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## An Allegiant Air Executive Popular With Wall Street Resigns

**Lukas Johnson isn't the most senior executive at Allegiant Air, but he has an outsized role at a company that has remarkably few executive vice presidents. He'll almost certainly be missed.**

By Brian Sumers

Lukas Johnson, a senior executive at Allegiant Air who chooses new routes and helps the airline set ticket prices, is leaving the company for a new undisclosed opportunity.

Hilarie Grey, a spokeswoman for Allegiant, confirmed the news. Johnson speaks regularly about Allegiant's strategy on earnings calls and directly to analysts, but the company did not deem the departure a material fact worthy of a filing with the Securities and Exchange Commission, because he is not a named executive officer.

Johnson declined to comment about his decision.

Johnson joined Allegiant in 2010 as a relatively junior executive and worked his way up to become senior vice president for commercial. He has been in charge of Allegiant's network, shifting the airline slightly away from its focus on the smallest U.S. markets, and growing it in places like Memphis, Tennessee, and Austin, Texas. He also has led the carrier's revenue-management team, among others.

While Johnson is not among the five most key executives on the airline's proxy filing, he has a significant following on Wall Street. Some investment analysts have commended him for his honesty, and he is often willing to go into detail about where Allegiant flies and why. In a recent note, Joseph DeNardi of Stifel, praised Johnson for his "command" and "passion" for airline planning and revenue management. DeNardi compared him to Scott Kirby, president of United Airlines, another executive liked for his candor and knowledge.

Allegiant has been in the news recently, mostly from fallout from an April investigation by CBS' 60 Minutes into the airline's maintenance practices. Correspondent Steve Kroft found Allegiant's jets have more mechanical problems than aircraft operated by major airlines and questioned whether the airline has systematic issue. Allegiant has denied the allegations and fought back against 60 Minutes, with the airline's president calling the report "inaccurate, misleading and not reflective of our safety culture and practices."

Johnson is not part of the controversy, which has focused on the airline's operations department.

Commercially, Allegiant is a major success, and its stock is among the best performing airline stock in the world. Allegiant has had 61 consecutive profitable quarters, and Allegiant executives said last month they do not expect the recent news coverage will affect the company's profitability.

Allegiant has had some turnover on its commercial team in the past year. Most notably, COO Jude Bricker resigned last May, and landed later as CEO of Sun Country Airlines, a low-cost-carrier based in Minneapolis. Another former Allegiant executive, Brian Davis, joined him this year as senior vice president for commercial.

*Brian Sumers is a Los Angeles-based reporter at Skift, where he covers the global airline industry.*