

Press Information Kit- All about us

Contents

- ***Company Information***

Page

1	Contents
2	Company background and history
4	A brief history of Virgin Atlantic
8	The Virgin fleet of aircraft
10	Route Network
11	Airline Partnership
12	Airline Alliances
14	Loyalty Programmes – Flying club
15	Virgin Atlantic awards
17	Richard Branson: biography and background

Company background and history

Since it was founded twenty-three years ago, Virgin Atlantic Airways has become Britain's second largest airline serving the world's major cities. Virgin Atlantic is the quintessential Virgin story. It has every ingredient: the small newcomer taking on the giant and complacent establishment, the people's champion introducing better service and lower costs for passengers with a reputation for quality and innovative product development.

Virgin Atlantic was developed as an offshoot of Richard Branson's Virgin Group, which was better known at the time in the world of pop and rock music. In early 1984, Branson was contacted by an Anglo-US lawyer called Randolph Fields with a proposal for involvement in a new airline. Recognising that, like the music business, aviation was a consumer led industry, and tired of the conveyor belt attitude to passengers, Branson decided it was time for Virgin to diversify. His fellow directors thought he was mad – particularly when he announced the new airline would begin operating in just over three months.

Never one to take 'no' for an answer, Branson's infectious enthusiasm ensured that staff were hired, an aircraft was found, licences were obtained and the uniforms were designed. It was not easy, especially with incidents such as an engine failure on the eve of the airline's maiden flight. On 22 June 1984 Virgin's inaugural flight to Newark took place, a flight filled with friends, celebrities and the media. The airline's aim was simple: "To provide the highest quality innovative service at excellent value for money for all classes of air travellers". Hugely popular, Virgin Atlantic has won top business, consumer and trade awards from around the world. The airline has pioneered a range of innovations setting new standards of service. Despite Virgin Atlantic's growth the service still remains customer driven with an emphasis on value for money, quality, fun and innovation.

From those early days the airline has gone from strength to strength. Now based at Gatwick, Heathrow and Manchester airports, it operates longhaul services from Heathrow to New York (Newark and JFK), Los Angeles, San Francisco, Washington, Boston, Miami, Tokyo, Hong Kong, Johannesburg, Cape Town, Shanghai, Delhi, Mumbai, Lagos, Sydney, Dubai, Chicago, Nairobi & Mauritius. Virgin also operates services from Gatwick to Orlando, Barbados, St Lucia, Antigua, Las Vegas, Grenada, Tobago, Cuba and Jamaica (Montego Bay & Kingston). It also operates a service from Manchester to Orlando, Barbados and St Lucia.

On 20 December 1999 Richard Branson signed an agreement to sell a 49% stake of Virgin Atlantic to Singapore Airlines to form a unique global partnership. The cost of the transaction to Singapore Airlines was £600.25 million, which included a capital injection of £49 million and valued Virgin Atlantic at a minimum of £1.225 billion. The deal was finalised in early 2000.

In summer 2003 came the launch of Virgin Atlantic's revolutionary Upper Class Suite, the longest and most comfortable flat bed and seat in the airline industry. The Upper Class Suite has won twelve of the most prestigious design awards including a Yellow Pencil award for product design and an IDEA Gold Award for Transport Design.

Since December 2004 Virgin Atlantic has launched services between London and Sydney, Mumbai, Dubai, Havana, Montego Bay, and direct flights between Manchester and Barbados and Manchester and St Lucia. New services from Heathrow included Chicago in April 2007, Nairobi in June 2007 and Mauritius in November 2007. Services between Gatwick and Kingston, Jamaica, launched in October 2007.

Virgin Atlantic announced in March 2007 that it has ordered 15 of the 787-9 Dreamliners – with options on ordering another eight 787-9s and purchase rights on a further 20 aircraft. The 787-9 Dreamliner burns around 27% less fuel per passenger than the A340-300, the aircraft it will replace in the Virgin Atlantic fleet. The order will see Virgin Atlantic take delivery of its new planes from 2011 and could be worth up to US\$8 billion.

