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FORT WORTH, Texas – American Airlines announced today it is launching a first-of-its-kind social networking site, BlackAtlas.comSM, which combines the best features of a travel site with the power of social networking to create a dynamic online community for travelers to share experiences unique to the black community.

User content will be anchored by travel video blogs and commentaries from author, filmmaker, television producer and world traveler, Nelson George, who will serve as the BlackAtlas.com travel expert at large. Unique travel content for the site is currently being collected at BlackAtlas.com. The site is scheduled to fully launch later this month.

“I love to experience new cities, new food and meet new people. I love the thrill of discovering black culture everywhere, and so many African Americans feel the same way I do,” said Nelson George. “I want to entice more people to hit the road by giving them a different, and hopefully fresh, angle on travel through BlackAtlas.com.”

Through blogs and discussion boards, users will be able to share travel stories, videos and photos and provide travel tips. They will also be able to rate or make recommendations of popular destinations and businesses, connect with other travelers with similar interests, answer questions based on their personal travel experiences and build travel itineraries based on user recommendations.

“We at American Airlines see BlackAtlas.com as an important connector, enabling an online community of travelers to share information about their favorite places for experiencing African-American and Black culture, food, music, literature, history and events across the globe,” said Roger Frizzell, American’s Vice President – Corporate Communications and Advertising.

“As we created the site, we also found a wealth of little-known facts about African-American and Black cultural and historical contributions in every corner of the world”, said McGhee Williams Ossee, Burrell Communications’ Co-CEO. “From a Jamaican restaurant in Milan to Santa Monica’s Ink Well Beach, there are uniquely African-American experiences enjoyed by travelers around the world. BlackAtlas.com is a forum that encourages travelers to share these stories and gives them the opportunity to better plan their next trip with a few key activities or places in mind.”

Site users will be able to share content across social networks, create profiles, rate content, save content to Favorites, create downloadable travel guides, contribute unique text, video or photos, and link to promotional fares on AA.com. Initial site content will be divided into destination/city-specific and category-specific information, such as travel tips, restaurants, nightlife, culture, arts and museums, historic sites, beauty and barber shops, and places of worship.