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Aviation

[NextGen gets boost with GAO decision, LaHood confirmation, January 26, 2009](#) The US government took another small step toward a revamp of the nation's air transport infrastructure last week as a proponent was confirmed as the new transportation secretary and the Government Accountability Office officially commended FAA for its progress. GAO, an arm of Congress that monitors government spending and performance, removed ATC modernization from its list of "high risk areas" for waste and mismanagement, saying FAA had addressed "root causes" that led GAO to place ATC reform on its previous seven lists, issued every two years.

[Delta reports massive 2008 loss, predicts 2009 rebound, January 28, 2009](#) Delta Air Lines reported a full-year 2008 net loss of \$8.9 billion, a result that represented a major reversal from net income of \$1.61 billion in 2007, attributing the huge deficit mostly to noncash charges related to goodwill impairment (\$7.3 billion) and its acquisition of Northwest Airlines (\$970 million). Consolidated combined traffic (including DL, NWA and regional affiliates) for full-year 2008 increased 2.7% to 202.7 billion RPMs on a 0.4% lift in capacity to 246.2 billion ASMs, producing a load factor of 82.4%, up 0.6 point.

[Allegiant finds profitable formula, January 28, 2009](#) Unfettered by a fuel hedge program that it ended 18 months ago, Allegiant Air parent Allegiant Travel Co. took advantage of falling oil prices and finished both the fourth quarter and full year in the black, the latter a \$35.4 million profit, up 12.4% from \$31.5 million earned in 2007. Allegiant's fourth-quarter profit of \$18.2 million was nearly four times greater than the \$4.8 million reported in the year-ago period. Operating income soared more than fourfold to \$28.7 million from \$6.1 million. Full-year revenue climbed 39.8% to \$504 million against a 41.6% year-over-year increase in expenses to \$448.2 million. Operating income rose 26.8% to \$55.8 million from \$44.1 million.

[Boeing reports big loss, cutting 10,000 jobs, January 28, 2009](#) Facing falling air traffic and pressure on military budgets, Boeing Co. announced plans to cut 10,000 jobs after reporting a surprise fourth-quarter loss Wednesday. The Chicago-based company, which makes passenger and military jets, became the latest blue chip company to mirror a slowdown in the world economy, as air travel wanes, airlines cut costs, and the government shifts focus to construction spending. Boeing, whose orders plunged in 2008 following three years of very strong bookings, also announced lower-than-expected earnings for this year.

Education

[College financial aid system facing stiff test, January 24, 2009](#) Finding financial aid for college this year promises to be tougher than any final exam. The quest for

	<p>money that begins for students and parents every January has taken on new urgency in 2009 amid fears that loans and grants will be scarcer than in the past due to the recession. Federal student loans remain readily available -- with some funding even increased recently by Congress. But the prospect that grants and scholarships may be cut at many schools, combined with the shrinking availability of private loans, has fueled widespread angst at a time when more people than ever are seeking help. Applications for federal aid for the current academic year already are running 10 percent above last year's record pace, according to the Department of Education.</p> <p>Coming Soon: Cash for College Students' Good Grades, January 30, 2009 For the past several years economists and educators have been studying the impact of incentives — monetary and other valuable gifts — on student performance. Now a recently launched Web site, GradeFund, takes the idea of incentives and aims to utilize them as a practical solution for paying for college. Students aged 13 and up (including graduate school) can easily go online and create a profile with the objective of getting sponsors who contribute money for their good grades.</p>
Technology	<p>Putting Your Best Face Forward with Desktop Videoconferencing, January 28, 2009 The Lyles Center for Innovation and Entrepreneurship at the California State University, Fresno taps into experts and speakers from across the campus and throughout the university system to help lead classes in innovation, consult on business, and provide advice. But travel consumes large amounts of valuable time and is increasingly expensive. And with a multi-acre campus and partnerships with local colleges across our region, we're focused on finding innovative ways to better achieve our goals and support our mission. The Lyles Center felt that videoconferencing could be a solution, but we needed to find a system that could reliably support multi-party interactions at an affordable price.</p> <p>JAL conducts 747-300 camelina oil test flight, February 2, 2009 Japan Airlines Friday conducted the latest biofuel test flight, operating a 747-300 partially powered by fuel derived primarily from the camelina plant. The 90-min. flight from Tokyo Haneda followed recent biofuel demonstration flights conducted by Air New Zealand and Continental Airlines (ATWOnline, Jan. 8). A 50/50 blend of traditional jet fuel and camelina-based biofuel powered one of the aircraft's four Pratt & Whitney JT9Ds. It was the first biofuel test flight using Pratt engines.</p>
Space	<p>NASA delays Discovery mission to space station, February 3, 2009 The space shuttle Discovery's mission to the International Space Station (ISS) has been delayed at least one week to February 19 for additional testing of a flow control valve, NASA said Tuesday. The Discovery had been scheduled for blastoff from Cape Canaveral, Florida on February 12. But during a flight readiness review, "NASA managers decided Tuesday to plan a launch no earlier than February 19," the space agency said.</p>
Society	<p>Corporate America starts to get serious on pay, February 1, 2009 The public outcry over sky-high compensation appears to have shaken some corporate boardrooms enough that changes are being made to curb pay, redefine appropriate practices and give shareholders more influence over compensation. Wall Street has been the target of criticism for paying executives exorbitant amounts, all while allowing them to take excessive risks. Those firms now have been forced to alter their pay practices by the government under the taxpayer-funded bailout.</p>

Economy	<p>House Quickly OKs \$819B Economic Stimulus Bill, January 29, 2009 In a swift victory for President Barack Obama, the Democratic-controlled House approved a historically huge \$819 billion stimulus bill Wednesday night, filled with new spending and tax cuts at the core of the young administration's revival plan for the desperately ailing economy. The vote was 244-188. The vote sent the bill to the Senate, where debate is expected to begin as early as this week on a companion measure already taking shape. Democratic leaders have pledged to have legislation ready for Obama's signature by mid-February.</p>
Government	<p>Stimulus Bill Would Make Millions of Students Newly Eligible for Tuition Tax Credit, January 28, 2009 Almost four million low- and middle-income students would become eligible for a tuition tax break under economic-stimulus legislation before Congress, according to an analysis by the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities. The House of Representatives is expected to pass the bill today. The House economic-stimulus bill would make people who do not owe taxes eligible for a refund worth up to 40 percent of the maximum credit, or \$1,000. Similar legislation in the Senate would allow them to receive up to 30 percent of the credit, or \$750.</p>
Other Articles of Interest (May not fall in current scan timeframe)	<p>2008 National Survey of Student Engagement Explores Variations in Educational Quality, January/February 2009 The 2008 report from the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE), Promoting Engagement for All Students: The Imperative to Look Within, finds that the quality of undergraduate education varies much more within a single institution than between institutions—in most cases, more than 90 percent of variations in educational quality is within an institution, not between institutions.</p>