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CWT's business travel magazine | UK & Ireland | spring 2013

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Open territory:

The risks of unmanaged travel

Considering a more relaxed approach to booking your business travel? Betty Low discovers that the best open booking travel programmes are far from being unmanaged.

What is unmanaged travel?

Just half a dozen years ago, a speaker at a travel industry conference opened his presentation by asking delegates what would happen if travellers were allowed to do their own bookings. At the time, the intakes of breath were sharp and the disbelief palpable. One delegate finally responded with: "Well, travellers would do what they wanted," the unspoken inference being that employees would automatically choose first-class flights and five-star hotels.

Essentially, 'unmanaged travel' was viewed as something only poorly-managed companies allowed. A 'well-managed' company would have had a travel programme in which the preferred booking channel, be it via a travel management company (TMC) consultant or a corporate online booking tool, would be clearly communicated.

Today however, unmanaged travel, also known

as 'open booking' or 'travel management 2.0', is less uncommon; essentially where business travellers book through any channel, for instance suppliers' own or aggregated content sites, with data capture being achieved via an expense management tool.

What are the risks of unmanaged travel?

Though most now acknowledge the majority of employees and business travellers are good corporate citizens who want to do the right thing, certain drawbacks remain:

Cost – Although there may be the odd case where a traveller could have purchased a ticket for less, the overall cost of buying travel will be lower through a TMC. This is because they can manage compliance to clients' travel policies, leverage savings as a consequence of the large

volume being purchased, or collect refunds on unused tickets, among other reasons. A pilot programme led by Sapient and reported by BTN Group/TRX in *Open booking: Is it right for your travel programme?* (December 2012), found that travellers spent 15-20 per cent more when booking outside of their TMC.

"The trend is a move from travel management to traveller management"

Data – Companies need to collect data for a variety of purposes such as financial, duty of care and procurement. The more disaggregated a purchasing process, the greater likelihood there will be data leakage and complexities with consolidating the information.

Time – While the idea of open booking may seem appealing at first, the reality may be less so in moments when the value of TMC support is most visible to travellers eg when they require complex bookings, ticket changes/refunds or support during emergencies. In these situations, loss of employee productivity occurs when travellers must spend more time managing their travel than when a TMC was on-hand to help.

In addition, an open booking policy can weaken vendor relationships with airlines, hotels or ground suppliers, which in turn might reduce both hard (best rates) and soft benefits (such as complimentary lounge access).

A programme that works for buyers and travellers

Though the above is true for all companies, there is no 'one size fits all' travel policy solution. The key is to understand your company culture. Some companies have a great deal of central control. Banks, for example, have high security and regulatory obligations while technology companies may encourage individual decision-making.

Nigel Turner, Director of Programme Management & Business Development, UK & Ireland, Carlson Wagonlit Travel (CWT), encourages companies that are currently creating or reviewing their policy to remember that travellers, as well as companies, have needs; and that happy travellers make for productive employees.

"Fundamentally, there are four key things that will encourage travellers to want to book within their company programme," Turner says:

- **Rates that are otherwise unavailable:** in addition to the fares published in the GDS, there are specially negotiated corporate and TMC rates.
- **The facility for instant and targeted communications:** when given the right information at the right time in the booking process or journey, travellers will generally do the right thing. One tool that can help is *CWT Programme Messenger*. It delivers targeted messages direct to travellers to encourage them to make informed, policy-compliant decisions, or to advise when they have booked travel to a high-risk destination.
- **The facility to book and plan a trip, fully-informed:** if the information the traveller needs is readily available by you or your TMC,

then there is no need for them to look (and potentially book) elsewhere. A private hotel review site for your company's travellers is now available with *CWT Hotel Intel*. It allows travellers to provide feedback on preferred properties, which subsequently provides value to other travellers (and helps with supplier feedback and negotiations).

- **Interactive advice when travelling:** stay connected with mobile and tablet devices for secure access to itineraries, preferred travel providers and real-time travel information. This is available through *CWT To Go™*, a mobile app exclusively for CWT clients. From restaurant information to click-to-call CWT travel help, it is one app that can provide the services your travellers need.

From travel management to traveller management

Advances in technology are allowing traveller needs, such as those listed above, to be met. In a world where smartphones proliferate and disruptions to travel can occur at any time, communication vehicles that provide travellers with real-time information at every point of the journey are essential.

Turner believes that advances in technology are the result of the significant change in the way we now view travel management. "We're moving from travel management to traveller management," he says. "Rather than fighting the mobile environment, we should embrace it and give business travellers what they're looking for. However, it has to be in a controlled way that supports the travel programme and covers employers' duty of care requirements."

Turner concludes that collecting management information remains a challenge with open booking and that this must be considered when deciding whether this approach is appropriate. "If you feel that you can control and manage your policy, the quality and cost of what you've bought, service expectations, and duty of care obligations by allowing people to book wherever they want then yes, I'd recommend you carry on. However, if the answer is no to any of these questions, you need a TMC to provide the services for you."

Look for CWT's research on managed and unmanaged travel to be released this summer, and talk to your CWT programme manager or representative for more information. ■

Points to remember when considering open booking

According to the BTN Group/TRX survey, close to 80 per cent of travel managers have no plans to pilot open booking. However, 12 per cent have already done so, 9 per cent are planning to conduct a pilot in 2013, and 2 per cent are considering how to make a pilot work.

CWT offers the following advice for companies reviewing their programme:

- Define clear processes for gathering and distributing real-time information to ensure travellers' safety.
- Consider the value of TMC services in emergency situations, out-of-hours service and for day-to-day service with complex bookings.
- Do not assume open booking will automatically generate savings. Consider the total cost of travel, not just ticket prices or rates, and weigh any cost reductions against negotiated value (including airline status upgrades, access to hotel amenities, car rental insurance etc).
- Consider the impact on service levels, given the loss of SLA management.
- Monitor the effects on employee productivity and satisfaction.
- Address data privacy issues.
- Evaluate the available tools for capturing data and the need for technology developments in-house.
- Consider the challenges of implementing new processes and retraining travellers, as well as staff involved in travel bookings or travel management.

