

Free Japan flights

WENDY Wu Tours is offering free return flights from Australia to Japan on select tours to the Land of the Rising Sun in 2021/22.

The applicable tours include departures from Sep 2021 to Apr 2022 for bookings made by 13 Nov, and also includes eight solo departures on the company's A Week in Japan, Jewels of Japan, and Discover Japan and Japan Uncovered adventures.

In addition to free flights, solo tours also feature complimentary extras such as free chauffeur Australian airport transfers, airport lounge pass (SYD, BNE, MEL) and a welcome cocktail reception on arrival.

Call 1300 727 998 for details.

Photocopier firm facing ACCC action

THE Australian Competition and Consumer Commission (ACCC) has instituted Federal Court proceedings against Fuji Xerox over 31 unfair contract terms in the photocopier maker's small business contracts.

The move will be of little surprise to some travel agents who are believed to have been forced to pay significant penalties for returning equipment due to the closure of their offices during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The ACCC said it was responding to complaints about excessive exit fees, automatic renewal terms and unilateral price rises.

MEANWHILE the ACCC is also set to authorise small businesses to collectively bargain with suppliers and franchisors, in a new "class exemption" which will become effective from early 2021 - details at acc.gov.au.

QF to save on agent costs

QANTAS CEO Alan Joyce this morning confirmed wide-ranging cost cutting measures to help the carrier survive the pandemic, for the first time revealing publicly that the measures include "renegotiating our arrangements with travel agents".

Without providing further details, Joyce said the initiative would "create better selling opportunities for the trade and significantly reduce our cost of sale," implying that agent remuneration is likely to be cut.

The company hasn't yet responded to a request for further details, with the move flagged during the Qantas Annual General Meeting today.

"The only antidote when you're faced with less revenue is to

lower your costs," he said, with \$15 billion in savings identified over the next three years, mostly through reduced flying activity.

As well as job losses, Qantas has flagged a review of its property footprint, stopped cash spending on sponsorships and is reviewing its ground handling operations.

The QF CEO also gave an update on the airline's current performance, noting that the unexpected closure of several domestic borders in Jul had delayed the carrier's recovery and resulted in a \$100 million negative on quarterly earnings.

"Essentially this is a timing issue - we know the upswing will materialise - just later than planned," he said.

If Qld opens up to NSW in the coming weeks it's expected Qantas Group domestic capacity to be back to 50% of previous levels by Christmas.

"We know that latent travel demand is strong...with most international travel off limits for a while, we're expecting to see a boom in domestic tourism once more borders open up."

Recovery timetable

THE Tourism Restart Taskforce has updated its proposed timetable for the resumption of different parts of the travel and tourism sector, along with a guide to further explain the rationale behind the various stages.

A meeting of the Taskforce acknowledged the new Digital Passenger Declaration (**TD** 19 Oct) as a means of facilitating safe travel, while the timetable also now reflects the potential for "private corporate quarantine".

Based on current health trends the timetable envisages the opening of all domestic borders this month, apart from Vic which could reopen in Dec.

International quarantine caps could be gradually eased and then fully removed by 01 Mar.

See australianchambercovid.com.

Today's issue of TD

Travel Daily today has seven pages of news including our PUZZLE page.

Hurtigruten's split decision

HURTIGRUTEN has unveiled plans to restructure its business, effectively splitting the company into two separate entities, Hurtigruten Expeditions and Hurtigruten Norway.

The expedition arm of the line will consist of eight smaller cruise ships which will undertake sailings to more than 250 destinations such as Greenland, Norway, Svalbard and Antarctica.

Hurtigruten Norway will operate seven ships along the Norwegian coast under the leadership of a soon-to-be-named CEO.

MEANWHILE Hurtigruten is running a series of Adventure Awaits webinars detailing its range of 2022/23 itineraries.

Agents can register now for any of the seven remaining sessions.

The next webinar to take place will detail the Norwegian archipelago Svalbard, running on Tue at 2pm AEDT - **CLICK HERE** to register and attend.

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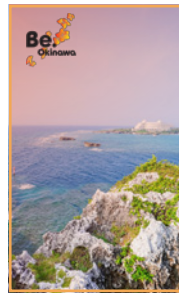
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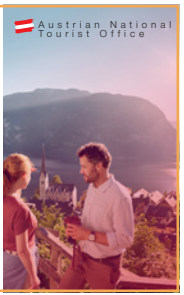
Offer valid until 13 November 2020. Subject to availability. New bookings only. Visit wendywutours.com.au/agents/japan for full terms and conditions.



