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## Happy Jetting

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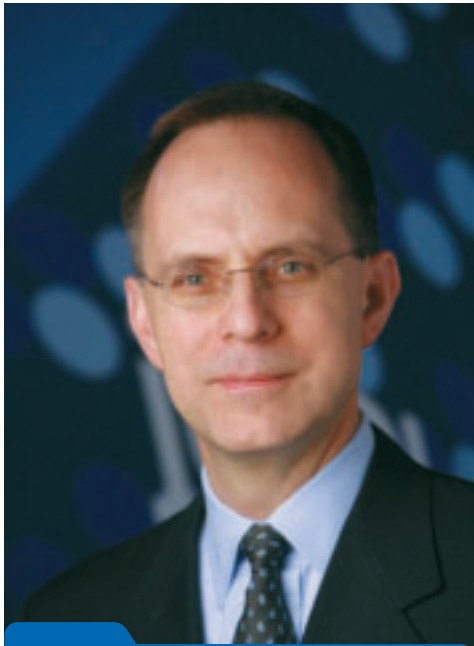
# Happy Jetting

A Conversation With ...  
Dave Barger, Chief Executive  
Officer, JetBlue Airways.

For New York's hometown airline, JetBlue Airways, it's not just about safely jetting its guests from point A to point B, it's about providing superior service in every aspect of each customer's air travel experience. It's a common goal among airlines around the world, but one of many things that makes JetBlue stand out is its "Customer Bill Of Rights," which outlines exactly what inconvenienced customers can expect during times of service disruptions that are within the carrier's control. And that's just the tip of the iceberg for JetBlue, which prides itself on having created a new airline category based on value, service and style.

JetBlue keeps customer satisfaction and comfort at the forefront. It offers "Lots of Legroom" and super-spacious "Even More Legroom" seats. It was the first in the region to introduce in-flight e-mail and messaging services. It offers 36 channels of DIRECTV, 100 channels of Sirius XM Radio and unlimited brand name snacks; it doesn't charge for first checked bags; and the list goes on.

"During 2008, we continued to improve the travel experience for our customers onboard our aircraft," JetBlue President and Chief Executive Officer Dave



**Dave Barger, who joined JetBlue Airways' board of directors in 2001 and six years later took the reins as chief executive officer, recognizes that exceptional customer service, in the air and on the ground, is the key to the carrier's ongoing success.**

Barger told shareholders earlier this year. "For example, we modified our fleet with a product we call Even More Legroom. Even More Legroom seats provide our customers with 38 inches of pitch in selected rows for a modest fee. We believe our cabin experience, which includes the most legroom in coach (based on average fleet-wide seat pitch for U.S. airlines) and DIRECTV and Sirius XM Radio installed by our LiveTV subsidiary, to be 'best in class' across the industry."

As a result of its detail to customer satisfaction, the airline has won more than 120 awards in categories such as Best Large U.S. Economy Class, Best In-Flight Entertainment, Most Eco-Friendly Airline, Best In-Seat Comfort and Best North American Low-Cost Carrier.

"For the fifth year in a row, JetBlue achieved the No. 1 customer-service ranking among low-cost carriers by J.D. Power and Associates," Barger said. "This award, and many others, is a testament to the dedication of our crewmembers who do a tremendous job delivering The JetBlue Experience to our 22 million customers annually."

During the course of nearly 10 years, the airline has built a stable, fun environment for its crewmembers — the airline's term for employees — and a pleasant atmosphere for its customers. It continually engages in community activities to support non-profit organizations in the

cities it serves. And it views its strategy for continually improving the environment as its social responsibility.

In addition to providing top service to its customers and a warm work environment for its more than 12,000 crewmembers, JetBlue has a knack for clever themes, such as its "Happy Jetting" tagline, and witty advertising that holds viewers' attention through comedic dialog, such as that of its "Welcome Bigwigs: The CEO's Guide To Jetting" video.

Whether in the air or on the ground, JetBlue strives to deliver on its promise to provide world-class service, convenience and comfort to its millions of customers. It operates out of New York John F. Kennedy International Airport's Terminal 5, which it refers to as "home sweet home," and offers "jetters" quick, simple check-in, up to 20 security lanes, 26 gates with ample seating, complimentary Wi-Fi, 22 dining options, 25 retail locations and a children's play area.

"In 2008, we marked the beginning of a new chapter in JetBlue's history with the opening of our new Terminal 5 facility at JFK Airport," Barger said. "This project, a partnership with the Port Authority of New York & New Jersey, involved six years of planning and construction and includes 26 gates, new roadways, a parking structure and a connector to the

AirTrain. We believe we have a tremendous advantage being based in New York, the largest travel market in the world, and Terminal 5 gives us the opportunity to provide superior customer service on the ground that matches our award-winning experience in the air."

In May 2007, Barger was named JetBlue chief executive officer, assuming the additional title of president this year. He has served on the airline's board of directors since 2001, and from 1998 to 2007, he served as the airline's chief operating officer. He's been in the airline industry for more than two decades, serving in several management positions for Continental Airlines prior to the founding of JetBlue in 1998. In a recent interview with *Ascend*, Barger shared his thoughts about what makes JetBlue Airways an industry leader.

