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Airline Quality Rating 2013

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Airline Quality Rating

2013

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Our 23rd year of reporting airline performance

April, 2013

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ABOUT THE AUTHORS

Dr. Brent Bowen is Professor and Head, Department of Aviation Technology within the Purdue University College of Technology. Previously, Dr. Bowen served as Professor and Chair, Aviation Science, Parks College of Engineering, Aviation and Technology, and directed the office of Air Transportation Policy and served as Senior Fellow for the National Center for Aviation Safety Research at Saint Louis University. Bowen attained his Doctorate in Aviation Sciences from Oklahoma State University and a Master of Business Administration degree from Oklahoma City University. His Federal Aviation Administration certifications include Airline Transport Pilot (Type-rated Douglas DC-3 SIC), Certified Flight Instructor (SEL, MEL, Instrument) with Gold Seal, Advanced-Instrument Ground Instructor, Aviation Safety Counselor, and Aerospace Education Counselor. Dr. Bowen has authored/co-authored numerous successful grand proposals totaling awards exceeding \$25 million and has in excess of 300 publications, papers and professional program appearances to his credit. His research interests focus on aviation applications of public productivity enhancement and marketing channels, specifically in the areas of service quality evaluation, benchmarking, safety and security. Dr. Bowen is an active industry consultant, pilot, and former fixed-base operator and scheduled air carrier operator. Dr. Bowen served on the National Research Council Steering Group on the Small Aircraft Transportation System and was named by the FAA Administrator to a National Academy of Science study group on airspace optimization as a component of the Next Generation Air Transportation System. Additionally, Dr. Bowen was appointed by FAA Administrator to serve on a National Academy of Science panel to examine the need to cultivate a future generation of transportation leaders.

Dr. Dean E. Headley is Associate Professor of Marketing in the Department of Marketing at the W. Frank Barton School of Business, Wichita State University. He holds a Doctorate in Marketing and Statistics from Oklahoma State University, a Master of Business Administration degree from Wichita State University, and a Master of Public Health Degree from the University of Oklahoma. Dr. Headley's research interests include methodology development for measurement of service quality, the connection between service quality and consumer behavior, consumer choice processes in service settings, and the effects of marketing activities on consumers and providers of services.

Dr. Bowen's and Dr. Headley's research on the development of the national Airline Quality Rating (AQR) is viewed by more than 75 million people each year and is annually featured by national news outlets such as ABC's Good Morning America, The Cable News Network, The Today Show, C-Span, USA Today, The Associated Press, The Wall Street Journal, Aviation Week and Space Technology, the network evening news shows, and in numerous other national and international media. Bowen and/or Headley have served as invited expert witnesses before the U.S. House of Representatives Committee on Government Operations and have served as invited speakers and panelists for such groups as the National Academy of Sciences/Transportation Research Board, Department of Transportation and other Congressional and Executive panels.

Their body of research has been recognized with awards from the American Marketing Association, the American Institute of Aeronautics and Astronautics, Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University, the Travel and Transportation Research Association and others.

AIRLINE QUALITY RATING 2013

**Brent D. Bowen, Purdue University
Dean E. Headley, Wichita State University**

Abstract

The Airline Quality Rating (AQR) was developed and first announced in early 1991 as an objective method for assessing airline quality on combined multiple performance criteria. This current report, the Airline Quality Rating 2013, reflects monthly Airline Quality Rating scores for calendar year 2012. AQR scores for 2013 are based on 15 elements in four major areas that focus on airline performance aspects important to air travel consumers over the calendar year of 2012.

The Airline Quality Rating 2013 is a summary of month-by-month quality ratings for U.S. airlines that are required to report performance by virtue of having at least 1% of domestic scheduled-service passenger revenue during 2012. Using the Airline Quality Rating system of weighted averages and monthly performance data in the areas of on-time arrivals, involuntary denied boardings, mishandled baggage, and a combination of 12 customer complaint categories, airlines' comparative performance for the calendar year of 2012 is reported. This research monograph contains a brief summary of the AQR methodology, detailed data and charts that track comparative quality for domestic airline operations for the 12-month period of 2012, and industry results. Also, comparative Airline Quality Rating data for 2011 are included, where available, to provide historical perspective regarding performance quality in the industry.

The Airline Quality Rating (AQR) System

The majority of quality ratings available in the past have relied on subjective surveys of consumer opinion that were infrequently collected. This subjective approach yields a quality rating that is essentially non-comparable from survey to survey for any specific airline. Timeliness of survey-based results can be a problem in the fast-paced airline industry as well. Before the Airline Quality Rating, there was effectively no consistent method for monitoring the quality of airlines on a timely, objective, and comparable basis. With the introduction of the AQR, a multi-factor, weighted average approach became available that had not been used before in the airline industry. The method relies on utilizing published, publicly available data that reports actual airline performance on critical quality criteria important to consumers and combines them into a rating system. The final result is a rating for individual airlines with interval scale properties that is comparable across airlines and across time periods.

The Airline Quality Rating (AQR) is a weighted average of multiple elements (see Table 1) important to consumers when judging the quality of airline services. Elements considered for inclusion in the rating scale were screened to meet two basic criteria; 1) an element must be obtainable from published data sources for each airline; and 2) an element must have relevance to consumer concerns regarding airline quality. Data for the elements used in calculating the ratings represent performance aspects (on-time arrival, mishandled baggage, involuntary denied boardings, and 12 customer complaint

areas) of airlines that are important to consumers. All of the elements are reported in the *Air Travel Consumer Report* maintained by the U.S. Department of Transportation.

Weights were originally established by surveying 65 airline industry experts regarding their opinion as to what consumers would rate as important (on a scale of 0 to 10) in judging airline quality. Each weight and element was assigned a plus or minus sign to reflect the nature of impact for that criterion on a consumer's perception of quality. For instance, the criteria of on-time arrival performance are included as a positive element because it is reported in terms of on-time successes, suggesting that a higher number is favorable to consumers. The weight for this criterion is high due to the importance most consumers place on this aspect of airline service. Conversely, the criteria that includes mishandled baggage is included as a negative element, and is reported in terms of mishandled bags per 1000 passengers served, suggesting that a higher number is unfavorable to consumers. Because having baggage arrive with passengers is important to consumers the weight for this criterion is also high. Weights and positive/negative signs are independent of each other.

Weights reflect importance of the criteria in consumer decision-making, while signs reflect the direction of impact that the criteria should have on the consumer's rating of airline quality. When all criteria, weights and impacts are combined for an airline over the year, a single interval scaled value is obtained. This value is comparable across airlines and across time periods. In the spring of 2002, a nationwide survey of frequent flyers was conducted that allowed a revisiting of the weighting for the AQR elements. Analysis of the sample of 766 opinions showed no appreciable difference in the relative weights for the AQR elements. To maintain comparability across the years, the weights have been held constant.

The Airline Quality Rating criteria and the weighted average methodology allow a focused comparison of domestic airline performance. Unlike other consumer opinion approaches that have relied on consumer surveys and subjective opinion, the AQR continues to use a mathematical formula that considers multiple weighted objective criteria to arrive at a single, fully comparable rating for airline industry performance. The Airline Quality Rating provides both consumers and industry watchers a means for monitoring comparative quality for each airline on a timely basis, using objective, performance-based data. Over its 23 year history, the Airline Quality Rating has often been cited as an industry standard for comparing airline performance. Currently the AQR stands as the only regularly published rating available for airline performance. With the continued global trend in airline operations alliances, the argument becomes even stronger for the Airline Quality Rating to be used as a standard method for comparing the quality of airline performance for international operations as well.

Table 1

AIRLINE QUALITY RATING CRITERIA, WEIGHTS AND IMPACT

	CRITERIA	WEIGHT	IMPACT (+/-)
OT	On-Time	8.63	+
DB	Denied Boardings	8.03	--
MB	Mishandled Baggage	7.92	--
CC	Customer Complaints	7.17	--
	Flight Problems		
	Oversales		
	Reservations, Ticketing, and Boarding		
	Fares		
	Refunds		
	Baggage		
	Customer Service		
	Disability		
	Advertising		
	Discrimination		
	Animals		
	Other		

Data for all criteria is drawn from the U.S. Department of Transportation's monthly *Air Travel Consumer Report*. (<http://dot.gov/airconsumer/>)

The formula for calculating the AQR score is:

$$\text{AQR} = \frac{(+8.63 \times \text{OT}) + (-8.03 \times \text{DB}) + (-7.92 \times \text{MB}) + (-7.17 \times \text{CC})}{(8.63 + 8.03 + 7.92 + 7.17)}$$

What the Airline Quality Rating Tells Us About 2012

The Airline Quality Rating industry score for 2012 shows an industry that declined in overall performance quality over the previous year. As an industry, performance in 2012 was only slightly worse than the 2011 performance. Of the 12 carriers rated in both 2011 and 2012, seven carriers improved in Airline Quality Rating scores. American Eagle had the largest improvement in overall score, while United and SkyWest had the largest decline in AQR score for 2012.

The **overall industry** AQR score was nearly the same in 2012 as in 2011, even though declines were seen in two of the four performance areas tracked. As an industry, the AQR criteria shows that on-time arrival percentage was better (81.8% in 2012 compared to 80.0% in 2011), mishandled baggage rates improved to 3.07 per 1,000 passengers in 2012 from 3.35 per 1,000 passengers in 2011, involuntary denied boardings per passenger served increased to 0.97 per 10,000 passengers in 2012 from 0.78 per 10,000 passengers in 2011, and consumer complaint rates increased to 1.43 per 100,000 passengers in 2012 from 1.19 per 100,000 passengers in 2011. Of the 11,445 complaints registered with DOT regarding all U.S. domestic carriers, 61.6% were for either flight problems, reservation, ticketing and boarding problems, or customer service problems. Taking all 14 rated airlines together, the AQR score for the industry declined from a level of -1.08 in 2011 to -1.11 in 2012. With a mixed bag of gains and losses across the 14 carriers rated, the nearly identical AQR score for the industry is a positive sign. The maintenance of the AQR score at a near record low level during difficult economic times speaks well of the industry.

AirTran Airways (FL) On-time performance improved in 2012 (84.4% in 2011 compared to 87.1% in 2012). AirTran's denied boardings performance (0.95 per 10,000 passengers in 2012 compared to 0.57 in 2011) was worse. An increase in customer complaint rate to 0.91 complaints per 100,000 passengers in 2012 was worse performance than their 2011 rate of 0.72. The mishandled baggage rate of 1.58 per 1,000 passengers in 2012 was better than 2011 (1.63). This was the second best mishandled baggage rate of all airlines rated.

Alaska Airlines (AS) had performance improvement in only one of the four areas tracked. Worse on-time arrival performance (87.5% in 2012 compared to 88.2% in 2011), more mishandled bags per 1,000 passengers (2.93 in 2012 compared to 2.87 in 2011), and more customer complaints (0.51 per 100,000 passengers in 2012 compared to 0.48 in 2011) all had a negative impact. With a slightly better rate of involuntary denied boardings (0.63 in 2012 compared to 0.82 per 10,000 passengers in 2011) Alaska Airlines' overall AQR score only slightly improved for 2012. Even with three of four areas showing declines, the AQR score of -0.79 for Alaska Airlines for 2011 was improved to -0.77 for 2012.

American Airlines (AA) AQR score for 2012 improved. The improvement in AQR score (-1.24 in 2011 compared to -1.11 for 2012) reflects a combination of poorer performance for on-time arrivals (76.9% in 2012 compared to 77.8% in 2011) and customer complaints per 100,000 passengers (1.80 in 2012 compared to 1.46 in 2011), and improved performance for denied boardings (0.73 in 2012 compared to 0.92 in 2011) and mishandled baggage performance (3.55 per 1,000 passengers in 2011 compared to 2.92 in 2012). The combination of performance outcome gains and losses produced an improvement in the AQR score for 2012.

American Eagle (MQ) had a denied boarding rate of 1.07 for 2012, much improved from 2.24 per 10,000 passengers in 2011. The airline had a decrease in the rate of customer complaints (1.27 in 2012 down from 1.45 per 100,000 passengers in 2011). On-time performance was 81.6% in 2012 compared to 76.3% for 2011. Their mishandled baggage rate of 7.32 per 1,000 passengers in 2011 improved to 5.80 for 2012, but was still well above the industry rate of 3.07. This combination of performance on the criteria produced an improved AQR score for 2012 (-1.78 in 2012 compared to -2.51 for 2011). American Eagle had the largest improvement in AQR score of any airline rated for 2012.

Delta Air Lines (DL) On-time percentage for 2012 shows an improvement over 2011 (82.3% in 2011 and 86.5% in 2012). Their rate of mishandled baggage (2.66 in 2011 improved to 2.10 in 2012) was better than the industry average of 3.07 mishandled bags per 1,000 passengers. A increase in denied boardings (2011 rate of 0.31 per 10,000 passengers compared to 0.51 for 2012) and a reduced rate of customer complaints (1.23 in 2011 compared to 0.73 in 2012) combined to move Delta's AQR score to -0.58 in 2012 from -0.80 in 2011. With gains in three of four criteria, Delta's overall AQR score improved by the third biggest margin of the airlines rated.

ExpressJet (EV) Data for ExpressJet reflects the combined data for Atlantic Southeast and ExpressJet for 2012. On-time performance (76.9%) is below the industry average of 81.8%. ExpressJet's denied boarding performance (2.13 per 10,000 passengers) was the second highest of the airlines rated and compares unfavorably to the industry average of 0.97. A customer complaint rate of 1.07 complaints per 100,000 passengers compares well to the industry average of 1.43 for 2012. Their mishandled baggage rate of 5.52 per 1,000 passengers (second worst of all rated) is higher than the industry rate of 3.07 bags per 1,000 passengers. Overall, ExpressJet entered the AQR ratings with the second worst AQR score of the 14 airlines rated this year.

Frontier Airlines (F9) On-time performance in 2012 (77.9%) declined compared to 2011 (79.2%). Frontier's denied boarding performance (0.78 per 10,000 passengers in 2012 compared to 0.97 in 2011) was better than last year. A customer complaint rate of 1.05 complaints per 100,000 passengers for 2012 increased from their 2011 rate of 0.76. Their mishandled baggage rate of 2.22 per 1,000 passengers was slightly worse than their 2011 rate of 2.21. Frontier's 2012 AQR score of -0.78 compared to -0.75 for 2011 was among the smallest declines in AQR score of all the airlines rated.

Hawaiian Airlines (HA) On-time performance (93.4% in 2012 and 92.8% for 2011) is the best of all airlines rated for 2011 and 2012. Hawaiian's denied boarding performance (0.11

per 10,000 passengers in 2011 and 0.18 in 2012) is among the best of the airlines rated and compares very favorably to the industry average of 0.97. A customer complaint rate of 0.89 complaints per 100,000 passengers is higher than last year's rate of 0.70. Their mishandled baggage rate of 2.88 per 1,000 passengers is worse than their 2011 rate of 2.63. Hawaiian had the fifth best AQR score for 2012 at -0.71.

JetBlue Airways (B6) On-time performance in 2012 improved to 79.1% from 73.3% in 2011. Jet Blue's denied boarding performance (0.01 per 10,000 passengers in 2012 and 2011) is the lowest of the airlines rated. A customer complaint rate of 0.79 complaints per 100,000 passengers was lower in 2012 (1.08 in 2011) and was well below the industry average of 1.43 for 2012. Their mishandled baggage rate of 1.88 per 1,000 passengers in 2012 was third best among airlines rated and it was less than their 2011 rate of 2.21. JetBlue had the second best AQR score (-0.43) of the airlines rated for 2012.

SkyWest Airlines (OO) On-time performance of 81.6% in 2012, was improved from 79.3% for 2011. SkyWest's denied boarding performance (2.32 per 10,000 passengers in 2012 compared to 0.68 in 2011) declined markedly. A customer complaint rate of 0.88 complaints per 100,000 passengers in 2012 compared to the 2011 rate of 0.73 had a negative impact on their 2012 AQR score. Their mishandled baggage rate of 5.26 per 1,000 passengers in 2012 declined from the 2011 rate of 4.13 bags per 1,000 passengers. SkyWest's AQR score declined in 2012 to -1.88 from -1.15 in 2011, and is one of the two airlines with the largest decline in AQR score from year to year..

Southwest Airlines (WN) On-time arrival percentages of 81.3% in 2011 was improved to 83.1% in 2012. A customer complaint rate of 0.25 per 100,000 passengers in 2012 and 0.32 in 2011 are the industry's lowest. Southwest Airlines is consistently the airline with the lowest customer complaint rate in the industry. An involuntary denied boarding rate of 0.65 per 10,000 passengers in 2011, increased to 0.84 per 10,000 passengers in 2012. The mishandled baggage rate of 3.65 per 1,000 passengers in 2011 improved to 3.08 per 1,000 passengers for 2012. Overall, Southwest shows an improved AQR score of -0.81 for 2012 over their score of -0.93 in 2011.

United Airlines (UA) Data this year for United reflects the combined data for United and Continental. On-time arrival performance declined from 80.2% in 2011 to 77.4% in 2012. Their mishandled baggage rate increased from 3.66 per 1,000 passengers in 2011 to 3.87 in 2012. Performance regarding an involuntary denied boarding rate of 1.01 per 10,000 passengers in 2011 worsened to 1.83 in 2012. A higher customer complaint rate of 4.24 in 2012 compared to 2.21 per 100,000 passengers in 2011 combined with declines in all other performance areas to move United's 2012 AQR score to -2.18 from -1.45 in 2011. United is the lowest rated airline of the 14 included in the AQR for 2012.

US Airways (US) showed improvement in all four performance areas tracked for 2012. A closer look reveals that US Airways performed better in on-time performance (85.9% in 2012 compared to 79.8% in 2011), mishandled baggage (2.14 per 1,000 passengers in 2012 compared to 2.70 in 2011), and in customer complaint rate (1.74 per 100,000

passengers in 2012 compared to 1.91 in 2011). An involuntary denied boarding rate of 0.68 per 10,000 passengers in 2012 compared to 0.94 in 2011 was also an area of performance gain for US Airways. Their overall 2012 AQR score of -0.87 reflects improvement over their -1.13 score for 2011. The improvement in AQR score was the second largest of all airlines rated.

Virgin America (VX) is included in the AQR for the first time as an airline required to report performance data. On-time performance (83.5%) is above the industry average for on-time performance of 81.8%. Virgin America's involuntary denied boarding performance (0.07 per 10,000 passengers) was the second best of the airlines rated and compares very favorably to the industry average of 0.97. A customer complaint rate of 1.50 complaints per 100,000 passengers also compares well to the industry average of 1.43. Their mishandled baggage rate of 0.87 per 1,000 passengers (best of all rated) is clearly better than the industry rate of 3.07 bags per 1,000 passengers. Overall, Virgin America entered the AQR ratings with the best AQR score (-0.35) of any airline rated this year.

Previous Airline Quality Reports

Bowen, Brent D., Dean E. Headley and Jacqueline R. Luedtke (1991), Airline Quality Rating, National Institute for Aviation Research Report 91-11, Wichita, Kansas.

Bowen, Brent D., and Dean E. Headley (1992,1993,1994,1995), Airline Quality Rating Report, National Institute for Aviation Research Report Series, Wichita, Kansas.

Bowen, Brent D., and Dean E. Headley (1996, 1997, 1998, 1999, 2000, 2001, 2002, 2003, 2004, 2005, 2006, 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010, 2011, 2012), Airline Quality Rating Report, W. Frank Barton School of Business, Wichita, Kansas.

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Detail of Airline Performance

Since the Airline Quality Rating is comparable across airlines and across time, monthly rating results can be examined both individually and collectively. The following pages outline the AQR scores for the industry and for each airline rated by month for 2012. For comparison purposes, results are also displayed for 2011 where available. A composite industry chart that combines the airlines tracked is shown at first, with individual airline performance charts following in alphabetical order.

