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Air Canada and TAM extend partnership to benefit frequent flyers

Agreement allows customers of both airlines to earn and redeem Aeroplan Miles or TAM Fidelidade points on any flight operated by either Air Canada or TAM

MONTREAL and SAO PAULO, Brazil, April 27 /CNW Telbec/ - Air Canada, a founding member of Star Alliance, and TAM (Bovespa: TAMM4 and NYSE: TAM) Brazil's largest airline and future Star Alliance member, today announced that they will start implementing a bilateral agreement that will allow members of Air Canada's Aeroplan or TAM's Fidelidade programs to earn and redeem frequent flyer Miles/points beginning April 28, 2009 on flights operated by either company. This initiative is part of a Memorandum of Understanding signed between Air Canada and TAM in June 2008, aiming to expand services offered to customers of both airlines.

"We are delighted to offer Air Canada's most loyal customers increased benefits by continuing to build our partnership with TAM, Brazil's leading airline," said Ben Smith, Air Canada's Executive Vice President and Chief Commercial Officer. "The opportunities for earning and redeeming reward travel have now grown exponentially across each of our networks. In addition, customers will enjoy Air Canada's new in-flight product offering that features lie-flat beds in our Executive First Suites on all international routes including Toronto-Sao Paulo, as well as brand new cabins, seats and seatback entertainment for all passengers fleet wide." Air Canada operates daily Toronto-Sao Paulo non-stop flights using Boeing 767-300ER or 777-300ER aircraft in the northern hemisphere summer and winter seasons, respectively.

Paulo Castello Branco, TAM vice president, Commercial and Planning, states that the agreement will bring immediate benefits to passengers of both airlines. "The partnership of both frequent flyer programs - TAM Fidelidade and Aeroplan - enhances our strategy of Excellence in Services, one of the three pillars that sustain TAM's operations, the other two being Technical and Operational Excellence and Excellence in Management," says Castello Branco.

A pioneer in the adoption of a Frequent Flyer Program for airlines in Brazil, called Programa Fidelidade, TAM has now over 5.5 million members, with more than 7.4 million tickets distributed through the redemption of accrued points.

With the expanded partnership, Air Canada's Aeroplan Members can redeem their accrued miles for air travel on domestic and international flights operated by TAM. Likewise, TAM passengers can use points earned in TAM's Programa Fidelidade on any domestic or international flight operated by Air Canada.

Air Canada and TAM have had a codeshare agreement since October 2008, allowing TAM to sell seats on flights operated by Air Canada between Sao Paulo and Toronto, with the possibility of connections to a number of Canadian cities. Air Canada in turn can offer its customers a number of flight options to Brazilian destination operated by TAM. With this partnership agreement, customers of both airlines will benefit from seamless connections on a single ticket and baggage check-through to final destination.

About TAM

TAM (www.tam.com.br) has been the domestic market leader since July of 2003, and closed March 2009 with 49.3% of market share. The company flies to 42 destinations in Brazil. Through business agreements signed with regional companies, it reaches 79 different destinations in Brazil. TAM's market share among Brazilian companies that operate international flights stood at 86.8% in March. Operations abroad include TAM flights to 18 destinations in the United States, Europe and South America: New York, Miami and Orlando (USA), Paris (France), London (England), Milan (Italy), Frankfurt (Germany), Madrid (Spain), Buenos Aires and Bariloche (Argentina), Cochabamba and Santa Cruz de la Sierra (Bolivia), Santiago (Chile), Asuncion and Ciudad del Este (Paraguay), Montevideo (Uruguay), Caracas (Venezuela) and Lima (Peru). It has code-share agreements that make possible the sharing of seats on flights with international airlines, enabling passengers to travel to 64 other destinations in the U.S., Europe and South America.

About Air Canada

Montréal-based Air Canada provides scheduled and charter air transportation for passengers and cargo to more than 170 destinations on five continents. Canada's flag carrier is the 14th largest commercial airline in the world and serves 33 million customers annually. Air Canada is a founding member of Star Alliance, providing the world's most comprehensive air transportation network for Canadian domestic, transborder and international travel. Air Canada aircraft offer customers individualized seatback in-flight entertainment systems with hundreds of hours of digital audio-visual entertainment. As well, customers can collect Aeroplan miles for future awards through Canada's leading loyalty program. In 2008, the readers of Business Traveler magazine voted Air Canada "Best In-Flight Services in North America," "Best Airline for Business Class Service in North America" and "Best North American Airline for International Travel."

About Aeroplan

Celebrating its 25th anniversary in 2009, Aeroplan, Canada's first frequent flyer program, belongs to Groupe Aeroplan Inc., a leading international corporation in loyalty program management. Millions of Aeroplan members earn miles in its growing network of over 70 partners worldwide, representing more than 150 brands in the financial, retail and travel industries. In 2008, more than 2 million rewards were distributed to its members, including over 1.5 million round trips in flights operated by Air Canada and Star Alliance members, which offer air travel to more than 900 destinations globally. In addition to flights, members also have access to more than 600 services, such as hotels and car rental, among others. For more information on Aeroplan, please go to www.groupeaeroplan.com or www.aeroplan.com.

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