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Travel Daily



C&K whistleblower found dead

AN ACCOUNTANT who formerly worked for the collapsed Cox & Kings (C&K) in India has been found dead in Mumbai, just days after becoming a witness in an investigation into the firm.

Sagar Deshpande had promised some "crucial documents" to the Economic Offences Wing of India's Enforcement Directorate, according to the *Mumbai Mirror*.

Deshpande, whose body was found near railway tracks in the Titwala area, had been missing since 11 Oct.

The 38-year-old had been a Finance Manager at C&K since 2010, and was cooperating with authorities in their probe into the company and its senior executives, over claims to have used fictitious customers to secure large loans from Yes Bank.

Yes Bank is the major creditor in the collapse of Cox & Kings and associated companies including Tempo and Bentours in Australia.

Although police suspect he killed himself, Deshpande's family are urging that the death be treated as suspicious.

Webjet poised to grow

WEBJET'S share of the air booking market in Australia is expected to grow, with CEO John Gucsic citing the acceleration of the shift from offline to online due to the decreased presence of physical stores.

An update to shareholders yesterday saw Gucsic highlighting Webjet's 9% average market share across all travel agency GDS bookings since May this year.

He noted that Webjet's "mix and match" online offering was well suited to the constantly changing and reduced airline schedules, with Webjet now seeing its domestic bookings for May-Aug 2020 at 14.2% of the levels for last year - compared to the overall market which is sitting at about 7%.

Gucsic highlighted the company's strong capital position, giving it strategic and financial flexibility through until 2022 despite second waves, ongoing border closures and uncertainty around a COVID-19 vaccine.

"Webjet is a global travel business and well placed to benefit as domestic leisure

markets open up," he said, with holiday trips expected to lead the rebound from the pandemic.

As well as OTA operations in Australia, the company's WebBeds wholesale accommodation business was also expecting to benefit from the structural shift to online, with its customers including the top five online travel companies globally.

Gucsic also forecast a significant change in the competitive landscape once COVID-19 passes, with "severe financial pressure on smaller players and the industry". He said Webjet's strong balance sheet and capital position gives it the flexibility to "take advantage of attractive opportunities to gain market share".

MEANWHILE Gucsic is also set to benefit from a new Webjet Long Term Incentive plan, despite a strong protest vote which saw almost a third of the company's shareholders vote against the proposal.

The plan awards options to Gucsic which, based on the growth in Webjet's share price in recent weeks, means they are already "in the money".

Chairman Roger Sharp said the Board's clear view was that Gucsic is the "right leader to see the company through this difficult period, and that we need to put appropriate incentives in place to retain John and to deliver long-term shareholder returns".

MSC implements anti-virus measures

MSC Cruises has announced the world-first implementation of an advanced technology ventilation sanitation system called Safe Air.

To debut on *MSC Seashore*, Safe Air uses UV-C lamps to ensure any viruses, bacteria and mould do not circulate in air conditioning and ventilation systems.

Seashore is currently under construction in Italy, with a Jul 2021 delivery expected.



Window Seat

WE CAN all agree that 2020 has been a shocker - but imagine if you had the responsibility for making it go even longer.

That's clearly been weighing on the conscience of Norway's Minister of Trade and Industry, Iselin Nybo, who has issued a formal apology about the start of Daylight Saving Time in the country this weekend.

"As Minister of Time, I strongly regret that 2020 will be another hour longer, this has already been a very demanding year for many," she said.

WHILE travelling with a face mask is definitely a pain, there is a possible silver lining this week in the form of the innovative release of new bacon-scented face masks.

The initiative comes from American smallgoods maker Hormel Foods, which said its new "Breathable Bacon" personal protective equipment features the latest in pork-scented technology.

"Don't just eat bacon - inhale it," the company urges on a special website which is now live at breathablebacon.com.

Sealink Hayman pact

SEALINK Travel Group has been awarded a three-year contract to operate transfers for the newly relaunched InterContinental Hayman Island Resort.

Sealink will operate at least two return services per day between Hayman and Airlie Beach, as well as transfers for all arrivals and departures as required at Hamilton Island Airport.

Three five-star vessels will be used to run the transfers, with SeaLink CEO Clint Feuerherdt saying the new Whitsundays operation would see the company's fleet expand to a total of 80 vessels across the country.