Airline Quality Rating Scores

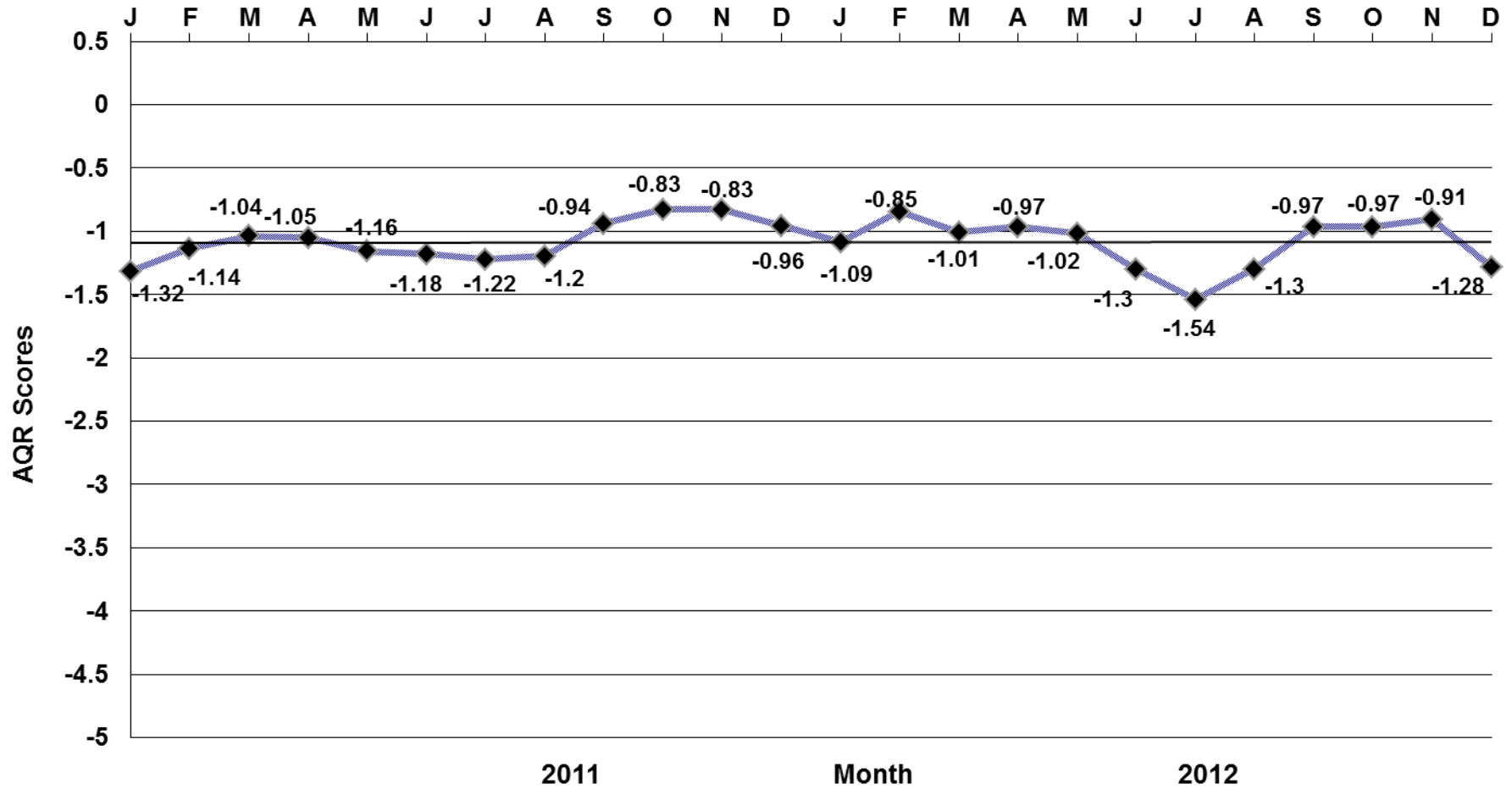
	2012 AQR		2011 AQR		2010 AQR		2009 AQR		2008 AQR		2007 AQR		2006 AQR	
	Score	Rank	Score	Rank	Score	Rank	Score	Rank	Score	Rank	Score	Rank	Score	Rank
Air Tran	-0.51	3	-0.48	1	-0.48	1	-0.49	2	-0.84	2	-1.03	1	-1.13	3
Alaska	-0.77	6	-0.79	5	-0.94	4	-1.39	11	-1.16	5	-1.75	7	-1.66	9
American	-1.11	10	-1.24	10	-1.28	11	-1.25	9	-1.71	9	-2.19	9	-1.83	10
American Eagle	-1.78	11	-2.51	15	-2.82	16	-2.83	18	-3.12	16	-3.80	15	-3.97	17
Delta	-0.58	4	-0.80	6	-1.22	7	N/A	-	N/A	-	N/A	-	N/A	-
ExpressJet	-1.95	13	N/A	-	N/A	-	N/A	-	N/A	-	N/A	-	N/A	-
Frontier	-0.78	7	-0.75	4	-1.27	9	-1.09	7	-1.31	7	-1.71	5	-1.30	4
Hawaiian	-0.71	5	-0.59	2	-0.58	2	-0.40	1	-0.69	1	N/A	-	N/A	-
JetBlue	-0.43	2	-0.60	3	-0.70	3	-0.62	3	-0.90	3	-1.30	2	-0.93	2
SkyWest	-1.88	12	-1.15	9	-1.28	10	-1.57	14	-2.13	13	-3.09	13	-2.76	14
Southwest	-0.81	8	-0.93	7	-1.01	5	-1.00	5	-1.23	6	-1.59	3	-1.38	6
United	-2.18	14	N/A	-	N/A	-	N/A	-	N/A	-	N/A	-	N/A	-
US Airways	-0.87	9	-1.13	8	-1.17	6	-1.19	8	-1.77	10	-2.94	11	-2.32	13
Virgin America	-0.35	1	N/A	-	N/A	-	N/A	-	N/A	-	N/A	-	N/A	-
Industry	-1.11		-1.08		-1.20		-1.27		-1.63		-2.16		-1.87	

NOTES:

- Scores and rankings for 2012 reflect the combining of ExpressJet and Atlantic Southeast (appears as ExpressJet), the combining of United and Continental (appears as United), and the addition of Virgin America.
- Scores and rankings for 2011 reflect the deletion of Comair from the airlines tracked.
- As of January 2010, data of the merged operations of Delta Air Lines and Northwest Airlines are combined and appear only as Delta Air Lines.
- Scores and rankings for 2008 reflect the addition of Hawaiian to the airlines tracked.
- Scores and rankings for 2006 reflect the addition of Frontier to the airlines tracked.
- As of January 2006, data of the merged operations of US Airways and America West Airlines are combined and appear only as US Airways.