Year	Month	Details
1984	February	Concept of a high quality, value for money airline is first developed.
	March	Licence granted for London (Gatwick) to New York (Newark).
	May	Lease purchase for the first aircraft, a Boeing 747, successfully negotiated.
	June	Virgin takes off from Gatwick starting a regular connection to New York (Newark).
1985	October	Virgin Cargo and Virgin Holidays are established.
	November	Licence granted for London (Gatwick) to Miami.
1986	January	First class sleeper seats installed in Upper Class.
	April	The Miami service from Gatwick takes off.
	June	Virgin takes delivery of a second B747 and the Miami flights are increased to four a week.
1987	July	UK licence granted for the Boston route.
	September	Virgin's one-millionth transatlantic passenger takes to the air.
1988	March	Licence granted for the Los Angeles and New York (JFK) routes.
	May	Virgin commences charter services to Orlando, Florida.
	September	Lease agreements entered into for the third and fourth 747.
1989	May	Virgin commences its three flights a week service to Tokyo.
	August	Introduction of video walkmans makes Virgin first airline to offer individual TVs to business class passengers.
	September	Virgin establishes aircraft maintenance facilities for its own aircraft and to provide a service to other airlines.
	October	Virgin doubles its capacity to New York with seven flights a week to JFK. Cargo opens terminal at JFK airport. Fourth frequency to Tokyo commences. Negotiations concluded in respect of Virgin's fifth and sixth B747.
1990	May	Virgin commences its service to Los Angeles. To coincide Virgin opens Upper Class lounge at Gatwick and Inflight Beauty Therapy for Upper Class passengers. Virgin becomes first airline to introduce automatic defibrillators and trained staff to aid inflight cardiac arrest victims.
1991	January	Civil Aviation Authority opens the door to Heathrow for Virgin's award winning operations. Launch of new uniform.
	April	Service to Tokyo increases to six flights a week.
	May	Daily service from London Gatwick to Boston starts. Virgin obtains seventh and eighth 747s.
	June	Virgin becomes first airline to offer individual TVs to all classes of passenger on wide-bodied aircraft.
	July	Virgin commences services from Heathrow to Los Angeles, New York (JFK) and Tokyo.
	November	Cargo opens its own terminal in Miami. Cargo opens its own terminal in Los Angeles.
1992	March	Sale of Virgin Music to Thorn EMI for \$880m. Richard Branson pledges to invest proceeds in Virgin Atlantic.
	April	Virgin is first airline to provide child safety seats.
	May	Launch of Virgin Mid Class, first airline to offer super economy service for full fare economy passengers. Daily scheduled service from London to Orlando commences.
1993	March	Virgin Atlantic launches service between Gatwick and Athens.
	June	Virgin Atlantic is the first airline to introduce a Snooze Zone in Upper Class cabin
	July	Virgin Atlantic introduces Virgin TaxiJet – the bike service to be offered to passengers in addition to the limo service.
1994	December	HRH Princess of Wales names Virgin Atlantic's first new airbus A340 300.
	January	New service launched from London City Airport to Dublin in partnership with CityJet.
	February	Daily service to Hong Kong commences. First Boeing 747-400 joins the Virgin fleet.
	May	San Francisco service launched
1995	June	Virgin Atlantic celebrates 10 th anniversary and introduces new global corporate identity.
	October	Fourth Airbus A340 and second 747-400 join the fleet.
	November	Mid Class rebranded Premium Economy.
1995	January	Announcement of marketing alliance with Malaysian Airlines.
	April	Launch of marketing alliance with Delta Airlines.
	May	No smoking flights introduced on Virgin Atlantic's transatlantic and Hong Kong routes. O2FLY, oxygen concentrator enabling chronic chest and lung patients to fly long distance introduced onboard.
	June	Virgin Atlantic commences service to Athens. Launch of ten year partnership with Malaysian Airlines. Virgin CityJet services commence between Dublin and Brussels. Codeshare with British Midland commences.
	July	Formation of the Asia Pacific – partnership with Ansett Australia Airlines and Malaysia

