

CUTTING FREE

Atlantic Coast Airlines reinvented itself earlier this year as low-cost Independence Air. Can it prosper cut from its former parent's umbilical cord?

REBECCA RAYKO / WASHINGTON DC

With just two months of service under its belt, Independence Air is either flying high or on shaky ground, depending on whom you ask. The outlook for newly launched Independence remains mixed for the regional-turned-low-fares carrier that began service from Washington Dulles international airport in June.

Eagerly awaited performance results for July, the carrier's first full month on its own, showed a load factor of 47% – an increase from June's 34%, but concurrent with capacity and traffic declines associated with the closure of its regional feeder relationship with United Express.

Reduced flying under the United Express banner, along with costs linked to its transition from Atlantic Coast Airlines to Independence Air, were also apparent in the airline's June financial quarter.