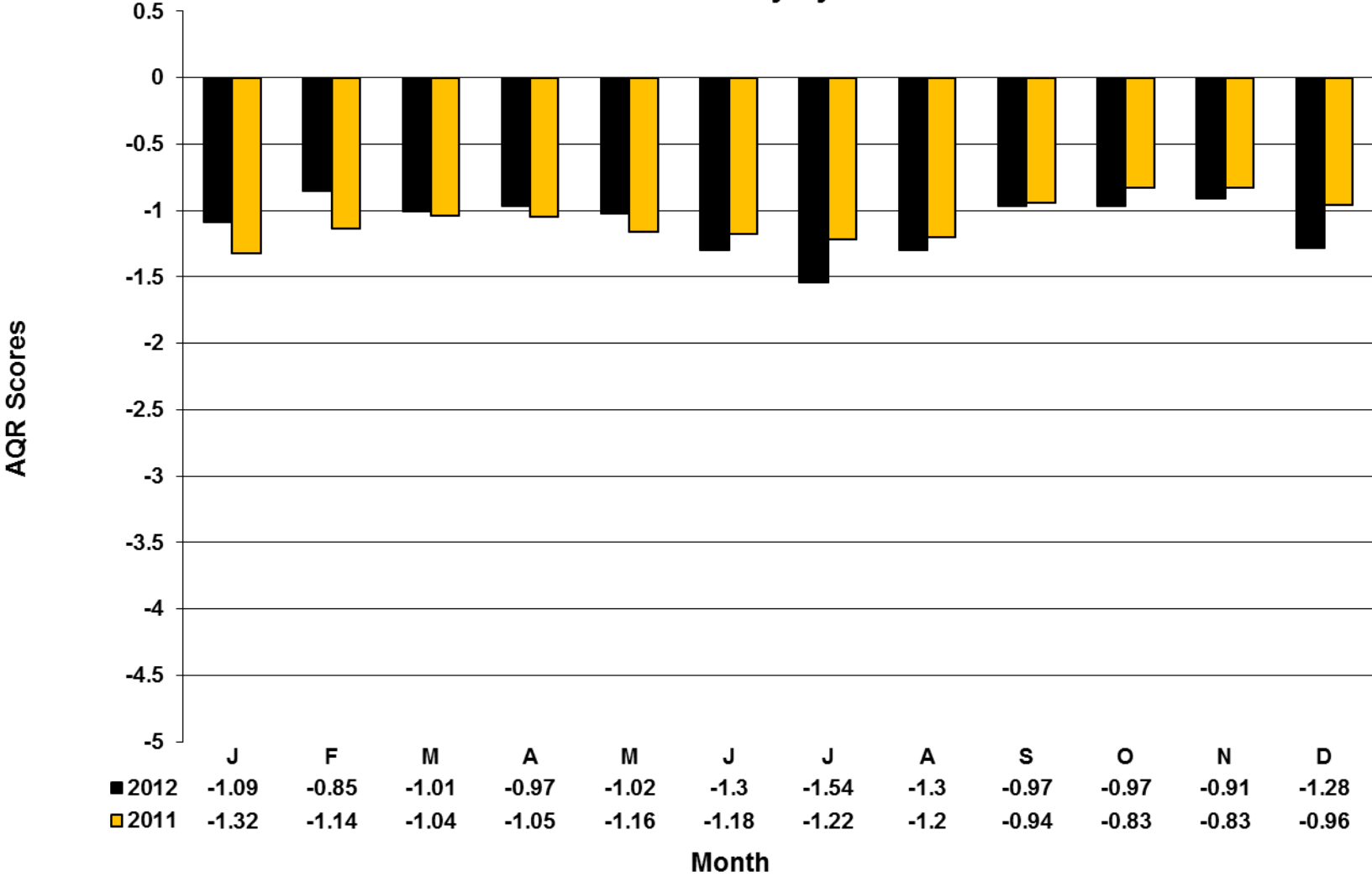
Airline Quality Rating

U.S. Airline Industry 2011 - 2012



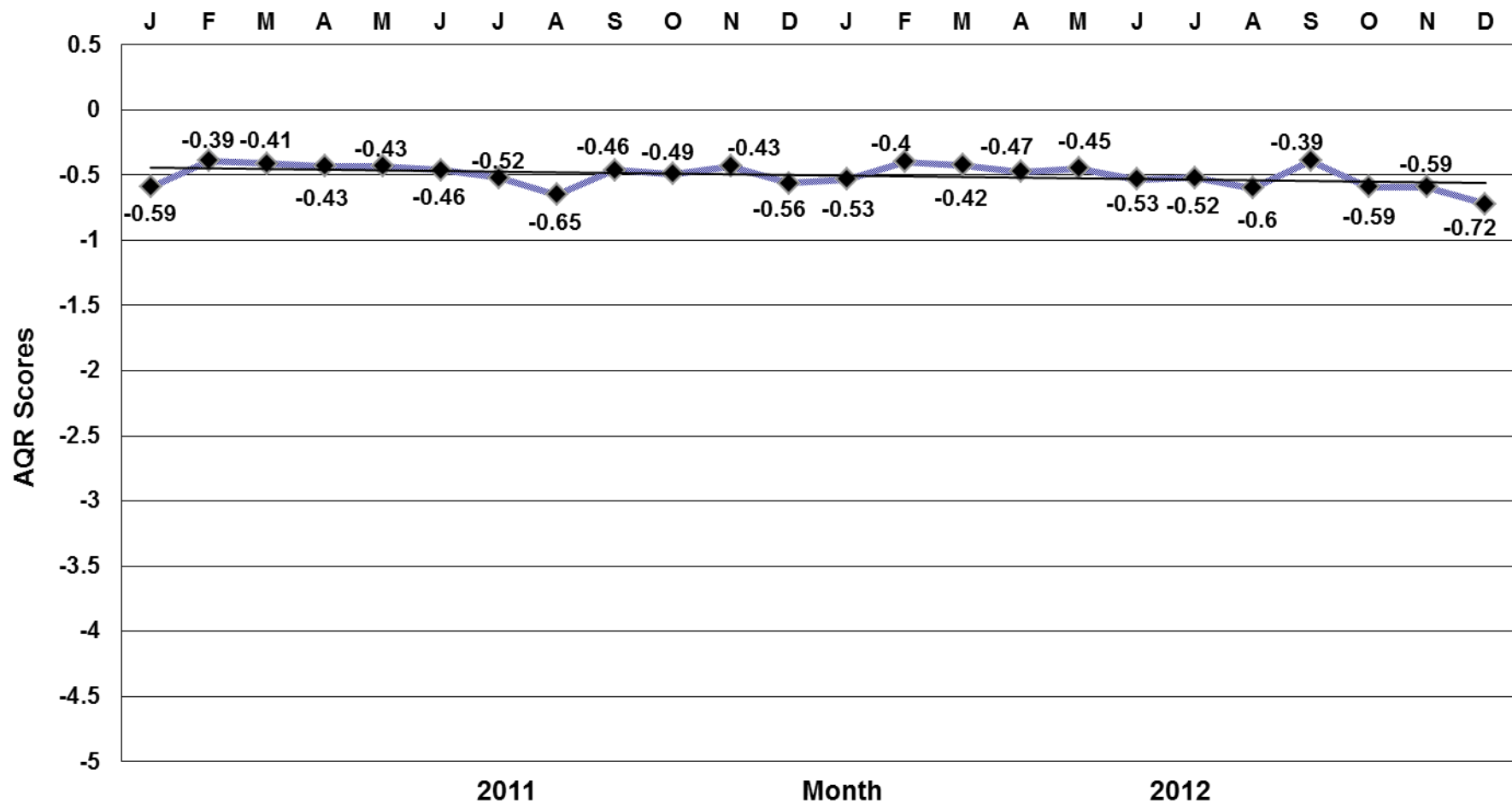
Airline Quality Rating

U.S. Airline Industry by Month



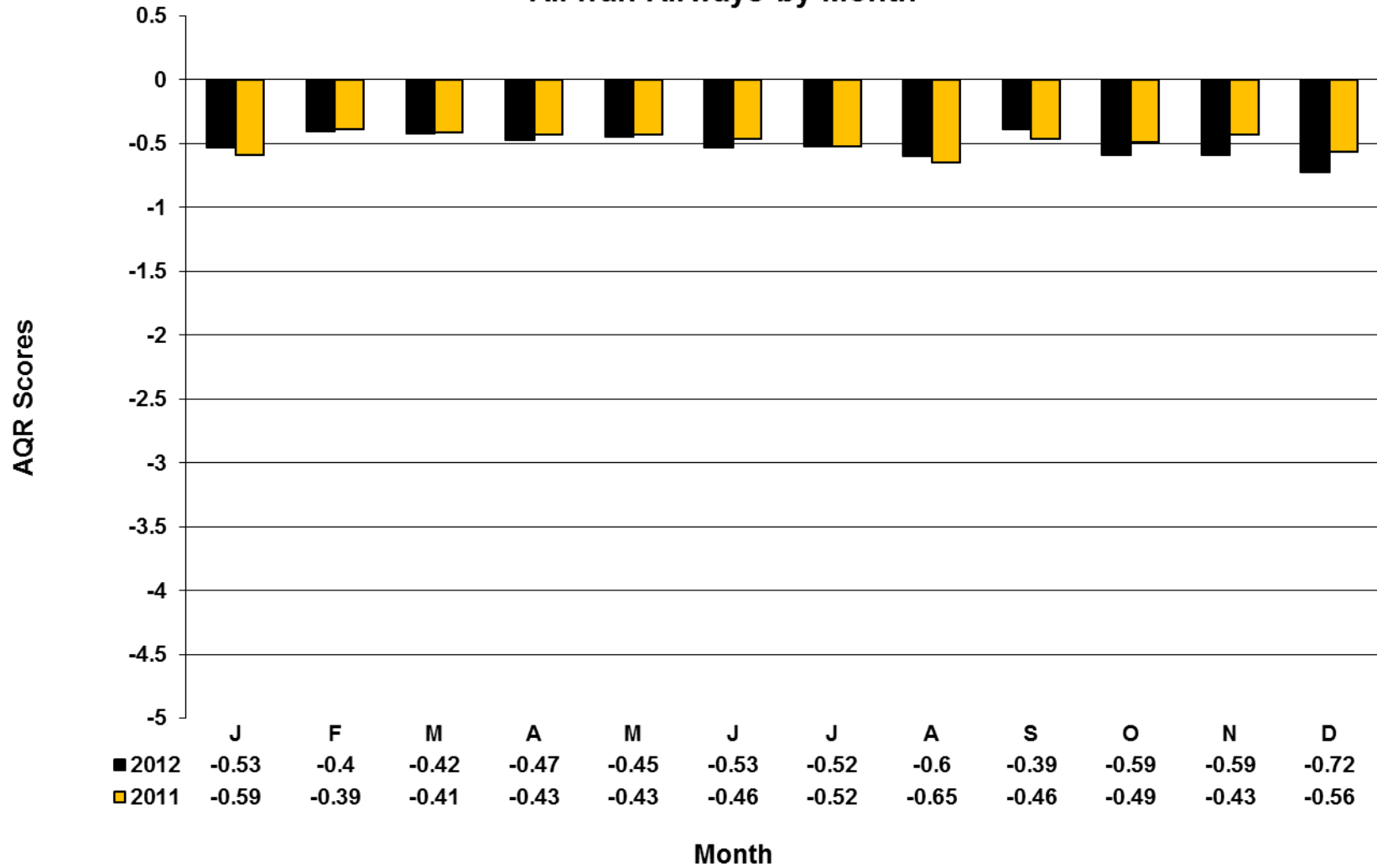
Airline Quality Rating

AirTran Airways 2011 - 2012



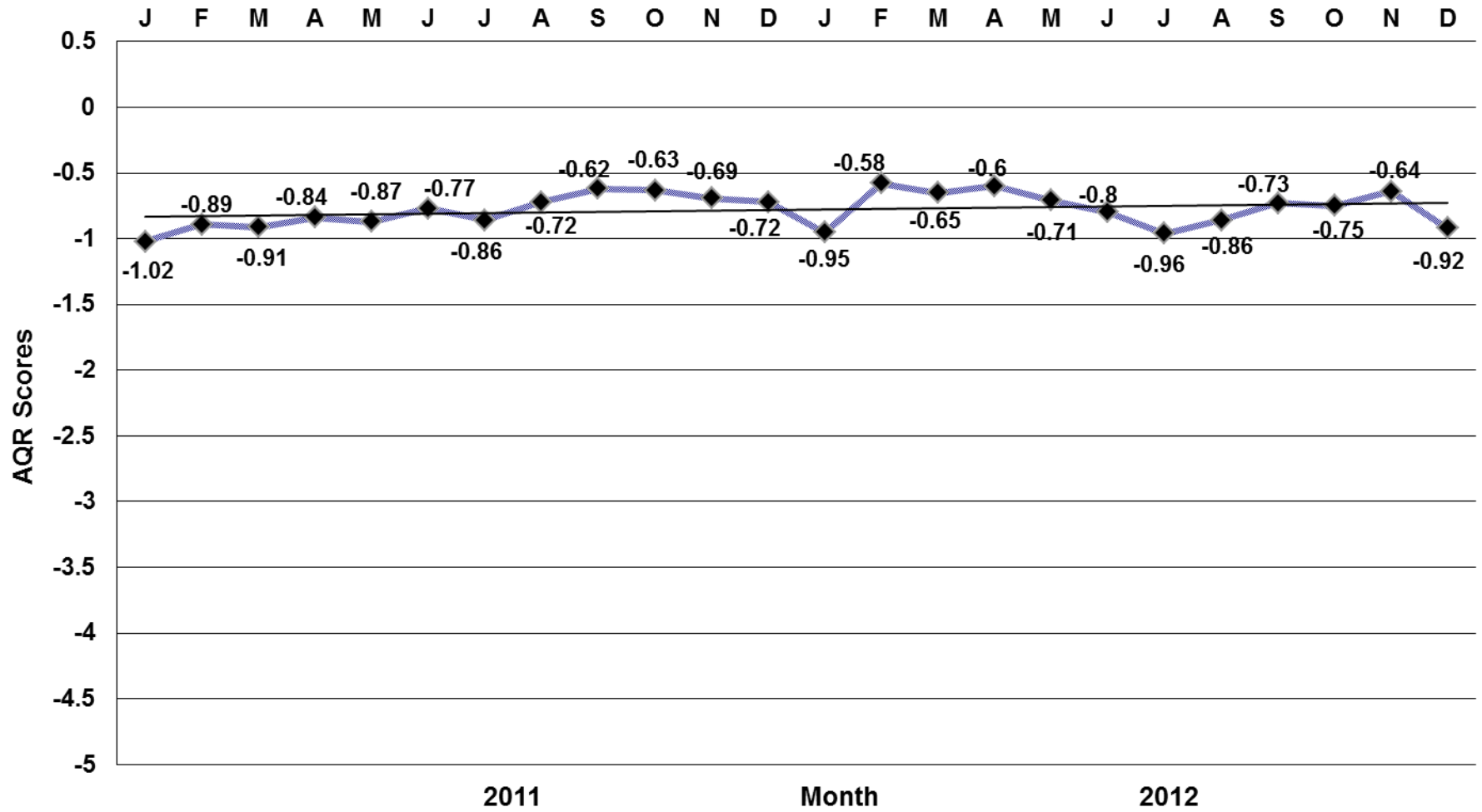
Airline Quality Rating

AirTran Airways by Month



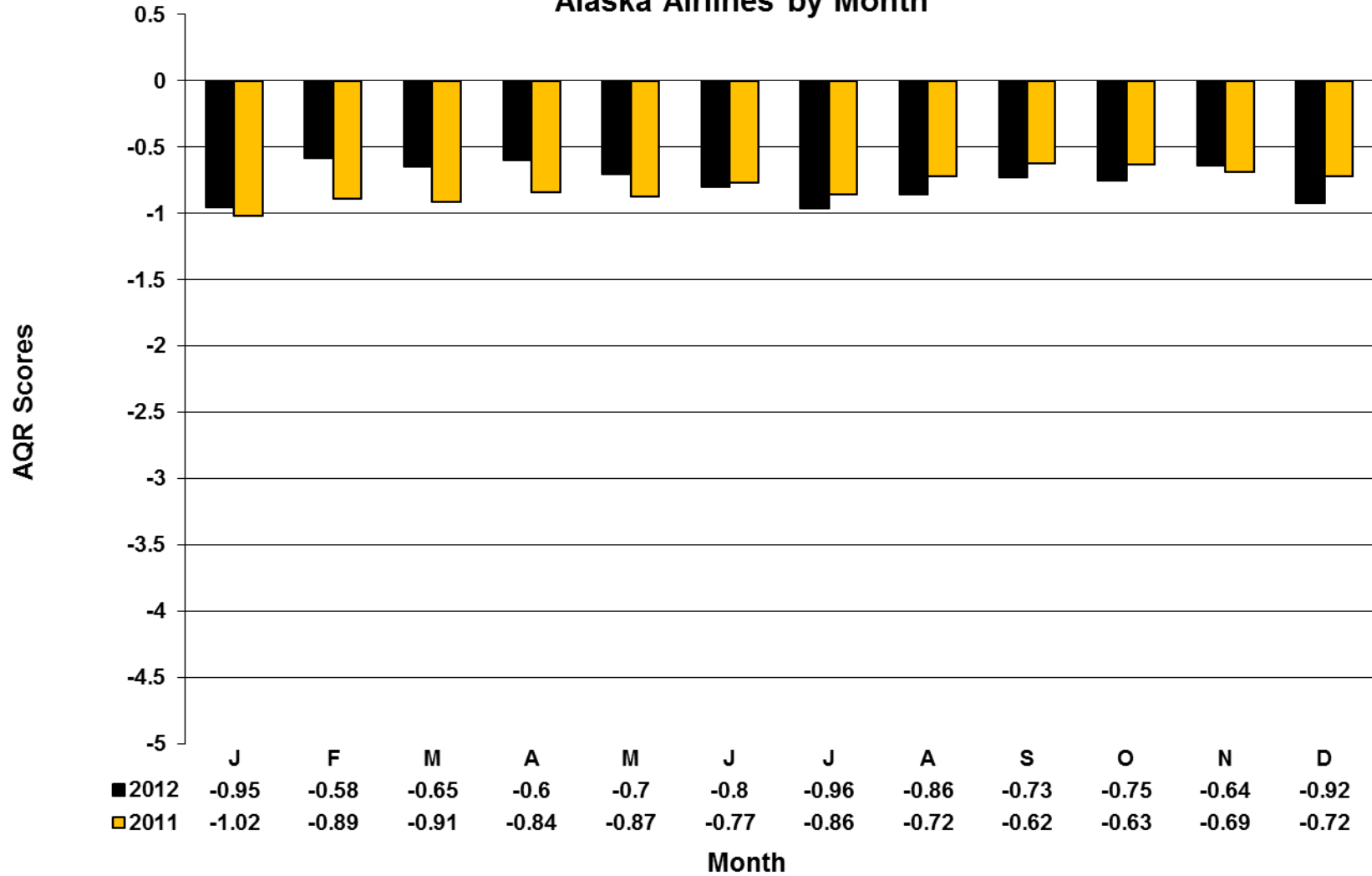
Airline Quality Rating

Alaska Airlines 2011 - 2012



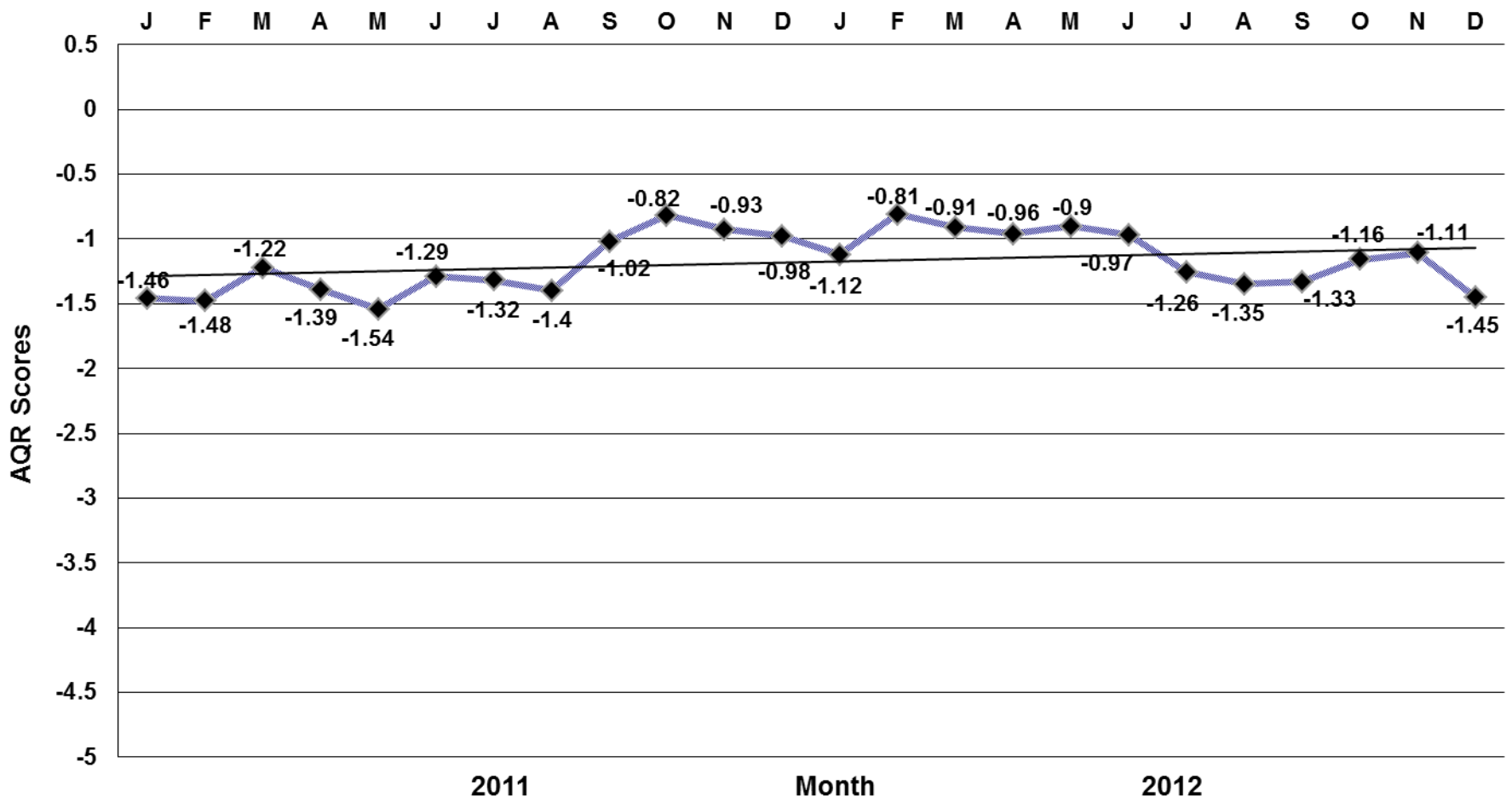
Airline Quality Rating

Alaska Airlines by Month



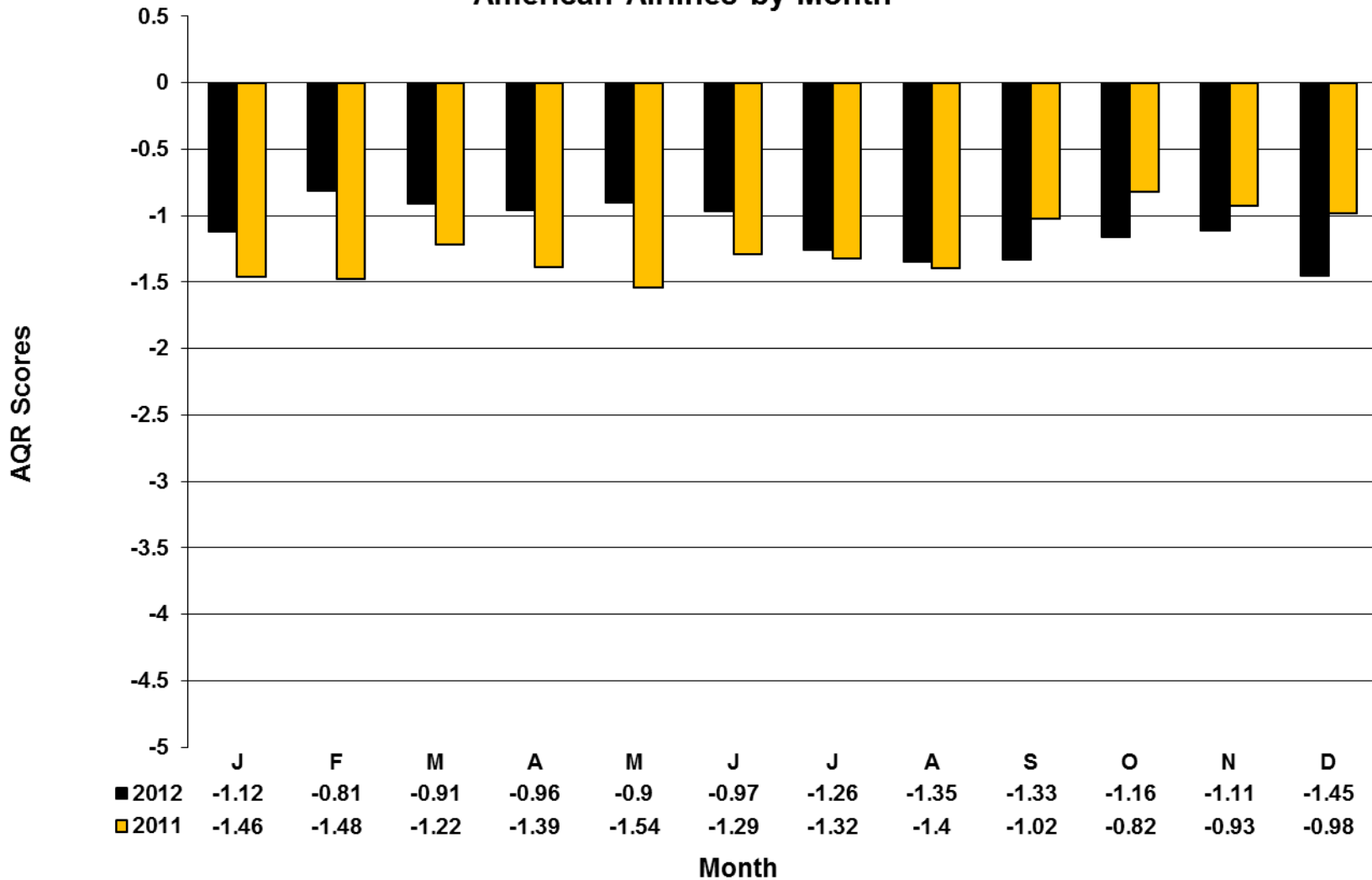
Airline Quality Rating

American Airlines 2011 - 2012



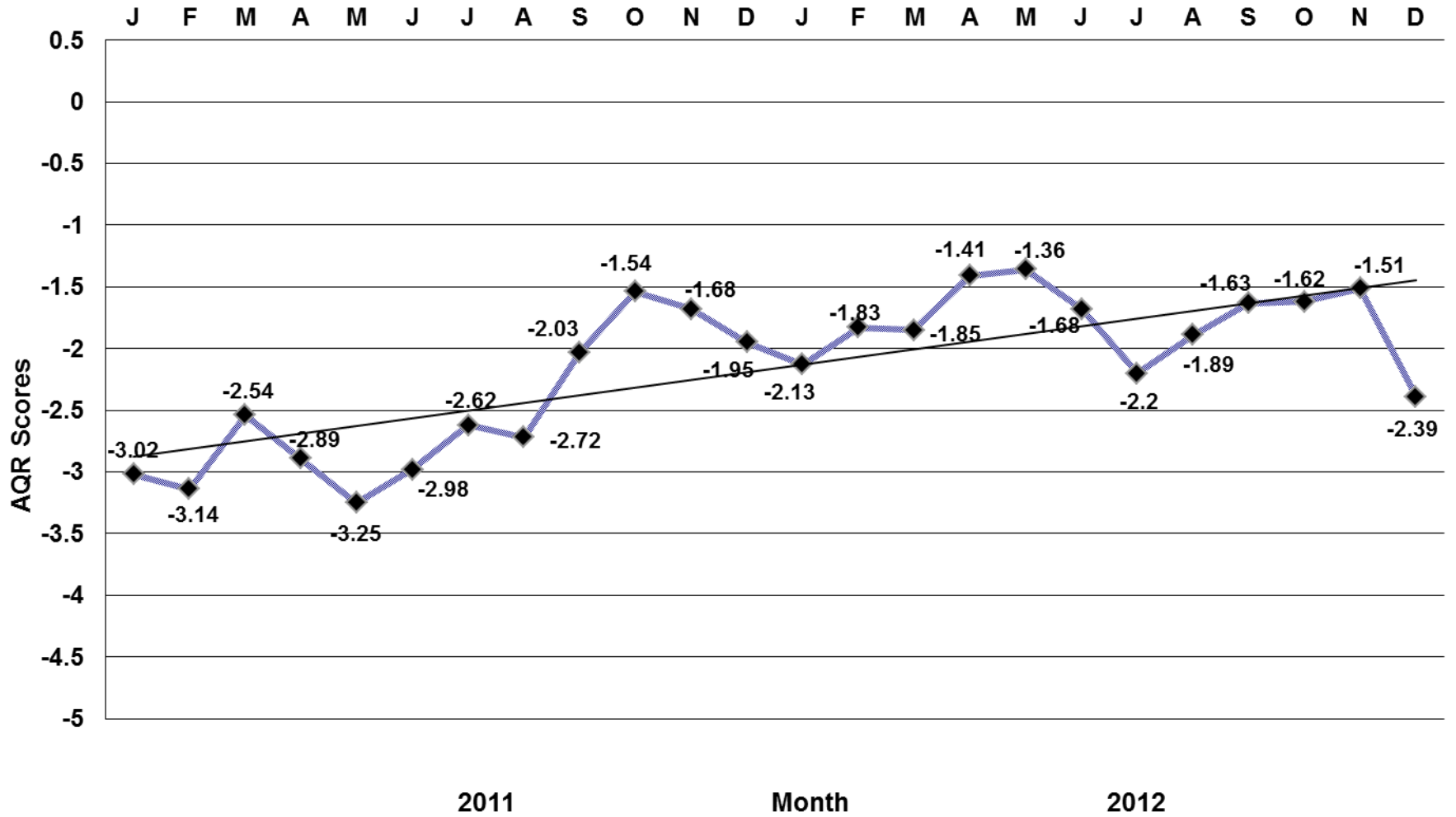
Airline Quality Rating

American Airlines by Month



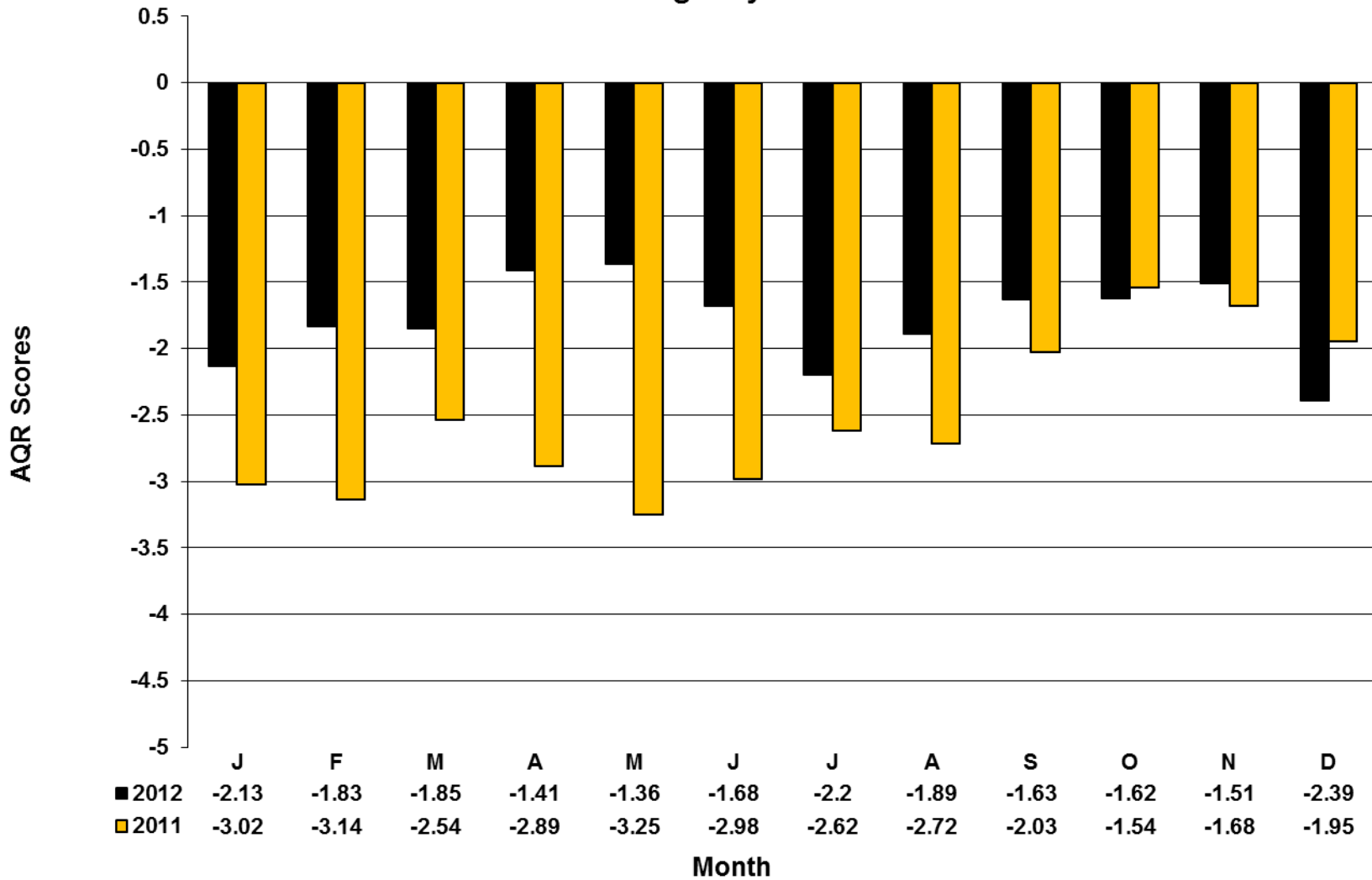
Airline Quality Rating

American Eagle 2011 - 2012



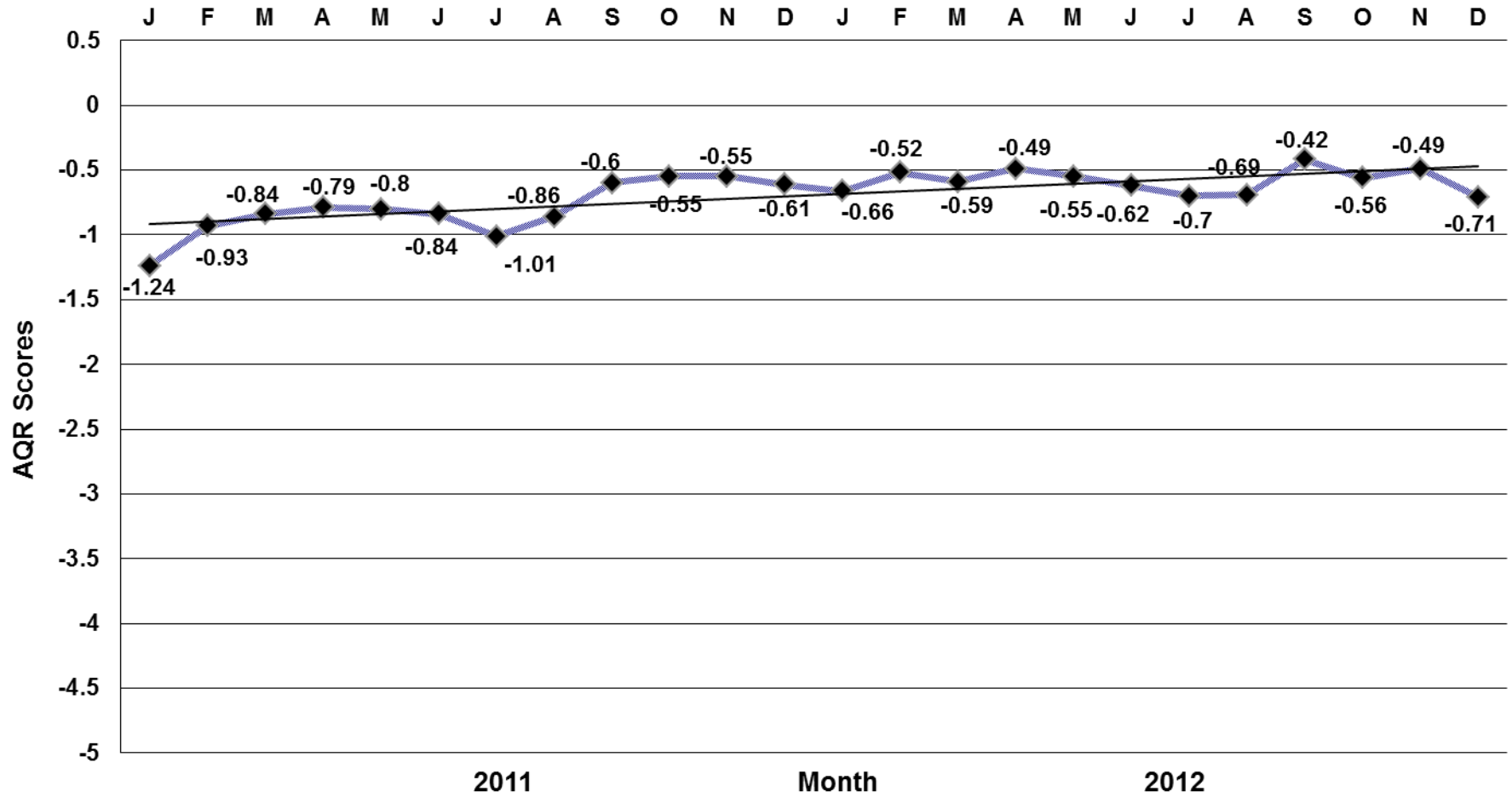
Airline Quality Rating

American Eagle by Month



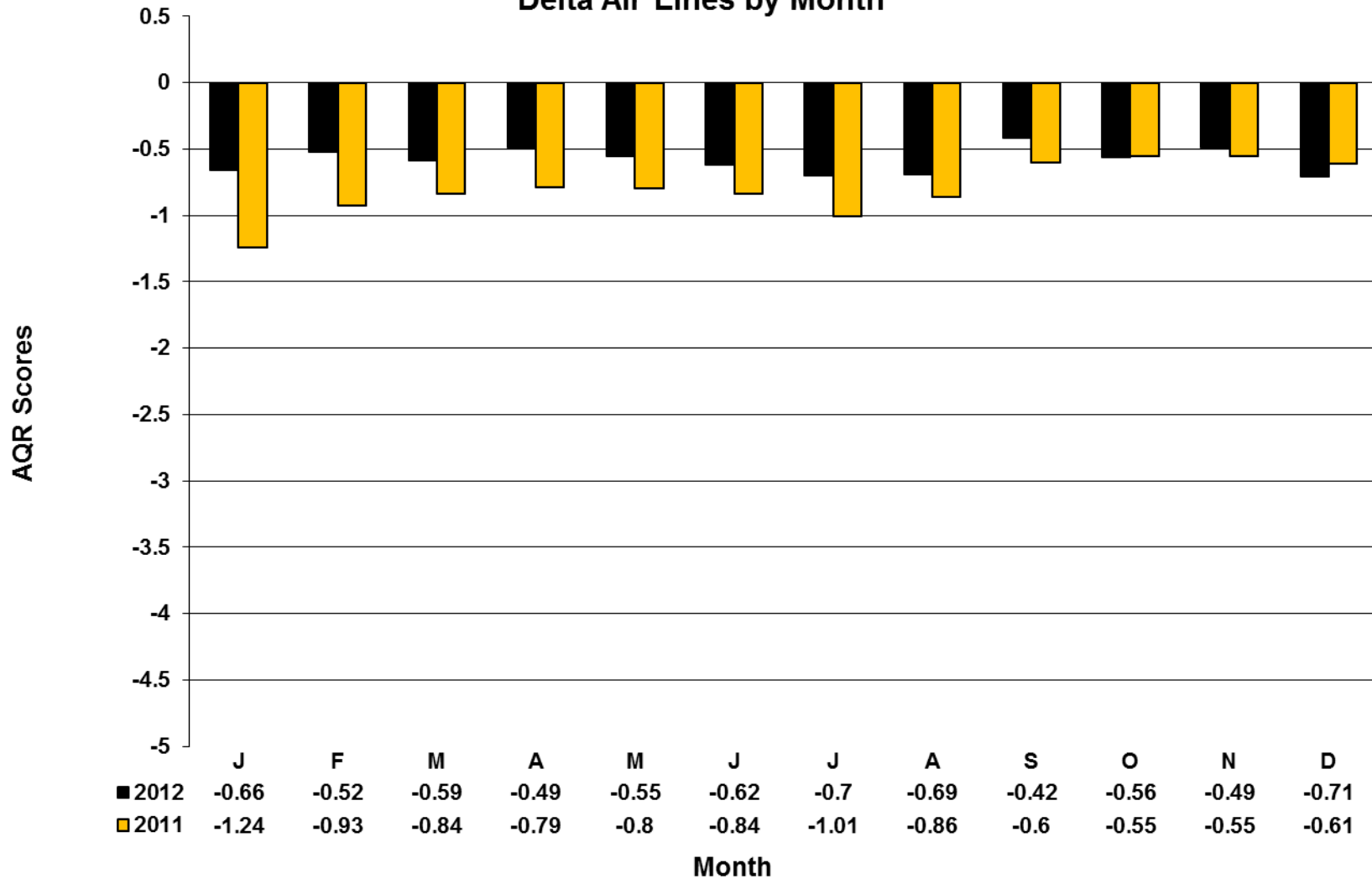
Airline Quality Rating

Delta Air Lines 2011 - 2012



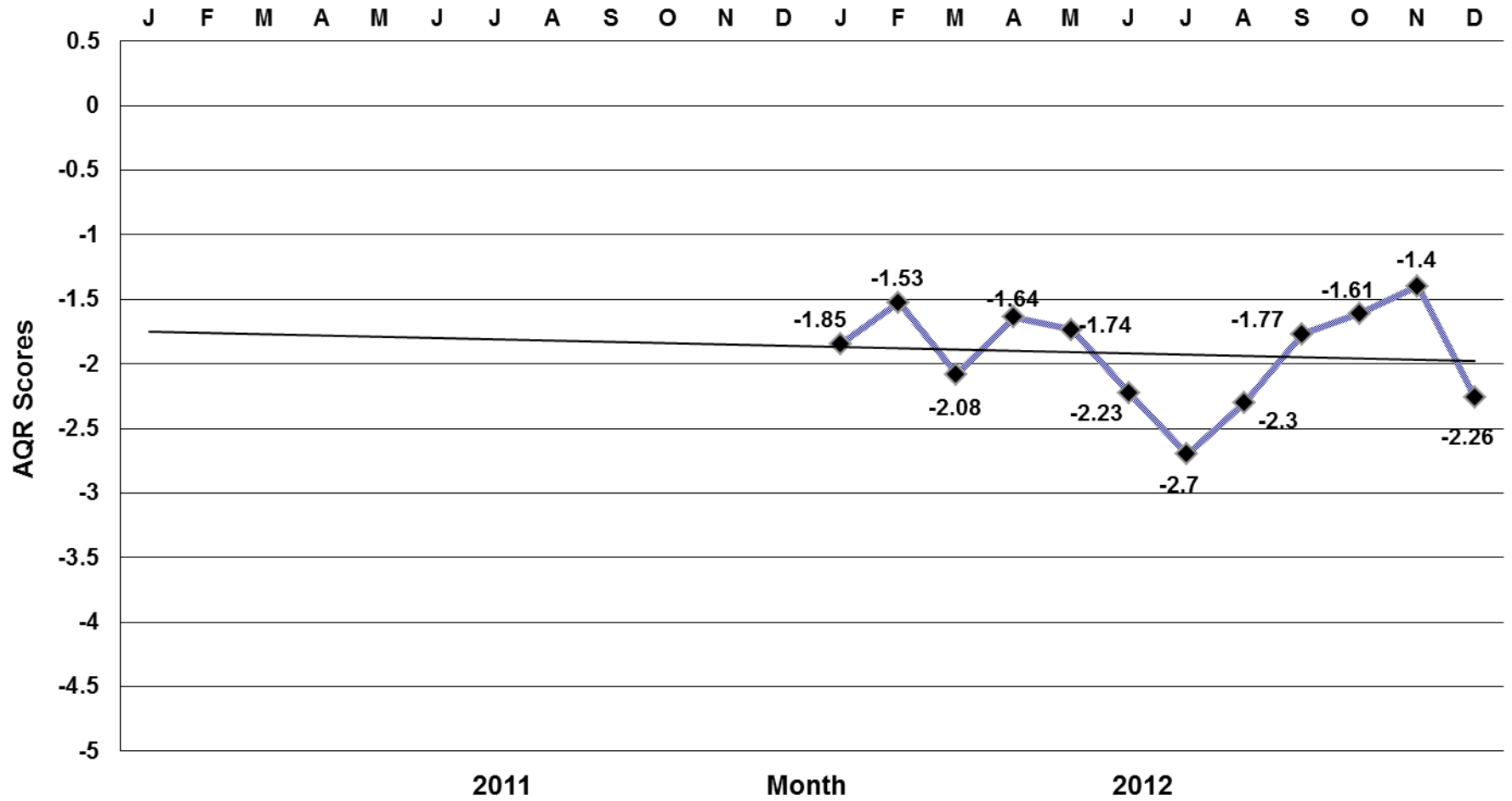
Airline Quality Rating

Delta Air Lines by Month



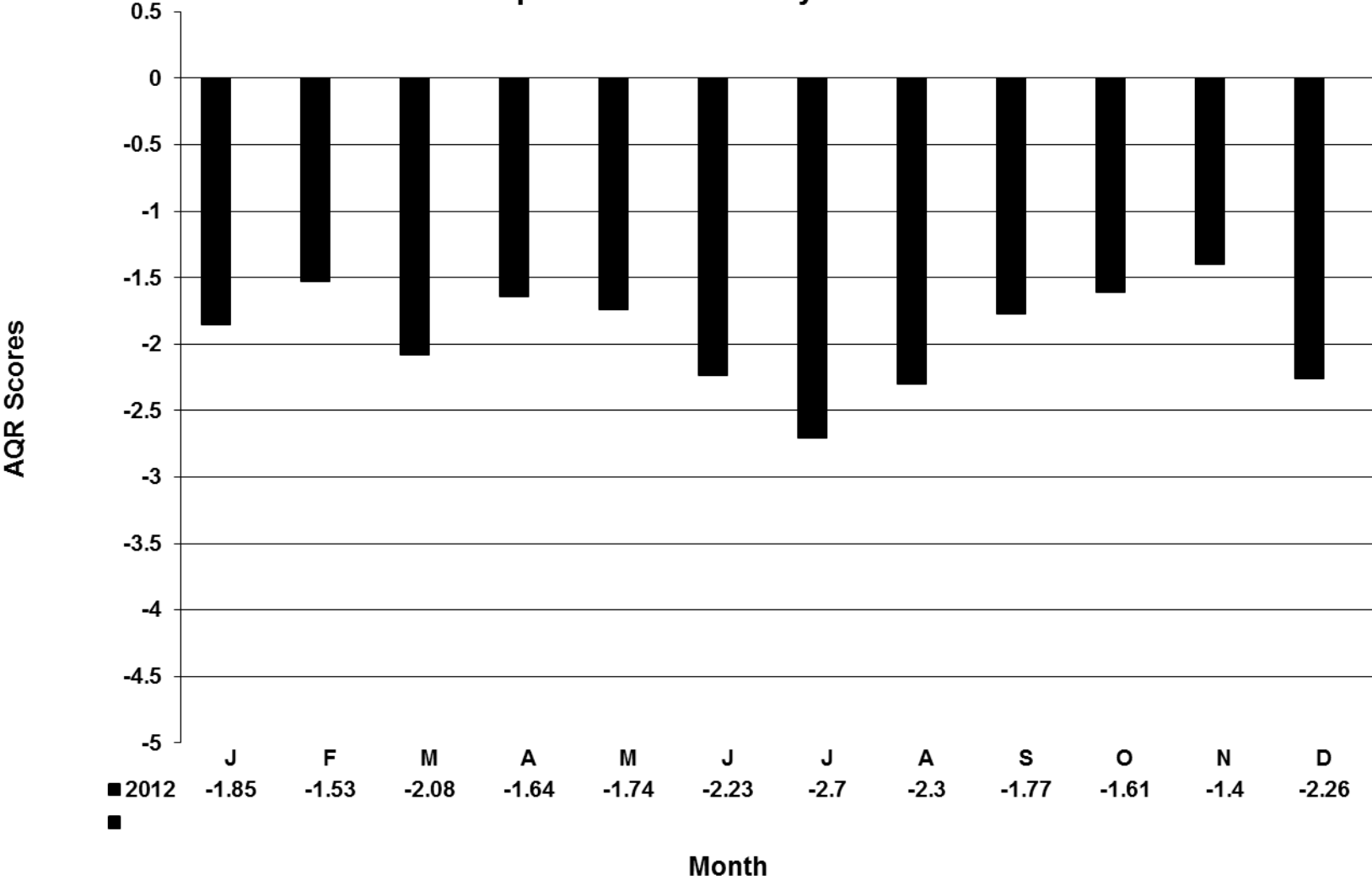
Airline Quality Rating

ExpressJet Airlines 2011 - 2012



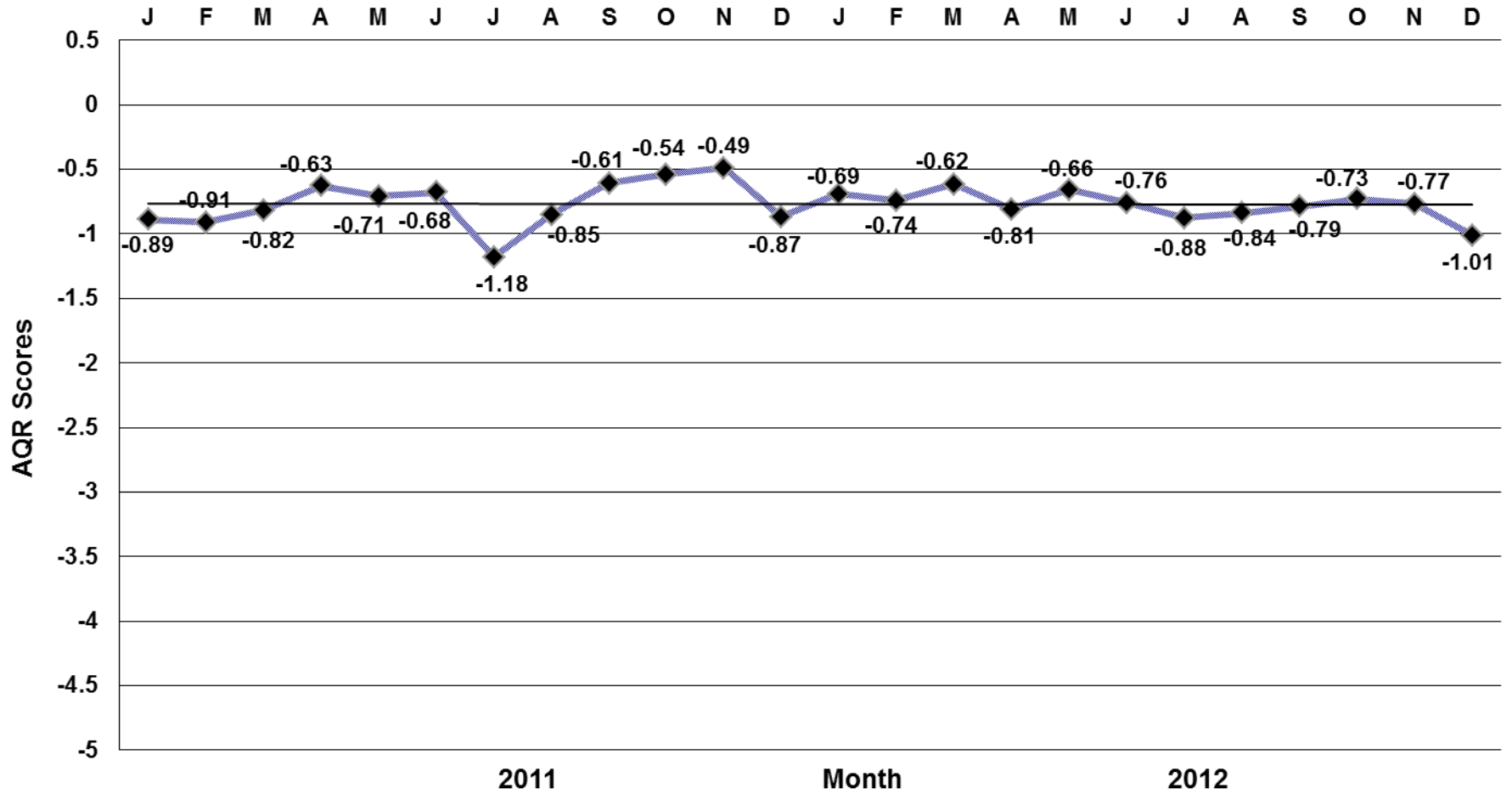
Airline Quality Rating

ExpressJet Airlines by Month



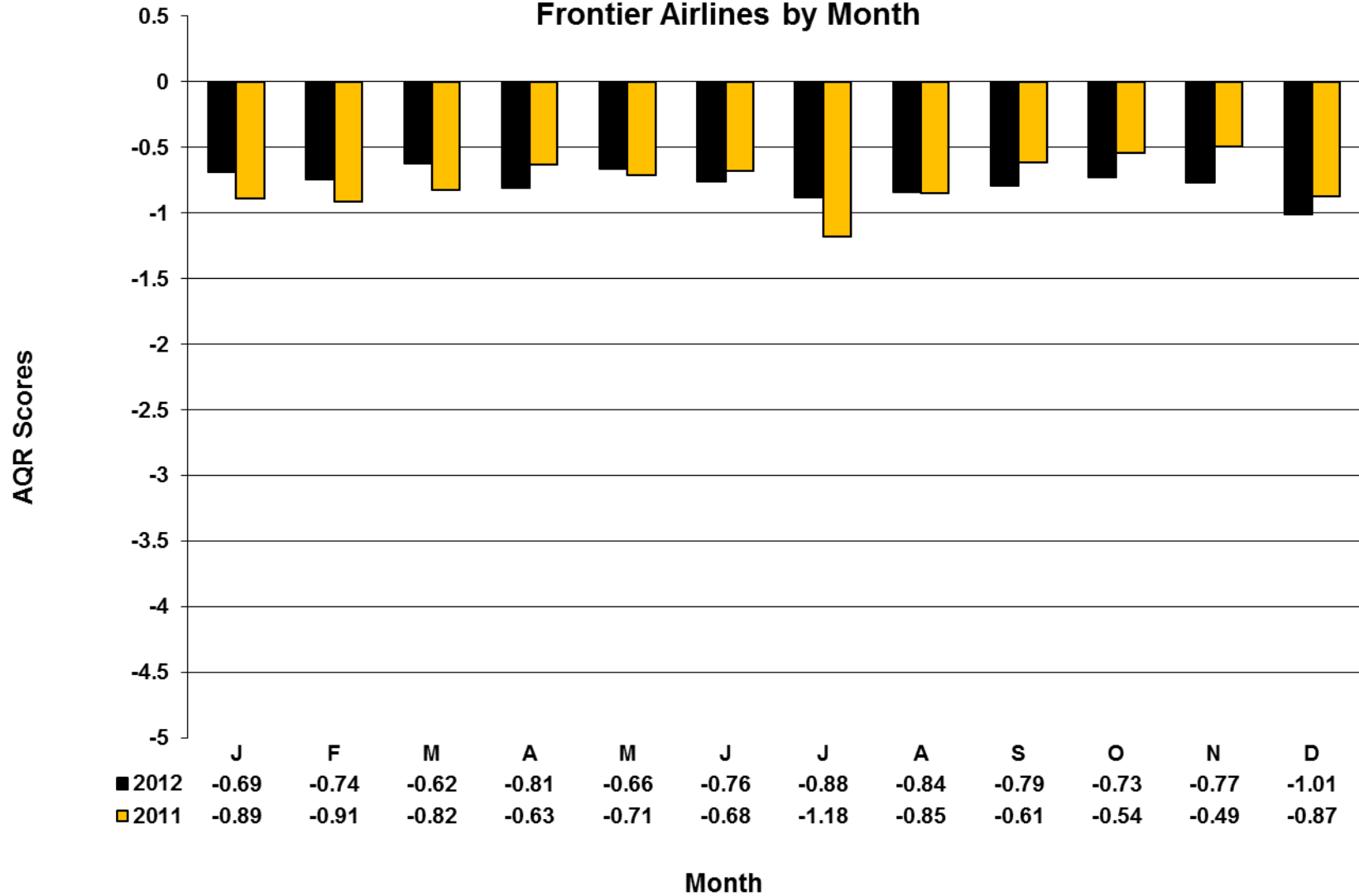
Airline Quality Rating

Frontier Airlines 2011 - 2012



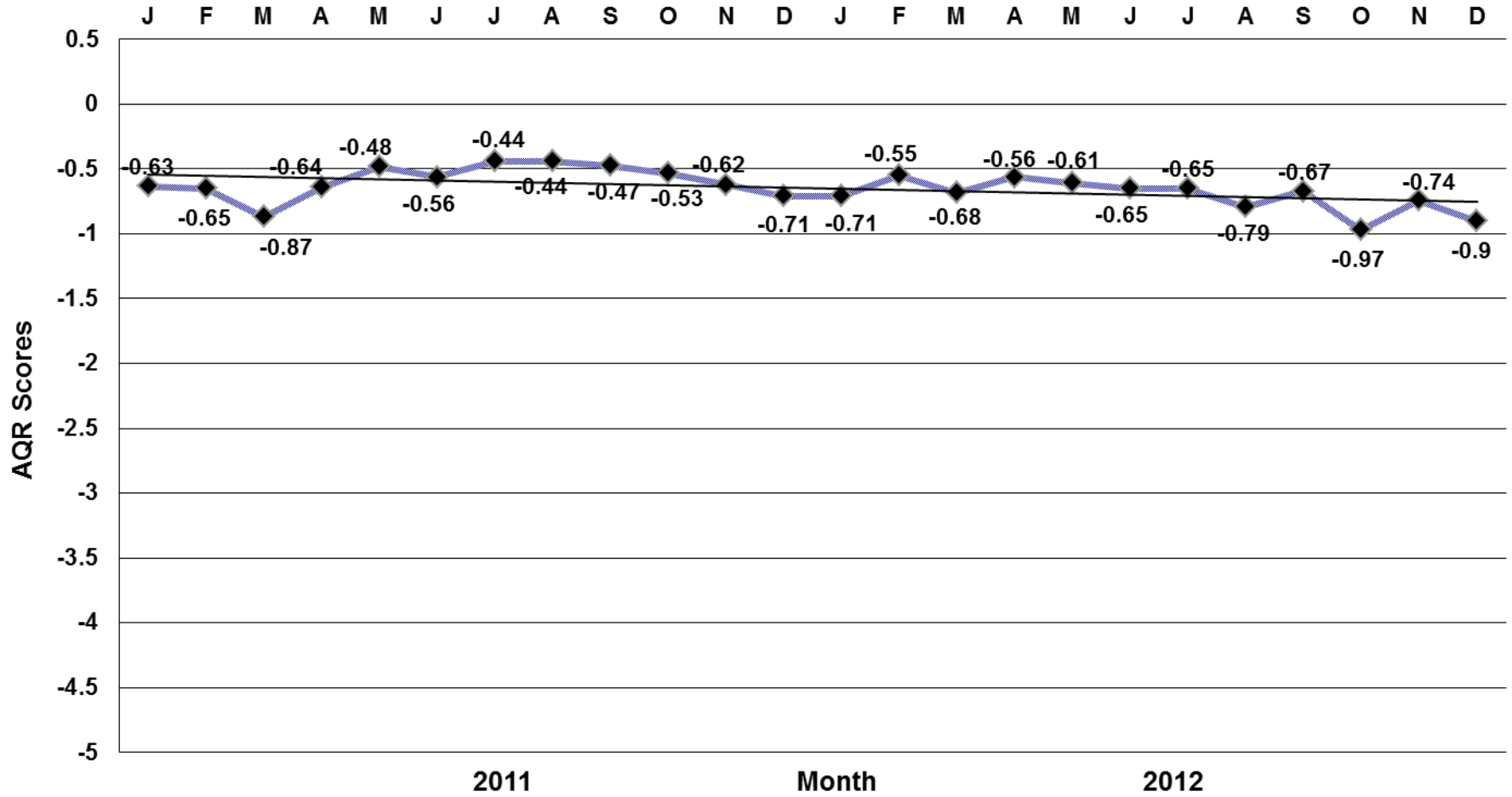
Airline Quality Rating

