

Business Travel Update

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A Business Travel Update provided by Professional Travel

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Featured Article

SWINE INFLUENZA

Human cases of swine influenza A (H1N1) virus infection have been identified in the United States.

Human cases of swine influenza A (H1N1) virus infection also have been identified internationally.

Investigations are ongoing to determine the source of the infection and whether additional people have been infected with swine influenza viruses.

CDC is working very closely with officials in states where human cases of swine influenza A (H1N1) have been identified, as well as with health officials in Mexico, Canada and the World Health Organization. This includes deploying staff domestically and internationally to provide guidance and technical support. CDC has activated its Emergency Operations Center to coordinate this investigation.

CDC 4-26-09 ([MORE INFORMATION](#))

Airlines Adding Checked-Baggage Charges

Emboldened by the revenue success of checked-bag fees, several carriers this week said they are implementing new charges, including Alaska Airlines' plan to follow legacy carriers in implementing a first-checked-bag fee, US Airways' plan to add a \$5 surcharge for customers paying to check bags at the airport and [Delta Air Lines](#) intention to bring its second-bag fee to international markets.

US Airways said economy customers traveling on or after July 9 would have to pay an additional \$5 if they elect to settle checked-bag charges at the airport. The carrier, like all of its domestic legacy carrier competitors, already levies a \$15 fee for the first bag and \$25 for the second. The carrier today began enabling customers to prepay first- and second-bag fees as they check in [online](#) through its Web site.

BTN 4-23-09 ([Full Story](#))

Frequent Flyer Awards

A few weeks ago, we set out to reality-check the expectation that, because demand for air travel has plummeted, the airlines are making more of their empty seats available to frequent flyers redeeming their miles.

Smarter Travel 4-2-09 ([Full Story](#))

Alliance Immunity Altering Airspace

Increasing momentum for antitrust-immune airline alliances is sparking industry concern that the consolidation of airline power will alter corporate buyer leverage for negotiating transatlantic deals and force companies into alliance agreements rather than individual carrier arrangements.

Assuming approval of pending applications, three clusters of immunized carriers are poised to control more than 80 percent of the North Atlantic market, U.S. Department of Transportation data show. DOT this month tentatively approved a joint venture of four Star Alliance members and Continental Airlines.

BTN 4-20-09 ([Full Story](#))

Meeting Planners Opting for Mid-Level Hotels, Cities

To save money and avoid negative perception, meeting planners are looking to mid-price hotel chains and second-tier convention cities as the economy worsens and attendance drops. According to *USA Today*, smaller markets are proving more resilient as planners avoid cities and hotels that may be perceived as lavish. **NBTA**

USAToday 4-13-09 ([Full Story](#))

Hotel Compliance Rising But Lagging

Traveler compliance with preferred hotel programs, though improving, still trails other policy aspects, and buyers are reporting emerging challenges in recent months as competing hotel deals that beat negotiated rates tempt travelers to book outside the program.

BTN 4-20-09 ([Full Story](#))

Airlines Improve for 1st Time in 5 years

Airline performance improved in 2008 for the first time in five years, according to an annual airline quality report released Monday. The survey, conducted by two veteran industry experts, ranks the 17 biggest U.S. airlines based on baggage handling, on-time arrivals, denied boardings and customer complaints. After a record-low industry rating in 2007, all 17 airlines improved their performance in 2008, according to the Airline Quality Rating (AQR) report.

CNN 4-6-09 ([Full Story](#))

America's Most Overbooked Airlines

Sight-seeing, beach-combing and eating ethnic foods top many travelers' to-do lists.

What's not on them? Being bumped from the flight. But that's what happens to a fraction of fliers each year. Though the number is relatively small — last year, 63,612 passengers were kept from overbooked flights, or a rate of 1.10 bumps per 10,000 passengers — for those who fall victim to the practice, it stings.

MSNBC 4-23-09 ([Full Story](#))

Ten Travel Traps to Avoid

Consider this hypothetical situation: John thought he scored big when an advertisement for a \$199 round-trip flight from New York to London popped up on his computer screen. When his credit card wasn't approved,

MSNBC 4-13-09 ([Full Story](#))

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