The hidden cost of business travel

The inherent correlation between stress and productivity, where increasing the former reduces the latter, affects everyone, including your travellers. But with business travel being a great way to improve global corporate productivity, typically yielding a return on investment of 10:1¹, knowing how to keep travel stress levels to a minimum is vitally important to the success of your business.

Reduced stress levels, increased income

Global business travellers estimate that roughly 50 per cent of their prospective customers are converted to new customers through an in-person meeting, compared with 31 per cent without such a meeting². This suggests that, even in challenging economic times, companies must look beyond the purely transactional aspect of a business travel trip and view business travel as a strategic means for companies to grow and compete effectively in the marketplace.

With a recent study³ from Carlson Wagonlit Travel's (CWT) independent consulting arm, *CWT Solutions Group*, highlighting the impact of travel stress on employee productivity, a greater focus on duty of care responsibilities will allow travellers to focus on what they are paid for: being productive.

Cue the *Travel Stress Index* (TSI)

Since the concept of the *TSI* was introduced back in June 2012 by *CWT Solutions Group* as a way of shedding light on the hidden costs of business travel, much progress has been made. The aim of the *TSI* was to understand and measure how and to what extent traveller stress accumulates during regular business trips, before defining a methodology and a set of key performance indicators (KPIs) to estimate the impact that this travel-induced stress has on an organisation.

Towards the end of last year, an understanding of the specific triggers of travel-related stress was gained and revealed to CWT clients, the top five being:

1. Lost or delayed baggage
2. Poor or no internet connection
3. Flying economy on medium to long-haul journeys
4. Delays
5. Staying at a hotel with a low rating

After defining these triggers, the next step was to devise a way to present quantitative measures of travel stress and use these measures to learn of the corresponding impact of travel stress on an organisation's workforce and, subsequently, bottom line.

“Business travel yields a return on investment of 10:1”

The next frontier in business travel

To do this, *CWT Solutions Group* took data from 15 million business trips booked and recorded by CWT over a one-year period. “We followed a ‘divide-and-conquer’ approach,” explains Vincent Lebunetel, Senior Director, *CWT Solutions Group*, Europe, Middle East & Africa. “Each trip was conceptually broken down into 22 potentially stressful activities covering pre-trip, during trip (transportation and destination-related elements), and post-trip.” Associated stress was then measured based on the duration and the perceived stress intensity for each activity. “In essence, the trip was viewed as having two components: ‘stress free’ time and ‘lost time’, which essentially translated as the times travellers felt stressed,” says Vincent.

Putting a metric behind a feeling

To quantify the effects of stress, Vincent and his team introduced the following KPIs:

- The maximum possible ‘lost time’ (or stressful periods) per trip
- The actual ‘lost time’ per trip (and its financial equivalent)
- The travel stress index, defined as the ratio of the above quantities

“Using these KPIs to guide our research, our results showed that the actual ‘lost time’ is 6.9 hours per trip on average,” explains Vincent. “This is based on the maximum possible ‘lost time’ for the average trip being 17.9 hours. Of this, 11 hours are ‘stress-free’, available to the traveller to either work or rest, with the remaining 6.9 hours being ‘lost time.’” The financial equivalent of the 6.9 hours is US\$662.

The largest contributions to this ‘lost time’ were shown to arise from flying economy class on medium and long-haul flights (2.1 hours) and getting to the airport/train station (1.1 hours).

Smarter travel policy decisions

Recognising that stress is something that can be reduced but not entirely eliminated, *CWT Solutions Group* analysed their findings on a client-by-client basis and found that companies can expect to control up to 30 per cent of the actual lost time – reducing 6.9 hours to 4.7 hours.

“The impact of stress can be reduced by up to 30%”

“By assessing a company's average stress level across travellers and benchmarking it against this industry norm, we can provide recommendations to help clients tackle the hidden costs of business travel,” says Vincent. “We encourage companies to view business travel as a strategic means to grow and compete effectively in the marketplace, while at the same time recognise that business travel has an impact on a company's most important asset: its employees.”

The *TSI* is a decision-making tool that helps clients assess and adjust their travel policies, and move from ‘travel policy’ to ‘traveller policy’. Essentially, travelling smarter rather than less will be the way to find the optimal point combining the actual costs of travel and the hidden ones.

For more information on the *Travel Stress Index* and to contact a member of *CWT Solutions Group*, please visit cwt-solutions-group.com. ■

“The financial impact of travel-related stress averages at US\$662 per trip”

1. WTTC and Oxford Economics, *Business Travel: a catalyst for economic performance* (2011)

2. WTTC and Oxford Economics, *Business Travel: a catalyst for economic performance* (2011)

3. CWT Solutions Group, *Stress Triggers for Business Travelers* (2012)

http://

Do you rate hotel review sites?

How much attention should buyers pay to traveller review platforms? Felicity Cousins finds out if social media can help with negotiations and improve the traveller experience.

The smart traveller

Checking the hotel reviews on sites such as TripAdvisor is becoming normal practice when travelling for leisure. Reading traveller reviews, both positive and negative, reassures the consumer that their choice of hotel is an educated one. But what happens when this type of social media is brought into the business travel space?

Around 70 per cent of business travellers now carry smartphones. This, along with access to traveller review sites, affects business travel hotel bookings. According to *Travellers' Road to Decision* conducted by Google and IPSOS OTX Media, one in three business travellers already post reviews online of properties they stay at, while 57 per cent enjoy reading about other travellers' experiences. And, rather than ignore the influence of social media, savvy travel managers are now integrating review sites into their travel programmes, allowing travellers to review and share their thoughts on hotels in a secure company environment.

One-stop resource

Traveller review platforms work by the travel management company providing a client with a dedicated platform for its travellers to share reviews on a list of preferred hotels. Reviews can only be made by travellers who have stayed at the properties in question (they are emailed for feedback after their stay) and travellers who are choosing a hotel can then see reviews from their colleagues, as well as the hotel location and amenities.