Frontier Airlines by Month



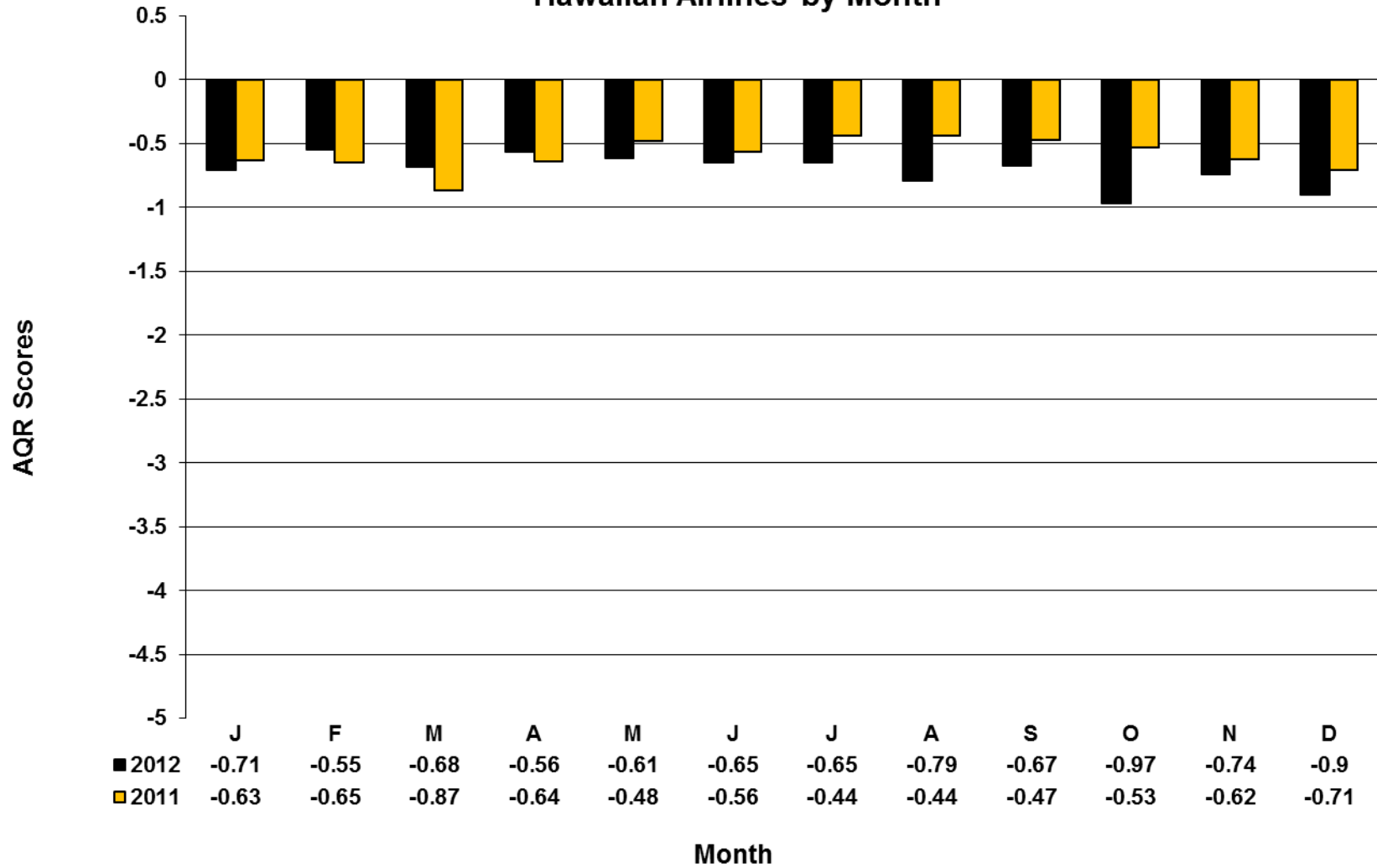
Airline Quality Rating

Hawaiian Airlines 2011 - 2012



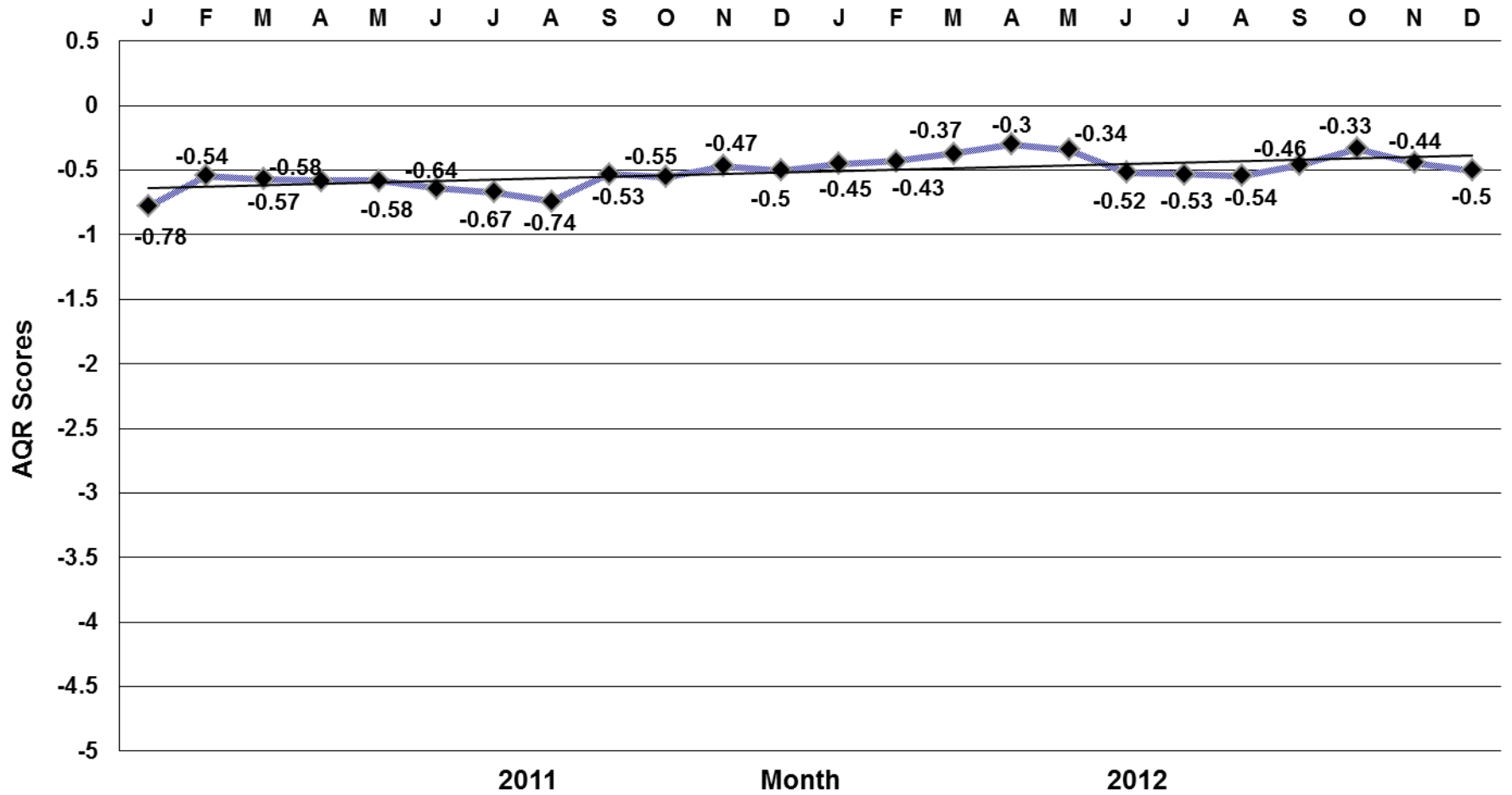
Airline Quality Rating

Hawaiian Airlines by Month



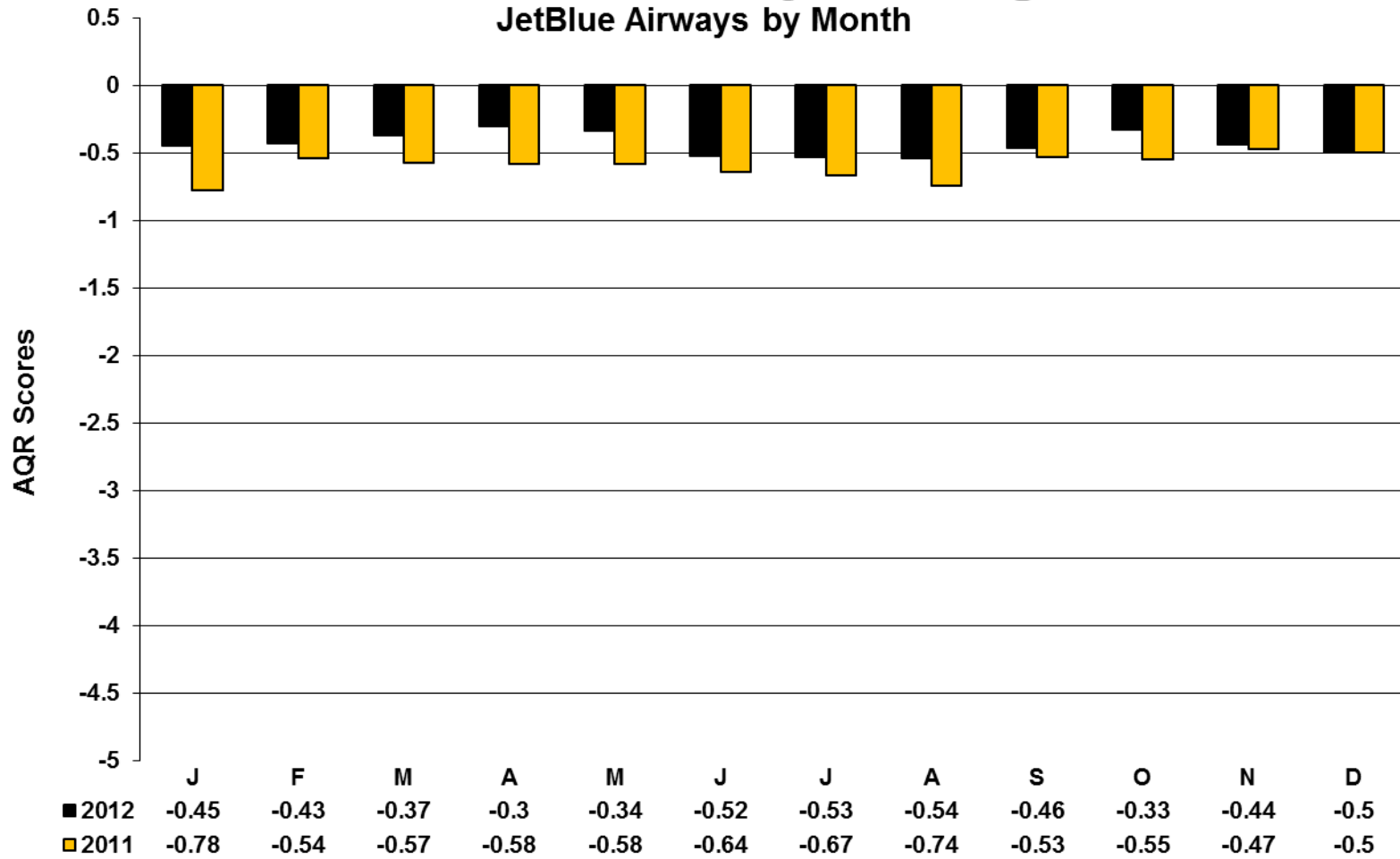
Airline Quality Rating

JetBlue Airways 2011 - 2012



Airline Quality Rating

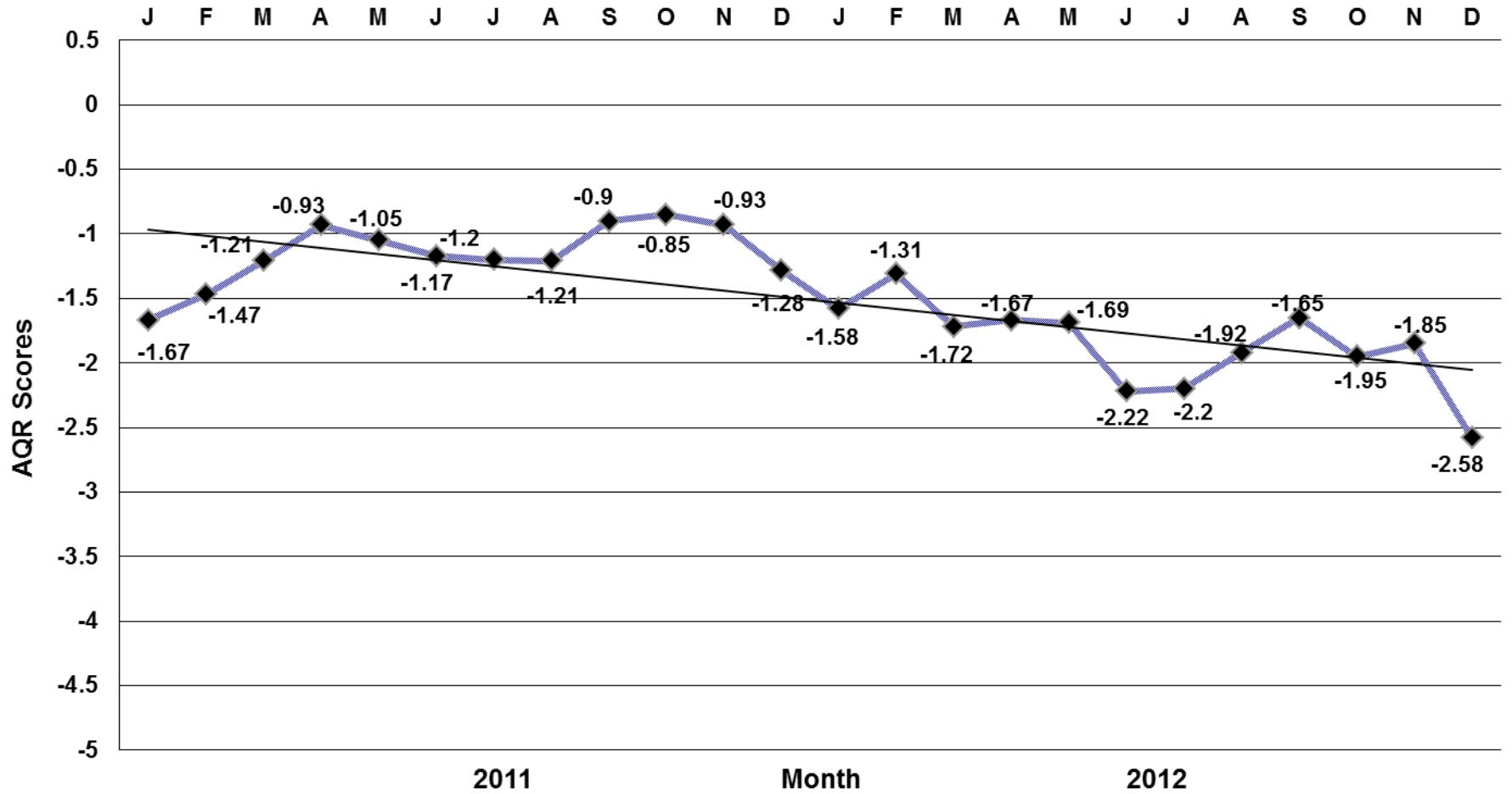
JetBlue Airways by Month



Month

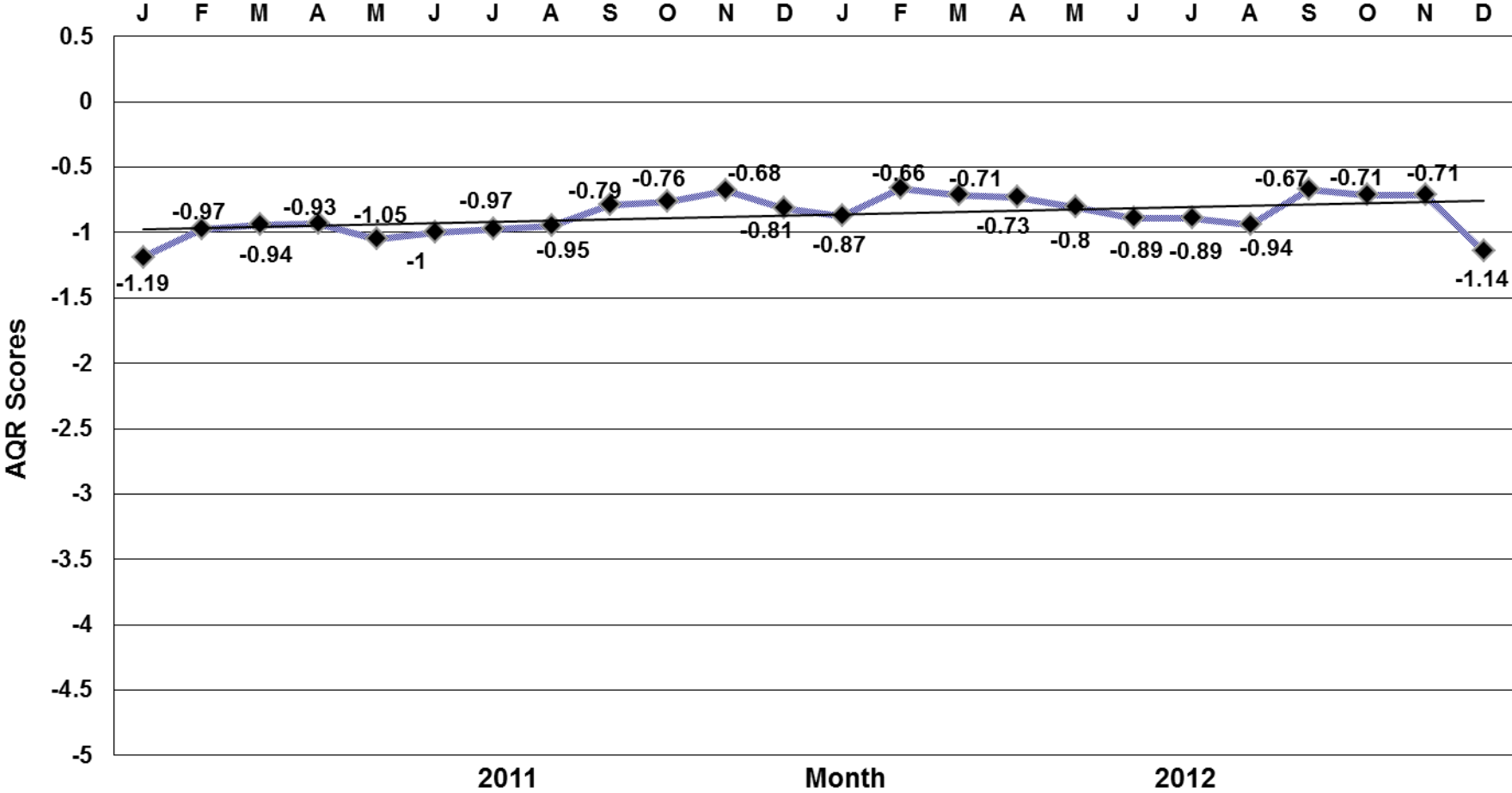
Airline Quality Rating

SkyWest Airlines 2011 - 2012



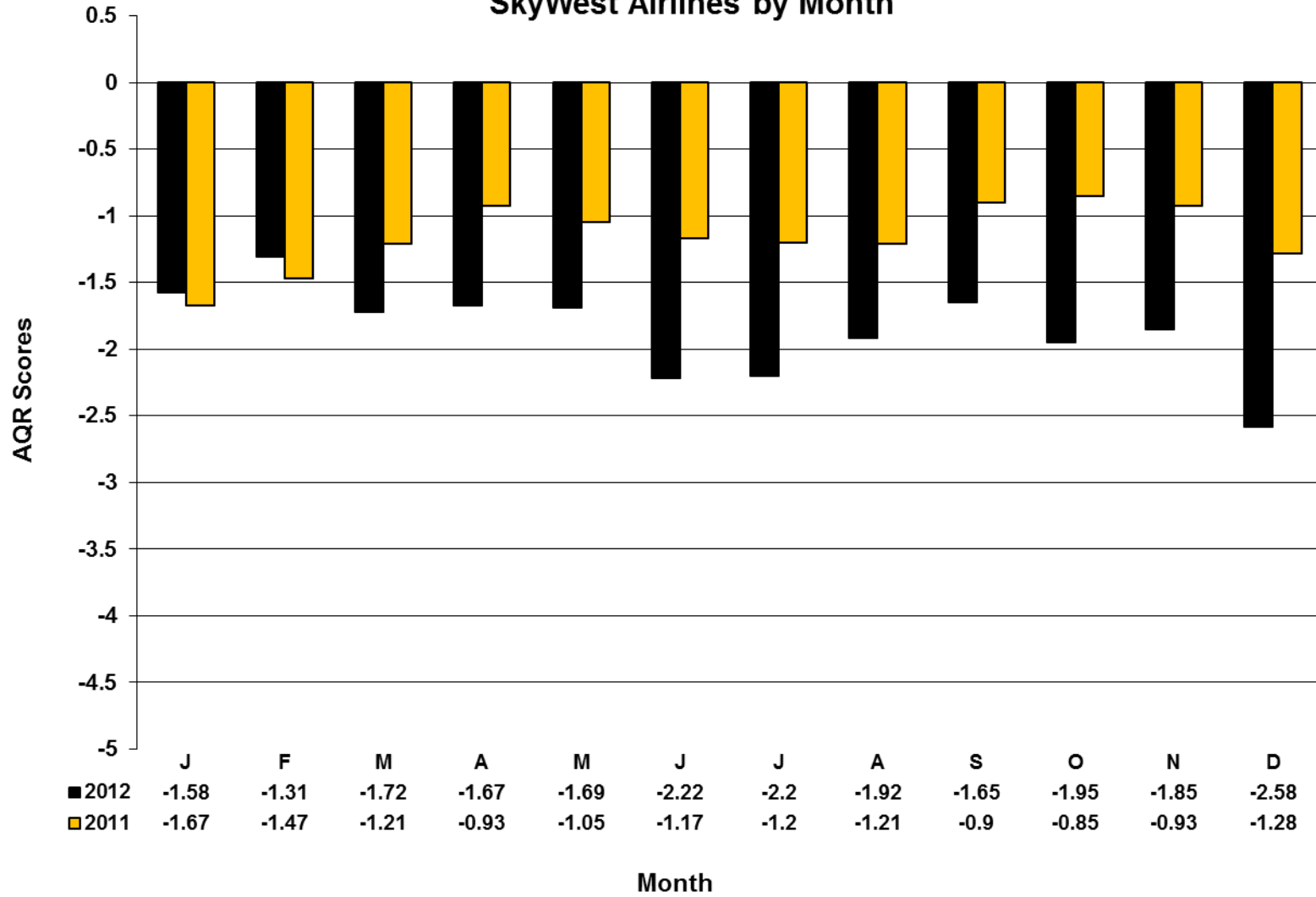
Airline Quality Rating

Southwest Airlines 2011 - 2012



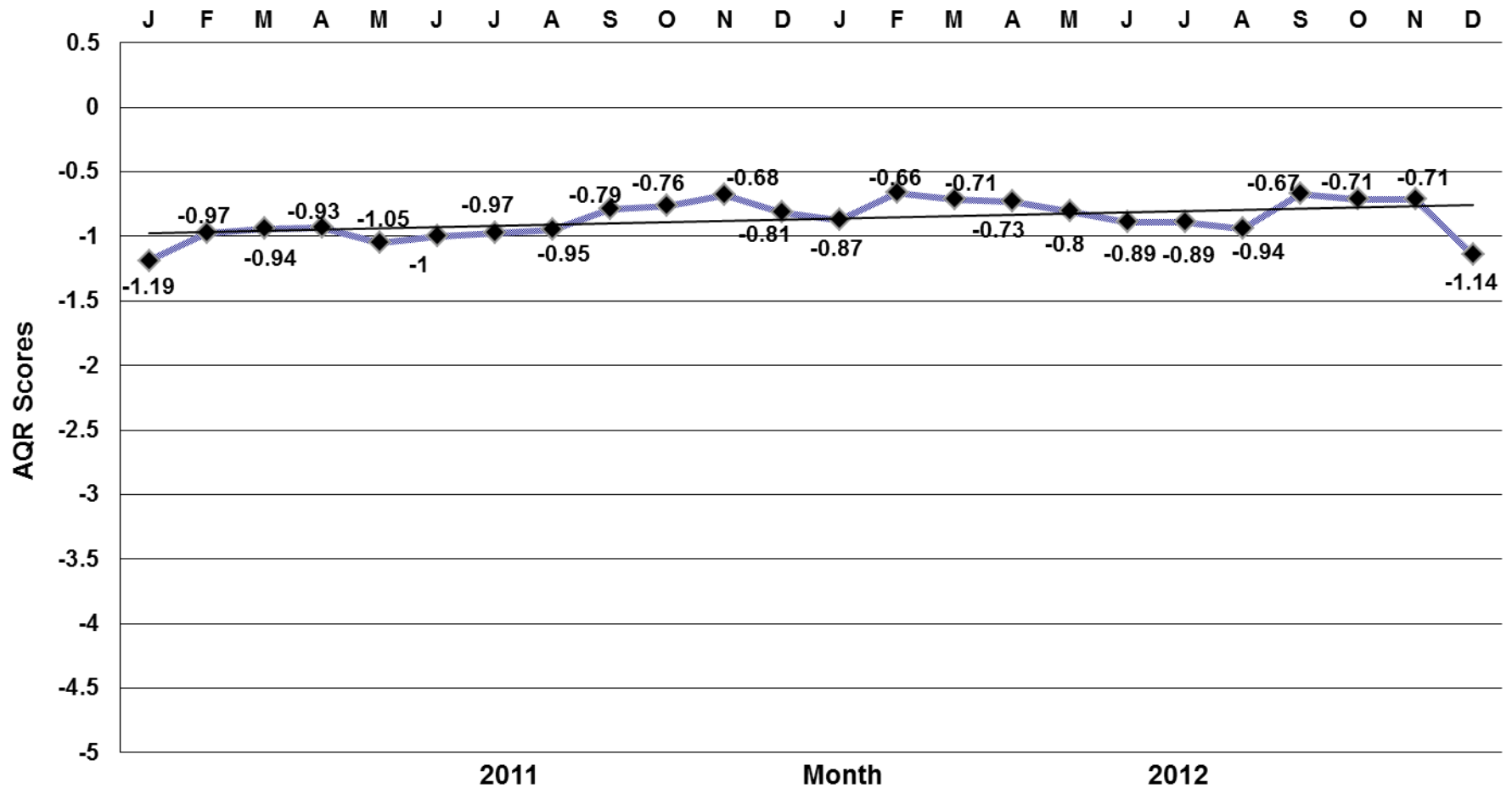
Airline Quality Rating

SkyWest Airlines by Month



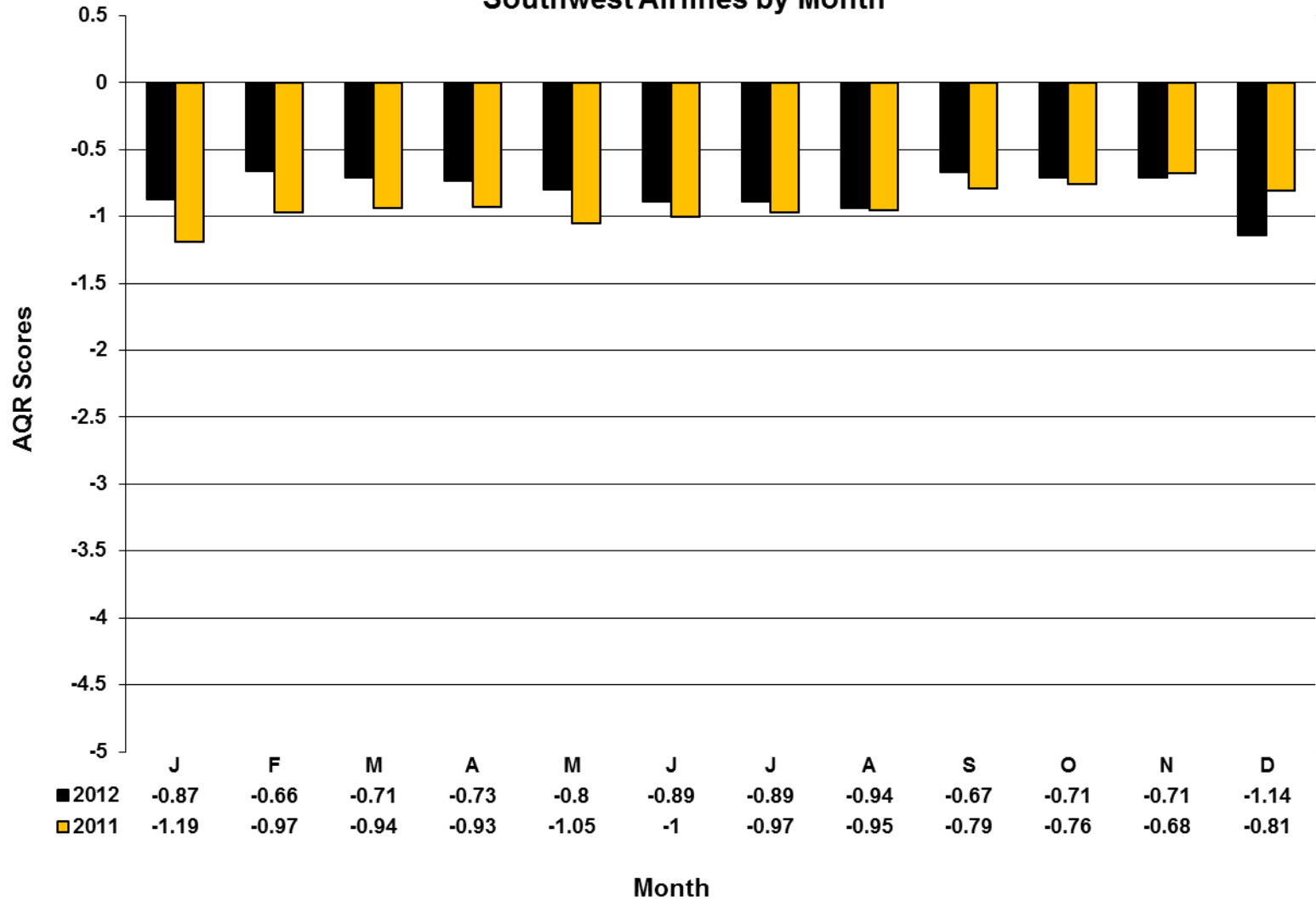
Airline Quality Rating

Southwest Airlines 2011 - 2012



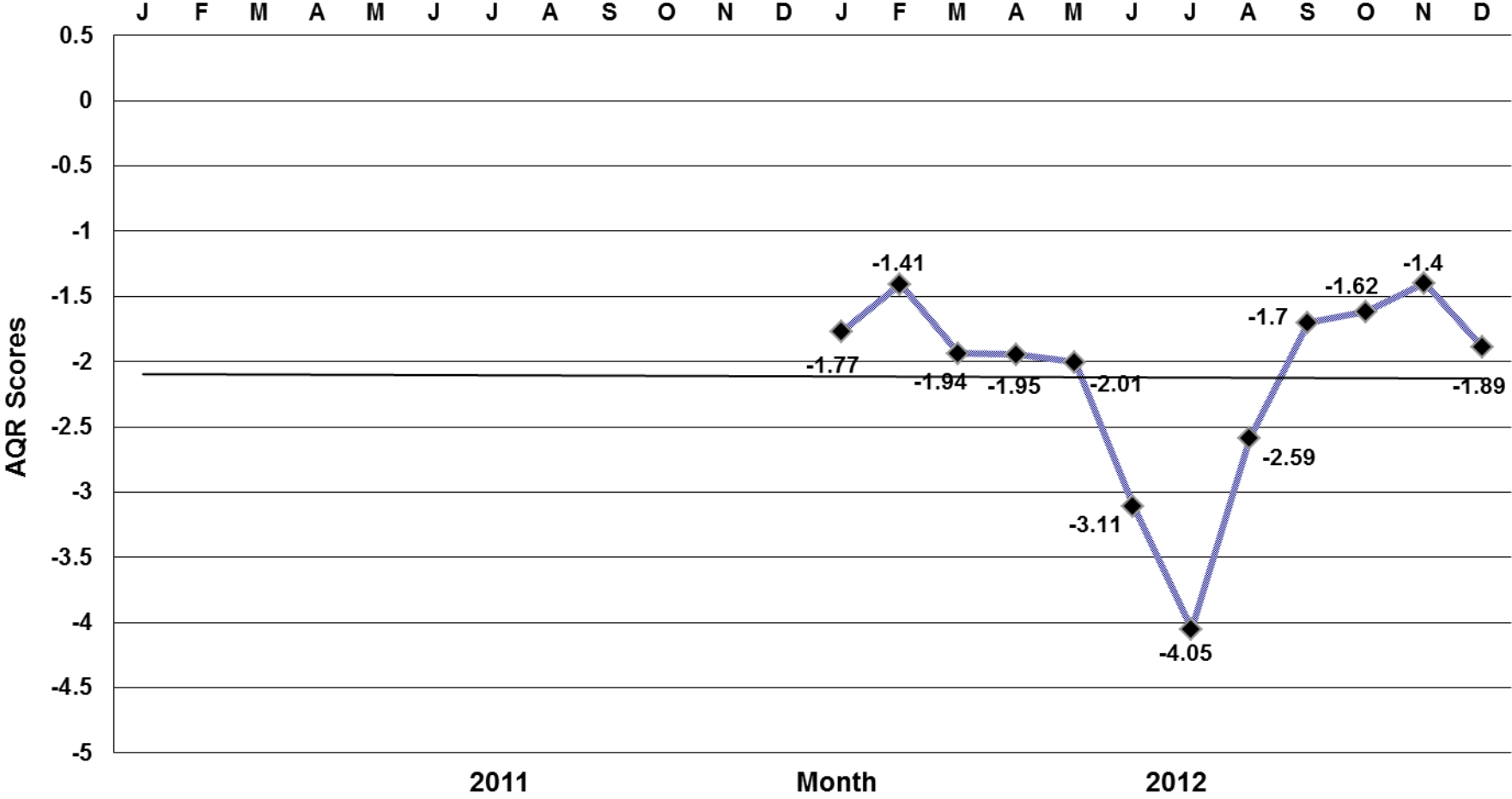
Airline Quality Rating

Southwest Airlines by Month



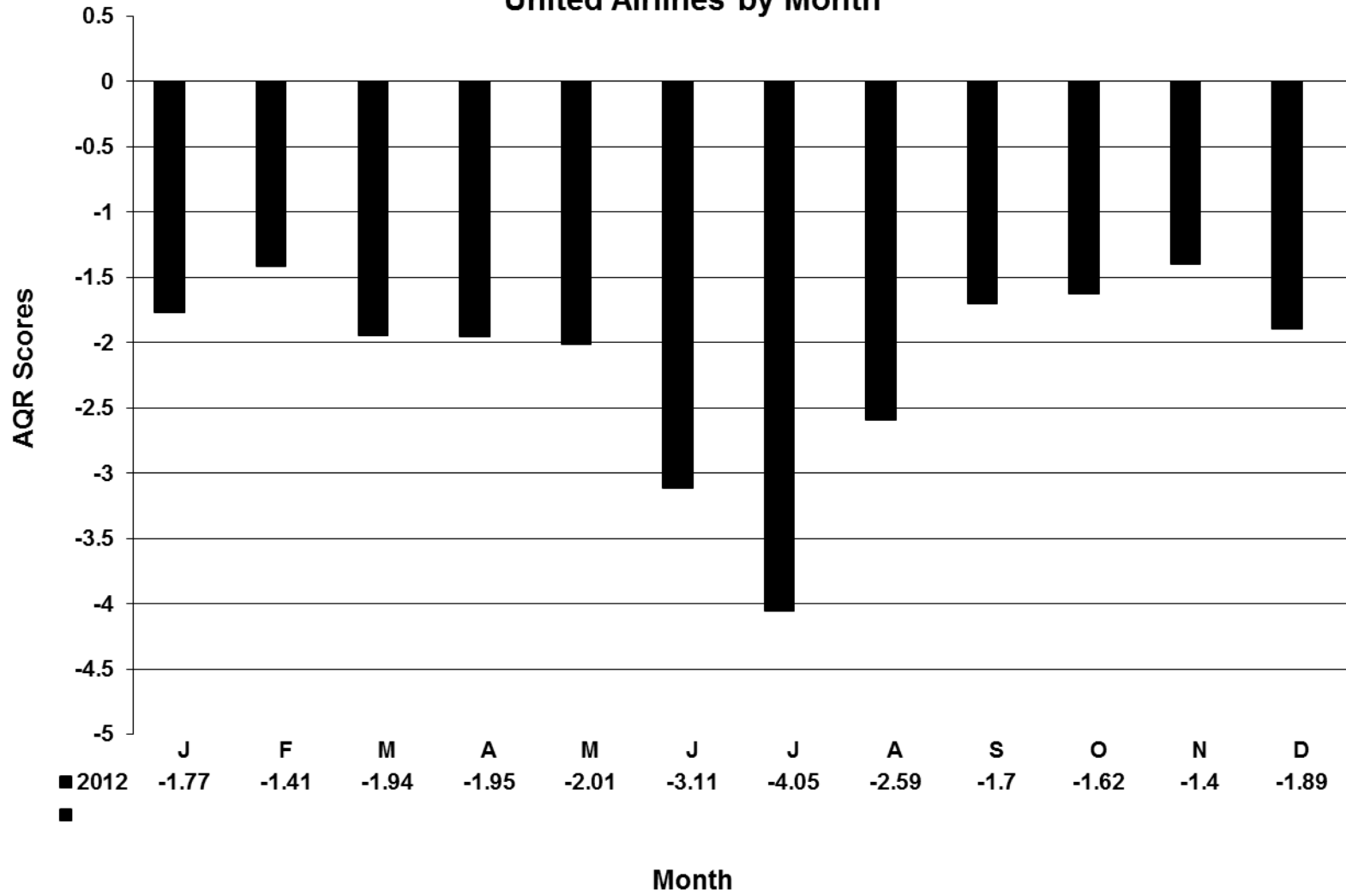
Airline Quality Rating

United Airlines 2012



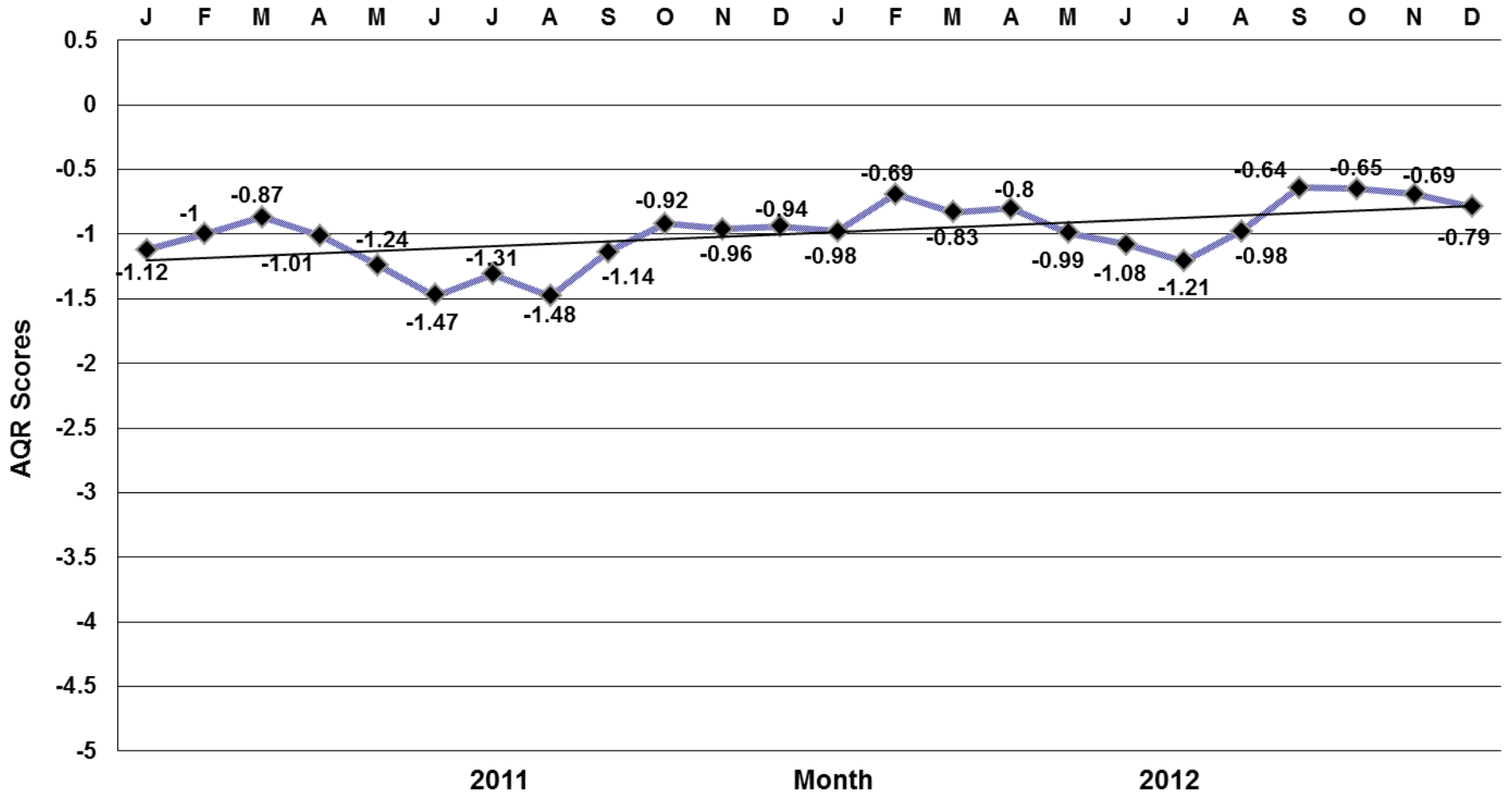
Airline Quality Rating

United Airlines by Month



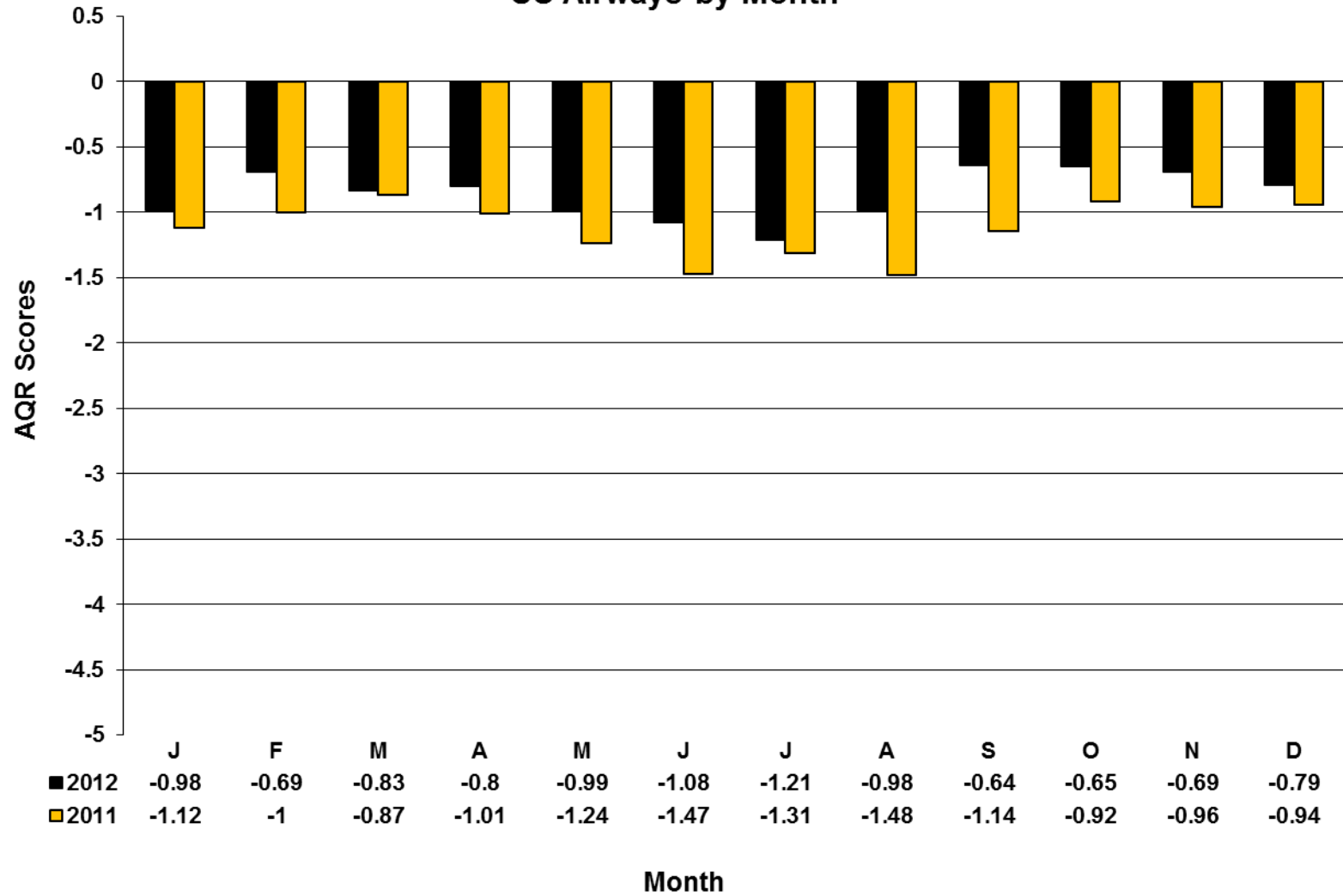
Airline Quality Rating

US Airways 2011 - 2012



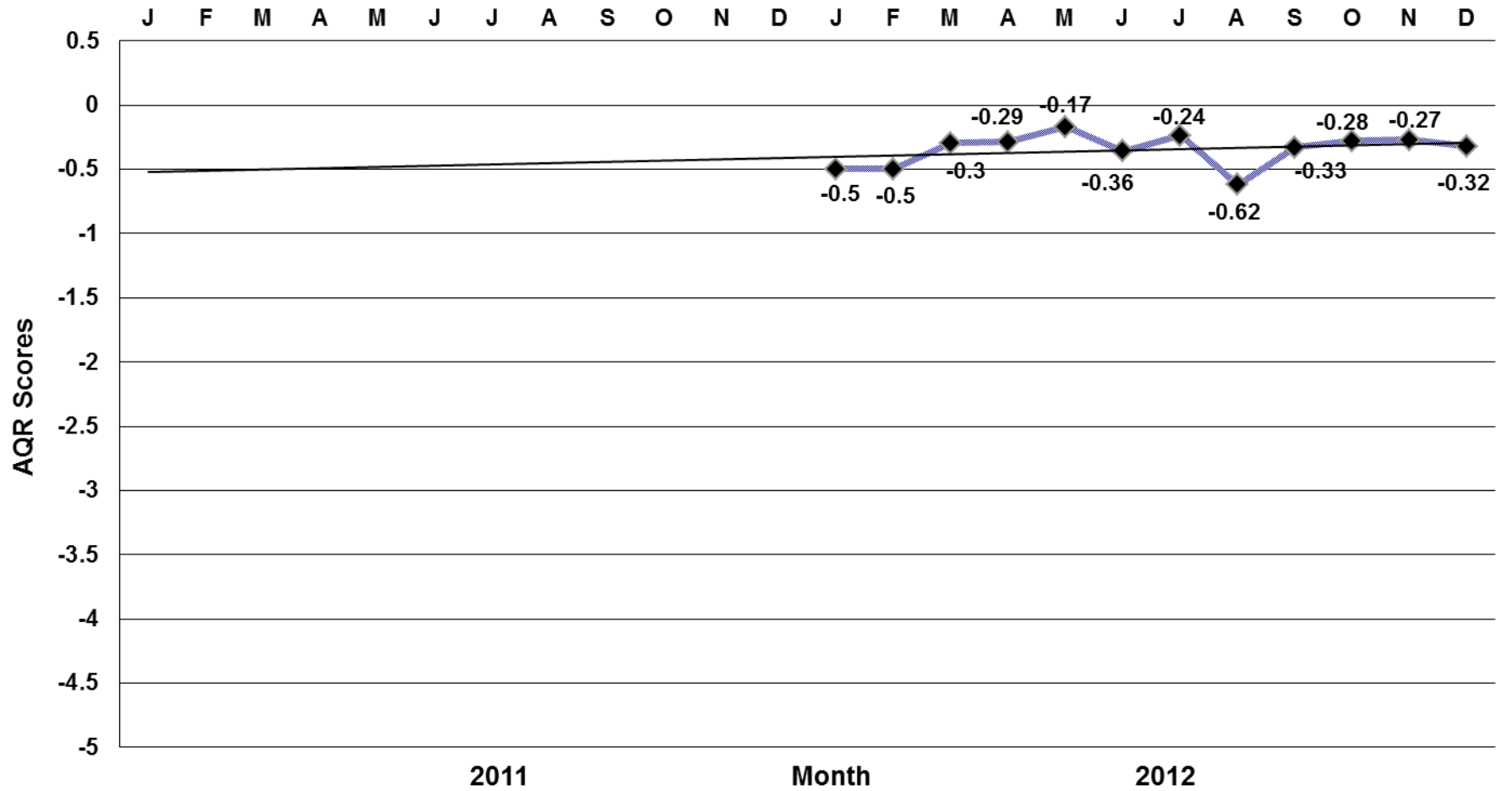
Airline Quality Rating

US Airways by Month



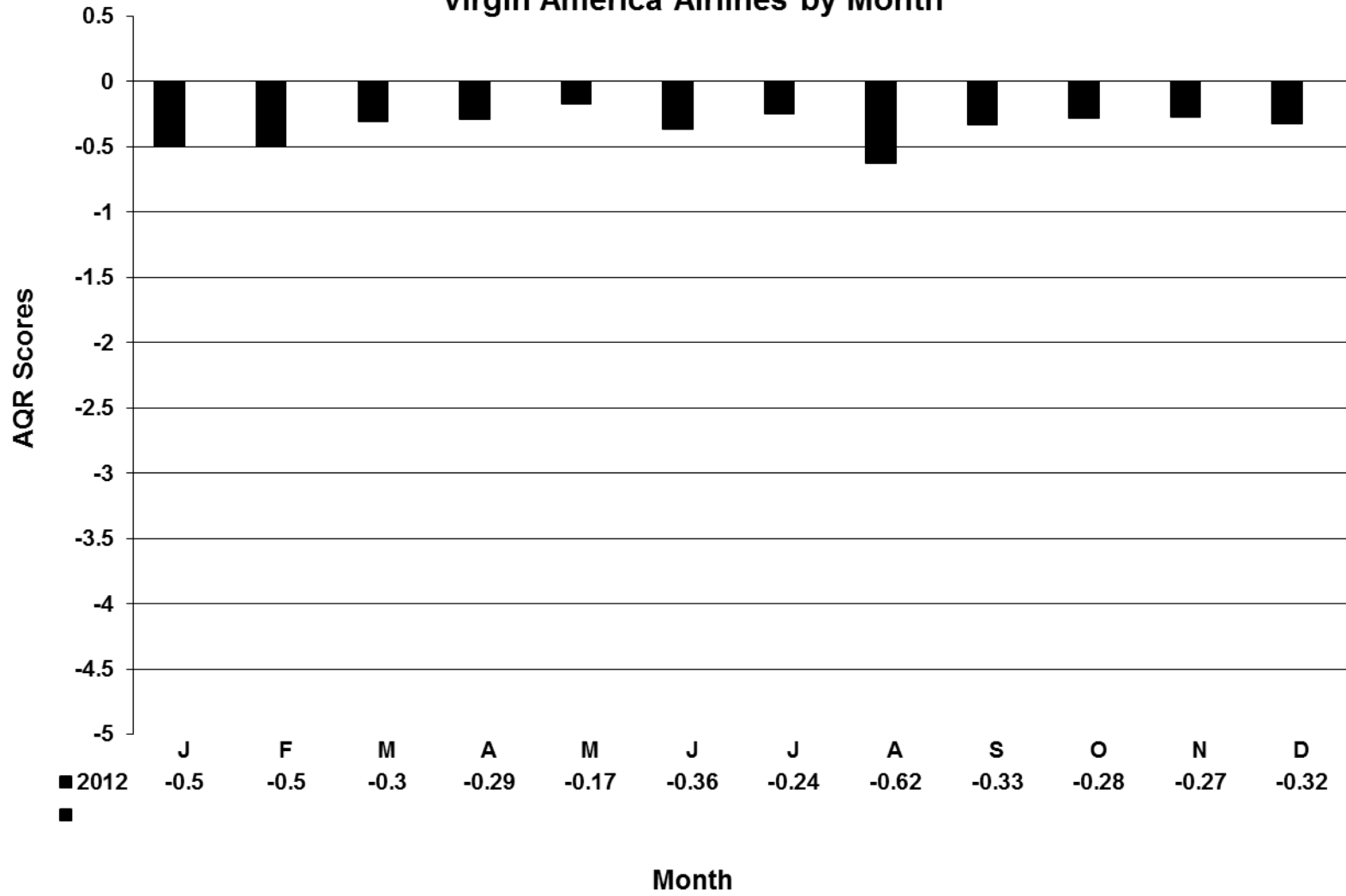
Airline Quality Rating

Virgin America Airlines 2012



Airline Quality Rating

Virgin America Airlines by Month



Detail of Frequently Cited Airline Performance Criteria

