

A BUSINESS TRAVEL UPDATE FROM - [DAVISVILLE TRAVEL-420 SECOND STREET - DAVIS, CA 95616 - \(800\) 255-4567](#)

## [Airlines](#)

### ***Delta Appears Poised to File for Bankruptcy Protection***

Delta Air Lines appeared poised to file for bankruptcy court protection and early in the week of September 12<sup>th</sup> was working on a \$1.7 billion agreement on financing to keep the carrier flying while it restructures. The filing will not occur until after Delta directors hold a final vote to authorize Chapter 11. The board also must approve debtor-in-possession financing. Discussions were expected to last until toward the end of the week of September 12th. Meanwhile, Delta has announced substantial service cuts at its Cincinnati hub, dropping to 442 flights daily from 599. (Source: *Wall Street Journal*, JoeSentMe.com)

### ***Northwest Airlines Continues Flying***

Northwest Airlines continues to operate its early-fall flight schedule despite the strike by the Aircraft Mechanics Fraternal Organization. The airline posted an update on its Web site saying that it is employing experienced, licensed mechanics who are trained to safely and professionally maintain aircraft according to Federal Aviation Administration standards. Meanwhile, three days of talks between the airline and the union ended Sunday with no new contract and no new talks scheduled.

(Source: Northwest Airlines, Reuters)

### ***Commercial Air Traffic Returns to Katrina-Ravaged Gulf Coast***

*U.S. Transportation Secretary Norman Y. Mineta announced Sept. 8 that there has been some restoration of service to the Gulf Coast's hurricane-ravaged transportation infrastructure. Commercial flights began serving the Gulfport-Biloxi International Airport on September 8th with roundtrip flights from Memphis. In addition, the FAA will begin operating the Lafayette Regional Airport 24 hours per day to accommodate air cargo operations from New Orleans that had been disrupted by Hurricane Katrina.*

*Meanwhile, ripple effects from Katrina continued to roil the travel industry. British Airways and Virgin Atlantic both announced increases to their passenger fuel charges due to rising fuel costs in the wake of the hurricane. Northwest also cited fuel costs in its suspension of New York JFK-Tokyo service effective October 2. (Source: DOT press release, *Business Travel News*).*

### ***American Airlines Introduces "Lie-Flat" Beds in Business***

American Airlines said it plans to add "lie-flat" seats to its business-class cabins, the first United States airline to do so. Though the seats are flat, they aren't horizontal -- they are angled lie-flat, which some passengers complain are uncomfortable because you slide down midslumber. Seats that realistically approximate a bed are a key feature for frequent business travelers, who are willing to pay a premium price for a good sleep in-flight. British Airways has offered a flat and horizontal seat in business class for several years. This month Air New Zealand is to begin offering a flat and horizontal seat in its business class on trans-Pacific flights. American Airlines said it will begin re-fitting the planes in 2006 and will continue into 2007. (Source: *The Wall Street Journal*)

### ***United Increases Larger Regional Aircraft - Ask us at Davisville Travel to book you on United for your next trip!***

Responding to passengers' unhappiness with long flights on 50-seat regional jets, United Airlines is boosting the number of 66- and 70-seat planes in its commuter affiliates' fleets to 100 by next summer -- all with first-class cabins, leather seats and bigger overhead bins. United said its four partners that fly as United Express already operate 74 of the larger regional jets, most of which are configured with first class and the airline's signature Economy Plus -- roomier seating in the front of the coach cabin for elite frequent-fliers. But the UAL Corp. unit is branding this service as "explus" and focusing on upgrading additional flights out of its largest hub, Chicago's O'Hare International Airport. (Source: *The Wall Street Journal*) **CALL Davisville Travel-1 (800) 255-4567**

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## ***Airport WiFi, Kiosks Bring Convenience, But Delays Feed Traveler Discontent***

As the number of air travelers continues to rise, airlines are providing more conveniences to business customers through technology, expanded facilities and special services. A focus on self-service technology, in particular, has resulted in the deployment of thousands of kiosks at airports around the nation, featuring functionalities that seem to be enhanced annually. Carriers also continue to improve airport clubs by adding wireless Internet connectivity and refurbishing facilities, and still offer special services to top corporate accounts and VIPs. A combination of factors, however, has led to mounting traveler frustration at many airports. For starters, delays and deteriorating on-time performance again are plaguing the air traffic control system. After dipping in the few years following the September 2001 terror attacks, passenger enplanements at domestic airports during 2004 totaled just fewer than 700 million and exceeded 2000 levels, according to the Federal Aviation Administration. FAA now forecasts enplanements to rise another 24 percent to 865 million by the end of the decade. (Source: *Business Travel News*)

## **Rail**

### ***More Acela Express Service Returns***

Amtrak upped its Acela Express service once again, adding more roundtrips between New York and Boston and New York and Washington, D.C. That brought the total up 12 weekday roundtrips between Washington and New York and three weekday roundtrips between Boston, New York and Washington. (Source: Amtrak press release).

**Hotels** – Don't forget to ask us when you call and are planning your next business trip or event to check out the American Express Hotel rates! The amenities are fantastic for us, [Davisville Travel](#), an American Express Travel Partner! 1 (800) 255-4567

### ***Hilton Starts Selling In-Room Items***

Last month, for the first time in its 80-year history, Hilton Hotels began making its in-room items available for purchase. The new Hilton to Home(TM) program provides a vehicle for consumers to purchase, via the Internet and printed in-room collateral, plush Hilton guestroom items, including the ultra-comfortable Hilton Suite Dreams(R) mattress and box spring, luxury Hilton Serenity Collection(TM) bedding items, Crabtree & Evelyn La Source(R) bath product line and the exclusive Hilton Family clock radio. (Source: Internet Travel News)



## ***Spotlight on...***

### ***Majority of Business Travelers Resist Charms of WiFi***

*Despite its seeming ubiquity, WiFi is used by just 25 percent of American business travelers, according to a survey of U.S. and U.K. business travelers. And just 17 percent of British travelers use it. Despite WiFi's growing availability both in transit and in airport terminals, a Gartner, Inc., survey found that users are abstaining from use of the technology for educational, cultural and financial reasons rather than technological apprehension. Still, Gartner, a leading provider of research and analysis about the global information technology industry, believes that WiFi could prove to be a critical differentiator in a competitive travel market, because it could be less expensive than other amenities for airlines to introduce.*

*Hotels remain the major WiFi provider in travel. And, even as airlines work to add WiFi, 78 percent of U.S. travelers and 75 percent of U.K. travelers said they welcomed the respite that airline flights offer from 24x7 connectivity. In addition, they said physical comforts such as more personal space, more room for baggage and entertainment were more important than WiFi.*

*The business travelers who do use WiFi said they were happy with connective speeds, ease of use and overall value. But sometimes price was a problem, as well as the limited availability of hot spots in usable locations. Additionally, many companies do not reimburse business travelers for use of these services because they're not included in corporate telecom contracts, according to Gartner.*

*Few travelers were concerned about security and non-users were interested in WiFi. Half of non-users said that they would be interested in sending and receiving e-mail. Sixty-eight percent of U.S. travelers and 57 percent of U.K. travelers would be interested in accessing the Internet for reasons other than work. And many respondents saw WiFi as a way to utilize down time in between flights in order to touch base with the office. (Source: Gartner press release).*

***[Davisville Travel](#) is committed to providing you with useful information on the latest developments in the travel industry. The following information has been compiled from a variety of sources and is updated monthly.***