	<p>July</p> <p>October</p> <p>November</p> <p>December</p>	<p>New York frequency.</p> <p>Virgin Atlantic celebrates 15 years in the air.</p> <p>The Shanghai inaugural takes place on 12 July</p> <p>Virgin signs fleet deal with Volvo to provide the airline's famous limousine service</p> <p>Virgin makes limousine service nationwide</p> <p>CAA declares Virgin Atlantic ready for the millennium</p> <p>Virgin Atlantic relaunch its frequent flyer programme renamed <i>flying club</i></p> <p>1 November – Virgin launches services to Chicago</p> <p>17 November – Virgin Atlantic relaunch the new Upper Class cabin</p> <p>Johannesburg Drive-Thru check-in opened</p> <p>Virgin Atlantic is granted extra frequencies to Shanghai from mid-2000</p> <p>Virgin Atlantic's first flight to Cape Town takes place on 2 December</p> <p>Virgin Atlantic signs codeshare agreement with Air India to operate services between London and Delhi from the summer of 2000</p> <p>Extra frequencies to Shanghai and Cape Town awarded to Virgin Atlantic by the CAA</p> <p>On 20 December Richard Branson signs agreement to sell a 49% stake of Virgin Atlantic to Singapore Airlines for £600.25 million</p>
2000	<p>February</p> <p>May</p> <p>June</p> <p>July</p> <p>October</p> <p>December</p>	<p>Opening of Revivals – Virgin Atlantic's first arrivals lounge at Heathrow airport on 8 February</p> <p>Economy and Premium Economy products and cabin receive a revamp.</p> <p>Virgin Atlantic moves its Shanghai operations to Pudong airport</p> <p>New clubhouse at JFK Airport opens</p> <p>Virgin Atlantic's Inflight Beauty Therapy service celebrates its tenth anniversary</p> <p>Virgin Atlantic signs a deal to be the first airline to introduce the latest telemedicine equipment onboard</p> <p>Virgin Atlantic launches the first direct scheduled service to Las Vegas on 8th June</p> <p>Flying club celebrates its tenth anniversary</p> <p>Virgin Atlantic launches services to Delhi on 5 July</p> <p>Virgin Atlantic launches 'Earth Calling' service onboard allowing passengers to be contacted via their mobile number to the in-seat phone.</p> <p>Revolutionary Upper Class sleeper seat introduced onboard</p> <p>Improvements in benefits offered to <i>flying club</i> members</p> <p>New baggage reclaim facility at Heathrow</p> <p>San Francisco Clubhouse opens in new International Terminal</p> <p>Virgin Atlantic wins OAG Airline of the Year</p>
2001	<p>February</p> <p>May</p> <p>August</p> <p>September</p> <p>October</p> <p>November</p>	<p>Virgin Atlantic confirms order for A380 aircraft</p> <p>New version of onboard Health video launched</p> <p>Virgin Atlantic launches new daily service to Toronto on 12 June</p> <p>Virgin Atlantic launches a new service from Heathrow to Lagos on 16 July</p> <p>Virgin Atlantic cuts capacity by 20% as a result of the terrorist attacks in the US</p> <p>Suspension of services to Chicago, Toronto and Athens</p> <p>Cockpit doors strengthened across fleet and other security measures introduced</p> <p>New safety video onboard</p> <p>Virgin Atlantic offers tickets for £98 with Daily Express</p>
2002	<p>February</p> <p>July</p> <p>August</p> <p>October</p>	<p>Frequency increases following September 11</p> <p>A340-600 order confirmed</p> <p>Launch of the A340-600 for which Virgin Atlantic is the launch customer</p> <p>First commercial flight of the A340-600 to New York</p> <p>Announcement of launch of services to Grenada and Tobago</p> <p>Virgin Atlantic launches SMS text messaging onboard</p> <p>Virgin Atlantic announced plans to launch a twice-weekly Port Harcourt service in January</p>
2003	<p>February</p> <p>May</p> <p>June</p> <p>July</p> <p>December</p>	<p>Virgin Atlantic launches twice weekly services between Gatwick and Port Harcourt, Nigeria</p> <p>Virgin Atlantic launches new Upper Class Magazine - Carlos</p> <p>Virgin Atlantic operates the first aid flight to Basra to help with relief aid</p> <p>Virgin Atlantic launches weekly service between Gatwick and Tobago and Grenada</p> <p>Virgin Atlantic introduces Passports for Pets Scheme</p> <p>Virgin Atlantic submits response to Government White Paper on future runway development</p> <p>Richard Branson launches a campaign to keep Concorde flying</p> <p>Virgin Atlantic launches Upper Class Suite – the longest bed flying today</p> <p>Virgin Atlantic announces plans to operate to Australia</p>

2004	January	Virgin Atlantic unveils the Virgin Atlantic GlobalFlyer – The Ground Breaking aircraft in which Steve Fossett will attempt the first solo circumnavigation of the world.
	February	Virgin Atlantic opens a new Clubhouse at JFK Airport
	March	Virgin Atlantic announce expansion plans for the airline, including the order of two more A340-600 aircraft and the recruitment of 1400 staff this year.
	June	Richard Branson takes on the Channel Challenge and sets a new record for the fastest crossing of the English Channel in an amphibious vehicle.
	August	Virgin Atlantic announces it has reached an agreement to take delivery of 13 new A340-600 aircraft with options for a further 13. In total the deal is worth in excess of \$5.5bn. Double Suites are launched onboard aircraft.
	October	Virgin Atlantic starts to fit Upper Class Suite onto its Gatwick fleet
	December	Virgin Atlantic launches daily services between Hong Kong and Sydney Virgin Atlantic opens new Hong Kong Clubhouse.
2005	February	Steve Fossett completes his solo circumnavigation of the world in the Virgin Atlantic GlobalFlyer.
	March	Virgin Atlantic commences services between London Heathrow and Mumbai.
	June	Virgin Atlantic celebrates its 21 st birthday by operating a commemorative flight between London and New York with Richard Branson, celebrities and media.
	July	Virgin Atlantic launches a weekly service between Gatwick and Nassau.
2006	November	Virgin Atlantic launches a twice weekly service between Gatwick and Havana.
	February	Virgin Atlantic launches a weekly service between Manchester and Barbados
	March	Steve Fossett completes the longest flight in the Virgin Atlantic GlobalFlyer
	July	Virgin Atlantic commences services between London Heathrow and Dubai
	September	Virgin Atlantic commences services between Gatwick and Montego Bay, Jamaica
2007	November	Virgin Atlantic launches its new Premium Economy seats
	April	Virgin Atlantic launches direct services between Manchester and St Lucia
	June	Virgin Atlantic re-launches direct daily services between Heathrow and Chicago
	October	Virgin Atlantic launches services between London Heathrow and Nairobi
	October	Virgin Atlantic launches services between London Heathrow and Mauritius
	October	Virgin Atlantic launches services between Gatwick and Kingston, Jamaica
December	Virgin Atlantic launches its new Upper Class Wing facility at Heathrow	
2008	December	Virgin Atlantic launches new terminal at T3 with the Spice Girls
	February	Virgin Atlantic operates World's First Biofuel Flight from Heathrow to Amsterdam