Consumer interest remains high regarding such issues as on-time performance, mishandled baggage, involuntary denied boardings (bumping), and treatment of customers. Since these criteria are central to the AQR calculations, it is important to provide more complete data for individual airlines in these areas. The following data tables provide a detailed look at the performance of each of the 14 U.S. airlines required to report performance in the specific areas of on-time arrivals, mishandled baggage, involuntary denied boardings, and consumer complaints to the Department of Transportation in 2012. The requirement is based on the criteria that an airline handled at least 1% or more of the total domestic scheduled-service passenger revenues for 2012. Data were drawn from the U.S. Department of Transportation monthly *Air Travel Consumer Report*. The final pages of this report outline the Airline Quality Rating criteria definitions for reference and clarity in more fully understanding the nature of the data reported.

2012 On-Time Arrival Percentage by Month for U.S. Airlines

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Annual
AirTran (FL)	.878	.912	.909	.940	.880	.859	.774	.817	.909	.859	.913	.814	.871
Alaska (AS)	.790	.895	.854	.906	.915	.884	.886	.893	.896	.868	.873	.833	.875
American (AA)	.836	.861	.799	.814	.821	.798	.764	.747	.580	.677	.796	.752	.769
American Eagle (MQ)	.817	.845	.823	.848	.821	.821	.754	.786	.865	.812	.866	.739	.816
Delta (DL)	.864	.900	.857	.909	.864	.855	.800	.839	.897	.855	.906	.854	.865