**Question: JetBlue Airways introduced a new airline category based on value, service and style. What constitutes this as a new category, and how is it different from what competitors are doing?**

**Answer:** In the past, when people looked at the airline industry, they saw two main kinds of airlines — traditional or legacy airlines and low-cost airlines. In recent years, there's been a



**JetBlue Airways has tailored its aircraft to include its "Even More Legroom" product, offering 38 inches of pitch in certain rows. The carrier's constant detail to its "jetters" has earned it the No. 1 customer-service ranking among low-cost carriers five years in a row.**



blending, so to speak, of the characteristics that used to be associated with each of those types as our industry has faced many challenges. Whether it's 9/11, SARS, high oil prices or economic recession, airlines have had to adapt. Travelers have begun to shop for air travel with more of a focus on price. We recognized this early on and decided to distinguish ourselves as the preeminent value carrier in the Americas. JetBlue will offer competitive fares, which any airline can do, but we can offer much more value that other carriers can't, whether it be free onboard entertainment, unlimited complimentary snacks, great legroom and a free first-checked bag, all coupled with friendly service. And by offering customers the option to purchase up, for four more inches of legroom in our Even More Legroom rows or first-run movies, for example, they can add value that's important to them. We offer a great experience to our customers today without nickel and diming them for it.

**Q: JetBlue's complimentary in-flight e-mail and instant messaging services were a first among U.S. airlines. How important are these types of service to customers? What feedback have you received from customers about the additional service?**

**A:** As we've looked at connectivity at altitude, we've recognized the desire for customers to stay connected with friends and loved ones on the ground, especially on longer transcontinental flights. We've been testing these capabilities on one of our aircraft — named BetaBlue — for almost two years now, and the response has been very positive. The ability for a customer to e-mail or stay connected via instant messaging to those on the ground is a great option, especially when it's offered free of charge, and the feedback we've received from customers on BetaBlue flights has been overwhelmingly positive. We're planning to roll the product out to additional aircraft starting this year, with the goal to add it as a complimentary amenity to the JetBlue in-flight experience.

**Q: JetBlue Airways is the first and only U.S. carrier to declare a Customer Bill Of Rights. What was the purpose for creating a Customer Bill Of Rights, and how does it contribute to JetBlue's success?**

**A:** We created the JetBlue Customer Bill of Rights in early 2007 after experiencing some operational challenges due to winter weather. We wanted to provide customers with a tangible document outlining exactly what they can expect



JetBlue not only takes good care of its customers, it offers a secure, enjoyable atmosphere for its 12,000 crewmembers, who work together as a team to ensure the best possible travel experience for all jetters.

from us if their travel plans become disrupted. This goes back to our desire to bring humanity back to air travel, one of our goals since launching service in 2000. We're a customer-service company that just happens to be an airline. The Customer Bill of Rights allows customers to hold us accountable as we welcome them onboard.

**Q: In its eighth year of service, JetBlue Airways said good-bye to flying and hello to jetting with its "Happy Jetting" tagline. How has the airline leveraged**

**this new tagline throughout its businesses, and how has it made a difference from a customer perspective?**

**A:** Flying is what the other guys do. Jetting is what we do here at JetBlue. Flying has a history of negative connotations, so we decided to distance ourselves from it. This was more than a marketing campaign; not only did we change the terminology used across the entire airline — the term "flying" isn't used anywhere — jetting introduced a new way of thinking. It identifies the value proposition that we offer our



Cast members of *The Simpsons Movie* (from left: Homer, Marge, Bart, Lisa and Maggie) travel in style with JetBlue Airways, “The Official Airline Of Springfield.”

customers and sets us apart from other airlines. It helps explain why JetBlue is unique in a fun way.

**Q:** Last year, JetBlue became the official airline of the Boston Red Sox professional baseball team. How did this agreement come about, and why is it important to the airline?

**A:** Over the years, our growth in cities outside of New York has been considerable. Boston has become a very important market for us. We now offer the most non-stop destinations from Boston of any airline. It's our second home. As we've grown, we've looked for ways to develop strategic sponsorships with key organizations. We've been fortunate to develop a great relationship with the Boston Red Sox as the team's official airline. We're also excited to have recently announced a new partnership with the New York Jets, which is our first major sports franchise partnership in New York, our hometown.

**Q:** How did JetBlue Airways become “The Official Airline Of

Springfield” in celebration of *The Simpsons Movie*?

**A:** We like to look for fun and exciting partnership opportunities. The release of *The Simpsons Movie* was the perfect way to celebrate our extensive service to the greater Los Angeles area. We even hosted a contest with a grand prize that included two tickets to the movie's premiere in Hollywood. And if you've ever wanted to see Homer, Marge, Bart, Lisa and Maggie Simpson traveling in style, we have the photos that show it!

**Q:** In 2005, JetBlue Airways received the highly coveted Diamond Certificate of Excellence Award from the U.S. Federal Aviation Administration. What were the main reasons for winning such a prestigious award? What emphasis does the airline place on winning such awards and why?