The Virgin Atlantic fleet of aircraft

Virgin Atlantic operates one of the world's youngest fleets of aircraft. Currently the fleet comprises of 38 aircraft, thirteen 747-400s and six A340-300s and nineteen A340-600s. The current average age of the fleet is 5 years and 7 months.

<i>Aircraft</i>	<i>Type</i>	<i>Name</i>	<i>Into Service</i>	<i>Manuf</i>	<i>Configuration (U/C, P/E, E)</i>
G-VFAB	B747-400	Birthday Girl	1994	1994	44/32/310
G-VHOT	B747-400	Tubular Belle	1994	1994	44/32/310
G-VBIG	B747-400	Tinker Belle	1996	1996	44/32/310
G-VTOP	B747-400	Virginia Plain	1997	1996	14/58/380
G-VAIR	A340-300	Maiden Tokyo	1997	1997	34/35/171
G-VSEA	A340-300	Plane Sailing	1997	1992	34/35/171
G-VHOL	A340-300	Jetstreamer	1997	1992	34/35/171
G-VAST	B747-400	Ladybird	1997	1997	14/58/380
G-VELD	A340-300	African Queen	1998	1997	34/35/171
G-VFAR	A340-300	Diana	1998	1998	34/35/171
G-VXLG	B747-400	Ruby Tuesday	1998	1998	14/58/380
G-VROS	B747-400	English Rose	2001	2001	14/58/379
G-VGAL	B747-400	Jersey Girl	2001	2001	14/58/379
G-VLIP	B747-400	Hot Lips	2001	2001	14/58/379
G-VROM	B747-400	Barbarella	2001	2001	14/58/379
G-VROY	B747-400	Pretty Woman	2001	2001	14/58/379
G-VWOW	B747-400	Cosmic Girl	2001	2001	44/32/310
G-VSHY	A340-600	Claudia Nine	2002	2002	45/38/225
G-VMEG	A340-600	Mystic Maiden	2002	2002	45/38/225
G-VOGE	A340-600	Cover Girl	2002	2002	45/38/225
G-VFOX	A340-600	Silver Lady	2002	2002	45/38/225
G-VGOA	A340-600	Indian Princess	2003	2003	45/38/225
G-VATL	A340-600	Atlantic Angel	2003	2003	45/38/225
G-VROC	B747-400	Mustang Sally	2003	2003	44/32/310
G-VEIL	A340-600	Queen Of The Skies	2004	2004	45/38/225
G-VSSH	A340-600	Sweet Dreamer	2005	2005	45/38/225
G-VNAP	A340-600	Sleeping Beauty	2005	2005	45/38/225
G-VGAS	A340-600	Varga Girl	2005	2005	45/38/225
G-VWKD	A340-600	Miss Behavin	2005	2005	45/38/225
G-VBLU	A340-600	Soul Sister	2006	2006	45/38/225
G-VWIN	A340-600	Lady Luck	2006	2006	45/38/225
G-VFIT	A340-600	Dancing Queen	2006	2006	45/38/225
G-VFIZ	A340-600	Bubbles	2006	2006	45/38/225
G-VYOU	A340-600	Emmeline Heaney	2006	2006	45/38/225
G-VRED	A340-600	Scarlet Lady	2006	2006	45/38/225
G-VWEB	A340-600	Surfer Girl	2006	2006	45/38/225
G-VBUG	A340-600	Lady Bird	2007	2007	45/38/225

A340-300 BASIC FACTS

The Airbus A340-300 is a 4 engined long-range aircraft from the Airbus "fly by wire" aircraft family and is assembled in Toulouse, France. Virgin Atlantic first added the A340 to its fleet in 1993. Virgin Atlantic currently operates six -300 series aircraft which typically carry 240 passengers in our 3 class configuration and have a range of over 7,000 nm. The now long established Airbus wide-body fuselage cross section is wide enough for passenger comfort but slim enough for optimum fuel efficiency. The wings for the A340, with their innovative aerodynamic design, were designed and are manufactured in the UK, by Airbus UK. The -300 is powered by four CFM International CFM56-5C2 or -5C4 engines, each delivering 31,200lb or 34,000lb of thrust respectively.

