

Final Project: Part 3

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Overview of Scenario

Throughout this presentation, I'll introduce my research and analysis of Southwest Airlines, sharing insights I gathered during the past semester. I'll then outline my content plan to help Southwest achieve a 20% increase in Instagram engagement, restore customer trust, and boost click-through rates (CTRs) on their featured What's New page on their website. Finally, I'll present a content calendar and a key performance indicator (KPI) measurement plan for January 2026.

Section 1: Research and Analysis

Strengths

- Continuing to excel in customer service despite the changes made.
- Transparent and communicable virtual platform for customers to use.
- Loyal customer base.

Weaknesses

- Brand indentifying features such as choosing your own seat no longer exist.
- Loss of customer trust due to changes of their brand defining luggage policy.
- Communicating policy changes to customers.

Opportunities

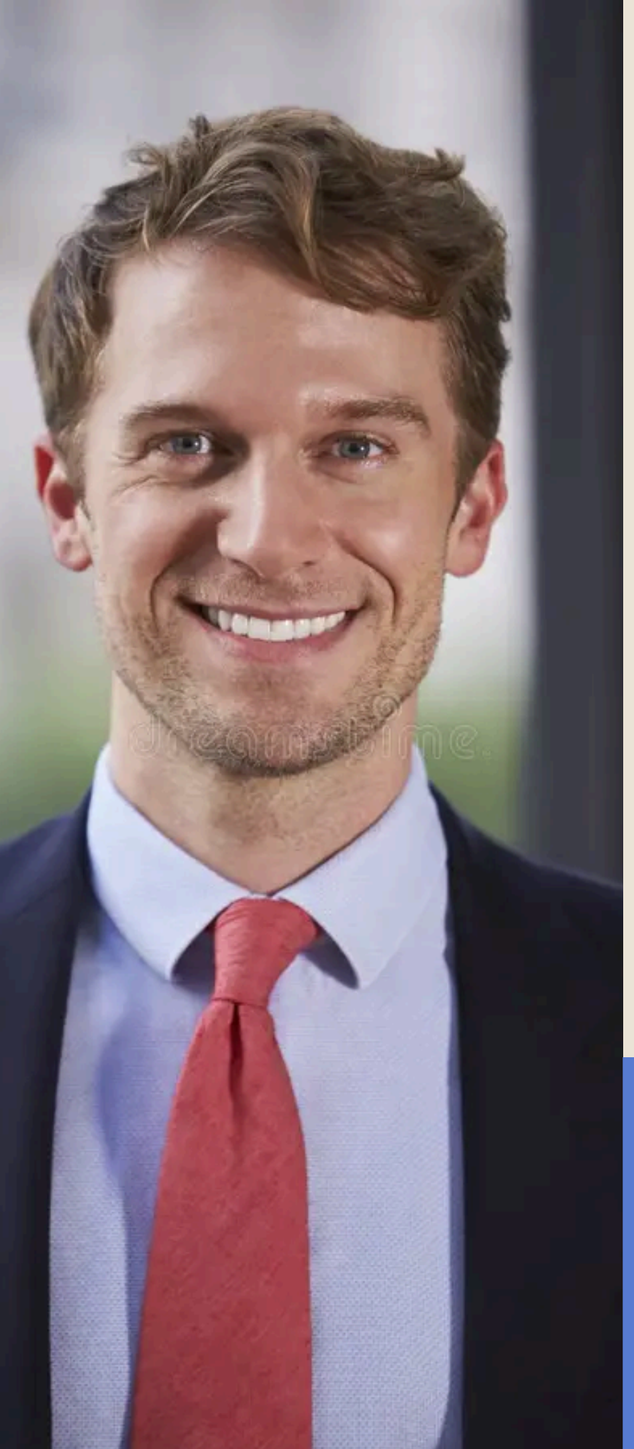
- Continue to highlight the benefits of their membership tiers.
- All new aircrafts have had larger overhead bins installed for carry ons (TravelandLeisure).
- Market and position themselves to target customers who are on the cusp of being in a higher reward tier.

Threats

- Customers may switch loyalty to a competitor.
- Competitors adjusting their fares to appeal to potential consumers who typically would fly Southwest.
- Changes being made to the airline for improvment don't have direct results leading to potential distrust between brand and customer.

