

Best Frequent Flyer and Frequent Guest Programs Chosen in the 2016 Freddie Awards

A record breaking number of 3.7 million frequent travelers and flyers from around the globe voted in this year's Freddie Awards.

“Southwest Airlines Rapid Rewards has been named frequent flyer Program of the Year. Marriott Rewards held the top spot, for the ninth consecutive year, taking the highest honor among hotel programs.”

Las Vegas, NV
April 29, 2016

Recognizing the best of travel loyalty programs, Southwest Airlines Rapid Rewards has been named frequent flyer Program of the Year. Marriott Rewards held the top spot, for the ninth consecutive year, taking the highest honor among hotel programs in the Americas region at the 2016 Freddie Awards. The Freddie Awards were on Thursday, April 28th, hosted in part this year by MGM Resorts International at the new T-Mobile Arena in Las Vegas, Nevada. A record number of 3.7 million frequent travelers from around the globe voted in this year's campaign.

Internationally, Air France/KLM Flying Blue is Program of the Year for the Europe/Africa region and Virgin Australia Velocity received the Program of the Year Freddie Award in the Middle East/Asia/Oceania region. Among hotel programs, Le Club Accorhotels is Program of the Year for the Europe/Africa region and they repeat the same honors as Program of the Year for hotels in the Middle East/Asia/Oceania region.

In the popular credit card category, American Express was a big winner by issuing two of the three winners: the Starwood Preferred Guest Card from American Express and the Flying Blue American Express Card.

The Freddie Awards represent excellence among travel loyalty programs around the globe and rate the best programs in six categories: Program of the Year, Best Promotion, Best Redemption Ability, Best Customer Service, Best Elite Program and Best Loyalty Credit Card. There is also a 210 Award for programs whose value vote rating was trending higher. Winners in this category included Club ITC, JetPrivilege, IHG Rewards Club, Norwegian Reward, LifeMiles and M life. Voters had six weeks to vote and were permitted to vote for programs in one of three global regions: Americas, Europe/Africa and Middle East/Asia/Oceania. Voting also was available in nine different languages.

The awards were announced this evening during a gala event at the brand new T-Mobile Arena in Las Vegas, Nevada. More than 400 airline, hotel and credit card representatives attended the ceremony, along with frequent flyers who voted in this year's awards. “We are delighted to once again allow frequent flyers throughout the world the opportunity to select the travel loyalty programs that they believe have achieved excellence,” said Randy Petersen, founder of the Freddie Awards. “This is not an elitist view of these programs nor a popular vote, but rather the ‘best’ are determined by the votes of those who spend a great deal of their life on the road and in turn are appreciative of the value they bring to their members.

The Freddie Awards are named after the late Sir Freddie Laker, who attracted fame (and a knighthood in the United Kingdom) for pioneering low-cost air travel across the Atlantic in the 1970s.

The presenting sponsor this year was Barclaycard. Other sponsors included Gogo, Avis, Points, Switchfly, Loylogic, Priority Pass, Inside Flyer, Connexions Loyalty and Uber. The Freddie Awards also partnered with BoardingArea, eBags and Society Awards.

And the winners are:

Americas

Airline

Program of the Year — Southwest Airlines - Rapid Rewards
Best Elite Program — American Airlines - AAdvantage
Best Promotion — Avianca - LifeMiles
Best Customer Service — Southwest Airlines - Rapid Rewards
Best Redemption Ability — Avianca - LifeMiles
210 AWARD — Avianca - LifeMiles

Hotel Category

Program of the Year — Marriott Hotels - Marriott Rewards
Best Elite Program — Hyatt - Gold Passport
Best Promotion — MGM - M life
Best Customer Service — Marriott Hotels - Marriott Rewards
Best Redemption Ability — Marriott Hotels - Marriott Rewards
210 AWARD — MGM - M life

Credit Card

Best Loyalty Credit Card — Starwood - Starwood Preferred Guest from American Express

Europe & Africa

Airline Category

Program of the Year — AIR FRANCE/KLM – Flying Blue
Best Elite Program — Lufthansa – Miles & More
Best Promotion — AIR FRANCE/KLM – Flying Blue
Best Customer Service — AIR FRANCE/KLM – Flying Blue
Best Redemption Ability — AIR FRANCE/KLM – Flying Blue
210 AWARD — Norwegian Air – Norwegian Reward

Hotel Category

Program of the Year — Accor Hotels – Le Club Accorhotels
Best Elite Program — Starwood – Starwood Preferred Guest
Best Promotion — Accor Hotels – Le Club Accorhotels
Best Customer Service — Accor Hotels – Le Club Accorhotels
Best Redemption Ability — IHG – IHG Rewards Club
210 AWARD — IHG – IHG Rewards Club

Credit Card

Best Affinity Credit Card — Flying Blue American Express Card

Middle East & Asia/Oceania

Airline Category

Program of the Year — Virgin Australia – Velocity
Best Elite Program — EL AL – Matmid Club
Best Promotion — EL AL – Matmid Club
Best Customer Service — Virgin Australia – Velocity
Best Redemption Ability — Virgin Australia – Velocity
210 AWARD — Jet Airways – JetPrivilege

Hotel Category

Program of the Year — Accor Hotels – Le Club Accorhotels
Best Elite Program — Hyatt – Gold Passport
Best Promotion — Accor Hotels – Le Club Accorhotels
Best Customer Service — IHG – IHG Rewards Club
Best Redemption Ability — IHG – IHG Rewards Club
210 AWARD — ITC Hotels – Club ITC

Credit Card

Best Affinity Credit Card — ADIB Etihad Guest VISA Card