The benefits for the traveller are clear, but what about the buyer? If the top priorities for buyers are leakage, traveller safety and cost, then there is no doubt these review tools are a good way for a buyer to check their hotel programme meets the needs of the traveller, drives compliance and stays within budget.

Pros and cons

There are concerns review tools leave travel managers dealing with negative reviews and repercussions with suppliers. However, Carlson Wagonlit Travel's (CWT's) new hotel review platform, *CWT Hotel Intel*, has received mainly positive reviews from travellers.

Alexandra Lougovoy, Global Product Manager, Hotel Customer Experience, CWT, explains: "We have had really constructive feedback that has helped travel managers build their programmes. We have 90

per cent positive reviews so travellers are using it as a vehicle for constructive comment."

Jill Cox, Product Director, Global Hotel Customer Experience, CWT, agrees: "Reviews are private to the corporation so it is an internal communication and information sharing process. Although travel managers were initially nervous of negative comments, after a couple of months they realised the positives."

Since its soft launch in 2011, 27 clients now have *CWT Hotel Intel*, with more than 4,500 traveller reviews uploaded so far. Clients can personalise the content, and although they can't censor or edit reviews, they don't have to publish them immediately. Only negotiated hotel content is displayed on the tool, helping drive compliance and monitor the popularity of certain hotels.

This information can then be used as leverage. L'Oréal, a company with more than 550 hotels on *CWT Hotel Intel* has used feedback from travellers to craft its 2013 hotel programme. Corinne Delbreil, Travel, Meetings and Events Manager for L'Oréal global procurement, says: "We are extremely happy with the tool. It is smart, innovative and perfectly adapted to our environment. It's easy to use and the feedback based on actual bookings has been constructive and valuable."

Suppliers have also accepted the tool as part of the changing face of travel, as reviews, both positive and negative, can help hotels improve their service levels and ensure they are offering what their clients need.

Embracing the change

It looks like just as hoteliers have had to accept review sites, travel managers have to accept that a generation of travellers are being born with a tablet in their hands. CWT's Lougovoy says: "Half of travellers won't even look at a property without a review*. We are just bringing the solution into the corporate environment." L'Oréal's Delbreil agrees: "We wanted to increase our negotiation power with hotels and improve the satisfaction of our travellers. So far, we are extremely happy – we know that we are providing our travellers with the best choice possible, based on their feedback."

As a travel manager, can you afford to ignore traveller feedback? For more information on *CWT Hotel Intel*, please contact your CWT representative. ■

Benefits of traveller reviews

Increase negotiating power: feedback from travellers on certain hotels will give leverage when making deals.

Increase compliance: with more than 50 per cent of travel managers planning to mandate the use of preferred hotels in 2013, corporate hotel review sites can channel travellers towards booking with preferred hotels (and stop leakage from travellers booking outside the programme).

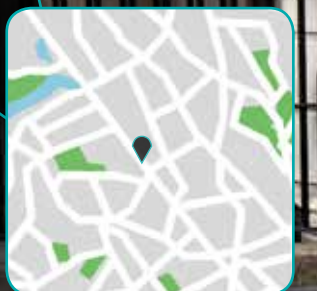
Enhance the traveller experience: as travellers will choose and book their hotel based on trusted reviews from colleagues who understand their needs (eg being near the office or next to a good restaurant).

Taking control



Traveller review sites are not about collecting negative feedback to use in supplier negotiations; rather they are about knowledge, communication and managing a policy in a positive way. Here are a few tips for managing social media tools:

- Social media works because people can express their honest opinions freely without censorship. Peer reviews carry more conviction than those posted by the supplier or even by a travel manager.
- Be aware of what travellers are posting and make sure you respond to any negative feedback. Most people want what is best for their company, so feedback should be excellent data to use for your negotiations, and ultimately for the benefit of the traveller.
- Start thinking of the traveller as the consumer. A corporate solution still needs to be user-friendly, and this will help improve the communication and the programme.



How to make meetings more sustainable

The possibilities around sustainable meetings and events are greater than ever in 2013, writes Magda Ibrahim.

The London 2012 Olympic Games shone a spotlight on event sustainability as organisers tackled energy, waste, transport and resources to prove the business case for producing the greenest Games ever. Alongside the sporting legacy, a new international standard for sustainable event management, ISO 20121 was developed.

Being green benefits the bottom line

According to chair of the ISO 20121 Committee Fiona Pelham, a common misconception is that 'being green' is the number one priority. "It is all about business sense," explains Pelham. "Sustainability is about looking at economic and social impacts, as well as environmental ones – working on the 'triple bottom line'."

It is a view Jane Baker, *CWT Meetings & Events* Business Development Director for the UK & Ireland agrees with, explaining the crucial aspect is to take a holistic look at ways of working. "Some people see it as being a 'nice to have', rather than something that will benefit the business in terms of driving improved value for money."

Sustainable suppliers for sustainable events

Considering elements such as local sourcing of events-related products and even food can keep costs down; as well as potentially providing a boost to local economies, and reducing carbon emissions from transportation.

It's important to look for suppliers who are proactive in their sustainable efforts; with many buyers only choosing businesses with green goals akin to their own. "For most businesses, corporate social responsibility is delivering value, and most delegates and buyers are seeking that value from businesses," explains Leeds Metropolitan's Jackie Mulligan from the International Centre for Research in Events, Tourism and Hospitality. "It's a compelling argument, and one that we believe the meeting industry ignores at its peril."

Set green goals and stick to them

Commission for a Sustainable London 2012 Chairman Shaun McCarthy advises it is important to set "clear, measurable goals that can be transparently reported." McCarthy recommends defining what you want to achieve and, ideally, dedicating resource to the task. "Set medium to long-term targets and make a plan to get there," he says. Working with the supply chain – including venues – to find out how they can help to achieve more sustainable events will be more effective than trying to solve every issue alone.

