

# Southwest Airlines Apologizes and Initiates Internal Investigation Regarding Illicit Computer Pricing Complaint

*SubscriberWise president obtains a prompt reply from Southwest Airlines following a formal complaint filed with the United States Department of Transportation.*

DALLAS, TX, U.S.A., October 14, 2015 /EINPresswire.com/ -- In response to [DOT](#) case # JI2015100057, a representative for [Southwest Airlines](#) replied with the following correspondence:

Dear David,

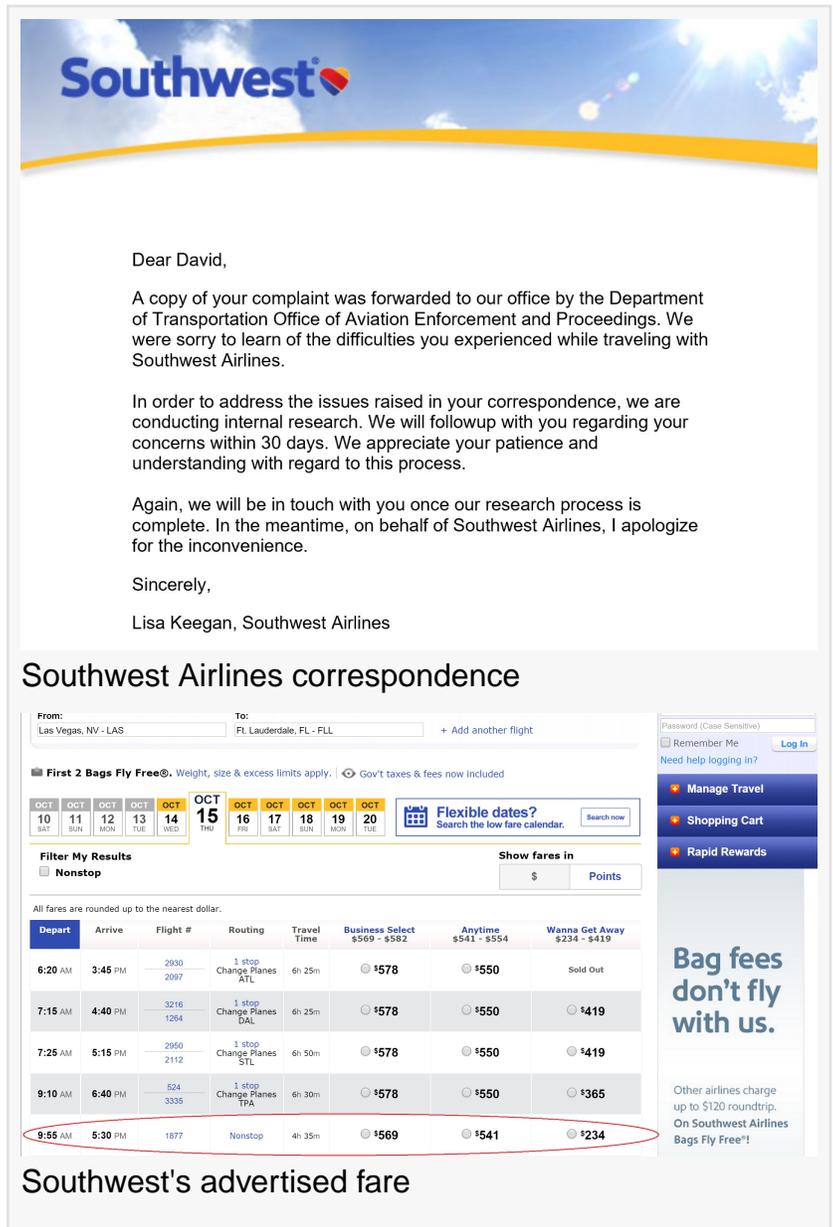
A copy of your complaint was forwarded to our office by the Department of Transportation Office of Aviation Enforcement and Proceedings. We were sorry to learn of the difficulties you experienced while traveling with Southwest Airlines.

In order to address the issues raised in your correspondence, we are conducting internal research. We will followup with you regarding your concerns within 30 days. We appreciate your patience and understanding with regard to this process.

Again, we will be in touch with you once our research process is complete. In the meantime, on behalf of Southwest Airlines, I apologize for the inconvenience.

