An independent, competitive alternative

Some of our US competitors argue that the success of Emirates derives solely from an “unlevel playing field” on which America’s carriers can never emerge victorious. The truth, however, is that US airlines – despite the home field advantage of the world’s largest domestic market and a rulebook that gives them favourable treatment under Chapter 11, as well as the Fly America Act – have failed to deliver the air services many of their customers want.

The reason for Emirates’ American success is simple: in a highly competitive, global marketplace Emirates has consistently identified and delivered what American consumers want, offering an unrivalled network of single-carrier routes and one-stop connections that US airlines fail to provide. Emirates offers an independent, competitive alternative to the three large traditional airline alliances, which is why more and more passengers are choosing to fly with the airline.

Emirates’ success is demonstrated through its measured, demand-driven growth in the US – from operating a single New York flight in June 2004 to thirteen daily frequencies to nine US cities today. A second daily service to Seattle commenced on 7th July, and in October this year a second daily service will commence to Boston. Emirates operates the Boeing 777 to four of its US destinations.

It also operates the Airbus A380, powered by US-made GE GP7200 engines to Dallas, Houston, Los Angeles, New York and San Francisco. With 3.5 billion people flying today and that figure predicted to grow by around 5% each year, Emirates will continue to expand to new cities, add frequencies, and deploy the aircraft best suited to meet growing traffic demand to Dubai and onward destinations.

Emirates’ single-carrier, global network

Far too often, US carriers have been happy to play it safe with long-established, trans-Atlantic and trans-Pacific routes, and either ignore new and growing markets such as India and Africa, or simply hand over passengers to their European alliance partners. The leading US airlines have been busy consolidating through domestic mergers and practicing “capacity discipline,” and in the process have ignored many opportunities in emerging markets. In contrast, Emirates – which is independent of traditional alliance partners and not beholden to feed an alliance network that often inconveniences passengers with circuitous routings, multiple connecting stops and longer travel times – has since 1985 built a network to capitalise on these emerging traffic flows.

Emirates has created a hub in Dubai that allows passengers in any of the nine US cities it serves to fly one-stop to 15 different Middle Eastern destinations; 23 African destinations; and 35 Asian destinations – all with connections optimally timed for passenger convenience. In contrast, the three US network airlines only serve a combined four points in Africa and four in the Middle East (not including overlapping points).

Emirates’ vital links from the US to emerging markets – for example 304 weekly flights to the five BRICS countries – will further drive American economic growth, trade and US job creation. However, the three leading carriers, along with their European partners, offer only modest air services in several of these markets, thus limiting consumer choice and sacrificing lucrative business. This commercial neglect by them has effectively created a competitive advantage for Emirates.

For 30 years Emirates has listened to passengers, and constructed a unique and expanding, single-carrier global network (see Annex A) that caters to what they value most on long haul international journeys – the most convenient and efficient routing, with the fewest stops, and the best synchronised connections possible – ensuring the shortest travel times. The table below demonstrates Emirates’ strong commitment to these emerging markets with the number of points served directly, compared with the three leading US carriers.
Route network comparisons

The maps below show that Emirates is providing vital routes to the US via its hub in Dubai that the three leading US carriers do not offer. So despite their claims that Emirates is stealing away passengers, these maps illustrate that in reality there are very few network similarities between Emirates and the big three US carriers. Moreover, of course, there is no US national interest in sacrificing the competitive choice of US consumers to protect inconvenient traffic flows over European hubs to benefit some European airline partners of US airlines.
Emirates’ product

In all of its cabins, Emirates offers its customers an extraordinary value proposition with innovative, award-winning service, including an unmatched onboard entertainment system, gourmet meals, and flying a fleet of modern, environmentally efficient aircraft. It is the world’s largest operator of GE-powered Boeing 777s, which are the backbone of its fleet. Emirates’ customer-focused product is tailored to what passengers want, not the lowest common denominator of what competitors offer. While competitors are limiting customer choice to a two-cabin service, Emirates continues to offer the choice of three. Moreover, while competitors exploit choice as an opportunity for add-on ancillary fees, Emirates delivers to passengers a much-valued package of seating, meals, and entertainment, and a generous baggage allowance in all three cabins, as part of its core value proposition.

Emirates was awarded with the ‘Best Airline – Business’, ‘Best Airline – Leisure’ and ‘Best Loyalty Rewards Programme’ for Skywards at the prestigious 2014 Condé Nast Traveller Readers’ Choice Awards, just to mention a few most recent accolades.

Emirates’ people

Emirates excels in providing its customers with world-renowned service and a level of reliability that US and European carriers simply do not match.

Self-serving suggestions by competitors that Emirates “exploits” its employees conveniently ignore the facts. Emirates is a global airline that caters to an international market. Accordingly it employs staff from more than 150 nations with competitive salaries and benefits in order to attract top talent. Emirates’ status as an excellent employer is shown by its high staff retention rates. Currently more than 12,600 staff have served for 10 years or longer and close to 3,000 have been with the company for 20 years or more. In 2014/15 alone, more than 400,000 people from around the world applied to work at Emirates.

Emirates provides benefits that many other airlines do not. For example, it pays the cost of benefits such as housing for many of its expatriate staff, contributes towards children’s education and has healthcare plans for its staff.

Emirates has consistently delivered profits for the past two decades and allows employees to share in that success through the airline’s profit sharing plan. The profit sharing plan has paid a total of US$979.8 million to staff since 1997. Emirates’ profit sharing scheme applies to all staff, rather than just senior managers.

A motivated and engaged workforce that takes pride in the Emirates brand and are committed to providing industry-leading passenger care is essential to Emirates consistently delivering an unsurpassed customer experience.
Annex A: Dubai Airport past and present

The map below shows all of the routes operated from Dubai Airport in 1985 – 32 in total.

Source: OAG Analyser

The map below shows all of the routes operating from Dubai Airport in 2014 – 220 in total.

Source: OAG Analyser