



Travel Counsellors – company overview

Travel Counsellors is a truly dynamic and global travel company. Founded by David Speakman in 1994, the company has over 1,200 full time professional agents operating across six countries and is widely regarded as the most professional home-based travel company in the world.

The company's customers benefit from having their own personal Travel Counsellor who takes a pride in getting to know their clients personally, providing them with the highest possible levels of personal service and taking care of all their travel requirements, down to the last detail. As the company is completely independent there is no directional selling and its Travel Counsellors are free to make the right choice for the customer.

Travel Counsellors are supported by award winning technology and a team of over 200 full time office staff who handle all administration and support. The company is committed to maintaining an average of one support staff for every five Travel Counsellors or better and the company boasts an impressive agent retention rate of over 90%.

Most business comes through referrals and recommendations. Travel Counsellors' consultants have an average 20 years of experience behind them, meaning they offer a level of knowledge that most retail travel agents cannot match. Because head office deals with all administration - including ticketing, helpdesk, IT and marketing – they also have more time to focus on the client. As a result Travel Counsellors is one of the leading companies in the world when it comes to customer loyalty and satisfaction. Using the Net Promoter® Score system, Travel Counsellors has consistently achieved a world beating score of over 90%, far higher than that achieved by other travel companies and putting it among just a handful of companies worldwide that are rated so highly by their customers.

The Company's dynamic packaging system, Phenix, allows Counsellors to quickly and easily search and compare different travel options for specific dates in a matter of minutes. This makes them better informed than any customer shopping on the internet and with access to net rates it allows them to control the price, enabling a better deal for the customer.

Travel Counsellors uses its technological know-how so that its agents have up to the minute statistics, news and advice even though they work from home. As well as containing commercial information such as commission details and sales figures, the company intranet also contains staff chat boards and an advice board where agents faced with a challenging enquiry can ask for guidance from their peers. The company also uses the latest webcam technology to enable face to face communication between Travel Counsellors and support staff across the globe. This includes live web cam training, business development meetings and on-line conferencing.

Every Wednesday morning Travel Counsellors broadcasts TCTV, an international webcast broadcast from its UK head office, which allows the management team to motivate and train agents on a remote basis. It has since launched business TCTV for the company's Corporate Travel Counsellors and International TCTV to cater to agents in each country.

Travel Counsellors is proud of its unique family ethos, which remains at the heart of the business. It has created, developed and implemented the technology to enable its team of 1,100 plus agents to work remotely from home, yet still be part of a large global community. The company also works with key partners to provide extra services and support to its Counsellors and staff including financial experts and a dedicated personal counsellor to provide confidential advice. So even though agents work from home on their own, they never feel alone.

The company's Travel Counsellors provide a community based service and are able to cater to their customer's travel needs whilst providing the highest level of personal and professional care. Agents



themselves are given the freedom and flexibility to achieve an improved work life balance, scheduling their working day to enable quality family time. It also gives many who work in the industry the chance to combine a successful career with a healthy family life, enabling them to continue working within an industry they love. Also, as the company's agents are home-based this has a positive impact on the environment, cutting down on traffic congestion and damaging carbon dioxide emissions.

Travel Counsellors believes strongly in giving back and investing in local communities worldwide and has partnered with one of the largest child-centred community development organisations in the world, PLAN UK, in its school linking project that aims to link thousands of school children around the world and improve the standard of education for children in poverty stricken countries.

The flexibility and support provided by the company plus the strong referrals from existing Counsellors has allowed Travel Counsellors to grow by double digits each year since inception at a time when major competitors are laying off staff and closing offices. The company's turnover has increased from its 1993 level of £510,000 to £315m for the financial year ending October 31 2010.

Travel Counsellors was presented with the prestigious Queen's Award for Enterprise in 2003-2008, the UK's highest business accolade. The company has also been named Travel Agent of the Year four times in the 2006, 2007, 2009 & 2010 Guardian, Observer and Guardian Unlimited Travel Awards as voted for by readers

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About Travel Counsellors: Travel Counsellors is a leading independent travel company with one of the highest customer service scores in the world and a turnover at the end of its last financial year (Oct 31 2010) of £315 million. Founded in 1994 it currently has over 1,200 travel consultants who work from home with the support of 200 staff at the company's UK headquarters in Bolton and overseas offices. The company operates in the UK, Ireland, the Netherlands, South Africa, Australia and Canada. In the UK, the Travel Counsellors Trust financially protects everything booked by the customer free of charge. Travel Counsellors was the winner of the prestigious Queen's Award for Enterprise in 2003-2008, the technology category of the 2005 CBI Growing Business Awards and was voted Travel Agent of the Year by readers of the Guardian, Observer and Guardian Unlimited in 2006, 2007, 2009 & 2010.

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