COMPETITIVE CONTENT ANALYSIS TABLE

Airline	Southwest	Delta
Instagram Followers	1.1 million	1.5 million
Average Instagram Engagement	**Likes:** ≈3500 **Comments:** ≈140	**Likes:** N/A (they hid this feature on their account). **Comments:** ≈300
Linked Social Media	Facebook, Instagram, Youtube, LinkedIn, and Pinterest	Facebook and X.
Blog Post Frequency	Southwest has been posting every 5-7 days.	Delta has been posting every 3-4 days.
Brand Voice	Personable, friendly, empathetic, and transparent.	Prestigious, knowledgeable, corporate, and straight forward.
Content Forms on Blogs	Occasional logistic updates are posted however a majority of the posts are wholesome heartwarming stories from customers, staff, and community.	Very structured and organized. Most posts read like news articles with corporate news with a few fun stories sprinkled in.
General Observation: Southwest Stories vs. Delta News Hub	Southwest has a designated area of the website for fun stories revolving around the brand.	Delta includes personal stories such as blog posts but they are posted on their general news feed and can be filtered by selecting “personal”.



BACKGROUND

Jett is from the suburbs of Chicago. He went to IU and studied business and currently works as a sales rep for Brookstone. Like many young adults he prefers to communicate through texting, emails, or push app notifications. Because of this his preferred content type is either a video that could be seen on reels or a story.

PAIN POINTS

Wanting to save money for the future but wanting to live in the present and travel.

Currently establishing himself financially and as a customer, leaving him unsure of which airlines will actually reward his loyalty.

MOTIVATIONS

Solidifying his leads so he gets to travel more for leisure than business.

The only stress he wants to encounter when traveling is the TSA line.

TRAVEL HABITS

Growing up, his family often used Southwest so the kids could spread out and reduce bickering.

He travels often for work. He likes to travel light and tries to keep his belongings down to a carry on and personal item (his backpack).

He likes to get places, if not on time, then early.

JETT SETT

AGE: 28

LOCATION: JOLIET, ILLINOIS

PLATFORM PREFERENCES

Persona Explanation

I reviewed the Statista Southwest Airlines Customer Insights report. From this I gathered a few key insights; gender between passengers is split even between male and female amongst all generations, 32% of users completed a bachelor degree or equivalent, and 23% are single adults. With these insights I was able to shape my persona.

As for the personal Reddit quotes I have my own testimony which is that my family always flew southwest growing up to avoid any arguing between my sister and I about who got the window seat.



SMART Goal



By the end of January 2026 Southwest Airlines will try to rebuild general customers trust by improving engagement on Instagram by 20%, increase CTR's on their "What's New" page, and continuing excelling at customer service through a one month virtual content campaign promoting Southwest new "Even Better" benefits.

Section 2: Content Planning

Five Keywords & Phrases

“How much are checked bags on Southwest?”

