Mission Statements of International Airlines: A Content Analysis

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Abstract:

A well-designed mission statement is essential for formulating, implementing and evaluating business strategy. Yet the role of the mission statement in the strategic management of business firms has not been sufficiently highlighted in the research literature. It is not surprising that minimal attention has been paid to the role of mission statements in the strategic management of tourism and hospitality organisations. This paper attempts to remedy this apparent neglect. This paper focuses on the international airline industry by selecting fifty (50) mission statements from corporate website. The mission statements are then analysed to determine the extent to which they conform to commonly accepted views of the 'ideal' mission statement. Variations from the stated "ideal' are highlighted and discussed. Conclusions are drawn regarding the role of mission statements in the strategic management of tourism and hospitality organisations.

Key words: mission statement, strategy, airlines

Introduction

Although not a guarantee for success, strategic management allows organisations to make effective long term decisions, to execute those decisions efficiently and to take concrete actions as needed to ensure success (Thompson and Strickland 1999). The importance of mission statements to the effective strategic management of business organisations is well documented in the literature. A mission statement is a general expression of the overriding purpose of an organisation that, ideally, is in line with the values and expectations of major stakeholders. Mission statements are often regarded as 'enduring statements of purpose that distinguish one business firm from others'. Some theorists regard the organisation's mission as a 'cultural glue' which enables it to function as a collective unit. This 'cultural glue' consists of strong norms and values that influence the way in which people behave, how they work together and how they pursue the goals of the organisation. (Campbell and Yeung 1991:11). A well-designed mission statement is essential for formulating, implementing and evaluating business strategy (David 2001).

The role of the mission statement in the strategic management of business firms has not been sufficiently highlighted in the research literature. As Campbell and Yeung (1991) note, regarding the mission statement "--- there is little research into its nature and importance" (1991:10). Since this refers to the management literature generally, it is not surprising that minimal attention has been paid to the role of mission statements in the strategic management of tourism and hospitality organisations. A major objective of this paper is to remedy this apparent neglect.

Specifically, this paper will address the following issues: first, it will discuss the nature of mission statements and the purposes for which they are used; second, the paper will discuss the major components of a clear and comprehensive mission statement. Following a discussion of generally accepted criteria of an 'appropriate' mission statement, the paper will identify nine specific components of the 'ideal' mission statement. It is the authors' view that, these specific components should be included in the content of mission statements developed by tourism and hospitality organisations; third, the paper will identify fifty (50) actual mission statements of firms in an important sector of the tourism industry-the international airline industry. It will then analyse these selected mission statements to determine the extent to which they conform to commonly accepted views of the 'ideal' mission statement. Those airline mission statements that vary from the stated "ideal' will be highlighted and discussed.

Finally, the paper will discuss the implications of the analysis for further research into the role of mission statements in the strategic management of tourism and hospitality organisations.

The Mission Statement

A mission statement broadly charts the future direction of an organisation. It is the most generalised statement of organisational purposes and can be thought of as an expression of its raison d'être. A good mission statement describes an organisation's purpose, products and services, markets, philosophy and basic technology. Development of an organisational mission is an essential part of strategic planning and strategic management (David 2001). An organisation without a shared vision of what it wants to be is like a traveller without a destination (Ackoff 1987). Without it the organisation has no way of determining whether it is making progress. A mission statement establishes the values, beliefs and guidelines for

the way the organisation conducts its business and determines its relationships with its stakeholders - employees, customers, shareholders, suppliers, government and the community (Ackoff 1987). A sense of mission is important because it generates trust and belief in the activities of the organisation. It gives meaning to work, motivates people and fosters consensus activities conducive to the achievement organisational goals. A mission statement provides a unifying force, a sense of direction and a guide to decision making for all levels of management. As Pearce has stated,

> ‘[the mission statement] provides managers with a unity of direction that transcends individual, parochial, and transitory needs. It promotes a sense of shared expectations among all levels and generations of employees. It consolidates values over time and across individuals and interest groups. It projects a sense of worth and intent that can be identified and assimilated by company outsiders. Finally, it affirms the company’s commitment to responsible action, which is symbiotic with its need to preserve and protect the essential claims of insiders for sustained survival, growth and profitability of the firm” (Pearce 1982:74)

A clear mission statement is important to sound strategic management of an organisation for several reasons.

First, a clear mission statement is needed before alternative strategies can be formulated, implemented and evaluated. Only a clear definition of the mission and purpose of an organisation makes it possible formulate realistic business objectives (Drucker 1974), providing useful criteria for choosing between strategies.

Second, a clear mission statement can provide a basis or standard for allocating organisational resources, providing managers with a common direction that should transcend individual, departmental and transitory needs. It can facilitate the translation of objectives into a work structure involving the assignment of tasks to responsible elements within the organisation. It can help to translate organisational purposes into objectives in such a way that cost, time, and performance parameters can be assembled and controlled. This can influence the 'bottom line'. A study by Pearce and David (1987) compared the mission statements of Fortune 500 firms performing well and performing poorly. They concluded that high performers have more comprehensive mission statements than low performers, thereby identifying a link between a clearly identified organisation mission and organisation performance.

Third, a clear mission statement describes the values and priorities of an organisation. A clear mission statement can help to establish a general tone or organisational climate which can serve as a focal point for individuals to identify with the organisation's purpose and direction and to indicate standards of behaviour expected from them (Klemme, Sanderson and Luffman 1991:77). Therefore, the mission statement can help to foster unanimity of purpose within an organisation. The extent to which it does so depends on its ability to excite, inspire, and motivate those who are expected to participate in its pursuit.

Fourth, the mission statement can be an effective vehicle for communicating with important internal and external stakeholders. Stakeholders are groups, both inside and outside the organisation, with an interest in its fortunes. They are those individuals or groups who depend on the organisation to fulfil their own goals and on whom, in turn, the organisation depends. They include such external groups as customers, suppliers, shareholders, investors, government agencies and the general public (David 2001). Internal stakeholder groups include employees as individuals and as members of various professional bodies, departments, business units, and divisions etc. A mission statement needs to be specific enough to instil purpose in – but broad enough to effectively reconcile differences among the organisation’s diverse stakeholders. A clear mission statement that indicates the relative attention that an organisation will devote to meeting the claims of various stakeholders may help to overcome rivalry among a firm’s different stakeholders.

The Components of a Mission Statement

There are various views regarding the appropriate content of a business mission statement. There is widespread agreement, however, that the mission statement is more a declaration of attitude and outlook than a statement of specific details. Two reasons underlie this view. Firstly, a 'good' mission statement must allow for the firm to formulate, analyse and implement a range of feasible alternative strategies without unduly stifling management creativity. An excessively narrow mission statement could restrict creative decision making on the part of the firm’s management and employees. Secondly, a mission statement needs to be broad enough to effectively reconcile differences among an organisation's diverse stakeholders. Campbell and Yeung (1991) regard the organisational mission as consisting of four components -purpose, strategy, behaviour, values. They claim that managers will find it easier to generate commitment and enthusiasm among employees if they choose

organisational purposes reflecting higher level values. Purposes expressed in terms of stakeholders tend to emphasise their different and often self-serving interests or at least dampen their legitimacy. This makes it easier to bind the organisation together (the 'cultural glue' referred to above).

