

AirCal Vector Logo Free Download

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Description

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Air California, later renamed AirCal, was a U.S. airline company headquartered in Newport Beach, California that started in the 1960s as a California intrastate airline. The airline's home airport was Orange County Airport, now known as John Wayne Airport.

Air California was the "other" California intrastate carrier, counterpart to better known Pacific Southwest Airlines (PSA). The two airlines had very different origins. PSA was the product of a highly competitive, lightly-regulated earlier period in California intrastate airline history, while Air California was born into a later, far more regulated California environment. The California regulator explicitly aimed to ensure Air California's success by shielding it from PSA competition, in particular at Orange County Airport, from which PSA was excluded. Air California was further protected by Orange County itself. From 1967 through 1980, Orange County ensured Air California was one of only two mainline airlines to have access to (and the dominant carrier at) Orange County Airport, a lucrative duopoly that allowed Air California to prosper.

Air California/AirCal had a series of unusual owners. From 1970 to 1974, it was under the control of C. Arnholt Smith, a San Diego powerbroker, later convicted of fraud. From 1974 to 1981, it was controlled by Smith's former holding company Westgate-California Corporation (WCC), while WCC was in an extended period of bankruptcy run by a court-appointed trustee. From 1981 to 1987, AirCal was controlled by two California real estate developers, who, despite the turbulent nature of the industry at the time, made a success of the airline, before selling it to American Airlines.

Following the federal Airline Deregulation Act in 1978, Air California expanded beyond its namesake state. The airline was renamed AirCal in 1981 and merged into American Airlines in 1987.[4] By that time, AirCal flew as far east as Chicago and as far north as Seattle, Anchorage, and Vancouver, BC. But less than four years later, American gutted the former AirCal network, leaving little to show for its purchase.

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