Top tips for greener meetings

To help you hit the ground running, here are some things to consider when arranging your next event:

- Harness technology such as digital signage, LED lighting, and use social media and online communications. They can have a significant impact in terms of reducing energy and waste.
- Choose sustainable suppliers and source local produce and products. Where this is not possible, ask suppliers where they ship their goods from. The more miles a product has travelled, the greater the impact on the environment and the higher the shipping cost.
- Many procurement teams are cutting down on travel to save money, despite face-to-face meetings still being a popular way to communicate. Consider hybrid events, where part of the meeting is virtual and takes place online, and the other part takes place in person. Videos can be created and shown from employees or executives who do not attend in person but still wish to deliver a message.
- Where travel is essential, consider car-share schemes, public transport, or (high-speed) rail instead of air travel. Carbon offsetting is also an option to consider. Carlson Wagonlit Travel's *Total Impact Report* helps companies save money and time while reducing emissions by focussing on three areas: cost of ticket, productivity of the person travelling, and cost of offsetting.

"Sustainability is about looking at economic and social impacts, as well as environmental ones"

- Reduce food waste by ordering fewer portions than there are people. Event organisers often order enough food to cater for every attendee, however leftover food often goes to waste. Ordering for a set number of guests will reduce costs and help achieve a greener event.
- Choose sustainable venues such as Manchester Central, one of the first major conference and events venues in the UK to achieve ISO 20121; or the Orchard Hotel at the East Midlands Conference Centre, the most sustainable hotel in the UK.

Contact *CWT Meetings & Events* for more advice on how to make your events more sustainable at engage@carlsonwagonlit.co.uk, or call +44 (0)20 3353 0274. ■

"It's important to look for suppliers who are proactive in their sustainable efforts"

Paint the skies Little Red

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For more information, please contact your local Carlson Wagonlit Travel office.

virgin atlantic
little red

Bespoke system heightens contractor safety and security

The challenge: Prior to a solution being found, there was no way for Fircroft Group's clients to track the whereabouts or total cost of travel of contracted employees.

The solution: Technology was developed to allow individual contractor profiles to be set up that fed management information (MI) back to Fircroft's clients' systems, resulting in multiple benefits for each client.

With an annual travel spend of £1.4 million (\$2.2 million USD) in the UK, Fircroft Group, a global recruitment agency for the oil and gas, automotive, mining and engineering industries, required a secure system for when booking business travel for client contractors. "We approached Carlson Wagonlit Travel (CWT) to find a solution that would allow MI to be recorded for these travellers, while heightening their safety and security through all bookings being recorded," said Sean Morris, Process Improvement Manager, Fircroft Group.

Improving the process

Providing a solution to perfect the process before roll out, CWT worked with Fircroft Group to identify a client who employed a high proportion of contractors. "After choosing a company from the energy industry in the UK, implementation took place with an aim to separate bookings for Fircroft Group's contractors from the client's employees without impacting the existing tracking process and MI," said Simon Owen, UK Implementation Team Manager, CWT. "This was achieved by creating a separate account for the



contractors that linked to the client's system to ensure all MI was captured."

To improve the contractors' booking experience, they were serviced by the same CWT team as the client's, while access was provided to the contractors' own *CWT Portal* site – an online gateway through which all required CWT products can be accessed. Individual Fircroft Group profiles were also created for each contractor for improved traveller tracking.

Feeling the benefit

Following the successful implementation of the first energy industry client, a number of other Fircroft Group clients were implemented, each one being provided with their own MI group and serviced from the same location as the clients' employees.

Seven months later the project was expanded to include all Fircroft Group internal staff, with each of the seven UK locations being serviced by CWT teams. A project to implement all remaining Fircroft Group clients in the UK (bar one heavily mandated client) is currently underway.

"Following the success of the project in the UK, we are now looking to use CWT's services in the US, with a view to roll-out similar processes for contractors to other global locations in the future," said Sean.

For more information on how to improve traveller tracking and capture management information, speak to your CWT Programme Manager. ■

FIRCROFT



Pictured: Sean Morris, Fircroft Group and Simon Owen, Carlson Wagonlit Travel

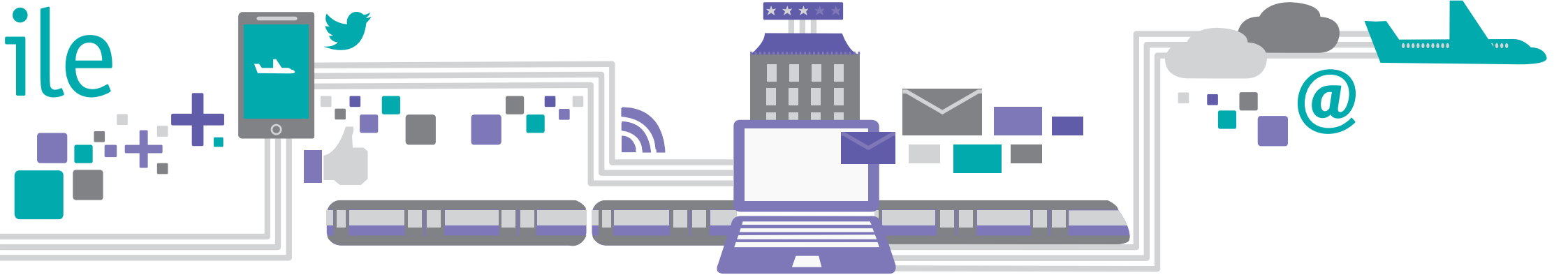


12:00



Appwardly mobile

Linda Fox looks at how mobile developments in the corporate world can smooth the journey for travellers and even benefit travel bookers.



Connectivity v control

Apple may have coined the phrase 'there's an app for that', but hardly a day goes by without someone sharing a new mobile application or mobile-optimised website; be it a game, map-based service, or information tool.

That is all well and good until you're a travel manager confronted with people on the go who want to download and use these apps, while simultaneously dealing with a corporate ban on apps downloaded to company phones.

The current debate is around two issues. On the one hand, a blanket ban alleviates all the personal data privacy and company security concerns but, on the other, most travellers now carry at least two mobile devices with them – one for company use, one for personal – and will download the apps anyway, so why fight it?