Based on a study of the mission statements of 75 manufacturing and service firms, and the research literature relating to mission statements, Pearce and David (1987) and David (1989), claim that an effective mission statement exhibits nine characteristics or components. Pearce and David claim that the following nine components serve as a practical framework for evaluating and writing mission statements:

Customers: Who are the organisation's customers?

Products/services: What are the organisation's major products or services?

Location/markets: Where does the organisation compete?

Technology: Is technology a primary concern of the organisation?

Concern for survival, growth and profitability: Is the organisation committed to economic objectives?

Philosophy: What are the basic beliefs, values, aspirations, and philosophical priorities of the firm?

Self-concept: What is the organisation's distinctive competence or major competitive advantage?

Concern for public image: Is the organisation responsive to social, community, and environmental concerns?

Concern for employees: Are employees considered to be a valuable asset of the organisation? (Pearce and David 1987).

It is useful to explore the extent to which the mission statements of firms in the tourism industry have mission statements characterised by these elements. In the section to follow, the mission statements of 50 international airlines are displayed and examined for their content.

The Content of Mission Statements of Selected International Airlines

The authors, using Pearce and David's nine components of a comprehensive mission statement, undertook a Content Analysis of the mission statements of 50 international airlines. The mission statements are set out in the Appendix. An evaluation matrix of the mission statements of the selected airlines appears as Table 1. The mission statements, all of which were accessed from the world wide web, were then compared to determine the extent to which these airlines conformed to the commonly accepted view of the appropriate type of content of a mission statement.

Each of the authors independently recorded whether or not each airline mission statement included each of the nine components identified by Pearce and David (1989): concern for customers, products or services, location, technology, concern for survival, philosophy, self-concept, concern for public image, and concern for employees. A "YES" was assigned to the statement for each component if it was judged as being present and a "NO" assigned if it was judge that the component was not present in the mission statement being examined.

The two authors of this study then met firstly, to compare their rating of each component of the airline mission statements and secondly, to discuss any mission statements where there was any doubt about the rating of the presence of each of nine components. There was a significant level of agreement between each of the researcher's independent ratings of the mission statements.

Table 1. Content of Mission Statements of 50 International Airlines[1]

Company	Customers	Products/ Services	Location/ Market	Technology	Concern for Survival, Growth & Profitability	Philosophy	Self-Concept	Concern for Public Image	Concern for Employees	Number of Elements
Aerolineas Argentinas	Y	N	Y	N	N	Y	N	Y	N	4
Air Aruba	Y	N	N	N	N	Y	Y	N	N	3
Air Canada	N	N	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	5
Air Jamaica	N	N	Y	N	N	Y	Y	N	N	3
Air Lanka	N	N	N	N	N	Y	Y	Y	N	3
Air Malta	N	N	N	N	N	N	Y	N	N	1
Air New Zealand	N	Y	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	N	N	5
Air UK	Y	N	N	N	Y	N	Y	N	N	3
Alaska Airlines	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	7
Alitalia	Y	N	Y	N	N	Y	Y	N	N	4
All Nippon Air	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	N	N	6
America West	Y	N	N	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	6
American Airlines	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	7
Ansett Australia	N	N	N	N	Y	Y	N	N	Y	3
Asiana Airlines	Y	N	N	N	N	Y	Y	N	Y	4
Austrian Airlines	Y	N	N	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	6
Bangkok Airways	Y	Y	N	N	N	Y	Y	N	N	4
Britannia Airways	Y	N	N	N	N	Y	Y	N	N	3
British Airways	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	7
Cathay Pacific	N	N	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	6
China Airlines	Y	N	N	N	Y	Y	N	Y	Y	5
Delta Air	Y	N	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	6
Easyjet	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	7
Iberia	Y	N	Y	N	N	Y	Y	N	N	4
KLM Royal Dutch Airlines	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	N	N	6
Korean Air	N	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	N	5
Kuwait Airlines	Y	Y	N	Y	N	Y	Y	N	N	5
Lan Chile	Y	N	N	N	N	Y	Y	N	N	3
Lauda Air	N	N	N	N	N	Y	Y	N	N	2
Malaysia Airlines	Y	N	Y	N	N	N	Y	N	N	3
Malev Hungarian Airlines	Y	N	N	N	N	Y	Y	Y	N	4
Middle East Airlines	Y	N	N	N	N	Y	Y	N	N	3
Qantas	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	N	N	6
Qatar Airlines	N	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	N	6
Royal Air Maroc	Y	N	N	N	N	N	Y	N	N	2
Royal Jordanian	N	Y	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	6
Saudi Arabian Airlines	Y	N	N	N	N	Y	Y	N	N	3
Scandinavian Airlines System	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	N	N	N	N	4
Singapore Airlines	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	Y	N	N	N	5
Skywest	Y	Y	N	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	6
South African Airways	N	N	N	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	5
Swissair	Y	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	1
TAROM Romanian	Y	N	N	N	N	Y	Y	N	N	3
Trans World Airways	Y	N	N	N	N	Y	Y	N	Y	4
Turkish Airlines	N	N	N	N	N	N	Y	N	N	1
Ukraine International	N	N	Y	N	N	N	Y	N	N	2
US Airways	Y	Y	N	N	N	N	Y	N	N	3
Varig	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	N	6
Virgin Atlantic	Y	N	N	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	N	5
World Airways	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	N	N	6

[1] a Yes (Y) indicates that the mission statement includes reference to the component. A No (N) indicates that the mission statement does not refer to the component.

Table 2 provides information on the number of mission statements in which each of the nine components appears.

Table 2 Number of Mission Statements that include each component

Component	Number	Percentage
Customers	36	72%
Products/Services	16	32%
Location/Market	21	42%
Technology	11	22%
Concern for Survival	24	48%
Philosophy	40	80%
Self Concept	44	88%
Concern for Public Image	15	30%
Concern for Employees	11	22%

Table 2 indicates that the three components most prevalent in the airline mission statements are Self-Concept (88%), Philosophy (80%) and Customers (72%). Interestingly, these were the only components that featured in more than half of the mission statements. The components least prevalent in the mission statements were Technology (22%), Concern for Employees (22%) and Concern for Public Image (30%). The relatively small proportion of mission statements containing these components is noteworthy as they are key elements in competitiveness and communicating them to internal and external stakeholders would be expected to enhance a firm's recognition in its industry.

We can also determine which airline mission statements contain more of the key components than others do. This information appears in Table 3.

Table 3. Number of Components included in Mission Statements

Number of Components in Mission Statement	Name of Airline
9	None **(0)**
8	None **(0)**
7	British Airways, Alaska Airlines, Easyjet, American Airlines. **(4)**
6	Delta Air, Qantas, KLM Royal Dutch Airlines, All Nippon Air, America West, Austrian Airlines, Cathay Pacific, Varig, Qatar Airlines, Royal Jordanian, Skywest, World Airways. **(12)**
5	Korean Air, Singapore Airlines, Air New Zealand, South African Airlines, Air Canada, China Airlines, Kuwait Airlines, Virgin Atlantic. **(8)**
4	Scandinavian Airlines System, Aerolineas Argentinas, Alitalia, Asiana Airlines, Bangkok Airways, Iberia, Malev Hungarian Airlines, Middle East Airlines, Trans World Airways. **(9)**
3	Ansett Australia, Air Aruba, Air Jamaica, Air Lanka, Air UK, Britannia Airways, Lan Chile, Malaysia Airlines, Middle East Airlines, Saudi Arabian Airlines, TAROM Romanian, US Airways. **(12)**
2	Royal Air Maroc, Lauda Air, Ukraine International, **(3)**
1	Air Malta, Swissair, Turkish Airlines, **(3)**

Does it matter whether or not a mission statement excludes some or other of the nine major components of a mission statement? In our view the answer is: Yes. The more comprehensive the mission statement the better its potential to serve the various purposes of a mission statement in an organisation's efforts to achieve and maintain competitive advantage. To justify our view we will discuss the importance of each component in turn, providing examples from the mission statements set out in the Appendix.