Express Jet (EV)	.790	.793	.741	.826	.788	.763	.677	.737	.810	.769	.840	.712	.769
Frontier (F9)	.776	.725	.808	.827	.817	.743	.765	.816	.844	.780	.821	.627	.779
Hawaiian (HA)	.931	.912	.925	.944	.947	.939	.896	.928	.964	.948	.941	.933	.934
JetBlue (B6)	.812	.844	.801	.868	.830	.774	.755	.740	.828	.740	.819	.702	.791
SkyWest (OO)	.813	.838	.802	.850	.854	.824	.792	.826	.836	.808	.828	.729	.816
Southwest (WN)	.876	.891	.851	.870	.842	.798	.774	.796	.865	.824	.860	.739	.831
United (UA)	.822	.837	.774	.816	.778	.701	.641	.722	.820	.767	.855	.784	.774
US Airways (US)	.850	.893	.873	.906	.855	.862	.820	.835	.873	.832	.881	.829	.859
Virgin America (VX)	.824	.917	.749	.867	.869	.820	.817	.831	.853	.815	.859	.805	.835
Industry by Month	.838	.861	.821	.862	.833	.805	.759	.791	.833	.801	.857	.765	.818
Mesa (YV) ¹	.834	.893	.865	.892	.854	.870	.798	.795	.855	.843	.884	.819	.850

¹ This airline is not included in the Industry value. Only 14 airlines that are required to report all data elements for 2012 are part of the Industry value. Performance statistics are presented here for reference and comparison.

Source: *Air Travel Consumer Report*, U.S. Department of Transportation, Office of Aviation Enforcement and Proceedings.

2011 On-Time Arrival Percentage by Month for U.S. Airlines

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Annual
AirTran (FL)	.776	.826	.828	.820	.859	.800	.812	.824	.895	.898	.884	.919	.844
Alaska (AS)	.853	.821	.826	.895	.907	.914	.909	.908	.917	.911	.848	.855	.882
American (AA)	.798	.710	.808	.715	.703	.770	.776	.759	.822	.831	.819	.824	.778
