

BEST FREQUENT FLYER AND FREQUENT GUEST PROGRAMS CHOSEN IN THE 21st ANNUAL FREDDIE AWARDS

COLORADO SPRINGS, COLO. (April 23, 2009) - Alaska Airlines Mileage Plan was named frequent flyer Program of the Year and Marriott Rewards took top honors among hotel programs at the 21st Annual Freddie Awards on Thursday, April 23rd.

Internationally, Virgin Atlantic Airways Flying Club frequent flyer program was voted Program of the Year in the Europe/Middle East/Africa region and Australia's Virgin Blue Velocity received the Program of the Year Freddie Award in the Japan/Pacific/Asia/Australia region.

More than 700,000 frequent travelers worldwide cast online ballots to determine the winners. The awards represent excellence in frequent travel programs and rate the best frequent flyer and frequent guest programs in eight different categories: Program of the Year, Best Award, Best Bonus Promotion, Best Member Communications, Best Web Site, Best Award Redemption, Best Customer Service and Best Elite-Level Program. The Best Affinity Credit Card was also chosen. Voters were permitted to vote for programs in one of three global regions: Americas, Europe/Middle East/Africa and Japan/Pacific/Asia/Australia.

Starwood Preferred Guest won Frequent Guest Program of the Year in the Japan/Pacific/Asia/Australia region for the fifth consecutive year as well as in the Europe/Middle East/Africa region for the third consecutive year. Marriott Rewards placed first in the Americas region.

This is Alaska Airlines Mileage Plan's fifth time as the Program of the Year award winner in the Americas. The Seattle-based program also won first place in the Best Member Communications, Best Web Site and Best Elite-Level Program categories this year. This is the third consecutive year for the program to win Best Web Site and the fourth consecutive year for the program to win Best Elite-Level Program.

Starwood Preferred Guest American Express was named top credit card for the third consecutive year in the Americas region. In a testament to the globalization of these loyalty programs, British Airways Executive Club won for Best Award in the Americas and Delta Air Lines SkyMiles won for Best Elite-Level Program in Europe/Middle East/Africa.

Marriott Rewards won the most Freddie Awards overall with nine while Virgin Blue Velocity took home the most for an airline program with six. In the Americas region, the airline program that took home the most Freddie Awards was Alaska Airlines Mileage Plan with four.

The awards were announced today by InsideFlyer Editor Randy Petersen during a ceremony at the Hilton Fort Lauderdale Airport in Fort Lauderdale, Fla. Over 250 airline, hotel and credit card representatives attended the ceremony, along with several members of the voting public. "For this 21st annual event, we are delighted to once again allow frequent flyers throughout the world to voice their opinions about the frequent travel programs that truly rise up in excellence," Petersen commented. "This is not an elitist view of these programs but rather the 'best' are determined by the votes of those who spend a great deal of their life on the road."

The Freddie Awards honor quality, not quantity. Winners are determined based on the overall merits of each program as reflected in a "Value Vote." Value Voting asks the voter to assign a number between one and 10 (10 being the best) to the program for which he or she votes. To be eligible to win a Freddie Award, however, a program must receive at least two percent of the total vote for the category.

Petersen also presented Industry Impact Awards to Continental OnePass and United Mileage Plus. Introduced in 1992, the Industry Impact Awards are determined by editorial decision rather than by ballot. These awards honor the programs or individuals that have had, or will have, the biggest impact on the industry in coming years.

The Freddie Awards are named after the late Sir Freddie Laker, who attracted fame (and a knighthood in the United Kingdom) for pioneering low-cost air travel across the Atlantic in the 1970s.

This year, InsideFlyer magazine partnered with Points.com, Priority Pass, ICLP, Loylogic, Executive Travel Magazine and EzRez to present the event for the 21st consecutive year. Attendees to the Award Ceremony were invited to dinner through a sponsorship with Visa and wine for the diners was sponsored by Synapse.

