

## Redemption transactions skyrocket

Star Alliance, the airline network for earth, recently released statistics that confirm that Redemption Availability and Sell (RAS), a StarNet application which allows member carrier personnel to check itineraries and book Star Alliance Award travel on any member carrier, is extremely popular with customers and employees.

During 2002, over 33.8 million RAS transactions, or messages transmitted through StarNet related to verifying inventory for Star Alliance Award tickets, were recorded across the alliance. Additionally stats reveal that during January and February 2003, 8.2 million transactions were recorded & more than double the amount recorded during the same period last year. The increase also reflects the installation of RAS at Singapore Airlines, Mexicana and bmi.

And the numbers should continue to rise. New alliance member carriers Asiana and Spanair successfully launched RAS on March 1 and LOT Polish Airlines will join later this year.

These numbers reflect the significant value this application has for our customers and our member carrier call centre employees, says Denise Martineau, Director Loyalty, Star Alliance. It makes checking inventories and booking award travel much easier.

Martineau adds carrier feedback has been positive as well.

During our peak award booking season, January to March, the average call length for a partner award booking was 13 minutes. With

the introduction of RAS and the launch of the Star Alliance Awards

programme, our average call length is just over 8 minutes, explains Teri Hartwig, Senior Staff Representative – Reservations Planning, United who says the carrier averages

77,000 daily requests for partner space via StarNet.

Customers can now book and ticket on their first phone call to United if the award space is available versus waiting 72 hours as was the case before. Customer and employee satisfaction has improved since the introduction of RAS.

Star Alliance was established in 1997 as the first truly global airline alliance to offer customers global reach and a smooth travel experience. The members are Air Canada, Air New Zealand, ANA All Nippon Airways, Asiana Airlines, Austrian Airlines Group, bmi, Lufthansa, Mexicana Airlines, SAS, Singapore Airlines, Spanair, Thai Airways International, United, and VARIG Brazilian Airlines. LOT Polish Airlines is scheduled to join the alliance in late 2003.

NEWS RELEASE