American Eagle (MQ)	.755	.627	.798	.686	.676	.745	.759	.764	.843	.850	.825	.829	.763
Atlantic Southeast (EV)	.714	.769	.722	.685	.737	.659	.690	.766	.812	.847	.827	.820	.752
Continental (CO)	.765	.755	.776	.719	.760	.748	.759	.743	.798	.816	.822	.798	.771
Delta (DL)	.746	.785	.784	.783	.827	.785	.799	.825	.880	.895	.888	.885	.823
Frontier (F9)	.757	.725	.796	.809	.738	.772	.728	.834	.870	.869	.857	.732	.792
Hawaiian (HA)	.912	.918	.884	.941	.914	.931	.951	.948	.955	.947	.920	.910	.928
JetBlue (B6)	.650	.655	.713	.684	.762	.735	.741	.616	.778	.767	.859	.840	.733
Mesa (YV)	.816	.826	.835	.810	.848	.790	.809	.834	.855	.881	.878	.880	.837
SkyWest (OO)	.735	.743	.769	.801	.815	.782	.751	.806	.851	.855	.817	.800	.793
Southwest (WN)	.744	.743	.799	.757	.767	.805	.838	.834	.843	.868	.886	.872	.813
United (UA)	.845	.793	.840	.807	.784	.746	.730	.778	.822	.824	.829	.840	.802
US Airways (US)	.786	.805	.828	.774	.748	.730	.755	.742	.807	.853	.875	.878	.798
Industry by Month	.763	.752	.794	.761	.775	.773	.784	.795	.843	.858	.856	.850	.800
Express Jet (XE) ¹	.771	.655	.766	.680	.716	.720	.711	.778	.779	.815	.813	.763	.747

¹ This airline voluntarily reports performance data. Only the 15 airlines required to report all data elements for 2011 are part of the Industry value. Performance statistics for this airline are presented for reference and comparison.

Source: *Air Travel Consumer Report*, U.S. Department of Transportation, Office of Aviation Enforcement and Proceedings.