NEW EPISODE AVAILABLE!

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CORPORATE UPDATE

New TMC model proposed

MELBOURNE-BASED Reho Travel's Karsten Horne has spurred big discussion among his Helloworld for Business colleagues, with the presentation of a new retainer-based pricing model for TMCs.

After presenting the idea to 30 of his owner manager peers last week, Horne told **Travel Daily** he had received "amazing feedback".

The new model, presented in a special opinion piece on the **last page** of today's **TD**, notes the pressure the corporate travel sector was under even before COVID-19 - in particular the heavy impact last year of the new Qantas Channel which "promised to modernise the way agencies book fares and deliver personalised experiences to customers".

"How's that looking 12 months on? I know for our business alone it wiped \$100k off the bottom line, with nothing to show for it - certainly no customers raving about the experience," he said.

Horne said that was one of several signs for the industry that the days of relying on earning a living from suppliers was coming to an end.

Instead he is suggesting that

TMCs create a subscription pricing model for travel management, which would allow clients to pay for the value that agents are adding in terms of duty of care, account management, reporting and supplier negotiations.

The retainer model would sit alongside existing transaction fees for booking services, but would require a mindset shift for the industry to believe in its professionalism and "educate our clients on the value we add".

However for the new paradigm to work and get everyone back on their feet, "we need the majority of the industry on board," he said - hence the move to share the idea with the industry, despite giving away significant personal IP in the process.

Horne's retainer model ideas are available for download now in PDF format at traveldaily.com.au.

Vale Ben Weinmann

THE Australian travel industry is this week mourning the death of Benjamin Weinmann, who lost his long battle with brain cancer.

The highly respected Weinmann worked with many across the industry, including The Lido Group/HRS and Amadeus, and "lived and breathed hotels".

The energetic and passionate Weinmann invented the concept of Lido's hotel payments in 2007, and was commonly referred to as "The Hotel Guru".



travelBulletin

Spencer Travel team consolidates



SPENCER Travel this month officially welcomed offshoot operations Shire Travel and Spencer Travel Southside to its head office in Mascot, NSW.

MD Penny Spencer said the move would help reduce overheads as the company endures the COVID-19 pandemic, with clients understanding of the need for the change.

All existing phone numbers and contact details remain in place, and going forward the group's advisors will be available to meet with customers one-on-one in the Sutherland and St George areas to provide personal service.

The office newbies are **pictured** from left: Giselle Pennington and Leanne Ralston, Spencer Travel Southside; MD Penny Spencer; Ian Cooper, Shire Travel; Carissa Johnson, Spencer Travel Southside; and Lisa Allan & Joanne Watson, Shire Travel.

GBTA free offer

THE Global Business Travel Association (GBTA) is offering free honorary memberships to anyone in the travel industry who has been displaced due to the impact of coronavirus.

The membership, normally costing \$590, will be valid until 01 Aug 2021 or until finding employment, with the GBTA saying it is "committed to helping the business travel community stay connected during this challenging time".

Applications can be made via the GBTA website at gbta.org, with local GBTA Director Tony O'Connor from Butler Caroye saying "the idea is that the resources and network will be a help, and after many years of support and engagement from so many travel buyers and suppliers, it's right to be giving back".

GBT wins Google

AMERICAN Express Global Business Travel (GBT) has been appointed as the sole worldwide TMC for Google, with other recent GBT wins believed to include PayPal and Eli Lilly.

Travel Daily

CEO

Conversations

with Bruce Piper



In collaboration with the Travel Industry Hub, join us on weekly webinars as Business Publishing Group publisher Bruce Piper sits down with some of the biggest names in the industry.

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Way to go mate!



CLUB Med has revealed that Samantha Gittoes (**pictured**), formerly an agent with STA Travel New Zealand, has won its third holiday prize as part of the Nominate a Mate campaign.

She was put forward by Natalie Langley, also from STA Travel New Zealand, who heaped praise on the stoic agent for being the top seller for the past six years and for always imbuing her work with a positive spirit and enthusiasm.

Gittoes was also recognised for a host of challenges faced this year, including giving birth to her first child as the global pandemic struck, and unfortunately due to

travel restrictions, her mother was unable to fly to New Zealand and share the life-changing event with her daughter.

