



TRAVEL SOURCE: ONLINE

Successful Online Implementations

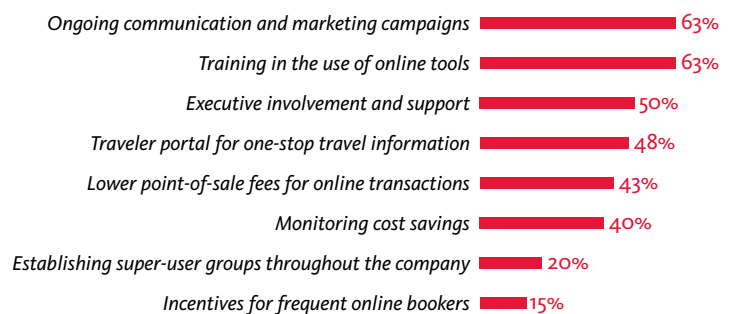
Online Travel Programs: Best Practices for Successful Implementations

With cost savings the top focus in most travel management programs, the implementation and management of an online booking strategy is one of the key areas of opportunity. As companies steadily move to managed travel programs, they will increasingly drive savings and program compliance through online channels.

Employee acceptance and adoption of corporate online booking tools is a continuing trend according to a recent study by PhoCusWright, Inc. They estimate that by the end of 2008 in the U.S. market, online adoption for the corporate travel industry will reach 57 percent — up from 46 percent projected for 2006.

The study goes on to say that this growth will be spurred by several behavioral factors, including increased but more responsible spending, a “halo effect” from using other online tools (e.g., online tools for meetings management, expense management, etc.), and greater online acceptance among slower-to-adopt, mid-sized firms. This is a reflection of corporations’ confidence in the channel to deliver tangible ROI, true process efficiencies and convenience to traveling employees. *

BCD Travel’s 2005 Annual Client Benchmark Survey results show that clients use various methods to drive online adoption, including:



As a company outlines its strategy for an online booking tool, it is important to understand the potential impediments to adoption:

- Service perception: if it is easier to call a travel agent, travelers most likely will continue using an agent to book travel
- Automation considerations: upgrades, non-accessible seats, complicated air pricing, supplier content, ground transportation and rail
- Speed issues: fast Internet connections must be available, and all internal network firewall issues must be resolved
- The number of contractors or non-employee travelers
- Security concerns
- Complex approval processes
- Complex trips

In a recent survey representing 198 BCD Travel clients around the world, 71 percent of respondents stated they use an online booking tool. The average online adoption rate was 40 percent, with some clients reporting adoption levels in excess of 81 percent of eligible transactions.



BEST PRACTICES

Success Through Continuous Improvement

BCD Travel considers the steps toward high adoption as a cycle of sustained momentum and continuous improvement, rather than a single starting and ending point. Once an online booking tool is implemented, BCD Travel recommends that clients continually reinforce the online initiative. This provides a platform to educate and remind travelers of objectives and promote new features and user-friendly design of the tool.

Establish adoption levels and determine success measurements. Make necessary adjustments based on the data. Typical measurements include:

- Percentage of adoption
- Percentage of domestic and international online passenger name records
- Average ticket price via online tools
- Percentage of hotels booked through the tool
- Average hotel rate via online tool
- Percentage of reservations that require manual intervention
- Reasons for contacts with travel agents

Cultivate senior management support

Nearly 70 percent of companies cited executive support or endorsement as the most highly rated technique for driving online adoption.

Provide user training

- Prepare an online user guide and FAQ for employees
- Offer in-person and Web-based training; demonstrate the online booking tool and answer questions. Be sure to offer customized familiarization sessions for user groups.

Publicize your accomplishments

- Include travelers when highlighting success stories, cost savings and adoption increases
- Offer incentives to travelers and travel managers for achieving adoption goals

CHOICE IS ALWAYS AN OPTION

At BCD Travel, we understand that customers have different criteria and we don't believe in a one-size-fits-all approach to online booking. We offer the expertise to help customize a solution that best fits your travelers and corporate culture. We offer the ability to integrate with virtually every commercially available online booking tool.

Our expertise matches your need to:

- Increase online adoption
- Reduce transaction costs
- Improve compliance
- Avoid unnecessary costs
- Improve decision making
- Eliminate inefficiencies
- Support your procurement and services strategy

FORMULA FOR SUCCESS

Companies measure success differently based on their own online objectives. BCD Travel recommends that online adoption be measured according to this formula: total number of online transactions reserved via online booking tools, divided by the total number of transactions. While some organizations measure adoption based on eligible bookings, this formula approach allows a company to understand the impact of more complex types of trips in relation to their online goals.

Surveys and analysis

- Solicit and analyze feedback
- Survey frequent users as well as those resisting adoption
- Analyze customer service calls for trends and address service issues
- Continue communications based on feedback and trend analysis

Mandates and charge backs

- Mandate specific type and purpose of the trip (i.e., simple domestic roundtrips, internal meetings, etc.)
- Mandate top city pairs
- Charge back higher fees to travelers who book with an agent rather than online

Start Saving Today

Online booking tools can drive significant savings through reduced agent-assisted booking fees. Discover today how much your company could save tomorrow.

For an evaluation customized to your company's needs, please contact BCD Travel at 1-800-342-3234 or via e-mail at techsales@bcdtravel.com.



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** PhoCusWright's Online Corporate Travel Update (2003-2006)*

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