But, before leaping into mobile, travel managers should consider what they and their travellers want from it and what they will use it for. Getting feedback from travellers on what they like and why might be a good start in terms of presenting a business case for mobile within the corporate travel policy.

Travellers just want connectivity while travel managers and bookers need control. The two need not necessarily be at odds with each other if companies treat mobile as just another channel and set up policies and usage guidance around it.

As connectivity improves via free Wi-Fi in public areas – Vodafone's recent announcement regarding access on the London Underground and AT&T's deal with The Cloud enabling US visitors to the UK to access the free service are good examples – and, travel managers will face increasing pressure and policy leakage by continuing to ignore mobile.

Compliance through mobile connectivity

Another reason why there need not be conflict is that there is the potential for some common ground between what travellers want and what travel managers need.

Carlson Wagonlit Travel's (CWT) *Travel Management Priorities for 2013* shows cost savings and improving traveller compliance as the top two entries on the priority 'wish list'. While those two elements would not traditionally sit well with the corporate traveller's idea of moving seamlessly between PC-based booking tools and mobile apps, a degree of flexibility built into policy would probably lead to increased compliance as travellers are enabled to access the information they want via the device they want.

"Although mobile technologies are often cited as a 'challenge' or 'threat' to a classic travel programme or travel policies in the press, mobile technologies should allow a travel manager to stay connected with their travellers, mainly for overall strategic communication but also on a per trip basis," explains Stefan Fallert, Director of Policy & Compliance, *CWT Solutions Group*. There are apps already on the market and more in development which help improve the traveller experience as well as capture important data for the travel management team.

Many of the tools available are around itinerary management where the traveller can access all their booking information – flight details and up-to-date alerts, hotel reservations, contact information for the travel agent or booker and increasingly ground transportation arrangements – in one place. Additional services are also being built into these apps such as maps, restaurant

information and images and the ability to capture and record expenses on the go.

CWT To Go™ is a good example and the service has been recently updated with weather forecasts, a facility to call a travel consultant and the ability to synchronise calendar and trip information.

The next version of *CWT To Go™* will be powered by WorldMate and delivered in the next month. This will be followed by a further significant upgrade later this year that will introduce enhanced integration with CWT's back-end systems and empower the traveller to do even more via the app, both during the trip planning phase and while on-the-go.

One traveller who has found the CWT app useful is Paul Mason, Director of Channel Operations at Viacom International Media Networks. "I use *CWT To Go™* for all my business travel and have found it to be extremely useful when needing to reference information about my trip in a hurry. Whether it is in the back of a taxi for the hotel address or checking the flight status updates, the app provides me with a one-stop shop for easy access."

"Travellers just want connectivity while travel managers and bookers need control"

Seamless passage

This is just the tip of the iceberg in terms of the potential for mobile and the corporate travel sector. Potential scenarios with travellers passing seamlessly through airport check-in, passport control and boarding gates without having to queue are not that far from reality as mobiles are used to track passengers at each stage.

Meanwhile, ongoing initiatives include customer service assistants on-hand and equipped with iPads at Narita Airport in Tokyo and airlines and airports incorporating avatars or virtual assistants into their services to help passengers.

CWT is developing Carla, its own virtual travel assistant who will materialise later this year and help travellers through every step of the booking process.

"Web and mobile will be the dominant sales channels for travel within two years"

App and away

Aviation technology specialist SITA predicts the web and mobile will be the dominant sales channels for travel within two years. As part of its recent *Flying into the Future* study, the company also says 90 per cent of airlines will offer mobile check-in by 2015, compared with 50 per cent today; and 80 per cent of airlines and airports will invest in business intelligence to help better inform them on traveller behaviour.

As all of these processes come together, the smoother the experience will be for travellers. There are also benefits for corporates and travel managers who gain greater visibility on behaviour patterns and spend, as long as the mobile channel is fully integrated with the online booking tool and expense management system.

Companies are also beginning to explore the potential of social media and mobile. Once again it's a case of formulating some policies and putting guidelines in place. But, why would a company care about its employees engaging with social networks? Travellers are already sharing massive amounts of data about themselves, their likes and dislikes, and travels. If all, or even some, of this can be harnessed within corporate travel apps then there is automatically a greater degree of control for travel managers.

There's also the potential to add peer-to-peer reviews on hotels and other services (turn to page eight for an article on traveller hotel reviews), plus apps that allow travellers from large multi-nationals to see fellow employees in the same destination at the same time. The use of social media by corporates is something CWT's Stefan advocates: "Direct traveller feedback gained through social platforms is a great source of information that may be used in supplier negotiations," he says. "Furthermore, any best practice tips from travellers and travel managers can be shared with the whole traveller community."

Developments in the use of social media in the corporate environment are not only improving the traveller's experience, but are also allowing for it to become more personalised. This is an opportunity for travel management teams to step in and provide value to travellers with their own expert destination information, alert them to any potential issues and be on-hand, by whatever means the traveller chooses, with assistance where needed.

For more information on *CWT To Go™* and how technology is making corporate travel smoother and safer in 2013, contact your CWT representative. ■



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Traveller safety in the frame

Addressing safety and security needs is a top 10 priority for travel managers, according to Carlson Wagonlit Travel's (CWT) *Travel Management Priorities for 2013*.

Companies have long been aware of their duty of care to employees, with the UK's Corporate Manslaughter Act of 2007 making our regulation one of the most stringent worldwide.

"Legally speaking, duty of care covers the employer's responsibility to ensure the safety and well-being of employees," says CWT's Global Product Manager for Safety and Security, George-Pierre Cladogenis. "Increasingly, companies are addressing how this responsibility extends to their business travellers."

Addressing duty of care risks in business travel

So, what are the areas involved in ensuring duty of care for travellers? "These can range from preventing and dealing with foreseeable accidents in a company's offices, to keeping travellers safe in the event of unexpected natural disasters," explains George-Pierre.