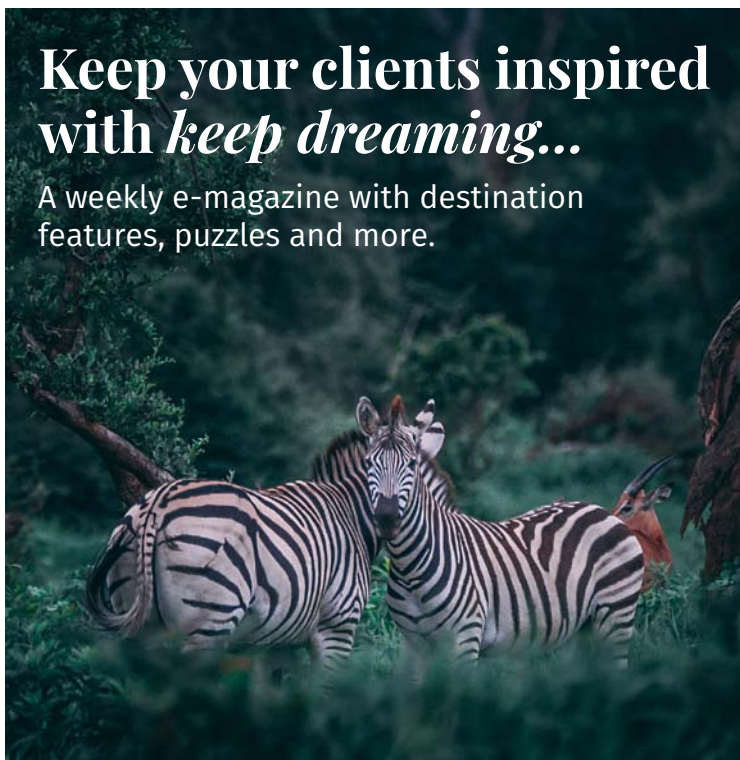
Instead she relied on her housemate for crucial support, who stepped in to fill the maternal role.

In another unfortunate twist of fate, Gittoes' positive personal development was offset by news in Aug she would be without a job after her employer went into administration during the challenging COVID period.

There is still time to nominate a mate you think has earned a holiday - see details [HERE](#).

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Travel Daily

Cyber crime jumps in COVID

THE retail, hospitality and travel industries were hit with more than 4 billion web application attacks over last two years, according to a new report compiled by global cybersecurity consultant Akamai.

The study also found that between Jul 2018 and Jun 2020, the three sectors combined totalled close to half of all cyber hacks across all industry verticals.

Loyalty programs have been one of the highest risk targets during the travel shutdown, the report claims, with a spike in criminal activity focused on the passwords of travel and hospitality companies.

"It was during this time that criminals started recirculating old credential lists in an effort to identify new vulnerable accounts, leading to a significant uptick

in criminal inventory and sales related to loyalty programs," Akamai Security Researcher Steve Ragan asserted.

"Retail and loyalty profiles contain a smorgasbord of personal information, and in some cases financial information too, all of this data can be collected, sold, and traded or even compiled for extensive profiles that can later be used for crimes such as identity theft."

SA winery develops

THE Nepenthe winery in Adelaide Hills, South Australia has lodged plans for a major expansion of its cellar door facilities to become a hub for food, wine and hosting events.

Construction is scheduled to commence in early 2021.

The winery is located 30 minute's drive from Adelaide and is close by to the German settlement town of Hahndorf.

US theme park hit

THE Californian Government has mandated that only small and medium-sized theme parks in the state can reopen, leaving larger theme parks like Disneyland and Universal Studios closed for an undetermined amount of time.

The state's government has confirmed the larger parks will only open when the county in which they are located falls to a "yellow" risk level (one case per 100,000 population).

Disneyland is located in Orange County, which currently remains in the higher risk red category (four to seven cases per 100,000 people).

Staywell stays well

STAYWELL Holdings has extended its collaboration with wellness app Caravan Wellness, providing guests who stay at their properties access to the mental health resource until the end of the year.

Hundreds of video wellness programs are now accessible via the app for guests.

Okinawa winners!

THE Tourism Office for the Okinawa Prefecture has selected two winners among those who completed the first two modules of Discover Okinawa's online training available via **Travel Daily's** Training Academy.

Sara Kennedy from Adventure World in Bondi Junction and Meredith Broadbent from Southlands Travel and Cruise Canberra have both scored themselves a bottle of Awamori, a traditional Japanese beverage made from Thai Indica Rice and Black Koji Mold - a highly prized drink from the region.

