

March 29th, 2009

Why Iberia's reward programme deserves attention

Gulliver's Blog

THOSE of you signed up to the world's frequent-flyer programmes may wonder which airlines offer the best online availability for transatlantic "reward travel". If so, you may be interested in a report from the IdeaWorks company, a consulting organisation, which aims to answer that very question.

IdeaWorks studied ten airlines—Iberia, Lufthansa, British Airways, American Airlines, Air France KLM, Delta Northwest, Continental, United, Scandinavian Airlines and US Airways—firing 6,400 booking queries at their websites (a nice job for someone). Their statistics anoint Iberia as the most generous, since the Spanish carrier offered reward seats on 83% of the 640 journeys considered. At the other end of the scale, US Airways hangs its head, offering availability for reward-travel tickets on just 4% of journeys.

Some of the airlines offer a paltry supply of reward seats. By itself, this is not a failure... and contrary to mileage junky blog sites, it does not represent a mortal sin. However, these airlines have failed to satisfy a promise made to consumers, and are guilty of not meeting member expectations.

In these competitive days, that may be something they want to look into.