

Gateway Airlines

A New Chapter for Virtual Allegiant Air

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A look into Gateway Airlines, and details of the transition for Virtual Allegiant Air

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BACKGROUND

On October 1st, 2010, Virtual Allegiant Air announced plans to close operations and to resume future operations as Gateway Airlines. This is the result of many factors listed in the closing announcement made by CEO Wes Miles, including rising pressure to conform to the real-world airline's operations, decreased activity both in flights made and forum posts, real-life events requiring members' attention to be shifted from Flight Simulator, another Allegiant virtual airline opening with realistic simulation of Allegiant, and many other factors.

Virtual Allegiant has composed this guide to aid the vAAY family in the transition to Gateway Airlines, and to answer some questions that may be raising.

CHAPTER 1: GATEWAY AIRLINES... LESSONS LEARNED

The essence that makes Gateway Airlines is based on the lessons learned from the three years of operation as Virtual Allegiant Air. Below are those lessons, although not all of them are new.

- **KEEP IT SIMPLE!** Many people have heard of it... KISS. Keep It Simple Stupid. This goes a long way, and extends to the operation of a virtual airline. People don't want complicated websites or long lists of rules. They want to fly, with just enough "rules" to keep it real, not to burden the pilot and make them not want to fly. This is the biggest lesson learned and Gateway will incorporate that into all aspects of the airline, from the website to the policies. We will try our best to balance realism with fun.
- **KEEP IT REAL!** Your call sign isn't going to be the same every flight you make. Gas isn't free. With every departure, there's a maintenance team who spent time making sure that plane is ready to go. When it breaks, they're on it. Guess what... that's not free either! There's no increased sim rate in real world. 1,000 fpm landings HURT and things break! And finally... you're not going to shoot an approach when there's a tornado on the field. 'Nuff said.
- **FLY!** They don't call it Flight Simulator for nothing. The point of a VA is to fly and have fun doing it, not to get hung up in politics, or spend all your time on administrative duties. Some of the administrators of Virtual Allegiant Air were so consumed in their duties that their actual hobby suffered. This takes away the fun and makes the hobby seem like more of a burden. At Gateway, we take the phrase "I'd rather be flying" seriously. Every member is encouraged to fly until it makes them sick. Then, take a sick day, and fly some more. Staff duties come second to flying, and will get done when they get done.
- **IT'S FUN, NOT POLITICAL!** This isn't so much of a lesson learned, but a philosophy that was carried over. We're taking vAAY's idea of staff and flying with it. People don't like abuse of power, and it's not what the hobby was designed for in the first place. So..... our staff do not carry "titles". Yup.... there's no CEO, no President, no COO, or any other staff positions you'll see at another VA. There's simply "Excessively Paid"'s. Yea, you read right. Excessively Paid #1, #2, #3, and so on. We want to simplify aviation and add a humorous perspective never before seen in the way a virtual airline operates.
- **ROME WASN'T BUILT IN A DAY!** And neither is an airline. Realistically, it takes YEARS for an airline to expand to a new hub. Shoot, we don't even plan on hub expansion. It's in our business plan to stay exclusively based at KSTL - Lambert St. Louis Airport. "Over-expanding" is common in the VA world and leads to a burned-out airline who can't keep up with itself.
- **FRIENDS, NOT CO-WORKERS!** Guys, if you know Virtual Allegiant Air... then this is nothing new either. We've always believed that you need to be more than a number to enjoy your virtual career. Gateway carries the same belief. We're not going to make everyone hold hands and meet on Teamspeak, but we don't like creepy internet predators either. Come out of your shell, meet new friends, and meet up with old ones!
- **WE'RE ALL ADULTS!** This hobby's no fun when you have to worry about someone else's behavior or grudges. Seriously people, how old are we? We don't fight. We're not always right. We don't bite. We sleep through the night. And we don't act on any personality

conflicts. Obviously, as with any group of people, there will be friction. But let's be adults and add lubricant. Everyone love lubricant!

CHAPTER 2: THE OPERATIONS

ST. LOUIS IS A GREAT CITY BECAUSE WE SAID SO

Any questions? Seriously... it's a wonder no one else has started an airline based out of St. Louis. The airport is large enough to conduct world-hub operations. The city is large enough to provide a loyal market that will keep paying time after time for flights throughout the world. There's little competition. And VATSIM has all but forgotten about KSTL (except routes between STL and ORD, MDW, DFW, MCI, and DEN). The city is large and offers soooo much for tourists and residents of the metro area alike.

- the St. Louis Zoo's free admission
- the OMNIMAX Theater at the St. Louis Science Center
- getting lost in the City Museum
- getting smashed (what?) at the night life on Laclede's Landing with over 15 riverfront bars and clubs by the Arch
- the Westward Expansion Museum at the Arch
- the Anheuser Busch world headquarters
- Busch Stadium to see the Cards play some ball
- the fine dining at over 100 restaurants in the down-town area featuring the Italian community "The Hill"
- river-boat dinners on the Mississippi
- 4 casinos to try your luck
- 5 major shopping malls in the metro area
- 3 satellite airports capable of handling divers, 5 total airports serving the metro area

This place is a bustling city with underserved air service, both in Real world and on VATSIM. Somehow, TWA went out of business. Then American Airlines dropped their STL hub. Now it sits... waiting for someone to take advantage of all of this. Sure, Southwest has a focus city setup... but even their service is not enough to put STL on the map where it should be. We plan to fix this.