The gift also marks Okinawa's Awamori Day coming up on 01 Nov, considered the drink's peak distilling season.

The next round of prizes will be announced soon, so agents are encouraged to complete all the modules to earn a chance to win.

Access and register for the modules [HERE](#).

Whose flag is this?



THIS country is known as the Land of the Thunder Dragon in its native language, and the sound of thunder throughout the nation's mountains and valleys is said to be the voice of dragons, hence the moniker.

However the flag design may not have originated from this, with similar designs used for centuries by a neighbouring country.

The dragon depicted on this flag carries jewels, which

symbolise the nation's wealth and perfection.

The dragon was originally green but was changed to white to stand for purity and the loyalty of various ethnic groups which live within the country.

Not much is known about the exact date of the flag's introduction, as the country was closed to the rest of the world for a long time, and is land-locked, limiting the need for a flag.

Do you know whose flag this is?

Funnies Flashback



WE'VE trawled through the **TD** Window Seat archives to give you a blast from the past. Here's some gems from 05 Feb 2014:

NICOTINE addicts rejoice - a new hotel search engine will help you locate accommodation around the world "where all our rooms are smoking!"

Smoketels.com brags that site users can save "endless hours" trying to locate a smoke-friendly hotel, pinpointing a search within just 60 seconds.

The portal says it has access to over 100,000 hotels worldwide.

British Airways has issued a unique challenge, seeking five contestants from around the world to race an A380 on the runway at Johannesburg.

The #ManVsPlane contest follows last year's "smash hit viral video" which featured South African rugby legend Bryan Habana beating the superjumbo over 200m from a standing start.

The winners will travel to Johannesburg on BA's new direct A380 flights from London Heathrow, which will commence operations next week.

NEED A DISTRACTION AMID THE DOOM AND GLOOM?

Check out our daily puzzle page.



Pub quiz

- Abolished in 1994, when was apartheid initially introduced in South Africa?
 - In the 1920s
 - In the 1930s
 - In the 1940s
- How many years before Europeans did Maoris settle in Auckland?
 - Roughly 400 years
 - Roughly 500 years
 - Roughly 600 years
- The Yorke Peninsula separates which two inlets of water?
- Which airline is headquartered in Atlanta, Georgia?
- Sri Lanka's two capitals are Colombo and which other city?
- Which city plays host to the United Nations' African headquarters?
- The traditional name of Rubibi refers to which Western Australian town?
- What is the largest city in Victoria's Grampians region?
- MGM Resorts International draws its name from which media company?
- The United Kingdom's Straits Settlements was dissolved after World War II, and now form parts of which three countries?

Unscramble

HOW many words can you make out of these nine letters? Every word needs to include the centre letter, have four letters or more and not be a proper noun or a plural. You can only use each letter once.

A	P	T
L	U	E
E	C	N

Good – 14 words
Very good – 21 words
Excellent – 28 words

NOTE: We've used Chambers Dictionary to decide what words are acceptable.

ANSWERS 22 OCT

Know your brands: 1 Sheraton Hotels & Resorts, 2 Domino's, 3 St George Bank, 4 Apple

Where in the world: Portree, Isle of Skye, Scotland

Whose animal is this: Red deer - Ireland

Friday 23rd October 2020

Crown reform push

AMIDST an ongoing NSW criminal inquiry into whether it should retain a gaming licence for its planned Sydney casino, Crown Resorts Chairman Helen Coonan has conceded the company has “never faced adversity like we are now”, in a statement to the ASX.

Coonan added the company would be embarking on a number of reforms to improve its culture and image, such as enhancing its accountability and transparency structures, the creation of a new compliance and financial crimes department, a review of functions across its legal entity structures, proactively addressing money laundering risks, as well as the deferral of all short-term executive incentives in order to ensure compliance.

CX defers 777-9

CATHAY Pacific has deferred the purchase of 21 Boeing 777-9 aircraft, originally intended to be the future of the airline’s First class experience.

The carrier said the jets would not be joining its fleet until at least 2025 or beyond.

The decision arrives at a major cost-cutting juncture for CX, which only yesterday revealed it would be folding its regional brand Dragon (**TD** 21 Oct) into its core business, and letting go of more than 8,500 staff.

Despite the delays, CX confirmed it would still be going ahead with alternative aircraft purchases, with 16 A321neos, originally ordered for the soon-to-be defunct Dragon, to be redeployed to the main business.