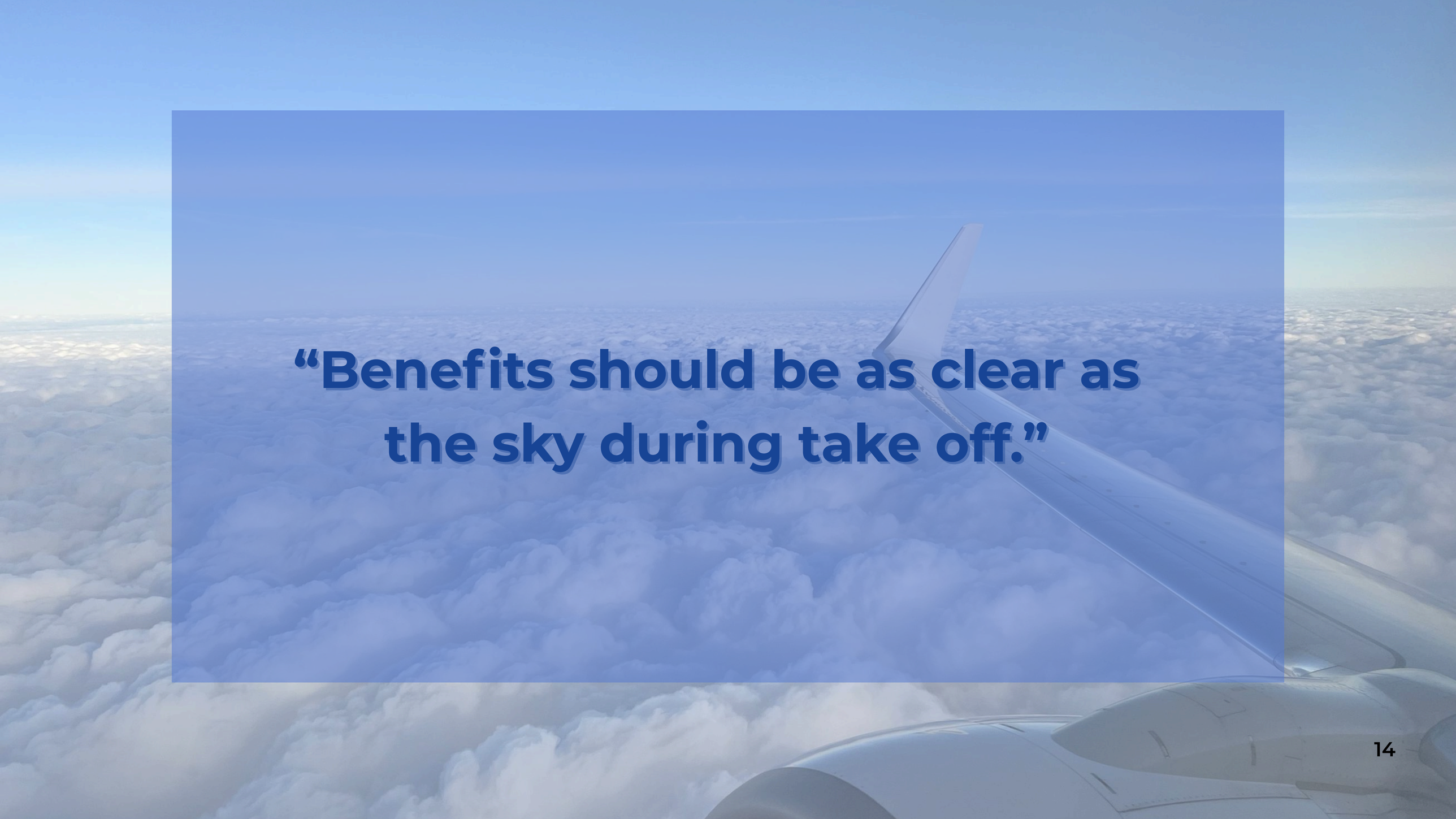
“Southwest credit card”

“Southwest contact number”

“When will Southwest start assigning seats?”

“Are carry on bags free on Southwest?”

Content Pillar Theme


“Benefits should be as clear as
the sky during take off.”

Video Idea

It will show a family in the early 2000s walking through the airport. There are two young boys in the family, walking to their gate in the airport, being rowdy (think typical 7 and 8-year-old giddy boy behavior). The family is headed to a beach vacation; one of the boys is wearing a Hawaiian shirt, and another one is carrying beach toys.

They are bickering and pushing each other back and forth. The dad is trying to get them to the gate, and the mom is hurrying everyone along, ensuring no one is left behind. The family makes it to their gate, where they check in, and the parents strategically separate the boys so they don't argue about who gets what seat or who has what toy. The parents glance at each other across the plane, relieved to have made it.

The next scene is very similar; however, the boys are now in their early 20s-30s, and it is set today. The brothers are guiding their parents through the check-in process (the process is different than when they flew years ago). The parents are wearing Hawaiian shirts; the dad has a fanny pack on (typical tourist wear).

The parents are now the ones who are bickering and stopping to look at things (maybe sunglasses or sunscreen) while the boys try to get them to the gate. They make it to the gate and get on the plane, where the boys now strategically place and settle in the parents across the row from them. The boys look at each other in relief to have made it.

The narrator will then say, "The same Southwest you know and love, just a little more mature, and Even Better".



Creative Engagement Idea: Clear Skies and No Surprise

We will invite customers to share photos of themselves traveling via Southwest from over the years. They can use the hashtag #ClearSkiesandNoSurprise for the chance to win a free bag on their next Southwest adventure.

