

Star Alliance Improves Conventions Plus Offer for Event Organisers

FRANKFURT, May 12, 2004 Star Alliance, the airline network for Earth has enhanced its global convention product, "Conventions Plus", both in terms of geographic reach and fares.

US Airways, the alliance's newest member, has added 88 destinations to the Star Alliance network, bringing the alliance's total global reach to 755 cities in 132 countries. Combined with the network expansion into Eastern Europe, which coincided with the addition of ten new European Union member countries, Star Alliance provides unparalleled options for convention travellers.

Our new network strengths on the eastern US seaboard, in the Caribbean and into Eastern Europe vastly improve accessibility to a whole new range of attractive convention locations, said Horst Findeisen, Vice President Commercial at Star Alliance.

We know for a fact, that many cities in the new EU member countries are interested in attracting convention business. With Star Alliance members operating more than 1750 weekly flights to 21 destinations in the new EU member countries, more than any other airline alliance, we are in a unique position to attract new business.

In addition to the wider geographic scope of Conventions Plus, delegate fare discounts have also become more attractive, with Star Alliance member carriers now offering discounts ranging from ten to 20 percent, depending on the type of fare, class of travel and airline used. Travel can be either in Business or Economy Class, and one companion may also travel on the delegate fare discounts.

Conventions Plus was first launched in 2002 and is aimed at providing simplified travel solutions to convention organisers. The main benefit for the organisers is the fact that they deal only with one airline in order to set up an event, rather than with several airlines. The local Star Alliance member airline becomes the point of contact for the convention organiser. Delegates belonging to any of the Star Alliance airlines frequent flyer programmes will be able to earn miles or points on their tickets.

Moreover, Star Alliance Gold and Star Alliance Silver customers may also avail themselves of their benefits accorded to them by their status when travelling on Conventions Plus fares.

In order to qualify for Conventions Plus benefits, conferences must be truly global events with a minimum number of 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 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, Asiana Airlines, Austrian, bmi, LOT Polish Airlines, Lufthansa, Scandinavian Airlines, Singapore Airlines, Spanair, Thai Airways International, United, US Airways and VARIG Brazilian Airlines.

Note: special conditions apply to Japan and New Zealand.