A340-600 BASIC FACTS

The new A340-600 entered service with launch customer Virgin Atlantic in July 2002. The -600 series retains the same fuselage cross section as the -300 but is some 11.6 m longer, at 75.3 m making it the longest civil aircraft produced. It also has a modified wing with an increased span of 63.4 m.

The A340-600 is designed to fly up to 7250 nm with a full payload of passengers and is configured with 308 seats in the Virgin Atlantic three class layout. The aircraft is powered by four Rolls Royce Trent 500 engines each delivering 56,000lb of thrust.

BOEING 747-400 BASIC FACTS

These aircraft are powered by 4 GE CF6-80C2 engines. Carrying more than 57,000 gallons of fuel, the -400 series consumes up to 13 per cent less fuel than previous versions of the B747 and engine noise levels are half that of original 747s in the 1970s. The typical maximum range is 7000 nm.

Virgin Atlantic Route Network

- **USA**

Heathrow/New York (Newark)/Heathrow*	VS001/VS002 VS017/VS018
Heathrow/New York (JFK)/Heathrow**	VS003/VS004 VS009/VS010 VS045/VS046 VS025/VS026
Heathrow/Miami/Heathrow	VS005/VS006
Heathrow/Los Angeles/Heathrow*	VS007/VS008 VS023/VS024
Heathrow/Boston/Heathrow	VS011/VS012
Gatwick/Orlando/Gatwick*	VS015/VS016 VS027/VS028
Heathrow/San Francisco/Heathrow	VS019/VS020
Heathrow/Washington DC/Heathrow*	VS021/VS022 VS055/VS056
Gatwick/Las Vegas/Gatwick	VS043/VS044
Manchester/Orlando/Manchester	VS075/VS076
Heathrow/Chicago/Heathrow	VS039/VS040

- **Indian**

Heathrow/Mauritius/Heathrow	VS372/VS373
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- **Africa**

Heathrow/Johannesburg / Heathrow	VS601/VS602
Heathrow /Cape Town / Heathrow	VS603/VS604
Heathrow/Lagos/Heathrow	VS651/VS652
Heathrow/Nairobi/Heathrow	VS671/VS672

- **Asia Pacific**

Heathrow/Tokyo/Heathrow	VS900/VS901
Heathrow/Hong Kong/Sydney/Hong Kong/Heathrow	VS200/VS201
Heathrow/Shanghai/Heathrow	VS250/VS251
Heathrow/Delhi/Heathrow	VS300/VS301
Heathrow/Mumbai/Heathrow	VS350/VS351

- **Middle East**

Heathrow/Dubai/Heathrow	VS400/VS401
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- **Caribbean**

Gatwick/Barbados/Gatwick	VS029/VS030
Gatwick/St Lucia/Gatwick	VS031/VS032
Gatwick/Antigua/Gatwick	VS033/VS034
Gatwick/Tobago/Grenada/Tobago/Gatwick	VS051/VS052
Gatwick/Havana/Gatwick	VS063/VS064
Manchester/Barbados/Manchester	VS077/VS078
Gatwick/Montego Bay/Gatwick	VS065/VS066
Manchester/St Lucia/Manchester	VS079/VS080
Gatwick/Kingston/Gatwick	VS069/VS070

* Two services per day, ** Four services per day

Airline Partnerships

Virgin Atlantic announced its unique global partnership with Singapore Airlines in December 1999. Under the terms of the deal Singapore Airlines acquired a minority stake of 49% of Virgin Atlantic. The partnership is a perfect match - both airlines have an unparalleled reputation for quality and innovation, and have won countless awards from the travel industry.

The cost of the transaction to Singapore Airlines was £600.25 million, which included a capital injection of £49 million. At the time Virgin reinvested a further £51 million into Virgin Atlantic. This transaction for a minority equity investment valued Virgin Atlantic at a minimum of £1.225 billion.

Virgin Atlantic, the UK's second largest long haul airline, operates a fleet of 38 aircraft to 30 destinations in Africa, Asia, Middle East, Indian Ocean, North America, the Caribbean and Australia.

