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Aeroplan Turns 25; Kicks off Yearlong Celebration with a 25 Day 250,000 Miles Giveaway

MONTREAL, Jan. 26 /CNW Telbec/ - In just twenty-five years, Aeroplan Members have accumulated approximately 821 billion miles and have redeemed Aeroplan Miles for more than 16 million rewards. Aeroplan has come a long way since it was established by Air Canada in 1984 as an incentive program for its frequent flyer customers. Today, Aeroplan's more than four million members can earn Aeroplan Miles with over 70 partners, representing more than 150 brands in the financial, retail, and travel sectors.

In 2008 alone, over 2 million rewards were issued to members including more than 1.5 million round-trip flights on Air Canada and Star Alliance carriers which offer travel to approximately 912 destinations worldwide. In fact, an Aeroplan member or their guest takes off on Aeroplan Miles every 7 seconds. Members also have access to over 600 specialty, merchandise, hotel, car rental and experiential rewards.

"This is a proud moment for Aeroplan as we come together with employees, members and partners to celebrate our 25th anniversary - a significant milestone that couldn't have been achieved without their ongoing support," said Vince Timpano, President, Aeroplan. "We are looking forward to the next 25 years and beyond, as we focus on solidifying our position as the leading coalition loyalty program in Canada, continuing to offer our members more ways to earn and redeem their miles every day."

Aeroplan and Air Canada will be kicking off the yearlong celebration with members on February 1st, with the launch of the 25 Day 250,000 Miles Giveaway contest where members can win 250,000 Aeroplan Miles for 25 days. Eligible Aeroplan Members will automatically be entered into the contest for one chance to win every time they fly on a purchased or reward ticket operated by Air Canada between February 1 - February 25.

"We are thrilled to be celebrating this important achievement with Aeroplan, Air Canada's frequent flyer program. We are pleased to have watched it evolve to where it is today - into one of the most popular multi-partner loyalty programs in the world," said Charles McKee, Vice President, Marketing at Air Canada. "We want to thank our loyal customers for supporting this program throughout the years with an exciting contest that will see more than six million miles given away in the month of February."

In addition to the contest, there will be other activities introduced in the coming months, such as special gifts for long-time members and exclusive rewards. 25 Milestones in 25 years

2009: Aeroplan, Canada's premier loyalty program, is celebrating its 25th anniversary in July 2009.

2008: Over 2 million rewards were issued to members including more than 1.5 million round-trip flights on Air Canada and Star Alliance carriers which offer travel to approximately 912 destinations worldwide.

2008: Vince Timpano was appointed President of Aeroplan Canada and Executive Vice President, Groupe Aeroplan Inc.

2008: Aeroplan launched the Aeroplan eStore featuring more than 12 product categories and over 100 retailers:
www.aeroplan.com/estore.

2008: Aeroplan Income Fund converted into a growth oriented, dividend paying global loyalty management public corporation named "Groupe Aeroplan Inc".

2008: Aeroplan launched Aeroplan Arrival, an exclusive branded content magazine that encompasses travel, lifestyle, culture and popular Aeroplan reward merchandise.

2007: Aeroplan Income Fund acquired Loyalty Management Group (LMG), a loyalty marketing and customer-driven insight and analysis business that owns and operates Nectar, the United Kingdom's leading coalition loyalty program.

2007: Launched the loyalty industry's first Carbon Offset Program as part of Aeroplan's Green It Up initiative that allows members to offset their flight rewards or their everyday carbon emissions using Aeroplan Miles. As of January 1, 2009, 17 million Aeroplan Miles have been redeemed for carbon credits: www.aeroplan.com/offset

2007: Launched Aeroplan Music Store, the loyalty industry's first online store where members can redeem miles for music:
www.aeroplanmusicstore.com.

2007: Aeroplan and the AGO launched the Grange Prize, an annual award recognizing the work of Canadian and international contemporary photographers.

2006: Launched an innovative member charitable donation program - Beyond

Miles. The program enables Aeroplan Members to donate miles to seven charitable organizations. As of January 2009, the following organizations are part of the program: Air Canada's Kids' Horizons, Engineers Without Borders-Canada, Médecins Sans Frontières-Canada, Schools Without Borders, the Stephen Lewis Foundation, Veterinarians Without Borders-Canada and War Child Canada: www.aeroplan.com/donate.

2006: Introduced ClassicPlus Flight(TM) Rewards, providing unrestricted access to 100% of available seats on Air Canada and Air Canada Jazz.

2005: Aeroplan began expansion of its partner roster into the retail sector. Today, partners include: Audiotronic, Dumoulin, Esso, Home Hardware, Primus, Sobeys and Uniprix, among others.

2005: Completed Initial Public Offering for world's first publicly-traded loyalty program, Aeroplan Income Fund.

2004: Introduced a series of co-branded charge cards with American Express that offer swift accumulation of Aeroplan Miles.

2004: Launched a comprehensive suite of non-air rewards (merchandise, experiential and specialty). Today, members have access to over 600 exciting specialty, merchandise, hotel, car rental and experiential rewards: www.aeroplan.com/mrch.

2004: Aeroplan increased access to reward seats by 50% on Air Canada and Air Canada Jazz.

2004: Launched new Aeroplan brand identity that positioned Aeroplan as its own entity outside of Air Canada and as the premier loyalty program in Canada.

2002: Aeroplan was spun-off as a wholly-owned subsidiary of Air Canada.

2001: Completed the integration of Canadian Plus members into Aeroplan.

2000: Rupert Duchesne became President and Chief Executive Officer of Aeroplan.

1998: CIBC Aeromortgage launched - This mortgage product helps turn mortgage payments into travel rewards (for every \$1 of regular mortgage paid, Aeromortgage holders earn one Aeroplan Mile).

1991: Launched the CIBC Aerogold VISA card, now one of the most popular gold credit cards in its category in Canada.

1985: More than 100,000 frequent flyers enrolled in the program.

1984: Aeroplan began as a promotional tool for Air Canada's business travellers. For more information about Aeroplan, please visit www.groupeaeroplan.com or www.aeroplan.com.

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