Customers:

The strategic management literature indicates that a concern for customers is crucial to strategy formulation, implementation and evaluation. A firm's marketing strategy involves defining, anticipating, creating, and fulfilling customer needs and wants for products and services. The information generated by customer analysis can be essential in developing an effective mission statement. Indeed, a major reason for developing a business mission is to attract customers who give meaning to an organisation (David 2001).

We found that 36 out of 50 mission statements of the selected international airlines included an explicit concern for customers in the statement. Some examples are:

' our strengths are…our focus on customer service' (Qantas)
'…while continuing to provide our customers with superior services' (Ansett)
'…providing professional services for passengers and shippers' (KLM)
'Aerolineas will continue to be the main link of Argentine business people and tourists with their foreign peers" (Aerolineas Argentinas)
'customer services aims to be with you whenever you're in need during your journey' (Bangkok Airways)
'passengers special attention and care remain the foundation of our service excellence' (Middle East Airlines)

The airlines differed in their mention of customers. Most simply referred to customers, travellers or passengers in general. A few airlines such as Easyjet, mentioned specific niche markets for example, business and leisure travel. Only a small minority including World Airways mentioned the cargo market, despite its potentially significant contribution to airline revenues and profits.

Careful thought needs to be given to the way in which an organisation positions its products in markets, which inevitably means selectivity of market coverage. Issues involve: customer

needs, or what is being satisfied; customer groups, or who is being satisfied; the technologies used and functions performed, or how customer needs are satisfied. The mission statement should reflect attention to such issues.

A 'good' mission statement identifies the *utility* of the firm's products to its customers. Britannia Airways offers customers 'greater choice and flexibility', while Lan Chile Airlines offers 'hospitality, quality and comfort'. The fact that some airline mission statements ignore customers is difficult to understand. An organisation needs to know who their customer is and what their customers value. Knowledge of who comprises a firm's customers is essential to the development of market strategies. As Drucker points out 'It is the customer who determines what a business is…what the customer thinks he/she is buying, what he/she considers value, is decisive…the customer is the foundation of a business and keeps it in existence' (1974: 61).

Products/Services:

The types of products that a firm produces distinguish it from competitors. A clear idea of the organisation's products and services is crucial to strategy formulation, implementation and evaluation. As the needs of customers change, firms need to introduce new product lines.

Perhaps surprisingly, only 16 out of 50 mission statements of the selected international airlines included explicit mention of type of products and services. Some examples are:

'a wide choice of airline based travel products that will be preferred in the market' (SAS)
'…is engaged in air transportation and related businesses' (Singapore)
' to be the best and most successful company in the airline business' (British)
'…one of the world's leading airlines' (Qantas)
'full service and cargo business' (World Airways)
'to perform in today's competitive market of worldwide commercial aviation' (Varig)
'we can offer you new destinations, more frequent flights, better connections and smoother, quicker transfers' (Air UK)

In the study undertaken by Pearce and David (1987), a mission statement received a "Yes" in the category Products/ Services if it contained a description of the types of products and

services produced by the firm. It seems fair to say, however, that the majority of international airlines took it for granted that the reader of their mission statement would know that they were in the aviation business. However, this assumption seems to have been responsible for the production of mission statements that are less informative than they otherwise might have been. For example, all of the airlines carry freight and yet very few mention this in their mission statement.

In the longer term product development is unlikely to be sustainable without the development or acquisition of new competencies. This gives added importance to the component Self-Concept to be discussed below.

Location:

The strategic management literature indicates that a clear idea of location of the markets for the organisation's products and services is crucial to effective strategy formulation in particular. However, only 21 out of 50 mission statements of our selected international airlines included explicit mention of the location of the firm's services. Some examples are:

'…is positioned as an airline operating world wide from a European base' (KLM)
'…lead the world in airline travel to and within the South Pacific' (Air New Zealand)
'…to serve the Scandinavian market profitably' (SAS)
'…operates worldwide as a flag carrier of the republic of Singapore' (Singapore)
' absolutely committed to being the best airline in the Caribbean' (Air Jamaica)
' Ukraine Airlines is now recognised as one of the most reliable airlines in Europe' (Ukraine Airlines)
' our vision is to be the premier airline in the Arabian Gulf' (Qatar Airlines)

Some airlines mentioned their home destination in their mission statement. For example, Swissair will "utilise the quality location afforded by Switzerland", and Air Jamaica is "absolutely committed to being the best airline in the Caribbean". Many other airline mission statements in the study gave no indication of the geographical scope of their networks. That is to say, they gave no indication of where their product is distributed and sold.

The diversity of a firm's operations gives us a clue as to the types of international cultures that the firm must deal with. The scope of an airline's operations provides important information as to its size and market power.

Technology:

Technological advancements can have a significant affect on organisations' products, services, markets, suppliers, distributors, competitors, customers, marketing practices and competitive position. Technological change is revolutionising business operations such that technology represents major opportunities and threats that must be considered in the formulating of business strategies. Companies in virtually every industry are relying on the development of new products and services to fuel profitability and growth. With new technology and communications, operational costs are reduced and flexibility, interactivity, efficiency, productivity, and competitiveness are enhanced.

Only 11 out of 50 mission statements of our selected international airlines mention technology or its cognate, innovation. Examples include:

'…to be a safe and reliable airline with a leading edge product' (Air Canada)
'equipping our fleet with the best aircraft and fitting them with the best configurations and standards of comfort' (Qatar Airlines)
'our fleet and communications network are products of the very latest in sophisticated technology' (Kuwait Airlines)
' to add the warmth of the Brazilian people to the best in current technology' (Varig)
' reputation for quality and innovative product development' (Virgin Atlantic)
' pioneering technologies that improve on time performance and expand safety margins' (Alaska Airlines)

It is puzzling why technology is omitted in the majority of our international airline mission statements. Today, technology management is today one of the key responsibilities of strategists. They need to 'assess the relative importance of these factors to overall corporate strategy'. Technological advancements can create new markets, result in a proliferation of improved products, change the relative competitive cost positions in an industry and render existing products and services obsolete. Technological changes can reduce or eliminate cost barriers between businesses and result in changing values and expectations of managers, employees and customers. Information technology (IT) is changing the very nature of opportunities and threats to organisations by altering the life cycles of products, increasing the speed of distribution, and creating new products and services. Delta Airlines for example, specifically mentions its e-commerce initiatives. Firms that use Computerised Intelligence Systems (CIS) to gather, assimilate and evaluate external and internal information effectively gain competitive advantages over other firms.

As the needs of customers change over time, firms need to introduce new product lines and airlines are not insulated from this. Moreover, advances in technology can make it possible to produce new and/or better products at lower cost. Product innovation can broaden an industry's customer base, rejuvenate industry growth and widen the degree of product differentiation among rival sellers. In the long term however, product development is unlikely to be sustainable without the development or acquisition of new competencies.