The two carriers' route networks do not overlap and are uniquely complementary. Under the terms of the memorandum of understanding, the two carriers have retained their distinctive identities and have continued to develop their own products. The two companies have retained their independent management teams but Singapore Airlines has some representation on the Virgin Atlantic Board of Directors.

Frequent flyers on Virgin Atlantic and Singapore Airlines are able to earn mileage and redeem travel rewards on each other's services. Additionally Virgin Atlantic and Singapore Airlines work together to offer their passengers greater benefits including Round The World fares, access to lounges world-wide, and an increasingly seamless travel experience across their networks.

Airline Alliances

To enable us to offer flights to even more destinations around the world, we have entered into alliances with a number of partner airlines – each hand picked for their high levels of service and customer care. On alliance services connecting with Virgin Atlantic flights we are able to through check passengers and their baggage to their final destination, where local customs regulations permit.

We have synchronised our schedules with those of our partners to enable us to offer passengers the shortest possible connections between our services. Passengers are also able to earn and redeem Flying Club miles on our alliance services, subject to the terms and conditions of individual Agreements.

Singapore Airlines

Our Codeshare Agreement with Singapore Airlines enables Virgin Atlantic passengers to purchase tickets in Economy and Business class on Singapore Airlines services from both London Heathrow and Manchester to Singapore. Additionally, Singapore Airlines passengers are able to purchase seats between Singapore and Orlando, Boston, Miami and Washington, using Virgin Atlantic operated Transatlantic services. From 1 December 2006, Singapore Airlines' passengers can fly via London to Los Angeles, San Francisco or Dubai on Virgin Atlantic services and from the 1 January 2007 Virgin Atlantic passengers will be able to travel on Singapore Airlines' services between London and Sydney via Singapore.

bmi British Midland

Our Codeshare arrangement with bmi British Midland (BD) allows European passengers greater access and simple connections onto our worldwide network of services operated from Heathrow. Our partnership allows us to offer connections between Amsterdam, Brussels, Dublin, Hanover, Palma, Paris, and Venice and many of our Heathrow operated services.

Continental Airlines

Virgin Atlantic's Codeshare Agreement with Continental Airlines (CO) allows us to jointly offer high quality, high frequency services to New York. We sell seats in Economy class and BusinessFirst on two Continental operated London Gatwick - Newark services, allowing us to make seven daily services available to NYC. The Codeshare has now been expanded to include up to 10 Domestic US.

South African Airways

Virgin Atlantic's Codeshare Agreement with South African Airways (SA) enables passengers to connect between Virgin Atlantic services to and from Johannesburg, and SA service between Johannesburg and Cape Town, Durban, Port Elizabeth and East London.

America West/US Airways

Virgin Atlantic's Codeshare Agreement with America West Airlines (HP) enables Virgin Atlantic passengers convenient connections between Virgin Atlantic services from Los Angeles, San Francisco, and Las Vegas, and America West services from Phoenix, Las Vegas and San Diego.

Virgin Blue

Virgin Atlantic's Codeshare Agreement with Virgin Blue enables Virgin Atlantic passengers to connect between Virgin Atlantic services to and from Sydney and Hong Kong with Virgin Blue flights between Brisbane, Adelaide, Cairns, Melbourne and Gold Coast domestic flights

Air China

Virgin Atlantic's Codeshare Agreement with Air China enables Virgin Atlantic passengers to purchase flights between London Heathrow and Beijing, complimenting Virgin Atlantic's daily flights into Shanghai. Air China will codeshare on Virgin Atlantic's daily services between London Heathrow and Shanghai.

All Nippon Airways

Virgin Atlantic's alliance agreement allows Virgin Atlantic passengers to fly onwards in Japan on ANA's domestic services. The deal will also allow ANA travellers to fly on Virgin Atlantic services from ANA destinations on the Virgin route network.

Loyalty Programmes

Flying club

Flying Club is Virgin Atlantic's frequent flyer programme and it's one of the most generous around. Every time you take a qualifying flight with us or our wide range of partners you can earn miles which can be spent on a wide range of rewards.

As soon as you join *Flying Club*, you'll become a red member and be entitled to some great benefits such as regular news and offer updates, access to your *Flying Club* account online, and the use of a dedicated helpline.

Once you move up to Flying Club Silver you'll get all the benefits of *Flying Club* Red, plus a good deal more, designed to make your travelling experience even more enjoyable. Benefits include: Use of Premium Economy Check In on every Virgin Atlantic flight (regardless of your class of travel), upgrades for the Gatwick and Heathrow Express train services and much more.

At the pinnacle of *Flying Club* is our gold tier, where you'll receive extra privileges designed just for our most frequent travellers. Benefits include use of Upper Class Check In (on every Virgin Atlantic flight), use of Virgin Clubhouses around the world, and many more exclusive entitlements.

