

This is your history

1996

We took flight on Feb 29, 1996.

A great leap forward for Canadian air travel – on leap year day, no less.

Why “WestJet”? Co-founder Mark Hill’s Mom came up with the name. We’re glad she did, as it sounds a lot better than “ABC Air”.

Throughout the year grew to 220 employees. It was a tough first year with the airline being grounded in September for two weeks due to a disagreement with Transport Canada over maintenance schedule requirements.

3 Aircraft

9 Destinations

1997

We started wearing our memorable denim uniforms. No frills. Fresh uniforms. Friendly, customer-first attitude. Our first impression with Canadians is a good one, making our second year in business a very good one.

6 Aircraft

8 Destinations

1998

It was in the original building and apparently it used to be a garage. Not sure if that was true, but the building got pretty cool as winter progressed. The dividers between agents were quite tall and hard to see others. The windows were a popular place to sit, just to feel in a more “open” space. Eventually as the season progressed and agents wanted to stick to those windows, those agents ended up with their winter coats on and fingerless gloves. Loved those windows – but eventually we were all driven to move away from them!!!

Grande Prairie to our destinations. We received two more aircraft, started our Cargo program, and “kidnapped an aircraft”.

What’s better than flying our two millionth guest? Flying guest number three million. We passed both milestones as 1.6 million guests flew WestJet this year.

11 Aircraft

8 Destinations



1999

July 13, 1999 WestJet's IPO on the Toronto Stock Exchange. Shares went on sale at \$10, and by year end were valued at \$18.

We broke ground on the Deerfoot building, CARE was born (a department solely focused on WestJetters, events, life moments, etc), we created the Touch 'n Go kiosk, and launched PACT (Proactive Communications Team).

16 Aircraft
12 Destinations

2000

We celebrated the grand opening of our new building on Deerfoot, with a centralized Ops Centre.

The new millennium, and the dawning of a new age, as the little airline that could – but wouldn't fly east of Winnipeg – adds Ottawa and Moncton as destinations, with Hamilton as our eastern hub.

2000 saw every full-time WestJetter take home record profit share.

22 Aircraft
15 Destinations

2001

We received our first NG (737-700), built our hangar and launched our flight simulator. This was the year we had our flight system go down. 2001 was also a tragic year with September 11, but WestJetters stepped up and persevered. We were the first Canadian airline back in the sky, and we worked diligently to ensure the transition to a more secure airspace didn't hamper the comfort or safety of our guests.

27 Aircraft
20 Destinations

2002

TAC (Turn around Crew ie: Ramp agents) joined our WestJet team.

WestJet moves into the business travel market, introducing service to Toronto and London, Ontario. Our shares split three for two for the second time, while revenues increased 42 percent.

We began adding winglets to our 737-700s to reduce fuel consumption, lower costs and reduce our impact on the environment.

35 Aircraft
21 Destinations



2003

In the midst of a SARS outbreak, we signed our Air Transat agreement.

You can't run an airline on peanuts. Spicy snack mix? You bet. Westjetters took to the streets, telling our story and handing out spicy snack mix. Just another fun example of doing things a bit differently, in our most profitable year to date.

44 Aircraft
24 Destinations

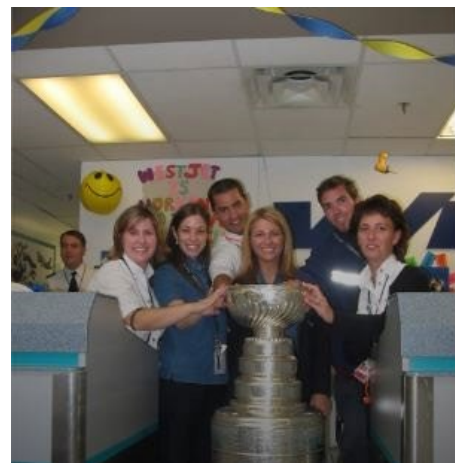
2004

Let's fly south. WestJet introduces service to several U.S. destinations: New York City, Los Angeles, Palm Springs, San Francisco, Phoenix, Fort Lauderdale, Orlando and Tampa. We launched our LiveTV.

