

CFIDarren Newsletter

Iconic Airline Brands That Disappeared

Issue #42

March 27, 2012

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"Instrument flying is an unnatural act probably punishable by God."
 - Gordon Baxter

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Thank you for taking the time to read this safety message

Rarely do I devote such space to a single topic. I started with an idea of the iconic airline brands which have disappeared in my lifetime. Once I started writing and researching, I couldn't stop until it was finished. Yes, it chews up a lot of space in this newsletter, but I know you're gonna love the trivia and airliners.net photos. If I ticked you off with this newsletter, I'll be back to the regular format next time.

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Thanks for your continued support... Darren

Airline Pilot Qualifications Change

The FAA has made progress toward meeting mandated requirements to extend rest time for pilots before duty and establish new procedures to minimize safety risks. The goal: One consistent level of safety across the entire airline industry - from regional jets to large mainline carriers to air cargo operations.

But the FAA has not met deadlines for raising pilot training standards, increasing minimum pilot qualifications, implementing pilot mentoring programs to raise the proficiency of less-experienced pilots and improving the leadership skills of airline captains. Currently, airline captains must have the ATP certificate, but first officers only need a commercial pilot's license and as little as 250 hours to be hired by some commuter airlines.

Airlines have challenged the change, delaying the process, FAA officials said. The FAA estimated the airline transport

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FBI officials said the FBI estimated the airline transport certificate requirement will cost more than \$87 million annually, with the brunt of the expense to be covered by regional airlines and other small carriers. The last six fatal commercial airline accidents involved regional airlines, which account for about 53 percent of the nation's commercial flights. It's clearly in our best interest to have one level of safety -- the highest possible, economically viable level.

To read more, See: [Airline safety standards still inconsistent](#)

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Safety Factoid

Studies have shown a strong link between errors in decision making and the severity of accidents: simple problems with skills can produce minor injuries and damage, while faulty decision making often results in accidents with serious injuries and fatalities.

Iconic Airlines That Disappeared

Based on the CNBC news item about iconic brands, I decided I'd put together a countdown of iconic airlines which disappeared. Here are the top seven icons of the airline industry:

Number 7 - PEOPLEExpress

This airline mostly flew 727s, 737s, & 747s -- it was the first airline that ran a cattle call to unassigned seats, and charged you for a ticket once you were already airborne. The flight attendant would collect your BankAmericard, MasterCard, or Diners Club and run it across the Charge-A-Plate. "Do you want the carbons sir?" Ultimately Continental Airlines gobbled them up in 1987.

Practical advice for using the NASA form when you've violated the FARs



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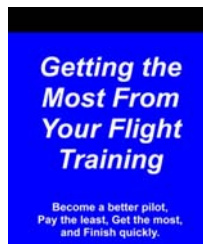
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Number 6 - ValuJet

They weren't the largest airline, but they certainly had moxie. They started out with an old Delta DC-9 to run a classic Delta city pair (ATL-TPA) on which Delta had an hourly L1011. They went head to head and didn't look back. After flight 592, ValuJet sold off to AirTran (a smaller regional at the time) and finally was purchased by Southwest Airlines.



Number 5 - Northwest Airlines

NWA holds a special place in my heart -- not because of the rap group with the same initials -- but because its my former alma mater. NWA had an 80+ year history only to be gobbled up by Delta Airlines who advertised the merger as creating the largest airline in the world. NWA had many firsts such as the first carrier to Asia, launch customer of the 747 and 787, not to mention being the largest operator of A330s. Oh we miss you NWA...



Darren Smith, ATP, CFII, MEI

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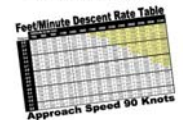
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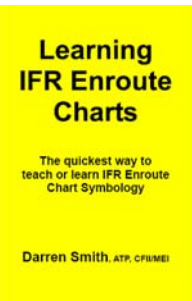
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Number 4 - Braniff Airlines

This airline flew quite a number of different types including 727s, 737s, A320s, and BAC111. There's one aircraft I bet you didn't know they flew... the Concorde. Yup, they ran a daily flight from DC-DFW when fuel was very cheap. They would lease the Concorde from BA and Air France and fly the domestic route with Braniff crews at Mach 0.95 max. This particular flight often flew with as few as 15 passengers. The Simpsons and Southpark have both paid homage to Braniff.



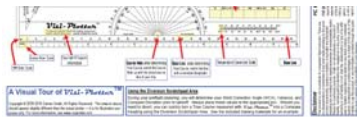
Number 3 - TWA

TWA, founded in 1925 under a different moniker, was a head-to-head competitor with another airline on this list, #1 Pan Am. They created fierce competition with Pan Am's Worldport at JFK with the TWA Flight Center. They were the unofficial #2 flag carrier for the United States and had an extensive route network in the US, Europe, and Middle East. Eventually TWA was gobbled up by American Airlines in early 2001.



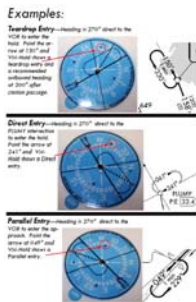
Number 2 - Continental Airlines

Continental Airlines disappeared last year and so did its motto, "Work Hard. Fly Right". In doing so, United Airlines topped Delta by creating an even bigger airline. Delta's



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tuned quickly changed, "At Delta, we're not trying to create the biggest airline, only the best airline." CAL rates a high mention in the list due to the pioneering human factors program which recognized pilots make mistakes. They were the first airline with a no-penalty go-around policy. The name is gone, but I hope the human factors efforts at CAL have a long life at UAL.



Number 1 - Pan American Airlines

Pan Am was the largest airline until it's collapse in 1991. Founded in 1927, it had a long and storied history and was the epitome of new world Americana. They tried unsuccessfully to buy Northwest and the joke was on them as Delta gobbled up the shattered Pan Am in 1991.



Well, there's the top 7 iconic airline brands that have disappeared. What do you think? Did I get it right? Discuss on Facebook, or hit reply and let me know what you think.