First female takes charge



BREAKING the glass might not sound like a great thing to do at an aquarium, but in a way that’s what Sea Life Sydney has just done, smashing through the glass ceiling to appoint its first female to the role of Displays Curator.

Self-proclaimed “aquarium nerd” Laura Simmons has become the first woman to hold the role in the attraction’s 32-year history, where she will be charged with heading up the development of habitat displays and managing a team of 65 marine specialists.

Simmons will also play an important role in implementing conservation and sustainability projects that align with Sea Life Trust charity initiatives and campaigns.

“I feel so fortunate to be here, to work with such a fantastic organisation at Australia’s largest and best aquarium,” she said.

“We not only want to create great experiences and memories at our attractions, but leave a positive, lasting impact on the world,” Simmons added.

She was most recently employed by Cairns Marine to be its Curator/Project Manager for more than a decade.

Pictured: Simmons feeding small fish to a much bigger fish.

TRAVEL SPECIALS

WELCOME to Travel Specials, *Travel Daily*’s Friday feature. If your firm has released a travel special you’d like to make the industry aware of, send the details to specials@traveldaily.com.au

Savings of up to \$1,000 per couple are on offer with **Viking** when bookings are made before 30 Nov on its 23-day European Sojourn, from Bucharest to Amsterdam. The discounted rate is available at \$9,995 per person, with the sailing visiting popular European destinations such as Hungary, Croatia, Serbia, Bulgaria and Romania. Call 138 747 for details.

StayWell Holdings has launched a range of local promotions designed to encourage Aussies to explore their own backyards. The Discover Your Local campaign applies to nine of its properties for bookings made by 30 Nov and delivers savings of up to 35% off select hotels. **CLICK HERE** for more information.

There are still a few days left to take advantage of **Adventure Canada**’s discounts on a plethora of itineraries in 2021. When bookings are made by 31 Oct, travellers can save 15% on the total price. Call 1800 363 7566.

Big discounts are on offer for select **Paul Gauguin** cruises in 2021. Savings of up to \$2,600 per couple are available on an extensive range of seven-night Tahiti & the Society Islands cruises departing between Apr and Dec 2021. Call 1800 878 671 for more details.

Daintree biz on sale

EXPRESSIONS of interest have opened for the sale of Cape Tribulation’s Jungle Surfing Canopy Tours attraction in Cairns this week, one year after a tragic zipline accident last Oct killed a 50-year-old man and precipitated its closure (**TD** 01 Nov 2019).

MEA joins Vic chorus

MEETING & Events Australia has joined the Victorian Tourism Industry Council in calling for the Victorian Govt to reboot the state’s flagging visitor economy.

“The events sector in Victoria currently does not have an established roadmap towards its recovery which is having a devastating impact on businesses and jobs,” MEA said.

Vanuatu wellbeing

THE Vanuatu Department of Tourism and Planet Happiness have partnered to run a new happiness index survey which will canvass the view of local tourism stakeholders to create and uphold more sustainable tourism policies for the future.

Got a confidential tip? Contact Travel Daily via our secure WhatsApp service on +61 2 8007 6760 or click [HERE](#)

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CRUISE
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A retainer model could save TMCs

OPINION

Karsten Horne
from Reho Travel
is thinking outside
the box with this
idea for a new
pricing model for
travel management
companies.



Got an opinion to share? Let us know in up to 400 words via email to feedback@traveldaily.com.au.

LET'S for a moment forget about the effects of COVID-19 on the corporate travel industry and wind the clock back 12 months.

Was it all rosy, this time last year? I don't think so. TMCs were still reeling from the impact of the new Qantas Channel which promised to "modernise the way agencies book fares and deliver personalised experiences to customers". How's that looking 12 months on? I know for our business alone it wiped \$100k off the bottom line with nothing to show for it, certainly no customers raving about the experience.

I saw that move as a warning shot across the bow of our industry that the days of relying on earning a living from suppliers was coming to an end, although the ship has been leaking for over a decade. Commissions and overrides have slowed to a trickle, service fees are being squeezed whilst in the past few years the cost of servicing an account has increased tenfold. Nowadays you won't get a look in unless you have an SSI portal, Duty of Care dashboard, automated approval process, BI reporting, 24/7 service, a swarm of robotics and a team of experienced account managers.