When assessing these risks, it can be useful for travel managers to focus on the following key elements, as identified by CWT's safety and security partner iJET, a leading provider of global intelligence and operational risk management:

- Clearly written and communicated corporate travel policies
- Limited out-of-policy bookings (those not going through the travel management company, which do not benefit from traveller tracking and other services)
- Up-to-date destination intelligence
- Information on airline safety
- Limited numbers of employees on any given flight
- Carefully selected preferred hotels
- Well-managed use of ground transportation (self-drive v other options)
- Availability of hotlines
- Benchmark of standards of care in relevant industries
- Adequate, tailored insurance

According to the CWT *Travel Management Priorities for 2013* survey, the most popular planned measures for travel managers tackling safety and security are providing destination information to travellers, and implementing traveller tracking and real-time notifications; closely followed by providing a 24/7 security hotline, implementing a disaster/crisis response plan, and providing medical assistance and security services.

"Given that companies can be held to account by local and/or foreign laws, it is advisable for travel managers to apply the highest possible standards of duty of care in all the countries in which they operate," says George-Pierre. ►►

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Fly into tomorrow.

"CWT'S powerful traveller tracking tool, powered by iJET, enables companies to quickly identify affected travellers at any time, for any reason"

Accurate traveller information from start to finish

Recognising the importance of traveller safety and security, CWT uses the credo of anticipate, locate, communicate and assist to enable clients to maintain the duty of care requirements for their travellers:

- **Anticipate** travel disruptions to minimise the impact on the company and your travellers.
- **Locate** travellers at any time, for any reason.
- **Communicate** with travellers as needed, via email, text message or phone.
- **Assist** travellers with emergency reservations, evacuations and crisis response.

CWT's basic safety and security service is available on a complimentary basis to all clients to help them monitor and react to situations impacting travel. This CORE safety and security offering includes summary-style, security-based alerts vetted by travel security experts so companies can monitor potential travel disruptions, plus CWT'S powerful traveller tracking tool, powered by iJET, which enables companies to quickly identify affected travellers at any time, for any reason.

This base *CWT Safety & Security* offering can be enhanced with PRO, FLEX, or PLUS packages that have been designed to enable a more proactive approach to managing security issues by meeting the needs of differing market segments, and client organisations of varying size and maturity.

The importance of a complete traveller profile

A traveller profile created in *CWT Portrait* is important for efficient and accurate travel bookings. Disruptions and security threats further highlight the importance of having a complete profile and effective safety and security measures in place. This will enable immediate contact with your travellers in an emergency.

Quick checks:

- Basic information is not enough. In order for us to be able to provide the best service and support, profiles must be complete.
- Personal information such as mobile phone numbers and email addresses enable CWT to make contact directly with the traveller.
- Make sure the name entered in *CWT Portrait* is the same as the one on the traveller's passport (travellers could be denied boarding if the name on the ticket does not match the one on the passport).
- Enable immediate, easy bookings by entering credit card details and any preferred travel options or loyalty card information.
- Make sure any changes to vital information are updated in the traveller's profile.

For further advice on employee duty of care and *CWT Safety & Security* packages, please speak with your CWT representative or search for *CWT Safety & Security* online. ■

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ANA

A STAR ALLIANCE MEMBER

Industry insider

Carlson Wagonlit Travel's (CWT) acquisition of WorldMate, the leading developer of mobile technology in travel, is part of the company's ongoing commitment to lead the industry in mobile solutions.

Connect caught up with Kevin O'Connor, Executive Vice President and Chief Information Officer at CWT, and Amir Kirshenbaum, CEO at WorldMate, to learn how this partnership will benefit CWT clients and their travellers.

What trends have been identified between the business traveller and mobile technology in recent years?

Kevin O'Connor: Mobile use globally has really taken off in recent years, for both commercial use and for entertainment. This adoption accelerated dramatically with the advances in social media, smartphones and the launch and popularity of tablets, especially the iPad. Increasingly, users expect a personalised, highly interactive and real-time experience on their mobile devices of choice, to manage their lives on the fly wherever they are.

Business travellers are no different to other users. They too expect to have information organised conveniently and presented with intuitive navigation at their fingertips on their mobile device. And they expect this information to be customised to their preferences, to be augmented by other relevant information, with a built-in ability that allows them to act on the information quickly. Business travellers will increasingly expect to plan, purchase and manage their travel on their mobile device. They will also expect their travel management applications to interact with their calendars, contact lists

Kevin O'Connor, Executive Vice President and Chief Information Officer at CWT



"Business travellers are no different to other users; they too expect to have information at their fingertips"

Amir Kirshenbaum, CEO at WorldMate



and social media networks; which is why our relationship with a leading mobile technology company like WorldMate is essential for us to continue to deliver what our clients need.

Amir Kirshenbaum: Mobile technology is everywhere, to the extent that all brands must have a mobile presence and mobile-oriented touch points with its customers. This fact is reinforced for the travel industry, where customers are frequently on the road.

As highlighted by Kevin, we've seen a boom in mobile applications and mobile-provided services in the travel category in recent years. Today's applications span a wide spectrum, including trip planning, itinerary management, real-time monitoring, local guides, last-second booking, and various other content services. In addition, the three biggest forces in smartphones have each entered the field of mobile travel services – Apple Passbook, Google Now, and Samsung Wallet. For now, each is focused on boarding passes and assisting travellers with the right information at the right time.

Another interesting trend we've been seeing is a desire from travellers to actually perform transactions and book travel on the go, via their mobile phones. Not just last-minute reservations, but also reservations made at the planning phase, over a week before the trip starts. ►►

 **WORLDIMATE**

2000 Present



The evolution of WorldMate

WorldMate first launched an app for Palm and Pocket PC in 2000. Since that time they have led the marketplace with several innovations, including accessing and storing content (weather, currency rates etc), real-time flight alerts, reading confirmation emails in order to create itineraries automatically, and in-app hotel and car rental booking. In essence, the evolution has been about continually understanding the likes and needs of travellers and proactively serving them with intelligent recommendations at the right time. WorldMate will continue along this path, expanding it by addressing the needs of travel managers who are delicately balancing the goals of improving travel compliance with the demands of their travellers, who are attracted to consumer-centric apps.