A source that shows that this incentive will work is CrowdRiff. They state that 84% of people are more likely to trust a brand if it uses user-generated content in its campaigns. This will also continue the online conversation regarding policy changes, keeping customers aware and informed of the recent changes.



Four Social Media Post Concepts

LinkedIn: This post will have a visual of a Southwest plane from the view of the boarding gate at an airport. The post textually should consist of targeting young professionals encouraging them that now is the best time to begin building longstanding brand loyalty to an airline.

Instagram: This post will have a video of a real life Southwest customer walking through the steps of them booking their flight, checking in, and boarding through the point of view of their phone and the Southwest app (like a screen recording vlog), at the end they will open their camera and take a picture of their view out of the plane window

Instagram: This post will visually show a breakdown of the new and revised rewards system. It will consist of 1-4 images/slides each dedicated to a tier of the program.

Twitter/X: This post will be more of a “meme” style post. The text will say; “The face your parents make when moment when you book your next trip with no surprises.” The image will be a popular reaction meme from the Good Dinosaur.

Section 3: Editorial Calendar & Measurement

January 2026

Content Name	Content Description	Content Type	Week 1	Week 2	Week 3	Week 4	Week 5
Blog Post: Level Up Your Loyalty	*A blog post dedicated to seasoned solo travelers.*	*Blog Post*	*Draft due*	*Draft finalized*	*Blog post goes live*	*No action needed*	*No action needed*
Video Idea: Southwest More Mature	*A video that follows a family during their own Southwest journey.*	*Video/Commercial*	*Cast video*	*Film video*	*Edit video*	*Test screen with marketing board*	*Video goes live*
Creative Engagement Idea: Clear Skies and No Surprise	*A campaign that allows customers to share photos of themselves traveling in the past with Southwest for the chance to win a free bag.*	*Social Media Post*	*Post original campaign launch*	*Accept submissions*	*Announce winner*	*Relaunch*	*Accept submissions*
LinkedIn Post	*Targeting young professionals encouraging them that now is the best time to begin building longstanding brand loyalty to an airline.*	*Social Media Post*	*Draft Post*	*Post goes live*	*No action needed*	*No action needed*	*No action needed*
Instagram Post: Reward Breakdown	*This post will visually show a breakdown of the new and revised rewards system. It will consist of 1-4 images/slides each dedicated to a tier of the program.*	*Social Media Post*	*Draft and Edit Post*	*Post goes live*	*No action needed*	*No action needed*	*No action needed*
Instagram Post: Customer POV Through Southwest App	*This post will have a video of a real life Southwest customer walking through the steps of them booking their flight, checking in, and boarding through the point of view of their phone and the Southwest app*	*Social Media Post*	*No action needed*	*Film video*	*Edit video*	*Video goes live*	*No action needed*
Twitter/X Post	*This post will be more of a "meme" style post. The text will say; "The face your parents make when moment when you book your next trip with no surprises." The image will be a popular reaction meme from the Good Dinosaur*	*Social Media Post*	*No action needed*	*Post goes live*	*No action needed*	*No action needed*	*No action needed*

KPI MEASUREMENT PLAN

KPI Category	Metric to Track	How To Measure	SMART Goal Target	What To Use
Instagram Engagement	Likes, comments, and shares per post.	Comparing the engagement data from January 2026 to December 2025 engagement or even January 2025 to investigate growth over the month prior or past year.	Instagram engagement to increase by 20% .	Instagram Insights
UGC Participation (Clear Skies, No Surprise)	Submissions, likes, shares, and comments.	Keep track of hashtag use and repost solid submissions.	Will also contribute to Instagram engagement to increase by 20%..	Instagram Insights, and Instagram Search
Blog Engagement	Overall page views, time spent on the page, shares, and scroll depth.	Monitor the blog post performance closely and take notes on where customers typically stop scrolling.	Increase CTR's on the "Whats New" page.	Google Analytics and Semrush.
Video Engagement (Southwest, More Mature)	Views, WTR (watch time rate) and shares.	Track performance of the video and any engagement around it (UGC reels, comments etc).	Instagram engagement to increase by 20%, rebuilding the general customers' trust, and increasing CTRs on the "What's New" page.	Youtube Studio, Google Analytics, and Semrush.
Overall Customer Sentiment (Reddit, X, Tiktok)	Positive vs negative sentiments about Southwest.	Have an analytic tool crawl the internet and gather comments posted online.	Rebuilding the general customers' trust. This also will allow Southwest to review negative sentiments quickly and deescalate criticism online.	Google Analytics and Semrush.

