

## American Airlines Creates Customer Service Strategy

In the wake of a turbulent year for the airline industry, American Airlines is finding unique ways to rebuild its image in the consumers' eyes by introducing a new customer service strategy with benefits to the AAdvantage membership, and adding new nonstop routes for the business traveler.

### Customer Service Strategy

American Airlines is offering its attendants a new tool to help them address minor traveler complaints and inconveniences. The company is rolling out new software which allows flight attendants to award AAdvantage Miles to AAdvantage members on the spot. Not all circumstances require management intercession, and flight attendants might award Miles if, for example, the wi-fi was not working properly and a passenger felt inconvenienced by that. Business travelers who are enrolled in the AAdvantage program, and who fly frequently, may find that the small inconveniences that tend to occur when traveling are more palatable if they have immediate resolution to general travel annoyances.

The program is part of a series of changes intended to help regain the travelers' trust. American Airlines is also offering their staff "de-escalation" training to help them resolve conflict, rather than participate in it. Business travel is stressful for both travelers and flight attendants. With every passenger equipped with a smartphone and a social media account, airlines cannot afford to have their staff engaging in incidents that will result in a media frenzy.

### New Routes

American Airlines is also expanding their travel routes, opening additional nonstop routes. Fifty-two new nonstop flights are being introduced, providing both domestic and international options.

- Travelers can now go from Philadelphia to Fort Wayne, IN; Oklahoma City; and Pensacola, FL.
- There is new service from Charlotte and Dallas/Ft. Worth to Panama City, FL, and South Bend, IN.
- Service from Chicago has opened up to Wilkes-Barre/Scranton, PA.

These new flights are in addition to the recently announced service to Budapest, Hungary; Prague, Czech Republic; and Reykjavik, Iceland. Forty new routes were added from American Airlines' nine original hubs, including seven routes from Philadelphia and eight from Dallas/Ft. Worth.