You can ensure that whatever your travelling habits, *Flying Club* and its partners can offer you a wide range of benefits and rewards to meet your personal travel needs.

For more information please go to www.virgin.com/flyingclub

Flying Co.

Virgin Atlantic has a sales incentive designed especially for small and medium-sized businesses under the new brand *flying Co.*

Flying Co is a unique incentive for smaller businesses because miles are earned twice over. Not only does each business traveller earn miles for their business as a member of *Flying Co*, but they also earn miles for themselves as members of Flying Club, our frequent flyer programme.

Flying Co miles can be redeemed on rewards including Virgin Atlantic flights, Virgin Atlantic flight upgrades, chauffeur driven car transfers, London Heathrow and Gatwick Clubhouse invitations, Heathrow and Gatwick Express tickets, bmi flights, Eurostar tickets, Hertz car rental and hotel stays.

Visit www.virginatlantic.com/flyingco for more information.

Recent Awards

2008

Red Dot Awards

Hall of Fame – Design Excellence

Rough Guides

Voted most child-friendly airline

Business Travel World Awards

Best Longhaul Business Airline

Globe Travel Awards 2008

Best Scheduled Airline to US/Canada
Favourite Airline

2007

World Travel Awards 2007 - US

World's Leading Airport Lounge

Zagat's 2007 Global Airline Survey - US

Best Frequent Flier Program in the World

Travel & Leisure's 2007 Global Vision Awards - US

Corporate Initiative for Environmental work

Business Travel Awards 2007

Airline of The Year
Best Airline - Economy
Best Airline - Business
Best Scheduled Airline, Long-Haul
Favourite Scheduled Airline, Long Haul
Best Customer Service for an Airline

Business Traveller Awards

Best Business Class
Best Premium Economy

Travel Trade Gazette Awards

Best Business Airline

Conde Nast Reader Travel Awards

Best Leisure Airline – long-haul

Red Dot Awards

Product Design – LHR Clubhouse

D&AD Awards

Environmental Design – LHR Clubhouse

Jet Set Airline Awards - US

Winner of eCityofStyle 2007 Jet Set Airline Award

Lighting Design Awards 2007

Isometrix Lighting & Design **for the** LHR Clubhouse

Design Week Awards

Best of Show – LHR Clubhouse
Hospitality Environmental – LHR Clubhouse

Travel Weekly's Readers Choice Awards - US

Best International Airline

Travel Weekly Globe Awards

Best Scheduled Airline to USA/Canada

TTG Business Travel People Awards

Best Sales Team

2006

Buying Business Travel Diamond Awards

Best Business Airline

Buying Business Travel Diamond Awards

Best Transatlantic Airline

FX Design Award

Winner - Best Leisure or Entertainment Venue

Campaign Poster Awards

5 Awards – Advertising

Group Leisure Magazine Awards

Best Airline for Groups

TTG Awards

Airline of the Year - Business

Business Traveller

Best Business Class
Best Premium Economy

Conde Nast Traveller Awards

Top Business on Transatlantic routes

BACA 'Excellence Awards'

Best Passenger Airline

Business Travel World Awards 2006

Best Long-haul Business Airline

Cargo Airline of the Year Awards - Air Cargo News

Cargo Airline of the Year - Virgin Atlantic Cargo
Best Cargo Airline to North America - Virgin Atlantic Cargo

