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## Southwest makes top 10 list for collecting most extra revenue

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Southwest Airlines, the nation's largest carrier of domestic travelers, has long promoted its policy against charging passengers for the first two checked bags.

But the Dallas-based discount airline still generates extra revenue in other ways.

Southwest recently moved up into a list of the top 10 airlines around the world that generate the most revenue from extra passenger charges, according to a study by Wisconsin-based IdeaWorks, an airline consulting firm.

In 2011, the study said, Southwest generated \$1.18 billion in extra revenue — money made outside of ticket sales — compared with about \$490 million in 2010.

A big chunk of that money came from the sale of frequent flier points to credit card companies, said Jay Sorensen, president of IdeaWorks and author of the study.

But the airline also collected sizable revenue by charging passengers \$10 to board early under its EarlyBird program, among other special offers that give passengers priority boarding and access to faster check-in lines, according to the study.

And, of course, the airline generates bag fees for passengers who check more than two suitcases or have bags that exceeds the 50-pound weight limit. In the first three months of this year, Southwest pocketed nearly \$8 million from checked bag fees, according to the U.S. Bureau of Transportation Statistics.

"Everything they have has been doing better," Sorensen said of Southwest's extra revenue. "I think we will see another jump in revenue next year."