Concern for Survival:

Profits or its cognates were explicitly mentioned in 24 out of 50 mission statements of the selected international airlines. Principal business aims may include profits, market growth, a target rate of return, etc. These different financial objectives may receive different emphasis by the firm at any given time and may also change according to whether the firm is implementing strategies to achieve short term or long term growth, but the mission statement should generally reflect a concern to meet the criteria for sound business performance. Some examples are:

' to ensure profitability for our shareholders' (Qantas)
' to deliver strong and sustained profitability' (Ansett)
' to be a financial success for shareholders' (Air Canada)
'we are dedicated to achieving sustained profitability for the benefit of our shareholders' (Austrian Airlines)
'perform at increasing levels of productivity and efficiency that will generate rates of profitability to sustain its growth' (Royal Jordanian)
'developing superior financial returns' (Cathay Pacific)
' supporting shareholder value through increased profitability of the ANA Group.' (All Nippon Air)

Interestingly, 52% of the airlines make no mention of economic objectives in their mission statement. Only a small minority including China Airlines acknowledge the need to meet stockholder interests, who, of course, might be very interested to know that the company intends to conduct its operations prudently. Indeed, even for those national carriers owned by governments, there is a need to be mindful of responsibilities to taxpayers.

Philosophy:

Some believe that the basic philosophy, spirit and desire of an organisation have far more to do with its relative achievements than do technological or economic resources. A strong

corporate culture founded on ethical business principles and moral values is a vital driving force behind continued strategic success (Gellerman 1989).

40 out of 50 mission statements of the selected international airlines included a philosophy of operations. Some examples are:

‘our unique Pacific style’ (Air New Zealand)
‘our commitment is to maintain the highest level of pride in our people’ (Air Canada)
‘the Italian style of service’ (Alitalia)
‘our own philosophy has always been to look forward and to strive for excellence’ (Air Lanka)
‘Korean Air’s fundamental philosophy is –‘to become the world’s leading airline and possess the highest standards of service and safety’ (Korean Air)

A clear statement of organisational values is crucial to strategy formulation, implementation and evaluation (Kemp and Dwyer 2000; Dwyer, Teal, Kemp 1999; Dwyer, Teal, Kemp and Yue Wah 2000). The philosophy of an organisation comprises the values are the beliefs and ethical principles that lie behind the company's culture. They may also relate to employees, customers, suppliers, the public government, shareholders etc (Byars and Neil 1987). Corporate culture, in turn, refers to a company’s values, beliefs, traditions, operating style, and internal work environment. A company’s culture is a product of internal social forces; it represents an interdependent set of values and behavioural norms that prevail across the organisation. An organisation’s culture emerges from why and how it does things the way it does, the values and beliefs that senior managers espouse, the ethical standards expected of all, the tone and philosophy underlying key policies and the traditions the organisation maintains.

To capture the emotional energy of an organisation, the mission needs to provide some philosophical and moral rationale for behaviour to run alongside the commercial rationale. As Bridges (1998) sees it,

> " A mission statement must fit the culture of an organisation. The statement goes to the heart of why an organisation exists and why it is in business. It must appeal to all stakeholders and, as such, it should be self-explanatory. But if the culture of an organisation is missing, then the statement becomes nothing more than a statement of purpose. That on its own cannot inspire performance and it cannot be easily converted into action. Culture gives it the power to enhance performance; culture

> gives the purpose a context so that people understand what is expected of them" (1998:40).

A mission statement that is supported by a value-driven culture becomes a touchstone for organisational behaviour and decision making. The mission statement drives the organisation and the values-driven culture ensures that employees have a role in supporting and shaping the values of the organisation. The organisation's mission then becomes possible. It should be noted, however, that values in mission statements may be at best only partially accurate and at worst misleading descriptions of the real organisational culture (Argyris and Schon 1978). The real culture is evidenced by the way the organisation actually operates.

The espoused values and beliefs, of the airline mission statements include, for example, belief in the importance of people as individuals (Air Aruba) and or belief in the importance of striving for values such as excellence (Air Lanka) or safety and personal service (South African Airways). Some mission statements emphasise all-encompassing religious values (Saudi Airlines), but few of the selected mission statements of airlines have chosen organisational purposes reflecting higher level values as recommended by Campbell and Yeung (1991).

The emerging view of social responsibility holds that social issues should be addressed both directly and indirectly in determining strategies. An increasing number of organisations are attempting to make social responsibility a part of their overall strategic management (Carroll and Hoy 1984). For example, Air Canada emphasises its role as an 'ambassador for Canada'. The fact that social responsibility to the community may conflict with responsibility to shareholders raises the issue of the extent to which firm goals should go beyond the minimum obligation to corporate governance.

Self Concept:

We found that 44 out of 50 mission statements of the selected international airlines included an indication of self-concept, that is the organisation's view of its particular strengths. This component was the most prevalent of the nine mission statement components appearing in the selected mission statements. Some examples are:

> 'our strengths are strong brand…customer service and our international reputation for technical expertise and safety' (Qantas)

‘ a dynamic and efficient airline’ (South African)
‘People ask how an obscure little airline in America’s hinterland has continued to survive and thrive while once proud giants disappeared. Grit and determination will be part of the answer’ (Alaska Airlines)
‘reliability and punctuality are key to our success’ (Ukraine International)
‘unsurpassed combination of services and on-time reliability’ (Air Jamaica)

Core competencies relate to any strategically relevant factor: greater proficiency in product development, faster response to changing customer requirements, superior performance in minimising costs or strong marketing and merchandising skills. For example, Qantas emphasises its safety record, Alitalia its ‘Italian style of service’, Aerolineas its Spanish language expertise, Malaysian Airlines its hospitality and Air Canada its ‘technical excellence’.

One of management's most important strategy implementation tasks is to guide the building of core competencies. The mission statement provides an opportunity for the company to identify its key competencies or competitive advantages that it currently possesses or plans to create.

Concern for Public Image:

The strategic management literature indicates that a clear understanding of the organisation’s social responsibilities to its various stakeholders is crucial to strategy formulation, implementation and evaluation, including development of the mission statement and that a mission statement can be a declaration of social policy (Carroll and Hoy 1984).

Although all strategy formulation, implementation and evaluation decisions have ethical ramifications for organisational stakeholders, only 15 out of 50 of our selected mission statements included an appreciation of their social responsibility or concern for public image.

Some examples are:

‘contributing to the wider community’ (South African)
‘ as a great ambassador for Canada’ (Air Canada)
‘build goodwill towards the company’ (America West)
‘seeking the trust from the community’ (China Airlines)

‘we are strongly committed to sound environmental practices and to the development of environmentally compatible aviation’ (Austrian Airlines)

A firm's ethical duties to the community at large and to environmental sustainability stem from its status as a citizen of the community and as an institution of society. Increasing numbers of firms believe that ethics training and an ethical culture creates strategic advantage. However, corporate social responsibility concerns the extent to which the organisation should move beyond the minimum obligation provided under the provisions of corporate governance and how the conflicting demands of different stakeholders can be reconciled (Johnson and Scholes 1997: 207). These demands relate to a variety of issues such as product safety, environmental awareness, fair trading, and honesty in advertising etc.