The event was Webcast live and a recap of the event may be viewed online at www.freddieawards.com.

THIS YEAR'S WINNERS ARE:

Program of the Year

Americas Airline: Alaska Airlines Mileage Plan

Americas Hotel: Marriot Rewards

Europe/Middle East/Africa Airline: Virgin Atlantic Airways Flying Club

Europe/Middle East/Africa Hotel: Starwood Preferred Guest

Japan/Pacific/Asia/Australia Airline: Virgin Blue Velocity

Japan/Pacific/Asia/Australia Hotel: Starwood Preferred Guest

Best Award

Americas Airline: British Airways Executive Club

Americas Hotel: InterContinental Hotels Group Priority Club Rewards

Europe/Middle East/Africa Airline: Virgin Atlantic Airways Flying Club

Europe/Middle East/Africa Hotel: Hilton HHonors

Japan/Pacific/Asia/Australia Airline: Virgin Blue Velocity

Japan/Pacific/Asia/Australia Hotel: Starwood Preferred Guest

Best Bonus Promotion

Americas Airline: American Airlines AAdvantage

Americas Hotel: InterContinental Hotels Group Priority Club Rewards

Europe/Middle East/Africa Airline: Etihad Airways Etihad Guest

Europe/Middle East/Africa Hotel: Marriott Rewards

Japan/Pacific/Asia/Australia Airline: Kingfisher Airlines King Club

Japan/Pacific/Asia/Australia Hotel: Hilton HHonors

Best Member Communications

Americas Airline: Alaska Airlines Mileage Plan

Americas Hotel: Marriott Rewards

Europe/Middle East/Africa Airline: Etihad Airways Etihad Guest

Europe/Middle East/Africa Hotel: Marriott Rewards

Japan/Pacific/Asia/Australia Airline: Virgin Blue Velocity

Japan/Pacific/Asia/Australia Hotel: Starwood Preferred Guest

Best Web Site

Americas Airline: Alaska Airlines Mileage Plan

Americas Hotel: Marriott Rewards

Europe/Middle East/Africa Airline: Etihad Airways Etihad Guest

Europe/Middle East/Africa Hotel: Starwood Preferred Guest

Japan/Pacific/Asia/Australia Airline: Virgin Blue Velocity

Japan/Pacific/Asia/Australia Hotel: Marriott Rewards

Best Award Redemption

Americas Airline: Southwest Airlines Rapid Rewards

Americas Hotel: Hilton HHonors

Europe/Middle East/Africa Airline: Etihad Airways Etihad Guest

Europe/Middle East/Africa Hotel: Hilton HHonors

Japan/Pacific/Asia/Australia Airline: Virgin Blue Velocity

Japan/Pacific/Asia/Australia Hotel: Starwood Preferred Guest

Best Customer Service

Americas Airline: Midwest Airlines Midwest Miles

Americas Hotel: Marriott Rewards

Europe/Middle East/Africa Airline: Virgin Atlantic Airways Flying Club

Europe/Middle East/Africa Hotel: Hilton HHonors

Japan/Pacific/Asia/Australia Airline: Kingfisher Airlines King Club

Japan/Pacific/Asia/Australia Hotel: Hilton HHonors

Best Elite-Level Program

Americas Airline: Alaska Airlines Mileage Plan

Americas Hotel: Marriott Rewards

Europe/Middle East/Africa Airline: Delta Air Lines SkyMiles

Europe/Middle East/Africa Hotel: Marriott Rewards

Japan/Pacific/Asia/Australia Airline: Jet Airways JetPrivilege

Japan/Pacific/Asia/Australia Hotel: Starwood Preferred Guest

Best Affinity Credit Card

Americas: Starwood Preferred Guest American Express

Europe/Middle East/Africa: Lufthansa Miles & More Credit Card

Japan/Pacific/Asia/Australia: Virgin Blue Velocity NAB Gold Card American Express/Visa

Industry Impact Award

Continental OnePass

United Mileage Plus