Based on these trends, how does the acquisition of WorldMate enable CWT to exceed clients' mobile expectations?

Kevin: Working in partnership with WorldMate has enabled us to accelerate our delivery of 'the perfect interface' for the business traveller in a manner and at a speed that would not have been possible without the acquisition.

WorldMate is the recognised leader in delivering richness of the mobile experience to individual travellers. When this is matched with the world-leading corporate travel management capabilities that set CWT apart from our competitors, our clients will receive an unsurpassed user experience that is comparable to the best found on the app stores, backed by the best industrial systems, processes and data. Put simply, CWT understands the business travel industry better than anyone else, and WorldMate understands how best to make the traveller's mobile experience as friendly and relevant as possible.

Amir: Absolutely, WorldMate brings to CWT a robust itinerary-centric platform and a suite of services that we will leverage alongside CWT's travel programme expertise to continue tackling clients' most important needs around cost control, reporting, leakage and compliance. Ultimately, we will not only provide innovative services that will delight our travellers, but will also provide unmatched value to the travel managers.

“Travel managers delicately balance the goals of improving travel compliance with the demands of their travellers, who are attracted to consumer-centric apps”

What led CWT to choose WorldMate over other technology providers?

Kevin: We have in WorldMate a world-beating, award-winning product that is consistently recognised as the best application in the space, backed up by a very solid, capable and dedicated development team, and a 10-year history of innovating in this space. With WorldMate, CWT has acquired deep domain expertise in the area of mobile delivery, huge insights into what the traveller needs, an exceptional development team and a product that we can use as the basis of the next version of *CWT To Go™* – CWT's award-winning mobile app that is exclusively available to CWT clients.

What can WorldMate offer CWT clients that other app providers can't?

Amir: First and foremost, WorldMate has a decade-long track record of developing the easiest-to-use, most complete business travel apps on the market. With the injection of CWT's resources, we expect this advantage in 'usability' and 'product richness' to grow. Furthermore, WorldMate is unique in that it has three-fold expertise in app development, itinerary management, and booking capabilities. The combination results in an unmatched, end-to-end solution, from trip planning to booking, and on-the-road services to reporting.

“The next version of *CWT To Go™* will be powered by WorldMate and delivered in the next month”

What innovations can our customers expect to see through CWT owning the technology?

Kevin: By owning WorldMate, we have access to the best technology available in the industry and their 10 years of thought leadership. It's vital that we ensure that the conditions are supported that enable WorldMate to flourish and continue to innovate without distraction, and attract and develop the best staff available.

Amir: Making WorldMate a part of CWT will ensure that we bring new products to market quickly and that they will be well-integrated with all the other services upon which our clients depend.

How does CWT plan to work with WorldMate going forward?

Amir: Since day one of the acquisition, CWT and WorldMate have been hard at work, side-by-side, to introduce the next generation of *CWT To Go™*. I will let Kevin speak more about this, but to answer the 'going forward' part of the question, the two teams are simultaneously honing the long-term strategy and accompanying product roadmaps designed to keep CWT at the leading-edge of the mobile wave for years to come. Our strategy will result in an unprecedented level of service both for the travel managers and travellers themselves.

Kevin: The next version of *CWT To Go™* will be powered by WorldMate and delivered in the next month. This will be followed by a further significant upgrade later this year that will introduce enhanced integration with CWT's backend systems and empower the traveller to do even more via the app, both during the trip planning phase and while on the go.

As mentioned by Amir, the CWT and WorldMate product teams are already planning future releases, which will involve WorldMate leveraging CWT's expertise in the areas of systems scalability and security. Both of which are critical in the business traveller space.

Speak with your CWT representative for further information on *CWT To Go™* and advice on how to encourage travellers to use mobile technology in a way that supports your programme. ■

An award-winning partnership!

CWT won 'Best Mobile Strategy' and WorldMate won 'Best Mobile Travel App' at the EyeforTravel's Mobile Innovation in Travel Awards, held in San Francisco on 18 March.

Prague

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This arrestingly beautiful city at the heart of Europe mixes perfectly-preserved history with contemporary flair.

Well-endowed with facilities, it's much loved by business travellers, says Fleur Kinson.

Angular spires, orange-red rooftops, colourful townhouses and cosy cobbled streets make Prague one of Europe's best-looking cities. Its six centuries of architecture stand virtually unscathed by war or natural disaster. But Prague is no fossilised museum-piece. This exceptional, cinematic-feeling city has plenty of slick modernity too. There's an extremely lively cultural scene, and of course huge numbers of international travellers here on business.

The capital of the Czech Republic, Prague is also the country's economic powerhouse – generating 25 per cent of the national gross domestic product (GDP). The city's good looks are a money-spinner, with tourism a major source of revenue (and further gain coming from international film-makers using this photogenic city as a backdrop). ►►

Prague's other key industries include pharmaceuticals, electrical engineering, machine manufacturing, food processing, and hi-tech research and development. Some very well-known international companies maintain research and development facilities in Prague, including Siemens, Honeywell and Sun Microsystems.

A stable and prosperous city with a solid infrastructure and a workforce who are highly-educated and relatively inexpensive, Prague is the first choice of many large multinationals as a site for their Eastern European office – among them Hewlett Packard, Boeing, and McKinsey and Co. The city is often described as the best place in Eastern Europe to do business, and its strategic position at the heart of the continent only adds to its advantages.

“Prague is particularly well-equipped for meetings and events”

When doing business with the Czechs, expect to find them a very polite and modest nation, unlikely to respond well to boasting. They are punctual and practical; they follow rules, they plan well and they think ahead.

Prague is particularly well-equipped for meetings and events. The gigantic Congress Centre to the south of the old centre includes vast trade-fair spaces and meeting halls variously sized to hold anything from 20 to 2,800 people. NATO, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank have all held meetings here. There are also a large number of fine hotels in the city with excellent meetings and events facilities – such as the Hilton, Marriott, and Radisson Blu Alcron Hotel.