A key strategic issue within organisations is the ethical stance that is taken regarding the extent to which the organisation should exceed these minimum obligations in relation to any specific stakeholder group. Johnson and Scholes (1997) list four views:

> One view is that some organisations would claim that the only organisational responsibility of business is the short run interests of shareholders. A second view is recognition that the long run benefit to the shareholder is associated with well-managed relationships with other stakeholders. The third view is that stakeholder interests and expectations should be more explicitly incorporated in the organisations purposes and strategies and that this will often go beyond the minimum obligation of corporate governance. A fourth view represents the ideological end of the spectrum. The firms purposes are seen as crucially associated with shaping society. (Johnson and Scholes 1997: 209, 211)

The debate between management theorists appears to be centred upon the relative merits of the third and fourth views. The 'minimalist' positions as represented in the first and second views have little support. To take just one example, there is widespread agreement that managing environmental affairs can no longer be an incidental or secondary function of company operations. However, whatever ethical stance the organisation takes, it should become an integral element of corporate strategy, and hence should be explicitly mentioned in the mission statement. Strategically, such a step helps a company to decide what kind of company it aspires to be, which is an important element in defining its organisational purposes. (Johnson and Scholes 1997).

Many of the selected airlines have developed clear codes of business ethics but only a small proportion have made mention of this in their mission statements, despite the fact that there is likely to be a strong relationship between the ethical stance and the character of the company. As noted above, the ethical stance adopted by an organisation also helps to organisation determine how it will try to reach its goals and how it will relate to its various stakeholders.

Concern for Employees:

Only 11 out of 50 mission statements of the selected international airlines included a statement of concern for employees. Some examples are:

'we are working in partnership with our staff to achieve our business goals' (Ansett)
' is committed to…caring for its employees' (South African)
' to maintain the highest level of pride in our people' (Air Canada)
' bring all employees into the decision making process-trust people and their ability to contribute to the mission' (Asiana Airlines)
'providing rewarding career opportunities' (Cathay Pacific)

An organisation's human resources comprise its most valuable assets. An understanding of and concern for these assets is crucial for strategy formulation, implementation and evaluation.

A number of the mission statements refer to the high standards of expected behaviour of their employees but there are no mission statements that mention any concern for the welfare of these employees. The mission statement of Aruba Airlines emphasises 'A committed staff with a reputation for excellence' and Austrian Airlines refers to its 'highly motivated and well trained staff'. However, faith in the ability of staff to deliver quality service to customers is not equivalent to expressing a *concern* for employees.

Concern for employees is crucial to the attempt to develop a strategy supporting culture. A well-designed strategic management system can fail if insufficient attention is given to Human Resource *Development* as well as Human Resource *Management*

Issues for Further Research

Further research is needed on the impact of the mission statement on persons working within particular airlines. The questions that require further investigation include: What extent are employees (whatever the level) aware of the mission statement? Does awareness of the organisation's mission statement and its content occur at all organisational levels or is awareness concentrated at particular levels in the organisation? How effective is the mission statement and its supporting organisation culture in achieving the stated goals of the organisation? Does an organisation culture exist that reinforces the content and spirit of the mission statement? Do mission statements generate trust and belief in the activities of the organizations? Do mission statements in fact provide organisation members with a common direction, transcending individual, departmental and transitory needs? Do mission statements in fact give 'meaning' to work? Do mission statements provide a basis for allocating organisational resources? Do they in fact help to overcome rivalry among different stakeholder groups inside and outside the organisations? Whose purposes does the organisation mission statement actually serve in practice? An exploration of these questions would provide an indication of whether the organisation's mission statement and its associated culture was "in use" or "for public consumption".

To answer such questions an in-depth study using a case study methodology needs to be conducted of specific airlines. It is anticipated that such case studies are likely to indicate that the mission statement presents a paradox. People in organisations can find themselves pulled in two contradictory directions: one force pulls them towards conformity and consensus and the other pulls them toward retaining their individuality and creative spirit. The first force leads people to develop a common set of beliefs, a paradigm or mission for their organisation. However, strongly held beliefs in the mission can lead people to resist change and to keep outsiders from occupying positions of any importance. In these circumstances, the organisation may lose flexibility so that the mission becomes static and restrictive. The second force leads them to pay lip service only to that common mission, or try to undermine it or to change it.

In addition to the problems presented by this apparent contradiction, a further problem arises when organisational practices do not match the mission statement. As Bart (1997) suggests, the power of mission statements rests in their ability to inspire and motivate people in the

organisation to exceptional performance and to guide the process of resource allocation in a manner that produces consistency and focus. However, that does not happen simply because a statement is committed to paper, framed and displayed. The reality of the business world is that managers are under continuing pressure to maintain competitive advantage in circumstances of rapid change. Where short-term solutions often seem to be more appealing than long term strategies, the principles underlying the firm's mission statement are sometimes forgotten. In reality the political context, in which corporate strategies are formulated and implemented, particularly the power and interests of different stakeholder groups, are likely to be more important than the wording of the mission statement.

Noting these contradictory forces at work Argyris and Schon (1978) distinguish between the 'espoused' mission of the organisation and the mission 'in use':

> "The organisation's paradigm or mission is itself a temporary arrangement of conflicting emotional drives. The tension this leads to is the source of the dynamics of organisational behaviour, the prompt to the dialectic of continually rearranging the beliefs that constitute the paradigm and one of the principal sources of both change and anxiety in organisations"

A determination of the differences, if any, between the 'espoused' mission of individual airlines and the mission 'in use', was beyond the scope of the present study. But one thing is clear: without a genuine business culture which is consistent with it, the mission statement published on the company website, in the annual report, or framed in the office foyer, sets the scene for 'mission impossible'.

It would be useful to assess whether firms that have more comprehensive mission statements demonstrate higher performance and whether the mission statement in fact influences the 'bottom line'? Bart and Baetz (1998) found a positive relationship between mission statements and organisational performance, and Business Week (1999) reports that firms using mission statements have a 30 per cent higher return on financial measures than those without such mission statements. The problem is, of course, that many diverse factors affect organisational performance and the international aviation is particularly prone to experience changes in the external (remote) environment (for example, political, regulatory, economic changes) that impact on a firm's performance. The terrorist attacks on the United States, that occurred on September 11, 2001 provide clear evidence of the turbulent and rapidly

changing environment that can present the airline industry and individual airline operators with significant challenges.

The strategies and values embodied in a mission statement can become inappropriate as the competitive environment of the organisation changes, and continued reinforcement of them could lead to failure. Some components of mission statements may become much more important in newly emerging contexts: for example, safety, public image, concerns for employees, and harmonious employment relations. The mission statement of China Airlines highlights their concern for all of these factors with their apology for past safety lapses being a focal point in their mission statement. Recognising the changing external environment of airlines and their need to respond with changes to the international environment Byar and Neill (1987) claim that a mission statement must be re-examined regularly. David (2001) counters this claim emphasising that 'a mission statement should always be subject to revision but will require changes infrequently if carefully prepared. Effective mission statements tend to stand the test of time' (2001: 68).

A longitudinal study of mission statements could improve our understanding of the effects of change on organisations and the appropriate response regarding their mission statement and its content. That is, monitoring how and why mission statements change over time in response to various environmental and strategy changes could provide further insight into the nature and appropriate uses of these documents under varying conditions. Moreover, the process of developing a mission statement may be of greater value and importance than the document itself. It is not known how many of the mission statements of international airlines have changed over time but a study of their content over time would provide useful information about the process of developing mission statements and keeping their content relevant to the firm's long term objectives.

