

SOUTHWEST AIRLINES NUTS ABOUT COMMUNICATION

Online



SOUTHWEST.COM[®]

Where We've Been

2006

2007

2008

2009

2010

2011

April 06: The "Nuts About Southwest" Blog is launched, picking up where *Airline* left off.

February 07: A media buy is used to launch a Facebook page to host a basketball bracket game.

May 08: The Nuts About Southwest Blog get a makeover!

July 09: The Social Media crisis response is tested when Flight 2294 makes an Emergency Landing.

Oct. 09: Southwest Airlines streams a press conference announcing ECP service.

Jan. 11: Social Media Policy and Handbook are created.

March 10: The Employee Blog launches.

December 06: The Southwest Airlines Marketing Team uses **YouTube** to host a "Wanna Get Away" video submission contest

Summer 07: Southwest begins a YouTube channel. And joins Twitter!

Sept 09: The Emerging Media Team is converged with the PR and Employee Communication team

June 11: Employee App created.

May 07: A Social Media integration team is created between Communications and Marketing.

Aug 08: The Emerging Media Team is developed within Communications and includes 4 full-time Social Media employees.

Jan 10: The Social Media Council and The Rapid Response teams are created.

May. 11: Social Media Customer Relations Specialists are hired to help manage online CR issues.



Southwest Airlines Social Media Strategy:

Our Philosophy

- To provide Southwest Airlines Employees and Customers a voice.
- To provide outstanding Customer Service.
- To protect the livelihood of the Southwest brand across all media platforms.

Our Goals:

- Maintain the Southwest Airlines FUN-LUVing personality across all channels.
- Create outstanding multimedia content and distribute to everyone.
- Raise awareness of new products and services.
- Provide critical info to Customers and Employees crisis or emergencies.



Our Job Responsibilities



Primary:

LISTEN

Secondary:

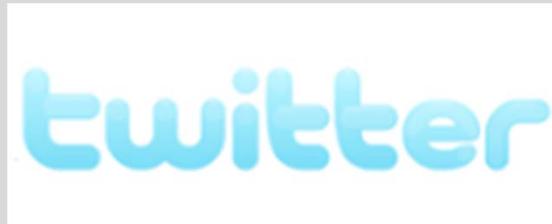
ENGAGE & SHARE
VIA ORGANIC
CONVERSATIONS



Where We Are Now

Social Media is thriving at Southwest Airlines! We continue to stay ahead of our competitors while still maintaining our unique sense of simplicity.

Some of the sites we are actively participating in:





The Official Southwest Fan Page has more than **1.6 million** Facebook fans, more than any other airline!

facebook



SOUTHWEST.COM

Southwest Airlines

Travel/Leisure [Edit Info](#)







Wall Southwest Airlines · Most Recent

Share: [Status](#) [Photo](#) [Link](#) [Video](#) [Question](#)

Write something...



Southwest Airlines

Read about how one of our Employees celebrates a Customer's 90th birthday by making her a Flight Attendant for the day!



Flight Attendant for a Day
www.blogsouthwest.com

I first met Customer Mary at the baggage carousel as she anxiously waited for her daughter, Susan, to pick her up. It took a little time, so I waited with her and discovered that Mary had come to West Palm Beach to celebrate her upcoming 90th birthday! She definitely doesn't look her age!
Mar

3 hours ago · Like · Comment · Share

474 people like this.

[View all 60 comments](#)

Write a comment...



Southwest Airlines

Our Annual Shareholders meeting is today! We're kicking it off with this awesome video! ONE LUV!



Southwest and AirTran: One LUV
www.youtube.com

A panoramic view of celebration surrounding the marriage of Southwest Airlines and AirTran Airways.



facebook

Station Fan Pages:

- Allow interaction with the community.
- Permit conversation is in a controlled environment.
- Empower Employees to have a voice.
- Offer us power in numbers!



But...with guidelines!

We currently have about 30 stations using a Facebook Fan Page



Southwest Airlines - Denver, CO Denver Trivia Time...What does LoDo stand for? las

Wall Info Photos Discussions Video Events

Write something...

Attach:  Share

Southwest Airlines - Denver, CO + Others **Southwest Airlines - Denver, CO** Just Others

 **Southwest Airlines - Denver, CO** Shared via www.blazingb.com

This is the second image I took of the amazing double rainbow at the Denver airport yesterday. Lots of storms were swirling around the airport and I got a decent lighting show on the way in but once we started to taxi to the I looked out and saw an amazing double rainbow, with the primary ra...

[See More](#)

Rainbows Over Denver



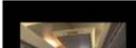
Tuesday at 10:32am · Comment · Like · Share

 **Southwest Airlines - Denver, CO** The storms over Denver can cause operational headaches, however the rainbows make up for it!
Tuesday at 10:36am · Like · Flag

 **Pamela Conticchio** OMG that's breath taking :) Rock on mother nature & swa ...
3 hours ago · Like · Flag

Write a comment...

