

# The Best of Heard & Overheard

## A look at what people had to say about Southwest Airlines throughout 2007 and 2008...

**January 23, 2007** --“They (SWA) grew their route structure faster than they intended, and they certainly drove a whole new demographic of passenger into the marketplace. They’ve also been a good corporate citizen, plunging money into supporting charities and getting engaged civically.”

--Tom Clare, *President Metro Denver Economic Dev. Corp., Rocky Mountain News*

**January 23, 2007**--“It’s no surprise that airlines like Southwest are so successful, year after year, because every employee there...knows that this year’s happy customer is next year’s profit. How sad that a behemoth like American Airlines doesn’t have similar foresight or culture.”

--*Letters to the Editor, Wall Street Journal*

**February 20, 2007** --“When you empower People to make a positive difference everyday, you allow them to decide. Most guidelines are written to be broken as long as the Employee is leaning toward the Customer. We follow The Golden Rule and try to do the right thing and think from the minds and hearts of our customers.”

--*Colleen, in a recent speech to The Paso Del Norte Group*

**March 1, 2007**--“As Southwest recognizes, providing great customer service is much more than just a job for the front lines or the call centers. It takes coordination from the top, bringing together people, management, technology, and processes to put customers’ needs first. That’s true today more than ever.”

--*Jena McGregor, Business Week*

**June 15, 2007**--“What airlines have tried to do seven or eight times since January is raise fares \$5 or \$10 one way, and almost every single increase has failed, due to low cost carriers like Southwest Airlines refusing to match the increases. **Southwest has become the 800-pound gorilla of air fare pricing. If they don’t want to raise fares, everyone has to roll prices back.**”

--*Graeme Wallace of farecompare.com, Tampa Tribune*

**August 3, 2007**--“It’d be a lot easier to just keep doing what they’re doing. They could be the great holdout—the low-cost, low-fare, shorthaul, domestic, cattle car, plastic boarding pass airline. They could sail off into the sunset doing that. You know what? That’ll work well for another few years, no question. But they’re smart enough to know it’s not going to work forever. They’re smart enough not to get chained down by the public expectations of them.”

--*Stuart Klaskin of KKC Aviation Consulting, Dallas Morning News*

**October 16, 2007** --“Smiling...Maybe it’s that “Love” thing. [And] It’s not just the flight attendants. The ticket agents, baggage handlers, pilots, gate agents – they all smile. It’s crazy. And it’s crazy how much a difference that makes, at least to me. Lots of people have hard jobs, and hard things in their lives. I admire deeply those who can

smile through it all. Given a choice, that's who I want to fly with, hire, be hired by, be served by, seek help from – and be.”

--*Bob Buckel, Springtown Epigraph*

**May 13, 2008** --“...I want to share an incredible act of kindness we witnessed. There were two American Red Cross volunteers on our flight (one was seated next to me) on their way to assist with Southern California wildfire relief efforts. Prior to landing at SAN, Patti, one of our Flight Attendants, gave them trash bags full of all the remaining cans of water the plane had been provisioned with at PHX because neither knew if or when they would have access to potable water. That Patti is empowered to make such an impromptu donation of supplies and did just that speaks volumes about both Southwest's caring culture and her huge, huge heart.”

--*SWACustomer Drew Ramsey in a letter to Colleen*

**May 13, 2008** --“The public does not care about the health of the airline industry. They care about the value for their transportation dollar. There's a reason that Wal-Mart is the world's largest retailer, and a reason that Southwest is one of the world's largest airlines.”

--*Airline consultant Stuart Klaskin in an Associated Press story*

**May 15, 2008** --“We're getting more high-tech, but we want to stay high-touch.”

--*Gary in The Columbus Dispatch*

**May 22, 2008** --“The awesome task before us is to ensure the continued prosperity of Southwest Airlines—one of the greatest success stories in American business. We all pledge to continue to keep the LUV alive and the Warrior Spirit strong that Herb and Colleen inspire in all 34,000 Southwest Employees.”

--*Chairman and CEO Gary Kelly at the Annual Shareholders' Meeting*

**May 28, 2008**--“The more fees they add, the more frustrated people get. As people get frustrated, they'll find other ways to get around. Whether by bus, rail, sea or Southwest.”

--*From the “comments” section of an article about rising fuel costs on Consumerist.com*

**June 13, 2008**-- “‘No surprise fees.’ Those are the first words you'll notice when you visit Southwest Airline's web site. It's a declaration that puts Southwest in a class by itself today, as most airlines are doing everything they can to make money while fuel prices rise to new heights.”

--*ABC News*