Conclusion

Each organisation has a unique reason and purpose for being. This uniqueness should be reflected in a statement of mission. Drucker (1974) suggests that it should be the 'first responsibility' of managers. A well-designed mission statement is essential for formulating, implementing and evaluating strategy. Managers often overlook the development and communication of a clear mission. A clear statement of mission is an extremely important

management priority that assists in ensuring that an organisation's short term actions do not become counterproductive to longer term interests.

The discussion of this study revealed that the three components most prevalent in the airline mission statements were Self-Concept (88%), Philosophy (80%) and Customers (72%). Interestingly, these were the only components that featured in more than half of the mission statements. The components least prevalent in the mission statements were Technology (22%), Concern for Employees (22%) and Concern for Public Image (30%). The discussion also revealed that less than half of the airlines (48%) had five or more of the nine components of the practical framework for evaluating mission statements.

Formulation of an appropriate mission statement appears to be necessary but not sufficient for successful business operations. In addition to developing a mission statement, managers need to think strategically about where they are trying to take the company. Management's concept of the business needs to be supplemented with a concept of the company's future business makeup and long term direction. Management's view of the kind of company it is trying to create and its intent to stake out a particular business position represents a strategic vision for the company. By developing and communicating a business mission and strategic vision, management infuses the workforce with a sense of purpose and a persuasive rationale for the company's future direction.

APPENDIX

Aerolineas Argentinas
Aerolíneas, with its present or future structure, will extend its wings yet further, connecting cities and towns within our country and over the whole world. Aerolíneas will continue to be the main link of Argentine business people and tourists with their foreign peers. Just like it has been doing for the past 50 years, AR will keep up our Argentine flag in international skies, without limitations of space or time, with the full and heartfelt commitment of those who speak the same language, those who share in this passion for freedom and adventure. (Source: aerolineas.com.ar/english.htm - 6/2/01)

Air Aruba
Customer Service: A committed staff with a reputation for excellence, hospitality, and service promises that the future of Air Aruba will be a bright one. We take great pride in the quality of customer service on our flights, and would always like to hear about any suggestions or concerns that you may have. Carrying on the tradition of our people, we strive to bring the friendliness of our island to the airline industry.(Source: http://www.interknowledge.com/air-aruba/aaruhe01.htm 21/2/01)

Air Canada
Above all, our commitment is to maintain the highest level of pride in our people, to be a safe and reliable airline with a leading edge product, to be a financial success for shareholders and to invest in our future as a world class airline and a great ambassador for Canada. A Leading World Airline Known For: - Superb Customer Service, - Teamwork That Inspires Individual Excellence, - Profitability, - As we are known for technical excellence and safety (Source: Webmaster, webmaster@aircanada.ca 20/2/01)

Air Jamaica
Only on Air Jamaica will you find an unsurpassed combination of services and on-time reliability. We're absolutely committed to being the best airline in the Caribbean.
(Source:http://www.airjamaicavacations.com/index.htm 20/2/01s)

Air Lanka
Our own philosophy has always been to look forward and to strive for excellence. So, it is fitting that as we enter the new millennium, we are also entering a new phase in our development. We are also presenting a new face to the world. Sri Lanka's new identity has been designed to reflect our position as a modern, progressive airline. It speaks eloquently of our commitment to moving forward, of our determination to reach new heights. (Source: http://www.airlanka.com/about.html - 22/1/01)

Air Malta
Our Mission is to be leaders in the Growth of the Economy of Malta. Supporting the Tourism and Communications Sectors. (Source: http://www.airmalta.com/am_annual_2000/board.html- 20/1/01)

Air New Zealand
Air New Zealand will be an internationally successful business. We will lead the world in airline travel to areas within the South Pacific, through a spirit of innovation, professional excellence and our unique Pacific style.

Air UK / KLM UK
To serve you better, KLM and KLM UK work in partnership on a commercial basis with other airlines. In this way, we can offer you new destinations, more frequent flights, better connections and smoother, quicker transfers. (Source: http://www.klmuk.com/flightfile/ournetwork/index.asp- 20/2/01

Alaska Airlines
Alaska is still differentiating itself: offering more flights than any competitor in almost every market it serves; providing a superior level of customer service; and pioneering technologies that improve on-time performance and expand safety margins. And the awards just keep on coming. Every time the history of commercial aviation is written, people ask how an obscure little airline in America's hinterland has continued to survive and thrive while once-proud giants disappeared. Grit and determination will be part of the answer. But more than that, it's

the people. Their caring. Their resourcefulness. Their integrity. Their professionalism. And their spirit - the unique spirit of The Great Land where the airline was born. (Source: http://www2.alaskaair.com/company/History/Overview.asp - 6/2/01)

Alitalia
Alitalia sees quality as ongoing improvement in an increasingly competitive market so as to meet the demands not only of the company's own tradition of service but also of the challenges posed over the last few years by changes in the domestic and international scenarios. This means that Alitalia reshapes its products on the basis of needs subject to increasingly quick rates of change while never forgetting the importance of professionalism and the fundamental value added by the Italian style of service, the sense of hospitality, welcome, friendliness and warmth that help to make an Alitalia flight a satisfying combination of functionality and comfort. In short, the aim is to ensure that the Alitalia product is perceived through features that distinguish it from the competition and give it a unique place on the market. (Source: http://www.alitalia.it/eng/mondo/conoscere/index.html- 21/2/01)

All Nippon Airways (ANA)
"The First Choice". A superior company is one that customers choose first. Committed to our highest priorities of safety and reliability, our goal is to be the First Choice of customers on the strength of personal service and world-class performance. To enhance customer value by strengthening the basic pillars - safety, comfort, reliable on-time performance and convenience - of the ANA air transport product, while supporting shareholder value through increased profitability of the ANA Group.

America West
America West Airlines is committed to providing safe and reliable travel for each of our passengers.
The America West Airlines Community Relations program demonstrates the company's values and good corporate citizenship by supporting community-based organizations and activities in key markets that the company serves, encouraging and providing ongoing opportunities for employee volunteerism, and offering outstanding customer service to internal and external customers. Community Relations activities and partnerships are strategically designed and selected to enhance the quality of life in key America West markets, build goodwill towards the company, instill pride in America West employees, leverage existing assets and partnerships, and generate awareness of America West and its services. To create new platforms for future earnings, our management team works to develop innovative strategies for long-term growth. As we move forward, the continued success of every one of the Company's initiatives depends on our ability to affectively address Airline operating issues and re-establish America West as a reliable carrier (Source: http://www.americawest.com/aboutawa/publicrelations/aa_shmessage.htm 21/2/01)

American Airlines
AMR is wholly focused on building and sustaining the leadership of American Airlines and American Eagle in the global airline industry. With that goal in mind, last summer we introduced the Airline Leadership Plan, which lays out the six key areas we think will define excellence in our industry in the years to come: safety, service, product, network, technology and culture. By leading in all six of these areas, we intend to make AMR the most successful airline company in the world and, in so doing, create the best possible outcomes for our customers, our employees and, of course, our shareholders.
Source: http://www.amrcorp.com/ar1999/chairmans_letter.html 21/2/01

Ansett Airlines
A wide ranging process of change is under way to deliver strong and sustained profitability-we are working in partnership with our staff to achieve our business goals while continuing to provide our customers with superior service.