2012 Involuntary Denied Boardings by Quarter for U.S. Airlines
(per 10,000 passengers)

	1st Quarter	2nd Quarter	3rd Quarter	4th Quarter	Annual
AirTran (FL)	0.83	1.00	0.65	1.35	0.95
Alaska (AS)	0.63	0.62	0.59	0.70	0.63
American (AA)	0.81	0.68	0.70	0.74	0.73
American Eagle (MQ)	1.47	1.10	0.84	0.93	1.07
Delta (DL)	0.44	0.38	0.45	0.79	0.51
Express Jet (EV)	1.87	1.97	2.45	2.17	2.13
Frontier (F9)	0.45	1.00	1.20	0.41	0.78
Hawaiian (HA)	0.36	0.05	0.14	0.17	0.18
JetBlue (B6)	0.01	0.02	0.01	0.02	0.01
SkyWest (OO)	1.64	2.46	2.30	2.82	2.32
Southwest (WN)	0.75	1.05	0.80	0.75	0.84
United (UA)	1.73	2.11	1.90	1.52	1.83
US Airways (US)	0.72	0.76	0.71	0.53	0.68
Virgin America (VX)	0.09	0.02	0.07	0.12	0.07
Industry by Quarter	0.89	1.03	0.96	0.97	0.97
Mesa (YV) ¹	2.38	2.58	2.50	2.69	2.54

¹ This airline is not included in the Industry value. Only the 14 airlines that are required to report all data elements for 2012 are part of the Industry value. Performance statistics are presented here for reference and comparison.

Source: *Air Travel Consumer Report*, U.S. Department of Transportation, Office of Aviation Enforcement and Proceedings.

2011 Involuntary Denied Boardings by Quarter for U.S. Airlines
(per 10,000 passengers)

	1st Quarter	2nd Quarter	3rd Quarter	4th Quarter	Annual
AirTran (FL)	0.44	0.42	0.56	0.88	0.57
Alaska (AS)	1.17	0.91	0.59	0.69	0.82
American (AA)	1.23	0.84	0.84	0.78	0.92
American Eagle (MQ)	2.74	3.07	1.86	1.38	2.24
Atlantic Southeast (EV)	0.56	0.93	1.06	1.07	0.91
Continental (CO)	1.49	1.68	1.63	1.12	1.49
Delta (DL)	0.29	0.29	0.38	0.30	0.31
Frontier (F9)	1.11	0.94	1.08	0.78	0.97
Hawaiian (HA)	0.12	0.04	0.01	0.26	0.11
JetBlue (B6)	0.02	0.00	0.01	0.02	0.01
Mesa (YV)	1.69	3.01	1.84	2.68	2.27
SkyWest (OO)	0.79	0.54	0.73	0.68	0.68
Southwest (WN)	0.85	0.73	0.55	0.49	0.65
United (UA)	1.14	0.86	1.18	0.86	1.01
US Airways (US)	0.93	1.13	0.81	0.87	0.94
Industry by Quarter	0.88	0.82	0.76	0.68	0.78
Express Jet (RU) ¹	1.58	1.87	2.10	1.67	1.82

¹ This airline voluntarily reports performance data. Only the 15 airlines required to report all data elements for 2011 are part of the Industry value. Performance statistics are presented for reference and comparison.

Source: *Air Travel Consumer Report*, U.S. Department of Transportation, Office of Aviation Enforcement and Proceedings

2012 Mishandled Baggage by Month for U.S. Airlines

(per 1,000 passengers)

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Annual
AirTran (FL)	1.52	1.32	1.32	1.27	1.19	1.64	1.73	1.87	1.48	1.62	1.54	2.19	1.58
Alaska (AS)	3.63	2.26	2.59	2.51	2.52	3.06	3.45	3.15	2.99	2.75	2.51	3.61	2.93
American (AA)	3.13	2.62	2.86	2.61	2.60	2.83	2.99	2.86	3.01	2.74	2.66	4.20	2.92
American Eagle (MQ)	6.92	5.69	5.95	5.10	4.47	5.36	6.31	6.02	5.55	5.56	5.31	7.74	5.80
Delta (DL)	2.41	1.93	2.26	1.74	1.93	2.36	2.43	2.19	1.67	1.94	1.74	2.58	2.10
Express Jet (EV)	5.49	4.53	6.60	4.72	5.13	6.20	6.84	6.40	4.36	4.69	4.09	6.73	5.52
Frontier (F9)	2.48	2.29	2.05	1.91	1.85	2.18	2.30	2.20	2.01	2.20	1.99	3.27	2.22
Hawaiian (HA)	2.87	5.57	2.78	2.47	2.63	3.02	3.24	3.61	2.64	2.95	2.56	3.02	2.88
JetBlue (B6)	1.94	1.70	1.75	1.60	1.67	2.08	2.18	2.10	1.73	1.58	1.83	2.26	1.88
SkyWest (OO)	4.67	4.07	5.45	4.35	4.52	5.78	6.03	5.64	4.76	4.99	4.59	7.83	5.26
Southwest (WN)	3.46	2.64	2.75	2.60	2.74	3.20	3.33	3.50	2.59	2.78	2.86	4.45	3.08
United (UA)	3.87	3.00	3.97	3.23	3.50	4.90	4.84	4.38	3.14	3.31	2.88	5.14	3.87
US Airways (US)	2.49	1.85	2.17	1.83	2.02	2.23	2.46	2.26	1.83	1.96	1.85	2.72	2.14
Virgin America (VX)	1.21	0.70	0.90	0.86	0.76	0.85	0.97	1.06	0.76	0.64	0.61	1.16	0.87
Industry by Month	3.29	2.63	3.07	2.60	2.74	3.33	3.49	3.35	2.69	2.80	2.62	4.13	3.07
Mesa (YV) ¹	3.91	3.53	4.85	4.57	4.95	4.94	5.61	5.24	3.83	5.04	3.65	5.69	4.68

¹ This airline is not included in the Industry value. Only 14 airlines that are required to report all data elements for 2012 are part of the Industry value. Performance statistics are presented here for reference and comparison.

Source: *Air Travel Consumer Report*, U.S. Department of Transportation, Office of Aviation Enforcement and Proceedings.

2011 Mishandled Baggage by Month for U.S. Airlines
(per 1,000 passengers)

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Annual
AirTran (FL)	1.97	1.62	1.58	1.52	1.67	1.81	1.77	1.87	1.43	1.36	1.45	1.49	1.63
Alaska (AS)	3.43	2.75	3.02	2.89	2.94	2.92	3.13	2.95	2.58	2.25	2.67	2.82	2.87
American (AA)	4.33	4.33	3.43	4.12	4.27	3.64	3.84	3.66	2.76	2.47	2.61	3.23	3.55
American Eagle (MQ)	9.19	9.33	7.00	8.13	8.67	7.30	7.97	7.68	6.00	5.20	5.50	6.67	7.32
Atlantic Southeast (EV)	8.22	5.86	6.47	5.89	5.47	5.80	5.66	5.41	4.52	3.99	4.18	5.16	5.52
Continental (CO)	3.44	3.00	2.85	2.54	3.37	3.57	3.88	3.67	2.95	3.17	3.09	4.44	3.35
Delta (DL)	3.77	2.93	2.93	2.66	2.84	2.99	3.26	2.50	2.03	1.90	1.95	2.28	2.66
Frontier (F9)	2.39	2.96	2.15	1.99	2.03	2.21	2.47	2.22	1.79	1.96	1.81	2.81	2.21
Hawaiian (HA)	2.99	3.22	3.33	2.49	2.49	2.48	2.33	2.10	2.26	2.38	2.59	2.97	2.63
JetBlue (B6)	2.52	2.22	2.31	2.21	2.07	2.20	2.40	2.64	1.95	1.94	1.85	2.20	2.21
Mesa (YV)	5.81	4.60	4.52	5.08	5.11	6.16	5.44	5.27	4.60	3.95	3.83	3.61	4.87
SkyWest (OO)	5.85	4.98	4.35	3.64	4.02	3.99	4.34	3.90	3.30	3.25	3.52	4.64	4.13
Southwest (WN)	4.52	3.64	3.51	3.47	3.85	3.85	3.91	3.76	3.17	3.25	3.00	3.59	3.65
United (UA)	3.67	3.19	2.67	2.44	2.90	3.60	3.67	3.35	2.44	2.76	3.07	4.25	3.66
US Airways (US)	3.04	2.52	2.42	2.36	2.83	3.24	3.14	3.21	2.66	2.27	2.24	2.42	2.70
Industry by Month	4.13	3.53	3.25	3.21	3.49	3.54	3.69	3.41	2.78	2.68	2.69	3.30	3.35
Express Jet (XE) ¹	6.58	6.12	5.85	4.04	4.51	4.67	4.90	4.64	3.90	3.85	3.92	5.50	4.82

¹This airline voluntarily reports performance data. Only the 15 airlines required to report all data elements for 2011 are part of the Industry value. Performance statistics are presented here for reference and comparison.

Source: *Air Travel Consumer Report*, U.S. Department of Transportation, Office of Aviation Enforcement and Proceedings.

2012 Total Complaints to Department of Transportation by Month for U.S. Airlines
(per 100,000 passengers)

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Annual
AirTran (FL)	0.81	0.50	0.55	0.69	0.30	0.47	0.59	0.83	0.45	0.36	0.49	0.25	0.91
Alaska (AS)	0.44	0.45	0.32	0.26	0.77	0.54	0.85	0.74	0.34	0.54	0.33	0.32	0.51
American (AA)	1.58	0.84	0.93	1.59	1.35	1.37	2.42	2.92	2.47	2.10	2.12	1.86	1.80
American Eagle (MQ)	1.13	1.18	0.96	0.38	0.83	1.29	2.73	1.72	1.18	0.98	0.80	1.90	1.27
Delta (DL)	0.79	0.77	0.64	0.91	0.91	0.76	0.87	1.16	0.61	0.48	0.45	0.43	0.73
Express Jet (EV)	0.99	0.65	0.73	0.84	0.79	1.76	2.48	1.28	1.27	0.45	0.26	1.00	1.07
Frontier (F9)	0.74	1.13	0.97	1.37	0.76	0.71	0.95	0.91	0.96	1.28	1.76	1.15	1.05
Hawaiian (HA)	0.68	0.28	0.64	0.83	0.90	0.60	0.23	0.46	1.05	1.97	1.39	1.60	0.89
JetBlue (B6)	0.83	1.04	0.66	0.57	0.63	0.92	0.82	0.93	1.11	0.59	0.90	0.56	0.79
SkyWest (OO)	0.96	0.49	0.72	0.85	0.78	1.68	1.44	0.69	0.46	0.92	0.98	0.51	0.88
Southwest (WN)	0.26	0.22	0.29	0.21	0.35	0.19	0.32	0.37	0.24	0.22	0.16	0.20	0.25
United (UA)	2.61	1.98	3.19	3.67	3.60	6.86	11.25	5.39	2.94	2.76	2.33	1.93	4.24
US Airways (US)	1.79	1.30	1.51	1.78	2.33	2.50	2.83	2.05	1.08	1.14	1.47	0.91	1.74
Virgin America (VX)	1.76	2.45	1.14	1.35	0.94	1.64	0.88	2.49	1.55	1.39	1.43	0.99	1.50
Industry by Month	1.19	0.91	1.08	1.31	1.33	1.89	2.81	1.92	1.24	1.10	1.06	0.95	1.43
Mesa (YV)¹	0.16	0.34	0.15	0.00	0.73	0.43	1.20	0.44	0.66	0.47	0.32	0.00	0.41

¹ This airline is not included in the Industry value. Only 14 airlines that are required to report all data elements for 2012 are part of the Industry value. Performance statistics are presented here for reference and comparison.

Source: *Air Travel Consumer Report*, U.S. Department of Transportation, Office of Aviation Enforcement and Proceedings.

2011 Total Complaints to Department of Transportation by Month for U.S. Airlines
(per 100,000 passengers)

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Annual
AirTran (FL)	0.89	0.43	0.59	0.76	0.62	0.52	0.69	1.17	0.91	0.75	0.40	0.97	0.72
Alaska (AS)	0.46	0.56	0.39	0.61	0.67	0.25	0.77	0.35	0.35	0.64	0.35	0.34	0.48
American (AA)	1.28	1.24	1.19	1.54	2.00	1.68	1.60	2.13	1.50	1.02	1.34	0.87	1.46
American Eagle (MQ)	1.08	1.28	1.40	1.20	2.20	2.61	1.61	2.40	1.29	0.57	0.83	0.70	1.45
Atlantic Southeast (EV)	0.41	0.61	1.19	1.03	0.94	1.38	1.41	1.34	0.78	0.24	0.53	0.36	0.88
Continental (CO)	2.11	1.62	1.50	1.29	1.85	1.87	1.85	2.65	2.34	1.92	1.55	1.21	1.81
Delta (DL)	1.89	1.50	1.11	1.18	1.07	1.03	1.39	1.63	1.05	1.10	1.01	0.90	1.23
Frontier (F9)	0.95	0.41	0.95	0.50	0.75	0.43	2.16	1.12	0.54	0.42	0.32	0.76	0.76
Hawaiian (HA)	0.43	0.30	1.09	1.18	0.41	0.81	0.50	0.77	0.72	0.57	0.71	0.68	0.70
JetBlue (B6)	1.41	0.72	0.82	0.96	1.18	1.29	1.20	1.11	1.14	1.20	1.05	0.77	1.08
Mesa (YV)	0.77	0.16	1.36	0.57	0.13	0.50	0.63	1.28	1.28	0.28	0.14	0.30	0.62
SkyWest (OO)	0.92	1.04	0.58	0.46	0.57	1.09	0.61	1.22	0.54	0.43	0.46	0.76	0.73
Southwest (WN)	0.22	0.22	0.29	0.40	0.49	0.34	0.36	0.44	0.38	0.29	0.21	0.14	0.32
United (UA)	1.58	1.90	1.82	1.77	2.32	2.55	3.28	2.54	2.39	1.84	1.95	2.14	2.21
US Airways (US)	1.51	1.59	1.15	1.52	2.00	2.56	2.32	3.01	2.19	1.64	1.86	1.56	1.91
Industry by Month	1.20	1.07	1.00	1.08	1.29	1.31	1.42	1.65	1.24	0.99	0.98	0.88	1.19
Express Jet (XE) ¹	0.94	0.29	0.89	1.53	1.24	0.96	1.68	1.28	0.93	1.17	0.73	0.48	1.04

¹This airline voluntarily reports performance data. Only the 15 airlines required to report all data elements for 2011 are part of the Industry value. Performance statistics are presented here for reference and comparison.

Source: *Air Travel Consumer Report*, U.S. Department of Transportation, Office of Aviation Enforcement and Proceedings.

**Monthly Count of Complaints Received by Department of Transportation
Regarding 14 AQR Rated Airlines in 2012**

Complaints for 14 AQR Rated Airlines		Top Four Categories¹ of Complaints for 14 AQR Rated Airlines in 2012			
		2012	1	2	3
Jan	563	FP	BG	CS	TB
Feb	415	FP	CS	TB	BG
Mar	601	FP	RT	CS	BG
Apr	688	FP	CS	TB	BG
May	732	FP	CS	BG	TB
Jun	1,084	FP	CS	TB	BG
Jul	1,674	FP	TB	CS	BG
Aug	1,118	FP	TB	CS	BG
Sep	619	FP	BG	TB	CS
Oct	580	FP	CS	BG	TB
Nov	538	FP	TB	BG	CS
Dec	639	FP	CS	BG	TB

¹ FP = Flight Problems; CS = Customer Service; BG = Baggage; TB = Reservations, Ticketing, and Boarding; RF = Refunds; FA=Fairs. Details of categories are at the back of this report.

Source: *Air Travel Consumer Report*, U.S. Department of Transportation, Office of Aviation Enforcement and Proceedings.

**Overview of Complaints Received by Department of Transportation for All U.S. Domestic Airlines
for 2012 and 2011 by Complaint Category**

	% of all Complaints Received		Number of Complaints Received	
	2012	2011	2012	2011
Flight Problems	32.7%	34.9%	3,740	3,290
Reservations, Ticketing, and Boarding	14.6%	11.2%	1,668	1,058
Customer Service	14.3%	12.0%	1,634	1,132
Baggage	12.4%	14.3%	1,416	1,345
Refunds	7.5%	7.2%	857	677
Disability	5.8%	6.0%	665	562
Fares	4.4%	5.0%	501	467
Oversales	3.5%	4.6%	402	435
Other	3.0%	2.9%	343	273
Advertising	1.2%	0.6%	134	61
Discrimination	0.7%	1.1%	81	106
Animals	<u>0.0%</u>	<u>0.1%</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>8</u>
Total	100%	100%	11,445	9,414

Source: *Air Travel Consumer Report*, U.S. Department of Transportation, Office of Aviation Enforcement and Proceedings.

Airline Quality Rating Criteria Overview

The individual criteria used to calculate the AQR scores are summed up in four basic areas that reflect customer-oriented areas of airline performance. Definitions of the four areas used in this AQR 2013 (2012 data) are outlined below.

OT ON-TIME PERFORMANCE (+8.63)

Regularly published data regarding on-time arrival performance is obtained from the U.S. Department of Transportation's *Air Travel Consumer Report*. According to the DOT, a flight is counted "on time" if it is operated within 15 minutes of the scheduled time shown in the carriers' Computerized Reservations Systems. Delays caused by mechanical problems are counted as of January 1, 1995. Canceled and diverted operations are not considered on-time arrivals. The AQR calculations use the percentage of flights arriving on time for each airline for each month.

DB INVOLUNTARY DENIED BOARDINGS (-8.03)

This criterion includes involuntary denied boardings. Data regarding denied boardings can be obtained from the U.S. Department of Transportation's *Air Travel Consumer Report*. Data includes the number of passengers who hold confirmed reservations and are involuntarily denied boarding on a flight that is oversold. These figures include only passengers whose oversold flight departs without them onboard. The AQR uses the ratio of involuntary denied boardings per 10,000 passengers boarded by month.

MB MISHANDLED BAGGAGE REPORTS (-7.92)

Regularly published data regarding consumer reports to the carriers of mishandled baggage can be obtained from the U.S. Department of Transportation's *Air Travel Consumer Report*. According to the DOT, a mishandled bag includes claims for lost, damaged, delayed, or pilfered baggage. Data is reported by carriers as to the rate of mishandled baggage reports per 1,000 passengers and for the industry. The AQR ratio is based on the total number of reports each carrier received from passengers concerning lost, damaged, delayed, or pilfered baggage per 1,000 passengers served.

CC CONSUMER COMPLAINTS (-7.17)

The criteria of consumer complaints is made up of 12 specific complaint categories (outlined below) monitored by the U. S. Department of Transportation and reported monthly in the *Air Travel Consumer Report*. Consumers can file complaints with the DOT in writing, by telephone, via e-mail, or in person. The AQR uses complaints about the various categories as part of the larger customer complaint criteria and calculates the consumer complaint ratio on the number of complaints received per 100,000 passengers flown for each airline.

CONSUMER COMPLAINT CATEGORIES

Flight Problems

Data is available by the total number of consumer complaints pertaining to cancellations, delays, or any other deviations from schedule, whether planned or unplanned for each airline each month.

Oversales

This complaint category includes all bumping problems, whether or not the airline complied with DOT oversale regulations. Data is available by the total number of consumer complaints pertaining to oversales for each airline each month.

Reservations, Ticketing, and Boarding

This category includes airline or travel agent mistakes in reservations and ticketing, problems in making reservations and obtaining tickets due to busy telephone lines, or waiting in line or delays in mailing tickets, and problems boarding the aircraft (except oversales). Data is available by the total number of consumer complaints pertaining to ticketing and boarding for each airline each month.

Fares

As defined by the DOT, consumer complaints regarding fares include incorrect or incomplete information about fares, discount fare conditions and availability, overcharges, fare increases, and level of fares in general. Data is available for the total number of consumer complaints pertaining to fares for each airline each month.

Refunds

This category includes customer complaints about problems in obtaining refunds for unused or lost tickets, fare adjustments, or bankruptcies. Data is available by the total number of consumer complaints pertaining to refunds for each airline each month.

Baggage

Claims for lost, damaged, or delayed baggage, charges for excess baggage, carry-on problems, and difficulties with airline claim procedure are included in this category. Data is available by the total number of consumer complaints pertaining to baggage for each airline each month.

Customer Service

This category includes complaints about rude or unhelpful employees, inadequate meals or cabin service, and treatment of delayed passengers. Data is available by the total number of consumer complaints pertaining to customer service for each airline each month.

Disability

This category includes complaints about civil rights complaints by air travelers with disabilities. Data is available by the total number of consumer complaints pertaining to disabilities for each airline each month.

Advertising

These are complaints concerning advertising that is unfair, misleading or offensive to consumers. Data is available by the total number of consumer complaints regarding advertising for each airline each month.

Discrimination

Civil rights complaints by air travelers (other than disabilities); for example: complaints based on race, national origin, religion, etc. (this category was first reported in May, 2002).

Animals

This category tracks customer complaints about loss, injury, or death of an animal during air transport by an air carrier. Data is available by the total number of customer complaints regarding animals for each airline each month.

Other

Data regarding consumer complaints about frequent flyer programs, smoking, tours credit, cargo problems, security, airport facilities, claims for bodily injury, and other problems not classified above are included in this category. Data is available by the total number of consumer complaints regarding other problems for each airline each month.