



# AIR CANADA

[Stories](#)

## Letter from Calin Rovinescu, President and CEO: 80 Years of Aviation



Sep 01, 2017



On September 1, 1937, Air Canada (then Trans-Canada Air Lines) took wing with a Vancouver-to-Seattle flight. The plane, a Lockheed L-10A, weighed little more than half of what a single engine on our biggest Boeing 777 does. In our first full year, we flew 2,086 customers, not even two percent of the number we now carry on a moderately busy day.

Our company has grown exponentially over its 80 years, and so many generations of dedicated employees have taken Air Canada from strength to strength with industry-leading innovations in safety, passenger comfort and efficiency. This includes being the first airline to install aircraft deicing nozzles, the first to make its North America-Europe flights non-smoking (followed by a total smoking ban), and the first to use a computerized reservation system.

From that short first flight to becoming one of the world's 20 largest carriers today, our ambition has been innovation in the pursuit of global aviation and customer service. That this animating spirit is as strong as ever was recognized when Air Canada was named the Best Airline in North America in the Skytrax World Airline Awards at this summer's Paris International Air Show – the sixth time in eight years.

As we embark upon our ninth decade, we are growing faster than ever, adding half as many new international routes in the last few years as we launched in our first 75. Our fleet renewal program has us flying the sky's most modern large commercial jet – the Boeing 787 Dreamliner – and the rejuvenation continues this year with the latest narrow-body aircraft, the Boeing 737 MAX, followed by Canada's own Bombardier C Series aircraft, the world's best regional jet.

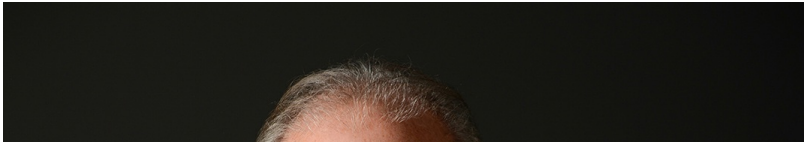
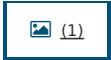
We are investing in such areas as best-practices training, new Maple Leaf Lounges and mobile and online services to streamline the customer experience. Through our participation in technology incubators, we are also exploring Artificial Intelligence, which holds unlimited potential to enhance all aspects of travel.

As we overfly this birthday milestone, we are reminded that it is customer service, safety and innovation that have enabled us to thrive for eight decades. Today, more than ever, we are fixed on these core values and are pursuing them with a vigour most of us can only dream of having when we are 80. Onward and upward!

Many things have changed since our maiden flight eight decades ago, but our core values of innovation, safety and customer service are what have always pushed us to new heights.

Calin's column appears every month in enRoute Magazine, Air Canada's award-winning in-flight magazine found onboard all Air Canada, Air Canada Rouge and Air Canada Express flights. This edition is from the [September 2017 issue](#).





A STAR ALLIANCE MEMBER 