Asiana Airlines
"To become recognized worldwide by our customers, shareholders, and employees as the best airline in the world. Safety will not be compromised - Be customer driven, both externally and internally
- Develop the attitude that conformance to customer expectations has top priority- Understand that improvement includes everyone in all parts of the organization- Bring all employees into the decision making process- Trust people and their ability to contribute to the mission; - Place emphasis on prevention and problem solving work; - Treat each other with dignity and respect
Source: http://www.us.flyasiana.com/ 21/2/01

Austrian Airlines
All actions aimed at providing customers exactly with what they need
Our top priority is to meet customer needs as fully and effectively as possible. A dedication to service dictates our actions in all aspects of business. Every step of the way, we endeavor to deliver products of excellent quality. Highly motivated and well-trained staff as a guarantee for our success.
Our staff are our most valuable asset. Company success would be inconceivable without the superb performance of each individual staff member. We work together professionally as a close team to set clear goals for the company. A broad range of basic and advanced training programs ensures that our employees can maintain their excellent qualifications in the future. Transparency and creating value for our shareholders .One of our central priorities as a listed company is to achieve full transparency in our reporting to the financial community. We are dedicated to achieving sustained profitability for the benefit of our shareholders.
Commitment to the environment and resource conservation.
We are strongly committed to sound environmental practices and to the development of environmentally compatible aviation. Steps are taken constantly within the company in pursuit of these aims. We are also involved in international research projects in this area.
Source: http://www.aua.com/iv/welcome_e.htm 21/2/01

Bangkok Airways
Bangkok Airways' Customer Services Department sets out to give every passenger a relaxing flying experience. Guided by our motto - "you never get a second chance to make a first impression" -Customer Services aims to be with you whenever you're in need during your journey.
"Bangkok Airways strives to be a premium service provider in all front-line areas. "All staff have a duty to ensure that passengers receive the best quality service possible." It's our attention to detail which sets Bangkok Airways apart from other airlines." Although we are developing more facilities for VIP guests, to us every passenger is deserving of the kind of attentive service that leaves them feeling they've had real value for money." Source: http://www.bkkair.co.th/PR-Greetings.html#services 22/2/01Recognising that a reputation for safety and reliability is an airline's greatest asset
Source: http://www.bkkair.co.th/safety.htm 22/2/01

Britannia Airways
A Franchise service means that you fly with an independent airline which operates to British Airways' own high standards of customer service quality and hospitality. Our franchise partners, who specialise in specific routes and regions, enable us to extend our network and thus offer you greater choice and flexibility. They use British Airways' name, livery and flight code, while inside the aircraft you find the familiar British Airways cabin interior and cabin staff in British Airways uniforms. Most important of all, from the moment you are welcomed on board you experience a level of service and attention to detail which is of the very highest calibre.

British Airways
To be the undisputed leader in world travel. This new mission statement is associated with certain 'new values': safe and secure, honest and reliable, innovative and team spirited, global and caring, a good neighbour. It is also associated with 'new goals': customers' choice, airline of first choice in key markets, strong profitability, meeting investors' expectations and securing the future.

Cathay Pacific
Our vision is to make Cathay Pacific the most admired airline in the world. Ensuring safety comes first. Providing Service Straight From the Heart. Encouraging product leadership. Delivering superior financial returns. Providing rewarding career opportunities. (Source:
http://www.cathaypacific.com/aboutus/story/0,,,00.html 22/2/01)

China Airlines (Taiwan)
We will be the most reliable airlines. Its success will built on trust of employee, customer, stockholder and community. In a narrow sense, "the most reliable" means flight safety will be the motto of perpetual operating in China Airline after feeling pains over a past mistake. In a broad sense, it represents seeking the trust from employee, customer, stockholder and community.
Source: http://www.china-airlines.com/cbrfs/cbrf50e.htm 22/2/01

Delta
Regardless of what direction the industry takes in the coming months, we are ready to meet the future. Delta is:
• Maintaining an unwavering focus on our basic mission of providing safe, comfortable and efficient air transportation. • Continuing to provide excellent value to the constituencies we serve: shareowners, customers and employees. • Delivering consistent, solid financial and operational results with cost levels that remain below the industry average. • Making investments to ensure that we maintain our industry leading position, from e-commerce initiatives to new mainline aircraft and regional jet orders. (http://www.delta-air.com)

Easyjet
To provide our customers with safe, low-cost, good value, point-to-point air services. To offer a consistent and reliable product at fares appealing to leisure and business markets from our bases to a range of domestic and European destinations. To achieve this we will develop our people and establish lasting partnerships with our suppliers. (http://www.easyjet.com/uk/about/mission.html)

Iberia
"to make global travel easier and more rewarding for you, to create a world where you will always feel at home, however far from home your journey may take you" (Source: http://www.iberia.com/iberia/ingles/home.html 22/2/01)

KLM Royal Dutch Airlines
KLM is positioned as an airline operating worldwide from a European base, providing professional service for passengers and shippers, demanding high-quality products at competitive prices, with a professional, reliable, punctual product, and a caring, friendly service.

Korean Air
Korean Air's fundamental philosophy is expressed in its founding goal of 1969: "*To become the world's leading airline and possess the highest standards of service and safety*." With competition increasing worldwide, Korean Air will focus on management, service, and automated facilities and technology to stay ahead of the competition. (http://www.koreanair.com/english/Corp_default.htm).

Kuwait Airlines
We know that you need efficiency, timeless, and reliability. Our fleet and communications network are the products of the very latest in sophisticated technology. Warm, personal service that meets your every need. Super modern technology. Traditional Arabian hospitality. This is what the new Kuwait Airways is all about. (Source: http://www.travelfirst.com/sub/kuwaitair.html 1/3/01)

LanChile Airlines
"hospitality, quality and comfort" (Source: http://www7.lanchile.com/english/un/compania/ceo.htm 1/3/01).Our ongoing commitment to our passengers and customers will continue to position us as a company with very high standards, distinguished by outstanding efficiency, creativity and service.
Source: http://www7.lanchile.com/english/un/compania/historia/1990-99.htm 1/3/01

Lauda Air
"Service is our success" - our company philosophy is the red line of success which links all the areas of our business. (Source: http://www.laudaair.com/e/ueberuns/index.asp 1/3/01)

Malaysia Airlines
We invite you to fly with us and experience the genuine warmth and hospitality that has made Malaysia Airlines a favorite among travelers around the world. (Source: http://www.malaysiaairlines.com/company/frame.html 1/3/01)

Malév Hungarian Airlines'
Facts and figures prove that in the last 50 years Hungarian civil air traffic developed dynamically, even occasionally surpassing the world average. Malév always took an outstanding part in the development and maintenance of Hungary's international, political, economic, cultural and touristic relations.
Malév Hungarian Airlines' personnel understand full well the obligation their predecessors' work places on them. That is why they continue to provide an even more punctual and polite service for Malév passengers in order that everyone who travels with the airline leaves the flight fully satisfied.

