

Success Story: Southwest Airlines

# Centralized program management improves accountability

## Challenge

At Southwest Airlines, gratitude is a way of life. They foster a unique team culture by linking every recognition and incentive program to their purpose, vision, values, and mission. This encouragement and rewarding the behaviors and performance helped Southwest Airlines become the World's Most Flown, Most Loved, and Most Profitable Airline. However, there was no single destination for employee engagement activities, nor was there a common currency used to recognize employees.

Southwest needed to introduce a common currency for recognition and create a platform where all employee engagement activities, including recognition, could be tracked. In addition, they wanted to ensure consistency among their recognition programs, track expenditures, and have access to real-time reporting on all the things they do to appreciate their people.

**1 Billion**  
SWAG points  
were earned by  
Southwest Employees  
in one year

**95%+**  
of the organization  
has opted-in to  
participate in the  
platform

## Solution

Inspirus customized a platform for Southwest Airlines that allowed them to centralize all recognition and incentive programs into one tool. The program gave teammates the freedom to redeem their SWAG (Southwest Airlines Gratitude) points for meaningful rewards in the SWAG Shop like guest passes, Rapid Rewards Points, dozens of gift cards, thousands of merchandise items, or tickets to concerts and event

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### Results

Since launching the SWAG brand and recognition platform, many levels of the organization have seen positive changes, including:

- More than 95% of all Southwest Airlines employees have opted-in to participate in SWAG
- The number of programs within the tool increased from 15 to 36 in two years
- Opportunities for peer-to-peer recognition expanded dramatically with the introduction of an online tool, accessible 24/7
- Monthly and quarterly dashboards gave internal departmental leaders the ability to monitor participation in recognition programs, hold leaders accountable for promoting a culture of recognition in their locations, and encourage friendly competition among peers
- In one year, Employees at Southwest Airlines earned more than 1 billion SWAG Points, and turned their points into something meaningful to them
- Of the SWAG points deposited to employees, 73% have been redeemed



### About [Southwest Airlines](#)

In its 44th year of service, Dallas-based Southwest Airlines (NYSE: LUV) continues to differentiate itself from other air carriers with exemplary Customer Service delivered by more than 46,000 Employees to more than 100 million Customers annually. Southwest operates more than 3,600 flights a day, serving 94 destinations across the United States and six additional countries. Southwest service to Puerto Vallarta, Mexico, begins in June 2015; and subject to government approvals, service to Belize City, Belize begins in October 2015.

From its first flights on June 18, 1971, Southwest Airlines launched an era of unprecedented affordability in air travel described by the U.S. Department of Transportation as “The Southwest Effect,” a lowering of fares and increase in passenger traffic whenever the carrier enters new markets. With 42 consecutive years of profitability, Southwest is one of the most honored airlines in the world, known for a triple bottom line approach that contributes to the carrier’s performance and productivity, the importance of its People and the communities they serve, and an overall commitment to efficiency and the planet. The 2013 Southwest Airlines One Report™ can be found [here](#).

### About [Inspirus](#)

Employees play a large part in defining a company’s culture — their everyday experiences create the foundational structure that drives an organization to be strong, high-performing, and ultimately successful. Through our technology and integrated solutions, we elevate the employee experience and optimize organizational culture by providing a holistic approach throughout the entire employee journey. We influence the employee experience through our six Quality of Life dimensions: recognition, health and well-being, personal growth, physical environment, social interaction, and ease and efficiency.

Only Inspirus combines an integrated rewards engine, learning courses, communication tools, and analytics into a single platform spanning recognition, service anniversary, well-being, and diversity and inclusion. Inspirus aims to bring joy to work, one experience at a time.