A recent Helloworld Business Travel survey revealed that of the 14 key services provided by a TMC, our clients ranked Travel Consultancy services at number eight. Alarming it is the only service we actually charge for; all the others are supplied free.

Not only that, but the other 13 services are usually rendered by our most expensive and experienced team members.

That same survey highlighted that the majority of our clients are willing to explore an alternative charging model.

It got me thinking that we need to change things up and quickly before it is too late. The first step

I believe is to take our hard hats off, invest in a nice hairdo and start referring to ourselves as a profession, not an industry.

The second important step is to split our service offering into travel management and booking services and to charge for them both.

I believe the best way to do this is to create a subscription pricing model for travel management, (a retainer model). My research has revealed that outside of the actual booking service, most TMCs provide around 30-40 services in four key areas: account management, duty of care, business intelligence (reporting) and supplier negotiations. A simple model with a basic, standard and premium offer will ensure that clients are only paying for the services they require, and your team are made accountable and measured on the services they are delivering.

I am not recommending a change or even a reduction to our standard transaction fee model for booking services, for the retainer model to work, they need to sit alongside each other.

You may ask, "How can I start charging for services that my clients have never paid for?" The first step is to be open about our profession, where we earn (and don't earn) our money and importantly, educate our clients on the value we add.

The accounting profession is a great example of presenting your investment journey to you, it's usually very complicated and extends well past your expiry date into your next generation.

How many of us have left a meeting with our accountants, comfortable that they are doing what they do best and glad they have us sorted because we now appreciate the complexities of their role. Then the invoice arrives in the mail and we are happy to pay it, because they have clearly demonstrated the

value they add to our business.

We need to have a discovery meeting with each potential client plotting their journey, not just with a pen and notepad, but up on the big screen, showing every complicated step and all the crossroads and potential pitfalls that you will navigate them through.

Last year I climbed Mt Ararat in Turkey. From a distance it looks pretty straight forward. You just climb up right? I mean it's pretty obvious where the top is. Ever tried strapping crampons on your feet at 5,000m, in the pitch black, in a howling blizzard at minus 20 degrees? Well imagine doing that without an expert. Believe me, delivering travel management services can be more arduous than climbing a mountain.

One of the challenges in implementing a subscription

service is justifying a monthly charge. That is until you look closely at all your individual services and plot them on a timeline.

By focusing on moving the business model from a transactional one to a relational, you have a constant 'touch

point' with the client with the opportunity to learn more about them and find ways to enhance the relationship both as a revenue opportunity and/or as an increased rapport opportunity.

Most of the services we provide go unnoticed and occur year-round but a good many can be locked in at set times of the year - e.g. annual review, hotel negotiations, budget reviews etc.

Subscription model ideas have been circling around the TMC world for a while now, there is a lot of talk and I'm pleased to hear that a few are testing the waters.

BTA recently commissioned leading industry consultants Nina & Pinta to create a white paper exploring TMC pricing models and concluded that "The biggest challenge will be selling in the benefits to customers over the more traditional transaction or

“
We need
to change
things up -
and quickly,
before it is
too late
”

management fee models, and deciding how the subscription is applied – to the corporation or to the end user (the traveller)."

Going beyond the subscription model and venturing into the retainer concept is JTB Business Travel - USA who recently announced its "Open Choice" program. Under the initiative, JTB provides support for bookings made through any channel, including online travel agencies or directly with suppliers.

Melbourne-based TripApprove has developed technology that allows you to plan, approve, expense, track and report every travel movement made by internal and external travellers within an organisation.

Threat or opportunity? Under the current model, these developments are a massive threat. However, for a TMC that has split its service it represents a tremendous opportunity. Imagine a future where a TMC doesn't make bookings or a BSC (Booking Specialist Company) doesn't manage an account. A small BSC could partner with a TMC and save massively on the costs of account management.

Or as is a growing trend, a company may choose to make its own bookings, however it can't do its own Travel Management.

Then there's scope for a small TMC or BSC to secure "approved leakage" with no need to provide account management services.

I'm not suggesting that everyone run out and transform their business models overnight as most of our clients are still struggling to consolidate data from a single source.

However, when they are presented with technology that allows them to integrate data from multiple sources, manage their budgets and track their traveller movements then we had better be ready.

When the rains come, Noah is not going to make space for us, we need to work together now to reimagine and consolidate our profession at a higher altitude to avoid being engulfed by the rising tide.