OUR BUSINESS MODEL AT A GLANCE

It's pretty simple, actually. We provide extensive world-wide commercial service to the St. Louis Metro Area by conducting major hub operations exclusively at STL, connecting St. Louis to small, minor and major US cities as well as major world-wide destinations.

By staying exclusively based and operating a world-hub at STL, Gateway will be able to focus on the air travel needs of the St. Louis market. By fully utilizing Lambert-St. Louis International Airport's hub facilities, we will slowly expand service to the St. Louis Area as we hire more employees and flight crews to support the operations. We will continue adding profitable cities/destinations and we will continue expanding our fleet—dependent upon number of pilots and net profit.

We essentially plan to pick up where TWA (God Rest Their Soul) left off... and be

"St. Louis's Gateway to the World"

CHAPTER 3: THE TRANSITION FROM vAAY TO GTW

What's going to happen now that Gateway is absorbing Virtual Allegiant Air? How is it going to work? What does it mean to you?

FLIGHT HOURS

Gateway is providing 100% hour-carryover for all vAAY members to rejoin, in addition to an award to recognize your service and time with Virtual Allegiant Air.

FORUMS

The Virtual Allegiant Air website and forums will be removed, however, some valuable information from the forums will be transferred over to Gateway's website.

FLEET

- Gateway is selling vAAY's ATR-72-500, 4 B737's, 3 MD-87's, and 3 MD-11's. These aircraft are fully-owned and proceeds will be used to pay off vAAY's loans on 3 B752's, 2 B744's, and 1 B773ER.
- Gateway is selling vAAY's 2 EMB-120's and 1 Dash 8-300. Proceeds will be used to pay off GTW's loans on 2 Saab 340's.
- Gateway is selling vAAY's CRJ-200 and both EMB-170's. Proceeds will be used to pay off GTW's loans for 3 CRJ-700's.
- Gateway is selling vAAY's 2 CRJ-900's, 2 A319's, 4 MD-90's, and 1 A380, and plans to pay off the remaining balance on the loans as part of sales.
- Gateway is keeping all 9 of vAAY's MD-83's, and has purchased 2 additional.
- Gateway is keeping all 3 of vAAY's B763ER's, and will absorb the loan payments on all 3 aircraft.
- Gateway is keeping the DC-7 for historical reasons... at this time we're not sure what we'll do with it but it will be stored at our STL facility.
- Gateway is keeping all 3 of vAAY's B752's, both B744's and 1 B773ER for future use, and will store them at our STL facility until further notice. These aircraft are 100% owned after pay off with proceeds from sales.

This makes our end fleet count as follows (as of 10/2/2010):

Regional		Financial Status	In Use
DC-7	1	OWNED	PENDING
Saab 340	2	OWNED	YES
CRJ-700	3	OWNED	YES
Domestic			
MD-83	11	OWNED x 9 FINANCED x 2	YES
B757-200	3	OWNED	FUTURE
International			
B767-300ER	3	FINANCED x 3	YES
B777-300ER	1	OWNED	FUTURE
B747-400	2	OWNED	FUTURE

HUBS/BASES

All Virtual Allegiant bases will be closed, and assets will be rolled into the STL base. Gateway Airlines will reimburse all employees for virtual moving expenses to the St. Louis area, however, proof of expenses is required.

ROUTES

While Gateway plans to eventually serve many of the cities Virtual Allegiant flew to... we cannot expand so far, so fast. Service to those select cities will eventually resume, with direct service to STL. Unfortunately, we cannot continue the focus city operations vAAY was conducting, as it doesn't align with our business model.

HONORARY LIVERY

Gateway will eventually unveil a special livery of one of our MD-83's in honor of our vAAY roots.

WEBSITE

Pilots and friends of Virtual Allegiant Air who would like to continue service and employment with the group we've come to love, can do so at: www.gatewayva.net

CHAPTER 4: GATEWAY / EVERGREEN PARTNERSHIP

The partnership between Gateway Airlines and Evergreen Virtual is the result of months of planning and coordination. Evergreen is the cargo component of Virtual Allegiant Air and Gateway Airlines. We put this together for the members... so you'd have options "close to home" for whatever itch you have to scratch. Between Gateway and Evergreen, we feel we're giving you the best we can offer. Members are encouraged to join both airlines for the maximum benefits and options. Let's look a little more into Evergreen Virtual

SAME INCENTIVES

Evergreen is offering the same 100% hour-carryover and award that Gateway is offering for members who move on with the legacy. Again, no time or effort lost.

OPERATIONS

Evergreen Virtual is primarily a charter cargo company which operates world-wide using a variety of cargo and freight aircraft. Additionally, they provide occasional passenger and corporate charters. With bases all over the world, your options are endless.

WEBSITE

Visit www.evergreenva.net for more information on opportunities in the cargo world!