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How budget airlines REALLY make their money: Jet2 and Wizz Air rely on optional extras MORE than Ryanair, with only 65% of their income coming from ticket price

- *Wizz Air came second in poll of airlines earning money from extra charges*
- *Jet2 took second place, Ryanair fifth and easyJet ninth*
- *Budget airlines relying on extra charges for up to 40% of their income*

By Travelmail Reporter

This article is based upon a report issued by IdeaWorksCompany.

The world's top airlines collected more than £31.5 billion in extra charges in 2013, an increase of more than £4 billion on the previous year.

Some airlines are making up to 40 per cent of their money from charging for extras like seat allocation, checking in luggage and food and drink on flights, according to a report by consultancy IdeaWorksCompany.

And when it comes to budget flights charging for extras, there are some surprise contenders at the top of the list.

Despite once leading the way as the budget airline that takes the most money from so-called ancillary charges, Ryanair only appears in fifth place in the 2013 report.

It is actually beaten by Jet2, the Leeds-based budget airline, and Wizz Air, the Hungarian carrier which operates across Europe.

The top carrier overall for extra charges was actually Spirit Airlines, which advertises itself as 'ultra low cost' and operates across the US, the Caribbean and Latin America.

Wizz Air took second place, relying on ancillary charges for 35 per cent of its revenue, while Allegiant - a US airlines based out of Las Vegas - Jet2 and Ryanair completed the top five.

1. Spirit - 38%
2. Wizz Air - 35%
3. Allegiant - 33%
4. Jet2.com - 28%
5. Ryanair - 25%
6. Tigerair - 24%
7. Jetstar - 21%
8. AirAsia X - 20%
9. easyJet - 19%
10. AirAsia Group - 18%

Asian and Australian carriers also made it into the top 10, including Tigerair and Jetstar, with easyJet coming in ninth place, with extras equally 19 per cent of its income. The statistics show a massive increase in extra charges by airlines.

In 2007, when the report was first launched, Ryanair led the way with ancillary charges representing 16 per cent of the money it took from customers.

Now the top airlines, Spirit, relies on extras for 38 per cent of its money, with Ryanair raking in 25% of its cash from seat charges, baggage charges, car hire commission and food and drink.