http://swamedia.com/channels/Officer-Biographies/pages/bob\\_jordan](http://swamedia.com/channels/Officer-Biographies/pages/bob_jordan)

"With the overwhelming approval of AirTran stockholders in March, we are ready to move forward with closing the transaction, now planned for May 2nd," said Gary Kelly, Southwest's Chairman, President, and CEO. "We anticipate that all necessary regulatory approvals will be obtained by that date. We look forward to that milestone day, first and foremost, so that we can begin the exciting work to integrate AirTran into Southwest, and welcome the AirTran Crew Members fully into the Southwest Family."

Upon close, Jordan would continue reporting to Kelly, and maintain his current responsibilities for Southwest's Technology, Finance, Internal Audit, and Corporate Planning Departments, while leading AirTran through the transition period until full integration with Southwest is achieved in 2013.

Jordan will continue to serve on the joint Integration Board consisting of Gary Kelly, Bob Fornaro (AirTran CEO), Mike Van de Ven (Southwest Executive Vice President & Chief Operating Officer), Loral Blinde (AirTran Senior Vice President Human Resources and Administration), and Jeff Lamb (Southwest Senior Vice President Administration & Chief People Officer). The Integration Board will continue to provide overall direction of the integration efforts. This structure, along with the Integration Leadership roles that Lamb and Blinde have, will continue after closing of the transaction. Bob Fornaro, after the transaction close, will move to a new role as a full-time consultant for the integration of the two airlines, working closely with Kelly and Jordan to ensure a smooth transition.

Until a single operating certificate is achieved as expected in 2012, AirTran operational Departments will continue their existing reporting relationships under the Leadership of Klaus Goersch, AirTran's Executive Vice President Operations and Customer Service. Goersch would report directly to Jordan, and he would work closely with Van de Ven, who would assume the overall Leadership for the operations of both airlines.

The remainder of the organizational structure for AirTran will be refined over the next few weeks and communicated after the transaction closes.

On September 27, 2010, Southwest Airlines announced that it entered into a definitive agreement to acquire all of the outstanding common stock of AirTran for a combination of cash and Southwest Airlines' common stock. Southwest has said the combination with AirTran will serve more than 100 destinations, including four new airports added by the carriers in 2011. It estimates that this will generate hundreds of millions in annual savings for consumers. These fare savings will result from expanding the well-known "Southwest Effect" of reducing fares and stimulating passenger traffic wherever Southwest flies.

### **About Southwest Airlines**

In its 40th year of service, Southwest Airlines continues to differentiate itself from other low-fare carriers--offering a reliable product with exemplary Customer Service. Southwest Airlines is the nation's largest carrier in terms of originating domestic passengers boarded, now serving 72 cities in 37 states with the addition of service to Newark Liberty International Airport on March 27, 2011. Southwest also is one of the most honored airlines in the world known for its commitment to the triple bottom line of Performance, People, and Planet. To read more about how Southwest is doing its part to be a good citizen, visit [southwest.com/cares](http://southwest.com/cares) to read the Southwest Airlines One Report(TM). Based in Dallas, Southwest currently operates more than 3,400 flights a day and has nearly 35,000 Employees systemwide.

### **Cautionary Statement Regarding Forward-Looking Statements**

This news release contains forward-looking statements related to Southwest's anticipated acquisition of AirTran Holdings, Inc. ("AirTran"). Specific forward-looking statements relate to Southwest's plans and expectations with respect to timing and integration matters. These forward-looking statements are based on Southwest's current beliefs, intent, and expectations, and are not guarantees of future performance or results. These statements therefore involve risks, uncertainties, assumptions, and other factors that are difficult to predict and that could cause actual results to vary materially from those expressed in or indicated by them. Factors include, among others, the possibility that the transaction is delayed or does not close, including due to the failure of closing conditions. Additional information concerning the risks associated with Southwest's anticipated acquisition of AirTran is included under the heading "Risk Factors" in Southwest's Annual Report on Form 10-K for the fiscal year ended December 31, 2010, and in Southwest's registration statement on Form S-4 filed with the SEC that includes a proxy statement of AirTran that also constitutes a prospectus of Southwest.

SOURCE Southwest Airlines