



Indy tells Cincy: 'Come fly with us'



May 14, 2010 by [Bruce Smith](#) | Star staff

Ad campaign touts nonstops and better fares in Circle City

Indianapolis International Airport is launching a marketing campaign to lure travelers from Cincinnati who might be willing to drive to Indiana to catch lower-cost flights.

The \$150,000 campaign will use advertisements in newspapers, magazines, billboards and social media websites to target Cincinnati area travelers, who already account for 70,000 boardings a year at the Indianapolis airport.

As the ads note, Indianapolis offers lower-cost flights and more nonstop flights to places such as Orlando, Fla., Las Vegas and Phoenix. Average air fares from Indianapolis last year were \$276, nearly \$100 lower than Cincinnati's average of \$367, according to the U.S. Bureau of Transportation Statistics. The national average was \$306.

Cincinnati travelers also may be more open to making the two-hour drive to Indianapolis because Delta Air Lines has drastically reduced flights through Cincinnati/Northern Kentucky International Airport, which used to be a major hub for the airline. Delta has 170 flights a day now compared with 630 five years ago.

"We didn't plan for that, but it was a coincidence," said Indianapolis Airport Communications Director Patzetta Trice.

The Indianapolis ads started appearing this month in the Cincinnati Enquirer and local business magazines that target business travelers. More ads will appear in Delta Air Lines' Sky Magazine for June, July and August.

The campaign also will be waged on Twitter and Facebook. And banner ads on Google, Yahoo! and Bing search engines will target computer users with Cincinnati ZIP codes.

The ads urge travelers to "Leave CVG behind" and "Next time you fly, keep us in mIND." They play off the international three-letter abbreviations for the Indianapolis airport (IND) and for Cincinnati (CVG).

One goal of the campaign is to counteract the loss of almost 12,000 passengers a year from the Indianapolis airport's prime market area of 3 million people, mostly in the central two-thirds of Indiana, who have been driving the other direction to planes at Cincinnati.

If that passenger flow can be reversed, the economic impact could be at least \$2.3 million a year, airport officials said. After Cincinnati, similar ad campaigns are planned to target Louisville, Ky., and Chicago, where Indianapolis airport officials think they can recapture the loyalty and dollars.

"In a sense, Cincinnati is different because of our frequency and nonstop flights," said Barb Schempf, manager of public relations. "With the recession and the

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airline consolidations, we're all in transition now. No real hard feelings. It's just business."

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