

Star Alliance Conventions Plus a success with event organizers

August 19, 2002 — Star Alliance Conventions Plus", the global convention product of the airline network for Earth, has got off to a flying start.

Less than six months after launch Conventions Plus* has already landed agreements with organizers of events totaling almost 50,000 delegates. Further contracts covering more than 25,000 delegates are currently being negotiated.

Of the events that so far have committed to using the services of Conventions Plus, the single largest one is next year's congress of the European Society of Cardiologists. More than 21,000 delegates will use Star Alliance member airlines to attend the conference, which will take place in Vienna between August 30 and September 3, 2003.

Another example is the 12th annual congress of the European Respiratory Society (ERS) that will be held in Stockholm from September 14 to September 18 this year, attracting more than 11,500 delegates. Star Alliance carriers have been chosen by the ERS as the preferred airlines to provide transportation to and from the venue.

The response in the market to Conventions Plus has been overwhelmingly positive, said Lara Chabina, who manages the product at Star Alliance. Conference organizers immediately recognized the benefits being offered. Instead of having to deal with several airlines in order to set up an event, organizers now have one central point of contact within their local Star Alliance member airline which certainly makes planning a lot more easier for them. Conventions Plus also includes global convention fares and a comprehensive program for supporting organizers prior to and during an event, she added.

Delegates belonging to any of the Star Alliance airlines frequent flyer programs will be able to earn miles or points on their tickets.

In order to qualify for Conventions Plus benefits, conferences must be truly global events with a minimum of 1,000 international delegates from at least three different countries and two continents. The lead time to the event must be a minimum of six months.

Star Alliance was established in May 1997 as the first truly global airline alliance to provide customers the benefits of global reach and a smooth travel experience. The member airlines are Air Canada, Air New Zealand, ANA All Nippon Airways, Austrian Airlines, bmi, Lauda Air, Lufthansa German Airlines, Mexicana

Airlines, SAS Scandinavian Airlines, Singapore Airlines, Thai Airways International, Tyrolean Airways, United Airlines and VARIG Brazilian Airlines.

Asiana Airlines of South Korea, LOT Polish Airlines and Spain's Spanair are scheduled to join Star Alliance in 2003. The future member carriers will further strengthen the Star Alliance network which currently serves 729 airports in 124 countries with almost 11,000 daily flights. Additional information is available at www.star-alliance.com.

* Star Alliance Conventions Plus is currently not available in Australia, New Zealand or Japan.

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