**A:** We were honored to receive the FAA's Diamond Certificate of Excellence Award for our maintenance technician training program. An award like this highlights

the excellence of our training programs and the dedication of our crewmembers. We've also received a variety of recognitions throughout the years for offering customers exceptional customer service — like five consecutive recognitions by J.D. Power and Associates for excellence in customer satisfaction. Any recognition we receive is directly related to the dedication of every JetBlue crewmember who strives to meet the needs of every JetBlue customer.

**Q:** When other airlines began charging passengers for the first-checked bag, why did JetBlue choose not to follow suit?

**A:** We are focused on creating a new airline category best described as a value airline. There are certain things we believe should be included as part of a ticket. Right now for JetBlue, that includes an assigned seat with industry-leading legroom, free satellite TV and radio, unlimited complimentary snacks, and a free first-checked bag. When these items are combined with JetBlue's award-winning friendly service, we have



what we call the JetBlue Experience. It's what's sustained our airline for almost 10 years and is positioning us for future success.

**Q:** As part of its continuing commitment to give back to the communities it serves, JetBlue partnered with KaBOOM!, a non-profit organization that envisions building play areas within walking distance of every child in the United States. How many play areas have been built by JetBlue employees, what impact does this initiative have on these employees, and why is it highly important to the airline?

**A:** We have been fortunate to partner with KaBOOM! for several playground builds in JetBlue cities. In September, we completed our seventh build, which happened to be right down the street from our corporate support center. Our crewmembers have tremendous passion for our industry, but they also are passionate about the communities in which they live. That's why it's important we partner with organizations like KaBOOM! and the American Cancer Society to allow our crewmembers the opportunity to give back to their communities and to be a good corporate neighbor.

**Q:** JetBlue's CEO Outreach Program included a humorous commercial, "Welcome Bigwigs: The CEO's Guide To Jetting," targeting CEOs who were accustomed to flying on private jets. What were you striving to achieve through this program and accompanying commercial? And how successful has this initiative been in attracting new business?

**A:** Our Welcome Bigwigs campaign was a tongue-in-cheek advertisement and viral video series welcoming CEOs and other executives to travel with JetBlue after being banned from using their private jets. The goal was to humorously use current events to portray the amenities every customer experiences when traveling with JetBlue. The campaign was perfectly timed with current events and received interest by the general public and the news media. The buzz generated by the campaign was a huge success. It showcased that JetBlue likes to do things differently and that we have a fun edge about our brand. Another example would be our US\$599 All You Can Jet pass, which received an extraordinary amount of social media attention and news coverage.

**Q:** What are some top reasons customers choose JetBlue rather than



JetBlue Airways strives to achieve service excellence in the air as well as on the ground. Based out of New York JFK's Terminal 5, the airline offers simple check-in options, ample security lanes, sufficient seating at gates, free Wi-Fi, several dining and shopping venues, and a children's play area.

**competing airlines? What steps does JetBlue take to retain customers?**

**A:** At JetBlue, we strive to add value to every customer's experience, and that's why customers choose to jet with us again and again. The free satellite TV and radio, extra legroom, unlimited complimentary snacks, and free first checked bag add value to the price our customers pay for a ticket. But those are the tangible things. The most important element that keeps our customers coming back is the caring and friendly attitude exhibited by our crewmembers. That's the secret that makes JetBlue successful and helps us stand out from other airlines.

**Q:** How involved are JetBlue Airways' crewmembers in Jetting to Green, your environmental sustainability program? In what ways is JetBlue going above and beyond to make a difference in the environment?

**A:** Every JetBlue crewmember plays a role in the success of our airline, and that includes environmental initiatives as well. Jetting to Green is a platform that allows us to share our environmentally friendly practices and to promote education and volunteerism. We have corporate elements to the program — like our partnership with Carbonfund.org that allows customers to offset carbon emissions generated by their flights — and we have events that allow our crewmembers to do one thing that's green. All across our network, crewmembers volunteer to plant trees or clean up beaches and parks. And then they

bring this environmental awareness back to the workplace, and it manifests itself in things like single-engine taxiing where our pilots only use one engine to taxi aircraft when on the ground. This saves fuel and helps the environment at the same time.

**Q:** What role does technology play in the success of JetBlue? How has technology changed and evolved since the airline began services a decade ago?

**A:** Technology has played a large role in our success. We launched service nearly 10 years ago as a completely e-ticket airline. We've never had paper tickets. Our reservations crewmembers work from their homes. We were the first domestic airline to have TVs at every seat — in economy class, no less. Fast forward several years, and we introduced complimentary in-flight e-mail and instant messaging services on our aircraft BetaBlue, a first among U.S. domestic airlines. We look for ways to use technology to enhance the customer experience and also to operate efficiently. Smart use of technology can drive business success.

**Q:** Where do you see JetBlue Airways in five years? What positions the airline for long-term success?

**A:** JetBlue is poised to be the preeminent value airline in the Americas. Approaching our 10th anniversary, our strong business model, expanding network, young fleet, amenity-rich service and friendly crewmembers are the tools we will use to reinvent the airline business all over again. **F**