 **Southwest Airlines - Denver, CO**

 **Southwest Airlines Employee Makes an Announcement About Bags Fly Free**
www.youtube.com

81 People Like This

DOT Figures



Southwest Airlines - Washington/Dulles What a beautiful Summer! I can't b a reminder that our flight schedule is changing on Sunday, August 15th. We say goodbye, for Vegas non-stops and hello to a second Denver non-stop. Of course many direct or connecting both Deber and Midway! on Monday

Wall Info Photos Discussions

Write something...

Attach:  Share

Southwest Airlines - Washington/Dulles + Others **Southwest Airlines - Washington/Dulles** Just Others

 **Southwest Airlines - Washington/Dulles** What a beautiful Summer! I can't believe it is flying by so fast! Just a reminder that our flight schedule is changing on Sunday, August 15th. We say goodbye, for now, to our Florida and Las Vegas non-stops and hello to a second Denver non-stop. Of course many direct or connecting flights are available through both Deber and Midway!
August 9 at 10:03am · Comment · Like

 **Southwest Airlines - Washington/Dulles**

 **Dulles Employees**
12 new photos
July 16 at 1:52pm · Comment · Like · Share

 **Southwest Airlines - Washington/Dulles**

 **Southwest Airlines - Washington/Dulles**
Blessed - 6 Feb 2010

Information
Founded: October 5, 2006

14 People Like This

 Christi Day McNeill  Rebecca Kentros-bennett  Shane Birdsinger

 Yesenia Castro  Danielle Fairbanks  Aaron Pifer

Fun & Personal Tone



Where does Social Media Belong?

- It is a media pitching tool
- News updates
- Customer service issues
- Policy changes
- Company messaging

= it is a Communications function with help from all over the company!

How Can We Stay Ahead?

To reshape our consumer-to-brand relationship, we should establish a new governance entity capable of:

- Identifying and executing strategic opportunities.
- Develop company-wide relationship building capability.
- Scale the success without interrupting the well-earned equity and momentum.

Customers do not care about departments, silos or turf. They want answers and solutions. We must organize ourselves behind the scenes to provide these two things wherever our customers are. In turn, we will win, we will build reputation, and will create brand advocates.



Every Employee Matters and Every Interaction Matters

- Our Employees are **ALWAYS ON**
- People are watching and with these new social media tools have the ability to immediately share their experiences online – whether Southwest is formally in the space or not



Singing Flight Attendant



Rapping Flight Attendant



Passenger Removal from
SW Flight 1552



The Old Guidelines

- Very basic
- Left too much room for interpretation
- Employees wanted more freedom to communicate online

The New Guidelines

- Worked with legal and Employee resources teams.
- Benchmarked with leaders at other large companies.
- Process of reviews, revisions, and launch took six months.

Southwest Airlines Social Media Handbook



Southwest Airlines Corporate Social Media Handbook



1. FOLLOW SOUTHWEST STANDARDS (THE GOLDEN RULE)

Employees are responsible for the comments they make on the internet. Do not post materials that may reflect negatively on Southwest or its Leaders, Employees, or Customers. Any conduct that would be in violation of Company rules may be grounds for discipline or dismissal.

2. EMPLOYEE IDENTIFICATION

If Employees talk online about the Company or its services, it should be made clear they are Southwest Employees. Employees are to identify that they aren't speaking on behalf of Southwest Airlines. Profiles should include a disclaimer similar to "The postings on this site are my own and do not necessarily represent the views or opinions of Southwest Airlines' Officers, Directors, or Employees." Remember, that only officially-designated Employees are authorized to speak on behalf of the Company.



3. BE AN AMBASSADOR

Employees should strive to represent Southwest Airlines in the best way at all times. Though Employees may not be speaking on behalf of the Company, they are still representatives of Southwest Airlines.

4. SHHH - IT'S A SECRET!

Keep confidential information confidential. If secret information winds up in the wrong hands, Southwest's Culture, reputation and livelihood are at risk. Company-related internet communication should only discuss publicly-known information. If Employees aren't sure whether information is public, don't make it public.



5. RESPECT THE PRIVACY OF OTHERS

The lines between public and private are not as defined in the internet space. Be careful when posting content that involves details of co-workers' personal lives. Assume that everything Employees post online will stay there forever, for anyone to see.

6. COMPANY TRADEMARKS AND LOGOS

Southwest's logos, trademarks, and copyrighted materials may not be used in any manner without the express written permission of the Southwest Airlines Licensing Department in Marketing.

7. FOLLOW THE RULES

Do not engage in illegal or unlawful activities. Even posting comments, pictures, videos or other information about participation in illegal activities is against the rules. Do not post or share copyrighted materials unless a license has been granted for the use of those materials.



Communicating the Policy

- Messages posted to our internal blog, SWALife
- Available for partial download on www.blogsouthwest.com/download
- Sent to our Senior Management Committee to share with teams
- Employees required to confirm they've read the policy



Key Learnings:

- Clearly outline your strategy and goals. Share with Employees.
- Understand your priorities.
- Force your teams to think outside of the Org Chart.
- Equip your Employees to understand and embrace Social Media.



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Questions?

