

Delta Air Lines, Inc. (Mr. Vinay Dube)

Delta Air Lines, based in the US, is one of the world's largest airlines, offering service to 321 destinations (as of April, 2015). Since Northwest Airlines, one of its predecessors, began operating in Japan in 1947, Delta has steadily expanded its business. We interviewed Mr. Vinay Dube, Senior Vice President – Asia Pacific for Delta Air Lines, who has overall responsibility for the airline within the Asia-Pacific region, regarding the company's business situation and future outlook in Japan.

Delta Air Lines, Inc., headquartered in Georgia, US, is one of the world's largest airlines with over 170 million passengers each year. Since Northwest Airlines, one of its predecessors, began operating in Japan in 1947, Delta has steadily expanded its business in Japan. We interviewed Mr. Vinay Dube, Senior Vice President – Asia Pacific for Delta Air Lines, who has overall responsibility for the airline within the Asia-Pacific region, regarding the company's view on the business in Japan.



Mr. Vinay Dube, Senior Vice President – Asia Pacific for Delta Air Lines

What is the background for Delta Air Lines doing business in Japan?

We had two purposes when we started business in Japan. The first one was to join two communities, two businesses and two cultures of Japan and the US. When we began our operation in Japan in 1947, it was the job for Delta's predecessor Northwest Airlines (which merged with Delta in 2008) to connect the countries of Japan and the US. The second purpose was to contribute to establish air

service in Japan. Japan Airlines started its operation in Japan in 1951. For the first full year after that, every Japan Airlines flight was operated by the aircraft with pilots of Delta's former airline, Northwest Airlines.

What is your current business situation in Japan?

This year marks the 68th year since we started business in Japan. We have grown to become the largest foreign carrier operating in Japan. We fly into seven cities in the mainland US (Los Angeles, New York, Detroit, Seattle, Atlanta, Portland and Minneapolis), five cities in Asia (Singapore, Manila, Taipei, Shanghai and Bangkok), and four cities in resorts (Saipan, Guam, Koror [Palau] and Honolulu) from Narita International Airport as the hub airport for the Asia-Pacific region. We also operate from Tokyo (Haneda) International Airport, Kansai International Airport, Chubu Centrair International Airport and Fukuoka Airport to resorts and the mainland US.

What is the strength of Delta Air Lines?

First, I can think of our "people." If you ask any company executive, I think that they will all say that the number one strength of a company in the service industry is customer-friendly people.

Our "employee-friendly" corporate culture is our unique strength. This is based on our belief that providing an employee-friendly corporate culture to realize high satisfaction directly leads to improvement of the service quality for customers. The warm spirit of hospitality of the Southern US,

which is where our headquarters are, influences our corporate culture. Just like how many Japanese companies have the DNA of safety, reliability, and quality, “employee-friendly” and “customer-friendly” corporate culture truly is our DNA and is Delta Air Lines itself. We are the only airline in the US that is a non-unionized airline. I think this proves the high level of satisfaction by employees.

What are the merits of operating in Japan?

One is that there are many demands for the travel industry, creating a big market. Such conditions have allowed us to steadily expand. We operate a hub at Narita. For passengers from the US, Narita is geographically well situated to connect to all cities in Southeast Asia, not just to Japan.

Another big benefit is that we can “export” the operation efficiency, safety and service quality offered by our Japanese staff to other countries. Every customer and colleague who has experienced Delta’s service in Japan always comments on the level of operation efficiency, safety and service quality, from how customers are greeted and checked in to how issues are

handled are exceptional. We are trying to establish this in Delta’s bases throughout the world.

Regarding the business in local regions

Japan has many vibrant cities and airports and has great demand for routes connecting cities throughout the world. We started operating in Osaka in 1967, Nagoya in 1991, and Fukuoka in 2011. This is also because each city had demand and advantages. In other words, we continuously establish the network according to the demand of customers.

How about the future development of business in Japan?

Our intention is to continue to expand the services that we offer to our customers in Japan and in the US. We will continue to improve our customer experience in addition to expanding the connectivity of our network. We have the philosophy of “kaizen”, or “Keep Climbing,” or continuous improvement. It is our view that we will continue to improve the network that we offer and we will also improve every aspect of the customer service in the future. (December, 2014)

History of company in Japan

- 1947 Started operation in Japan
- 1951 Japan Airlines signed operation contract with former Northwest Airlines, a predecessor of Delta Air Lines
- 1967 Started operation of flights from/to Osaka
- 1991 Started operation of flights from/to Nagoya
- 2011 Started operation of flights from/to Fukuoka
- 2014 Opened “Narita Technical Operation Center (hanger)” in Narita International Airport

Delta Air Lines, Inc. (Japan)

Establishment: 1947
 Business: Airlines
 Address: (Tokyo Office) Shiroyama Trust Tower 16F, 4-3-1, Toranomom, Minato-ku, Tokyo
 URL: <http://www.delta.com/>

Parts of this interview can be viewed on the 「CEO Voices in Japan」section of the Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry website. [「CEO Voices in Japan」](#)