Sincerely,

Lisa Keegan, Southwest Airlines



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Lisa Keegan, Southwest Airlines

### Southwest Airlines correspondence

From: Las Vegas, NV - LAS To: Ft. Lauderdale, FL - FLL + Add another flight

First 2 Bags Fly Free®. Weight, size & excess limits apply. Gov't taxes & fees now included

Depart	Arrive	Flight #	Routing	Travel Time	Business Select	Anytime	Wanna Get Away
6:20 AM	3:45 PM	2930 2097	1 stop Change Planes ATL	6h 25m	\$578	\$550	Sold Out
7:15 AM	4:40 PM	3216 1264	1 stop Change Planes DAL	6h 25m	\$578	\$550	\$419
7:25 AM	5:15 PM	2950 2112	1 stop Change Planes STL	6h 50m	\$578	\$550	\$419
9:10 AM	6:40 PM	524 3335	1 stop Change Planes TPA	6h 30m	\$578	\$550	\$365
9:55 AM	5:30 PM	1877	Nonstop	4h 35m	\$569	\$541	\$234

Southwest's advertised fare

Bag fees don't fly with us.

Other airlines charge up to \$120 roundtrip. On Southwest Airlines Bags Fly Free!®

"I sincerely appreciate that Southwest has responded to my

complaint so promptly,” said David Howe, president of [SubscriberWise](#). “I’m hopeful the information that I provided to the DOT, along with Southwest’s internal investigation, will result in a technology solution that will guarantee consumers obtain the advertised price for airfare selected (at southwest.com) and purchased in a timely manner.

“For the record, I provided Jessica Ilich of the DOT a screen shot from southwest.com with proof of the \$234.00 advertised fare which is the very same itinerary that resulted in an actual ticket price of \$411.00. Ironically this fare was published both on the day of booking (10/13/15) as well as today (10/14/15) despite its mysterious final price of \$411.00 at the point-of-sale. In other words, the advertised fare on Southwest’s corporate website of \$234.00 instantly increased 75 percent to \$411.00 moments later at the conclusion of the booking process (audio disputing fare increase with SWA: <http://www.subscriberwise.com/media/SWA.wav> )

“According to the DOT, this pricing tactic is inconsistent with the U.S. DOT’s rules,” stated Howe.

“Today I decided to investigate how other pricing schemes outside of the airline industry are used in a way that do not financially game consumers with complex computer technology and an absolute lack of transparency or accountability,” continued Howe. “After researching Ticketmaster’s model, I decided to provide this additional response to Jessica at the DOT:

RE: <http://www.einpresswire.com/article/291399331/southwest-airlines-doesn-t-live-up-to-new-transparency-campaign-subscriberwise-president-says>

Dear Jessica: It turns out that Ticketmaster is just like the airline industry regarding supply and demand pricing. However, there’s one critical difference. With Ticketmaster, the price advertised (at the moment the selection is made) is the price guaranteed for a set period of time. During this booking period, there’s a timer which is conspicuously displayed while the consumer is completing the transaction.

Here’s info directly from Ticketmaster’s FAQs ([http://help.ticketmaster.com/faqs/?tm\\_link=tm\\_i\\_faqs](http://help.ticketmaster.com/faqs/?tm_link=tm_i_faqs) ; search term: Checkout time):

How much time do I have to purchase tickets online? At the bottom of every page during the checkout process, there is a timer that shows you how long you have to complete the page before we release your tickets for others to buy.

Why is there a time limit when I’m purchasing ticket? We want to ensure that tickets are available to as many people as possible, so we limit the amount of time a customer can hold tickets before completing their purchase. At the bottom of every page during the checkout process, there is a timer that shows you how long you have to complete the page before we release your tickets for others to buy.

Why does checkout time vary between events and times of day? You may notice different checkout time lengths when purchasing tickets at different times of the day or for different events. This is because we set checkout time lengths according to ticket demand. When less customers are purchasing tickets, we lengthen the amount of checkout time. Alternately, when many customers are purchasing tickets simultaneously, we enforce shorter checkout times in order to serve all customers in a timely manner.

Jessica, this is exactly the system regulators should impose on the airline industry to end the illegal computerized pricing scheme of instantly (and often dramatically) increasing advertised prices during a two or three minute booking session. In other words, there’s absolutely no reason the price cannot

be "locked" while the customer completes the booking in a timely manner.

Sincerely,  
David Howe

"I'm eager for Southwest to complete its investigation and I look forward to their response," concluded Howe.

#### About SubscriberWise

SubscriberWise® launched as the first U.S. issuing consumer reporting agency exclusively for the cable industry in 2006. In 2009, SubscriberWise and TransUnion announced a joint marketing agreement for the benefit of America's independent cable operators. Today SubscriberWise is a risk management preferred-solutions provider for the National Cable Television Cooperative.

SubscriberWise protects billions of dollars of capital equipment and programming costs for leading communications companies across the nation. SubscriberWise technology also protects the identities of children and adults everywhere.

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