Southwest Airlines Co. (LUV): Southwest Airlines is a Dallas-based airline company that is in its 47th year of service. They pride themselves in their excellent customer service, low fares and free baggage that is not offered by many other airlines. They have more than 55,000 employees and service millions of customers per year, making them among the top airlines in the country. In 2003, they became the nation’s largest domestic air carrier and have maintained that ranking since. During their high season, mainly summer months, they operate a staggering 4,000 departures a day. Currently, they service 99 destinations domestically and also operate in 9 other countries, and are continuously looking for ways to increase their service base. Southwest operates the largest fleet of Boeing aircraft, which is a huge feat.

Southwest has steady revenue growth and huge gross margins thanks to their large, and growing, market share and low-cost strategy. The company is run by veteran leaders, which is evidenced by the fact that they have turned a profit every year for the last 44 years.

At a time when markets are reaching all-time highs and uncertainty is high, Southwest is well positioned to take advantage of any outcome. During recessionary periods, the low cost airline will capture a larger market share. During growth, it will benefit from the upward trend of the whole industry, while maintaining a loyal customer base. Southwest is a safe choice in an industry with risky competitors.