Prague is a wonderful place to travel to on business. The facilities are top-notch, the leisure scene is highly stimulating, the city is compact and very easy to get around, and when you stroll along these enchanting streets, you feel like you're in your own private movie.

One hour in Prague

Be sure to visit Prague's old centre (*Staré Město*) and its showpiece main square – a giddy whirl of bright Baroque frontages vying with older Gothic edifices. Wander agog across the city's single most famous sight, the medieval Charles Bridge (*Karlův most*). Then, wind your way up from the bridge through the pretty cobbled streets of the *Malá Strana* district to the grand, imposing castle. The views from on high across Prague's cityscape are unforgettable.

Eat and drink

Be sure to sample the slightly exotic delights of traditional Bohemian cuisine while you're in Prague, as well as the superb Czech beer. The 100-year-old Francouzská Restaurant offers Czech and other European dishes amidst stunning Art Nouveau opulence. Mlynec serves Michelin-standard Bohemian fare, and its stylish premises give great views of the Charles Bridge. If you'd like to combine beer-sampling with good dining, try the new and trendy Lokál Dlouhá. Note that Prague is also rich in stylish cafés and tea rooms.

Rest your head

In the heart of the city centre, the palatial Kempinski Hybernská offers large, sumptuous rooms arranged around an elegant courtyard garden. Also central is the Radisson Blu Alcron Hotel, a 1930s original that's been beautifully restored in an updated Art Deco style. Both hotels have extensive hi-tech meeting facilities, as do the two Hiltons in the city – the striking mirrored Hilton Prague on the edge of the business district and the Hilton Prague Old Town in the historical centre.

Getting there

After landing at Prague's Václav Havel Airport, the frequent number 119 bus will whisk you away to your city centre destination in under twenty minutes. There are the usual taxis and pre-bookable transfers, or you can join a Cedaz public shared minibus that will take you and others straight to your hotels. Overland travellers arriving by international train or coach into Prague can quickly reach the city centre on the fast, efficient metro system which joins the main rail station and bus terminal. ■

Helpful links

Visitor info: praguewelcome.cz/en
Congress centre: kcp.cz/an



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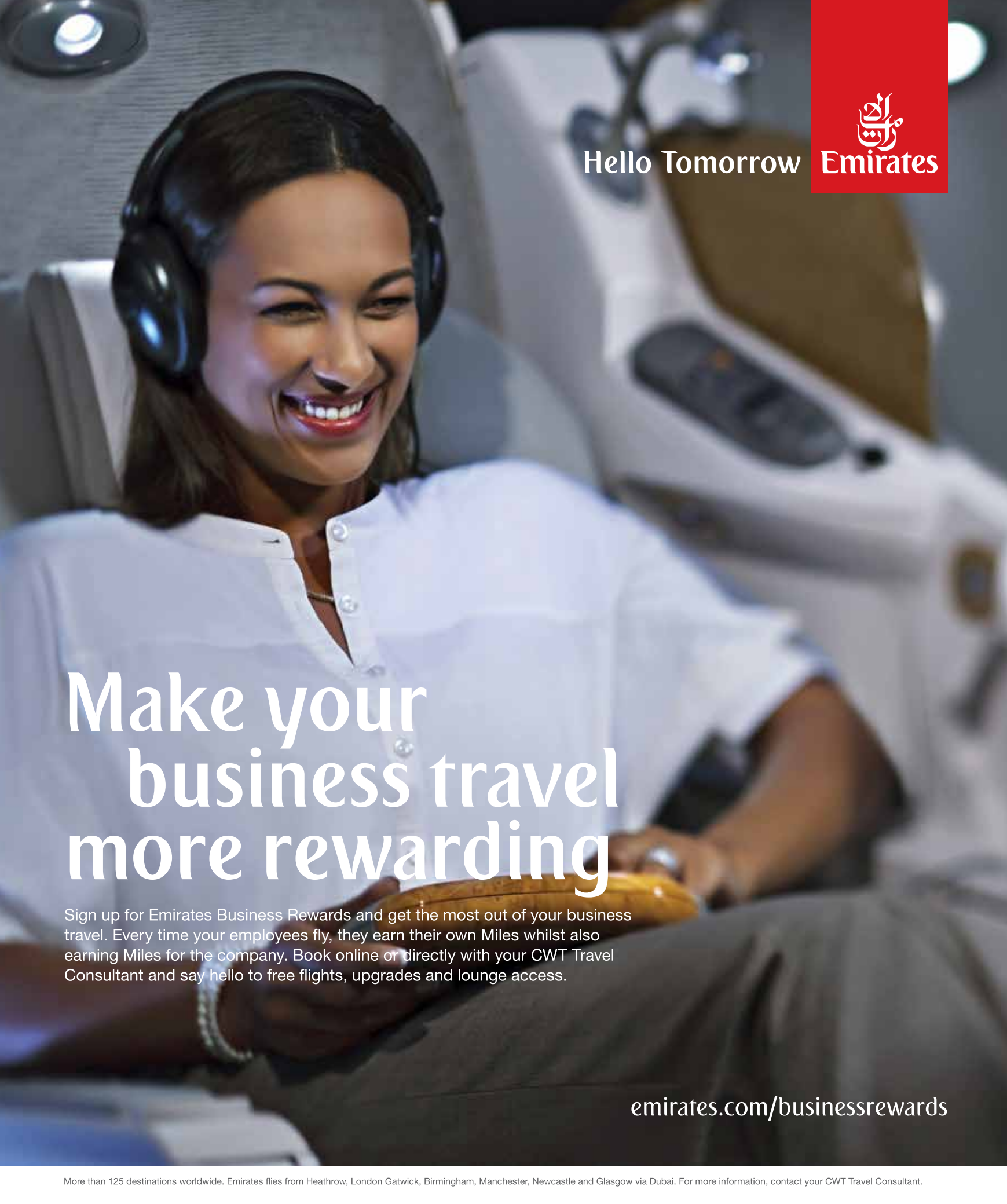
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