Susan Aglukark, Nunavut's first ever Juno Award-winning Inuk singer/songwriter flew with us back in 2004 in out of Fort McMurray (YMM).

More ways to serve: WestJet adopts common-use check-in kiosks to further enhance our self-service options for our guests. Our buy-on-board program introduces inflight food purchase menus.

Stanley cup visited Saskatoon (YXE)



2005

In 2005 we retired out 200 series aircraft. The retirement left us with one of North America's most modern airline fleets.

Launched our Cares for Kids program.

Nickelback across Canada, we were excited to be given a private concert and have some friends in OCC as the band broadcasted live from the aircraft.

63 Aircraft
35 Destinations

2006

2006 was our 10-year anniversary! We also launched WestJet Vacations and received our first 737-800.

11.2 million guests flew WestJet this year. That's like flying the entire population of Beijing. We don't fly to Beijing yet, but when we do, we'll be able to fly the entire city.

63 Aircraft
35 Destinations

2007

We celebrated the groundbreaking for our new Fred Ring Building. We also pioneered paperless boarding passes.

For the third year in a row, WestJet is named in the top ten of Canada's Most Admired Corporate Cultures.

70 Aircraft
46 Destinations

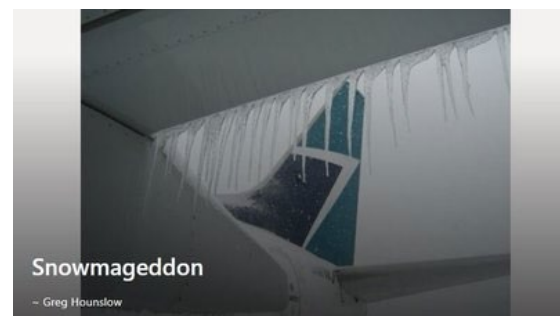
2008

In 2008 we got on the social media train, opening our WestJet Twitter account.

Right before Christmas we experienced "Snowmageddon", a huge snow storm across the entire country.

"Who is WestJet?" Our April Fool's Day story about sleeper cabins was quite a hit, even landing us on Jeopardy!

76 Aircraft
55 Destinations



2009

The \$100 million building is LEED-certified, providing a healthy, friendly and dynamic workplace for WestJetters – and is also home to one of Calgary's busiest Starbucks locations. (We do like our coffee.)

2009 saw many challenges with the Sabre cutover (which impacted WestJetters and our guests) and in April, suspension of several destinations in Mexico due to H1N1.

86 Aircraft
67 Destinations

2010

WestJet in the Calgary Stampede. Not our first year, but we're still a proud sponsor.

This year we added a whopping 17 international destinations, taking our total destinations to 70.

Attitude is everything. WestJet flight attendants are named the industry's best, in a 2010 survey of air travelers. Friendly attitude and outstanding customer service were named as the top two factors.

91 Aircraft

70 Destinations



2011

Our legendary April Fool's prank this year included us introducing a state-of-the-art money-saving feature - helium in the ventilation system to lighten the load, garnering 340,000 views from 172 countries.

We also launched our Eastern Triangle Initiative, increasing capacity to Ottawa, Toronto and Montreal.

Our reputation for excellence gains recognition with a nifty hat trick: WestJet is listed among Canada's Top 100 Employers, is named one of Aon Hewitt's Best Employers in Canada, and is named a JD Power Customer Service Champion.

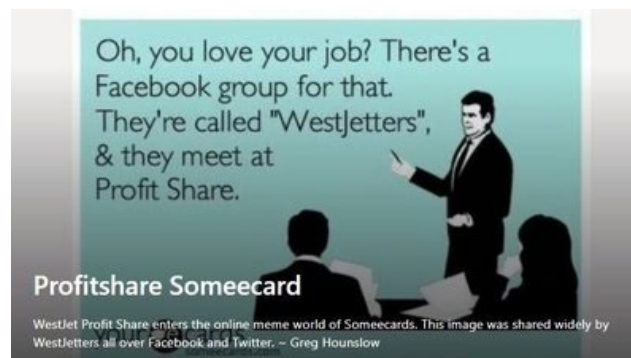
2012

We participated in our first Hero Holiday and our first ever Christmas Miracle. We also received our 100th 737 NG.

