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Star Alliance Expands Connection Service to Toronto Pearson Airport

Proactive Help for Customers with Tight Connecting Flights Marketing Campaign Launched

TORONTO, July 23, 2018 /CNW Telbec/ - The Star Alliance Connection Service is now available at Toronto Pearson Airport. This assists passengers with tight connections between two Star Alliance member airline flights. Dedicated Connection Service staff use special software to monitor the transfer window for customers with onward flights. Cases where passengers and checked bags appear in danger of missing a connection are automatically highlighted. The Connection Service agent can thereby already consider the various options available to ensure that the customer reaches the onward flight, or if necessary book alternative options, before the inbound flight even lands.

"With Connection Service now available in Toronto, we will ensure that more passengers with tight connections can make their onward flight, thereby improving the travel experience at one of our main hubs in North America. We are presently working on the expansion of this service to more key hubs in our network", said Christian Draeger, Star Alliance Vice President Customer Experience.

Toronto is the 13th biggest Star Alliance transfer hub world-wide, with more than 400,000 passengers connecting from one Star Alliance carrier to another each year.

In addition to home carrier Air Canada, the following Star Alliance member carriers serve Toronto: Austrian, Avianca, Brussels Airlines, Copa Airlines, EGYPTAIR, Ethiopian Airlines, EVA Air, LOT Polish Airlines, Lufthansa, TAP Air Portugal, Turkish Airlines and United. Together they offer more than 6,000 flights per week connecting Toronto to 159 destinations in 59 countries.

"Connection Service helps enhance the airport experience for our customers travelling on Star Alliance itineraries by streamlining the behind-the-scenes processing when handling tight connections which may arise. This further strengthens the position of our Toronto Pearson global hub offering convenient connections to almost anywhere in the world," stated Benjamin Smith, President, Airlines and Chief Operating Officer at Air Canada.

Star Alliance has been operating Connection Centres for more than a decade. In place at 11 hub airports, these have largely been working behind the scenes on expediting checked bags at risk of missing their onward flight. In addition, assisting passengers with tight connections was an additional service offered in Frankfurt, Houston and Munich. As part of the Alliance's strategy of further improving the customer journey, the Star Alliance Connection Service brand was rolled out last year, along with the plan of adding passenger assistance at all locations and expanding the overall product to more locations.

Chicago (ORD) was the first airport where the Connections Services brand was introduced last year and passenger assistance added to the baggage expedite. With Toronto (YYZ) now also offering Connection Service, the combined passenger and baggage expedite is now available at the following Star Alliance hubs: Chicago (ORD), Frankfurt (FRA), Houston (IAH), Munich (MUC) and Toronto (YYZ). At present, baggage-only expedite is offered at Denver (DEN), London (LHR), Los Angeles (LAX), Newark (EWR), San Francisco (SFO) and Washington (IAD).

Marketing Campaign

In order to increase the awareness of this service, Star Alliance is currently running a multi-channel marketing campaign. The centrepiece is a short entertaining film which illustrates the product's benefits. A press ad, a wide range of social media assets and a dedicated web presence on connection service round off the campaign. The content will be broadcast in the Alliance's owned channels, as well as across the member carriers' own outlets and via local market sales channels.

About Star Alliance:

The Star Alliance network was established in 1997 as the first truly global airline alliance to offer worldwide reach, recognition and seamless service to the international traveller. Its acceptance by the market has been recognized by numerous awards, including the Air Transport World Market Leadership Award and Best Airline Alliance by both Business Traveller Magazine and Skytrax. The member airlines are: Adria Airways, Aegean Airlines, Air Canada, Air China, Air India, Air New Zealand, ANA, Asiana Airlines, Austrian, Avianca, Avianca Brasil, Brussels Airlines, Copa Airlines, Croatia Airlines, EGYPTAIR, Ethiopian Airlines, EVA Air, LOT Polish Airlines, Lufthansa, Scandinavian Airlines, Shenzhen Airlines, Singapore Airlines, South African Airways, SWISS, TAP Air Portugal, THAI, Turkish Airlines, and United. Overall, the Star Alliance network currently offers more than 18,800 daily

flights to 1,317 airports in 193 countries. Further connecting flights are offered by Star Alliance Connecting Partner, Juneyao Airlines.

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