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# Deregulation, competition, and antitrust implications in the US airline industry

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### Abstract

Current problems in the US airline industry such as increasing industry consolidation, fortress hub dominance, predatory behavior, and high fare "pockets of pain" have their roots in the flaws of the theories that supported airline deregulation in 1978. Contrary to pre-deregulation expectations, the industry is characterized by large economies of scale, large barriers to entry, and a lack of contestability in airline markets. These inexorable economic forces are producing increased levels of monopoly and oligopoly control over city-pair markets resulting in a larger share of travelers paying higher fares. Additional mergers and acquisitions will exacerbate the problem. As these trends continue, the US Congress and the US Departments of Transportation and Justice will be under increasing pressure to take serious corrective actions.



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hypothesis, the acceleration is sequential.

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