WestJet Profit Share enters the online meme world of Someecards. This image was shared widely by WestJetters all over Facebook and Twitter.

100 Aircraft

81 Destinations



2013

WestJet Encore took to the skies on June 24, 2013.

This year we also added the Disney Mickey plane, making things a little more magical in December.

Our Christmas Miracle went viral, reinforcing WestJet's fun and caring culture. To view case study, click [here](#). To view Christmas Miracle case study, click [here](#).

We also introduced Home Rez super sales agents, WVI agents and reservation support.

We might just need a bigger garage: WestJet signs a letter of intent to purchase 65 new Boeing 737 MAX aircraft, with deliveries commencing in 2017.

105 Aircraft
87 Destinations



2014

WestJet crosses the pond. We celebrate our first transatlantic flight and love of all things Irish by introducing seasonal non-stop service to Dublin, Ireland.

We also launched WestJet Rewards - Teal, Silver and Gold.

122 Aircraft
107 Destinations

2015

We added Disney's Frozen decal aircraft to our fleet, received our first 767 and launched WestJet Connect.

As the year came to a close, WestJetters across our network performed almost 32,000 mini miracles for WestJet Christmas. And we welcomed 20 million guests.

140 Aircraft
98 Destinations

105 Aircraft
87 Destinations

2016

WestJet turns 20. That's something to celebrate. 20 years of re-defining Canada's airline industry through low fares, great customer service, and of course, classic WestJet jokes.

Hello, London. Our first wide-body transatlantic flight to London (Gatwick) is a remarkable milestone in our history. Our low-fare, high-care service jumped across the pond, and in doing so, made London a little bit more Canadian.

Established in 1999, the Proactive Communication Team (PACT) had the name changed to the WestJet Employee Association (WEA).

2017

MAX arrived, making us the first Canadian airline to receive the new, fuel-efficient Boeing 737 MAX 8 aircraft. This state-of-the-art engineering marvel is 14 per cent more fuel efficient than our current 737 Next-Generation aircraft. It's also the quietest bird in our fleet.

Guests like us. They really, really like us. Our caring brand continued to shine, as we were once again named Canada's most trusted airline. (Gustavson Brand Trust Index).

In May 2017, the WestJet Pilots unionized. In November 2017, the WestJet Encore Pilots unionized. Both are represented by ALPA.



2018

We are living the dream. The new Boeing 787-9 Dreamliner, that is. We unveiled our Dreamliner look with its new livery (paint job), and updated company logo. It's a new era for us, and the next step in our transformation to a global network airline.

Say bonjour to the City of Light. We're beyond thrilled to be flying to Paris, France. Yet another milestone in bringing our guests to one of the world's most visited cities.

In 2018 we welcomed two new members to our family: Swoop and Juliet.

In July 2018, the WestJet Cabin Crew unionized. They are represented by CUPE.

In August 2018, WestJet Dispatchers unionized. They are represented by CALDA.

2019

Our first Dreamliner arrived in early 2019. In May 2019 we announced the purchase of the company by ONEX, changing WestJet from a public company to a private one.

In May 2019, WestJet Encore Cabin crew unionized. They are represented by CUPE.

IN November 2019, the structure of WEA changed again. The Airports Employee Association (AEA), Aircraft Maintenance Engineer Association (AMEA), Contact Centre Employee Association (CCEA) and Technical and Administrative Professional Support (TAPS) are now independent of the WEA umbrella and will be part of a larger council of representation.

2020

2020 was a year we will never forget. Coronavirus (COVID-19) took over the world with major impacts on WestJet.



2021

WestJet celebrates 25 years of connecting Canadians. Click [here](#) for 25 year video.