Air Carrier International - Air Cargo World

Award for Excellence - Virgin Atlantic Cargo

2006 US Awards

Business Traveler's Reader's Choice Awards

Best Business Class in the World
Best Premium Economy

Forbes

Best Business Class

Conde Nast Traveler

Top Business Class on Transatlantic Routes

Skytrax 2006 World Airline Awards

World's Best Business Class Lounge

North American Travel Journalism Association

Best Foreign Airline

Travel & Leisure World's Best Awards

Conde Nast Reader's Choice Awards

Virgin Atlantic scored in the top 5 out of all airlines for both of these awards

2005

DBA Design Effectiveness Awards

Industrial Product – Upper Class Suite

Business Traveller Awards

Best Premium Economy Class

New Media Age Effectiveness Awards 2005 - Travel Category

Virgin Atlantic Web site redesign

Lighting Design Awards

Transport Lighting – Upper Class Suite

Air Transport World Awards

Passenger Service Award

International Forum (IF) Design Awards

IF Product Design – Upper Class Suite

Cargo Airline of the Year Awards - Air Cargo News

Best Cargo Airline to North America - Virgin Atlantic Cargo

Air Carrier - Air Cargo World

Award for Excellence - Virgin Atlantic Cargo

2004

Wallpaper Design Awards

Most Life Enhancing Item – Upper Class Suite

BSME Awards – Editor of the Year

Michael Jacovides – for Carlos

TTG Awards

Best Long Haul Scheduled Airline

Travel Bulletin Awards

Top Leisure Scheduled Airline

Business Traveller Awards

Best Premium Economy Class

Magazine Design Awards

Best Design Magazine of the Year – Carlos

Best Use of Illustration - Carlos

Best Designed Customer Magazine - Carlos

IDEA Awards

IDEA Gold Award – Transport Design – Upper Class Suite

Red Dot Awards

Best of the Best high Quality Design – Upper Class Suite Interior

Best High Quality Design –Upper Class Suite

ID Annual Review Awards

Best in Furniture – Upper Class Suite

Group Travel Awards

Best Airline for Groups

The Design and Art Direction Awards

Transport Product Design - The Upper Class Suite

The Guardian Travel Awards

Best Business Airline

Communicators In Business Awards

Internal Online Publications – Verb Online

Design Week Awards

Industrial Product Design winner –Upper Class Suite

Editorial Design winner – Carlos

Business Travel Awards

Best Long Haul Business Airline

Travel Weekly Awards

Best Transatlantic Airline

Recruitment Advertising Awards

Graduate / trainee – Engineering Apprenticeships

General Appointments – Hairdressers ads

Hospitality / Travel / Leisure – IFBT ads

Cargo Airline of the Year Awards - Air Cargo News

Best Cargo Airline to North America - Virgin Atlantic Cargo

Best Cargo Airline to the Far East - Virgin Atlantic Cargo

Richard Branson: biography & background

Founder and Chairman of the Virgin group of companies

Richard Branson was born in 1950, and educated at Stowe School, where he established a national magazine called Student at the age of sixteen. He started a student advisory service centre aged 17 to help young people. In 1970 he founded Virgin as a mail order record company and shortly after opened a record shop in Oxford Street, London. During 1972, a recording studio was built in Oxfordshire where the first Virgin artist, Mike Oldfield, recorded "Tubular Bells" which was released in 1973.

The first album of the newly created Virgin records went on to sell over 5 million copies. Over the years many household names, including Genesis, Phil Collins, Peter Gabriel, Simple Minds, The Human League, Culture Club, Janet Jackson and The Rolling Stones helped make Virgin one of the top six record companies in the world. The equity of Virgin Music Group – record labels, music publishing and recording studios – was subsequently sold to the Thorn EMI in 1992 in a US\$ 1 billion deal.

The interests of Virgin Group had now expanded into international "Megastore" music retailing, book and software publishing film and video editing facilities, clubs, travel, hotels and cinemas through over 200 companies in 29 countries.

Virgin Atlantic Airways, formed in 1984, has become the second largest British airline and operates a fleet of Boeing 747 and Airbus A340 aircraft to a network of 28 destinations worldwide. The airline was founded on the concept of offering a competitive and high quality Upper Class and Economy service. The airline is now the holder of every major travel award.

Since 1985, Richard has also been involved in a number of world record-breaking attempts. In 1986, his boat 'Virgin Atlantic Challenger II', rekindled the spirit of the Blue Riband by crossing the Atlantic Ocean in the fastest ever recorded time. This was followed a year later by the epic hot air balloon crossing in 'Virgin Atlantic Flyer' which was not only the first to cross the Atlantic but was the largest ever flown. In January 1991, he crossed the Pacific Ocean from Japan to Arctic Canada, again breaking all existing records with speeds of up to 245 miles per hour. Between 1995 and 1998 Richard Branson and Per Lindstrand and Steve Fossett made a number of attempts to circumnavigate the globe by balloon. In late 1998 they made a record breaking flight from Morocco to Hawaii but their dream was shattered by bad weather before a Swiss team successfully circumnavigated the globe early in 1999.

In 1996 Virgin Group launched Virgin Express, a short-haul airline based in Belgium offering a low cost, no frills service and flying within Europe. Virgin Rail operates two rail franchises and is engaged in a \$3.2 billion fleet replacement programme to create one of the most modern rail networks in the world with high speed tilting trains already in operation. In 1999 Virgin entered into the telecommunications business launching Virgin Mobile and in 2000 low cost airline Virgin Blue was launched in Australia, both of these companies have subsequently floated. The Virgin Group today comprises over 200 independent companies, with combined annual sales of some \$8 billion and total employees of around 35,000.

Sir Richard Branson recently announced that the Virgin Group has entered into an agreement to licence the technology to develop the world's first privately funded spaceships dedicated to carrying commercial passengers on space flights. Virgin has formed Virgin Galactic, a new company, which will become the world's first commercial space tourism operator.

In the 1999 New Years Honours list Richard Branson received a knighthood for his 'services to entrepreneurship'.

Richard is married to Joan with two grown children, Holly and Sam.