Source: http://www.malev.hu/ew/angol/nj_ceginfo/t_8996.html 1/3/01

Middle East Airlines (MEA)
MEA remains committed to provide all kinds of assistance at its offices, airport and in-flight, where passengers special attention and care remain the foundation of our service excellence.
Source: http://www.mea.com.lb/aboutus/index.htm 1/3/01

Northwest Airlines
The people of Northwest Airlines will provide reliable, convenient and consistent air transportation that meets or exceeds customer expectations and earns a sustainable profit. Reliable means safe, clean, on-time air transportation created by the best people providing friendly, professional, consistent and caring service recovery when, despite our best efforts, something goes wrong. Convenient means making it as easy as possible for customers in the markets we serve to do business with us, with the best schedules and the simplest access to our network. Consistent means delivering reliable and convenient service every time the customer flies or ships on our airline. (Source: http://www.nwa.com/corpinfo/profi/vision/ 1/3/01)

Qantas
QANTAS is one of the world's leading airlines, operating a domestic and international fleet of 149 aircraft, linking 104 ports in 29 countries. Our strengths are our strong brand, our focus on customer service, and our international reputation for technical expertise and safety. Our aim is to manage our operations, costs and productivity to ensure profitability for our shareholders, while maintaining the quality and reputation of our product.

Qatar Airways
To be the best, in everything we do... At Qatar Airways, our vision is to be the premier airline of the Arabian Gulf. But more than that, we have set our sights on providing the best-personalised service in the business. And that means being the best in everything we do! Providing the best reservation, check-in and transfer facilities. Equipping our fleet with the best aircraft and fitting them out with the best configurations and standards of comfort Offering the best in-flight catering, entertainment and service. And ensuring the best levels of punctuality and frequency on the routes we fly.
But most important of all, employing the best people in the industry. People who are attracted to Qatar Airways because they want to be part of a team where only the best is good enough. Qatar Airways, Flying the flag for Qatar...at home and abroad.
Source: http://www.qatarairways.com/about.htm 7/3/01

Royal Air Maroc
The highest standards to make your flight a genuine pleasure
Source: http://www.royalairmaroc.com/ver_en/index.htm 7/3/01

Royal Jordanian
Our Mission: Meeting the Challenges of a New Millenium. Royal Jordanian, the carrier of Jordan, the land of prophets and crossroad of civilizations, aspires to: - Provide safe, reliable and convenient air transport services and connections between the Middle East and the rest of the world and to extend such services through alliances with complementary carriers. - Deliver quality service through integrated and highly dedicated trained professionals at standards surpassing the competition.
- Perform at increasing levels of productivity and efficiency that will generate rates of profitability to sustain its growth and allow for reinvestment in the development, improvement and well being of its human resources. - Represent the best of Jordan, its people, culture, products and services, guided, as always, by its pioneering spirit of innovation and imagination to reach for higher skies.
Source: http://www.index.com.jo/rj/about.htm 7/3/01

Saudi Arabian Airlines
In the name of ALLAH the Most Gracious the Most Merciful. Considering its Mission Statement to be a world class airlines with a distinctive Saudi character, that is customer driven, Saudi Airlines is committed to providing top quality services and is doing everything in its power to achieve total customer satisfaction. (Source: http://www.saudiairlines.com/english/ 5/3/01)

Scandinavian Airline System (SAS)
The SAS business concept is to serve the Scandinavian market profitably with a wide choice of airline-based travel products that will be preferred in the market with special emphasis on

business travel.

Singapore Airlines
Singapore Airlines is engaged in air transportation and related businesses. It operates worldwide as the flag carrier of the Republic of Singapore, aiming to provide services of the highest quality at reasonable prices for customers and a profit for the company.

Skywest Airlines
Our mission is to provide airline service that exceeds our customers' expectations. Each of us is dedicated to excellence in the air transportation system. We are dedicated to:
Safety first On-time every time Fairness and consistency in everything we do
Working together as a team Personal and corporate integrity Maintaining profitability (Source: http://www.skywest.com/cp-menu4.html 5/3/01)

South African Airways
South African Airways is committed to being a dynamic efficient and safe airline, caring for its employees, providing warm personal service to its clients, the realisation of profits for its shareholders, and contributing to the wider community.

Swissair
The SAirGroup therefore aims to substantially upgrade the appeal of Swissair, Crossair and Sabena while simultaneously enhancing the level of cooperation among the airlines. In doing so the Group will place a great deal of emphasis on the quality of passenger service. As Swiss airlines, Swissair and Crossair will increasingly utilise the quality location afforded by Switzerland in an effort to promote an attractive and top-quality product. Source: http://srapps.swissair.com/srpress/news.po?lang=0 7/3/01)

TAROM Romanian
Passenger satisfaction and comfort is the ultimate goal of any air carrier. At TAROM, special attention was being paid to the product quality. Punctuality and reliability are being enhanced in order to satisfy passengers' expectations and requirements. (Source: http://tarom.digiro.net/ 7/3/01)

Trans World Airways (TWA)
At TWA, our mission is to ensure that our customers accomplish theirs. You, our valued customers, are an important part of TWA's vision. We are committed to continually improving our brand product and focusing on customer service. Every employee has been trained to deliver our unique brand of customer service. Our Customer Service Plan is specifically designed to assist us in reaching this objective for every customer on every flight. We are an airline of proud professionals, committed to One Mission...Yours. (Source: http://www.twa.com/about/customerserviceplan.html 7/3/01)

Turkish Airlines
The single goal to provide improved quality and faster service. (Source: http://www.turkishairlines.com/english/aboutus/abriefhistory-1.shtml 7/3/01)

Ukraine International
Reliability and punctuality are key to our success. Ukraine International Airlines is now recognized as one of the most reliable airlines in Europe. (Source: http://www.uia.ukrpack.net/eng/service/index.html 7/3/01)

US Airways
Our goal is to ensure that we offer and you receive, on a consistent basis, the service level that you are entitled to - - the highest level of service possible. You should receive the same commitment to service whether you fly with US Airways, US Airways Shuttle, MetroJet or US Airways Express.
Source: http://www.usairways.com/customers/commitment.htm 7/3/01

Varig (Brasil)
Quality, safety and profitability are the basis of the strategy adopted by the company to perform in today's competitive market of worldwide commercial aviation. Since its founding, in 1927, the constant challenge of VARIG has been to exceed the expectations of the most demanding passenger.
With this in mind, VARIG created a style of flying that continues to gain passengers of many different nationalities, always staying in tune with the best that the world has to offer. The secret has been to add the warmth of the Brazilian people, to the best in current technology and the highest international standard of

quality. (Source: http://www.varig.com.br/english/index.htm 7/3/01) The constant goal of VARIG is to exceed the expectation of its most demanding passenger, regarding quality, comfort and safety. (Source: http://www.varig.com.br/english/index.htm 7/3/01)

Virgin Atlantic Airways
Virgin Atlantic is the quintessential Virgin story. It has every ingredient: the small newcomer taking on the giant and complacent establishment, the people's champion introducing better service and lower costs for passengers with a reputation for quality and innovative product development.
Source: http://www.virgin-atlantic.com/pdfs/Presspack.pdf 8/3/01

World Airways
World Airways' operating philosophy is to build on its existing relationships to achieve a strong platform for future growth while at the same time grow its full service and cargo business. The Company's strategy is based, first and foremost, upon providing the highest level of service to its customers, thereby maintaining and expanding the amount of business being done with existing customers. The Company perceives a number of opportunities for its charter business created by a growing global economy, particularly, long-term growth in second and third world economies where the demand for airlift exceeds capacity, notwithstanding economic problems faced by some developing countries in recent years. World Airways attempts to maximize profitability by combining ACMI contracts with full service agreements that meet the peak seasonal requirements of its customers. The Company can respond to rapidly changing market conditions and requirements because its fleet of aircraft can be deployed in a variety of configurations. (Source: http://www.worldair.com/investor.htm 8/3/01)

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