Conclusion

In conclusion, my 30-day content plan will restore trust in Southwest customers by being relatable and transparent. Southwest knows that they have some problems to fix, but with UGC posted on Instagram, LinkedIn messages, and more, this is not only sure to increase engagement but also community. With the blog post, customers will be able to read how they may have been affected by recent policy changes and what they can do. The commercial will not only be reaching older Southwest customers but also newer, younger ones as it highlights the nostalgia of taking family vacations. Southwest is already well known, and their beloved customer base just needs to know that they are still the airline with a heart for their logo, just **Even Better**, and maybe even a little **More Mature.**



Thank you!

Appendix

AI Reflection:

The AI tools I used for this assignment were ChatGPT and Sora. ChatGPT helped me understand how to track KPI’s and what a client in marketing would be looking for when they are introduced. I also used Sora to complete my video idea as I was unable to be able to film such an idea here in Oxford. Lastly I also used ChatGPT to help me cite my sources. To my utmost knowledge I confirm that this work is my own and no AI was used for any critical thinking.

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Written Blog Post Draft

This was done using the Grammarly AI Blog Tool that was provided. I know the text is small on my mockup so here is a link to the original page for easier viewing: https://www.canva.com/design/DAG5vYwSDu4/wdZXYETdSxpo6-XV5umIzA/edit?utm_content=DAG5vYwSDu4&utm_campaign=designshare&utm_medium=link2&utm_source=sharebutton

LEVEL UP YOUR LOYALTY: NAVIGATING SOUTHWEST'S NEW POLICIES AS A SEASONED SOLO TRAVELER

2026

If You're in your 20s or 30s and have already mastered the art of solo travel. You're probably ready to take your relationship with an airline to the next level. Building long-term loyalty with Southwest Airlines comes with plenty of perks—but staying loyal also means keeping up with the latest policies. Here's what you need to know about Southwest's recent updates, especially regarding boarding and carry-on rules, so you can make the most of every trip and every point.

Why Choose Southwest for Loyalty? Southwest's Rapid Rewards® program is simple and generous, offering valuable points on every dollar spent, no blackout dates, and two free checked bags. The airline's customer-friendly policies, flexible ticket changes, and no hidden fees make loyalty easy and rewarding for frequent solo flyers.





TIPS TO MAXIMIZE LOYALTY

Download and Use the Southwest App: Get real-time notifications about boarding, gate changes, and policy updates.
Check the Travel Policies Page Before Every Trip: Policies can change quickly, especially around carry-ons and boarding.
Leverage Rapid Rewards: Book directly on Southwest.com for maximum points and exclusive deals.
Arrive Early for Boarding: Early arrival helps secure overhead bin space and ensures a smooth process.
Sign Up for Alerts: Receive text and email notifications for flight and policy changes.

Recent and Explicit Policy Changes: Southwest has recently implemented a few notable policy changes to improve the travel experience for loyal customers:
Revised Boarding Process: Boarding remains in traditional groups (A/B/C), but digital signage and announcements now provide clearer instructions on when and where to line up. Boarding lanes at busy gates may be reconfigured for smoother flow, and Southwest has increased the enforcement of boarding group order to prevent line-jumping.
Stricter Carry-On Enforcement: The maximum carry-on size remains 22" x 14" x 10", with one personal item allowed. However, Southwest gate agents are now checking bag sizes more carefully at the gate, and oversized or extra bags will need to be gate-checked. Overhead bin space is being more carefully managed, so boarding earlier is key.
Enhanced Mobile Experience: Southwest continues to upgrade its mobile app to deliver real-time boarding notifications, digital boarding passes, and instant updates on policy changes. Travelers are encouraged to use the app for the latest information and to streamline their airport experience.
Flexible Ticket Policies: While Southwest has long offered no change fees, the process for canceling or changing flights has been streamlined. Rapid Rewards® points from canceled bookings are now returned to your account immediately, making it even easier to adjust your plans.