Get engaged

Empowering travelers to make
smart buying choices

BCD travel

Get engaged

Empowering travelers to
make smart buying choices

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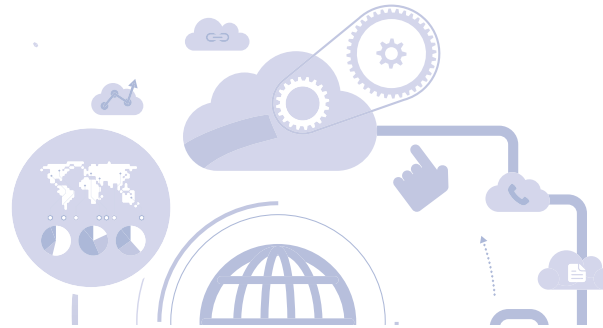
BCD travel

Executive summary

Engaging travelers can help steer their behavior towards smart buying decisions that drive savings and support safe travel.

While the idea of traveler engagement has been around for years, not all travel managers have adopted it. Here's why more should give it attention:

Millennials with a do-it-yourself attitude are beginning to dominate the workforce, influencing the behaviors of travelers in other age groups.

Business travelers are wanting the same level of choice for their business trips that they enjoy for leisure travel. They prefer consumer-grade tools and consumer-style interaction.

Suppliers are increasingly targeting travelers directly, engaging with them to influence their buying decisions.

Championing traveler engagement has been a challenge in the past because travel managers lacked:

Accessible
data

Expertise and
bandwidth

Specialized
help

Funding

Relevant
tools

Many travel managers saw traveler engagement as a diversion of their attention away from traditional goals like reducing costs and improving productivity.

And most did not have the marketing and communications expertise to effectively market their program internally.

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Executive summary

Improved business intelligence, marketing tactics, evolving technologies and availability of professional consulting services are helping travel managers introduce and promote traveler engagement.

Better business intelligence
A new generation of highly visual, smarter data analytics helps travel managers better understand traveler behavior and how it affects spend.

Better marketing
Once travel managers understand what behaviors need to change, they can create an appropriate, tailored engagement strategy.

Better technology
Corporate travel apps (like BCD Travel's TripSource), enterprise social communities and messaging platforms enable direct and instant engagement with travelers.

Better access to expertise
Consultancies like Advito, have dedicated engagement practices that can help travel managers with marketing and communications.

Traveler engagement is coming of age.
Use these five pillars of engagement to make it a reality.

Intelligence
Better insights into traveler behavior; and how that behavior needs to change to drive savings and other benefits.

Method
A clear set of practices for how to engage travelers, and emerging success stories.

Marketing
Better use of consumer branding and communications techniques.

People
Professional help to introduce those practices.

Technology
More personalized tools and channels for communicating, especially mobile apps and social communities.

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Introduction

Time to turn engagement theory into practice

The success factors for travel management continue to change. In addition to managing suppliers, programs must now put a greater emphasis on managing travelers.

We first highlighted this trend in our 2013 white paper, *Traveler Management – How to influence your employees to plan, book and travel smarter*. We presented a blueprint for steering travelers to smarter and safer choices through engagement and other behavior-management techniques. But, so far, there is little evidence of widespread inclusion of engagement strategies in travel programs.

Developments over the last few years magnify the need for traveler management. Travel managers are coming under increasing pressure to offer their travelers an experience similar to the one they get when traveling for leisure. This consumerization of business travel requires new approaches for managing traveler behavior. We'll take a closer look at the challenges facing traveler engagement and how these can be addressed.

redefine **travel**

create travel **alternatives**

understand consumer **psychology**

analyzing **policy**

1. plan

leverage **budgeting**

understand **motivation**

seek **partners/experts**

2. communicate

3b. on-trip influence

relevant **alerts and offers**

marketing **communications**

trip **approval**

A

B

4. review

exploit **gamification**

trip **packages**

compare **prices**

3a. pre-trip influence

fare **selection**

display **recommendations**

Source: BCD Travel's Traveler Management - How to influence your employees to plan, book and travel smarter, 2013

BCD travel

Introduction

Time to turn engagement theory into practice

Why traveler engagement was slow to take off

Lack of accessible data
To change behavior, travel managers need to understand how their travelers behave and how they can improve that behavior. In many cases, travel managers found it difficult to access the data they needed. And most lacked the analytical expertise and related insights to understand traveler behavior.

Lack of expertise and bandwidth
Travel managers are not trained to execute the full marketing and communications strategy needed to promote traveler engagement. Even if they had the necessary skills, most travel managers couldn't spare the time needed for this undertaking.

Lack of specialized help
Without the required skills and bandwidth, travel managers need specialized help. In 2013, few specialists offered consulting in travel program marketing and communications. The internal corporate communications department was an option, but they often didn't understand the travel program. Moreover, they lacked the resources needed to successfully execute traveler engagement practices.

Lack of funding
Even when professional help was available, travel managers still had difficulty securing funding for it. Travel management budgets don't traditionally include a line item for marketing. Few companies were prepared to approve a full-time communications person on the travel team or funding for third-party expertise.

Lack of relevant tools
Much of the battle for traveler hearts and minds is played out on mobile devices. Travelers increasingly rely on attractive apps from traditional travel suppliers and consumer travel service providers and new types of suppliers like Uber and Airbnb. Back in 2013, travel managers were unable to respond with tools of their own that empowered travelers while still fulfilling the key requirements of a managed travel program.

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Introduction

Time to turn engagement theory into practice

The increasing need for traveler engagement

Influence of the Millennial

In 2014, 78% of business travelers interacted with smartphones for their travel needs before, during and after their journeys.[1] They use these devices to book trips, manage itineraries, check-in for flights and hotels, and more. The rise in mobile usage coincides with the Millennial generation's (born between 1981 and 1996) coming of age. Millennials are now the largest generation in the workforce in the U.S., where they make up one in three workers.[2] They'll represent 50% of the global workforce by 2020.[3]

Millennials can be unforgiving when it comes to technology. If their company gives them tools they don't like, they're unlikely to use them. But more importantly, their behavior influences older workers, who also have access to the same tools. This generational cross-over of behavioral trends means that travel managers must recognize and meet the needs of the modern traveler across all age groups.

Consumer thinking

Travelers are accustomed to using smart travel tools in their personal lives—tools which know who they are, where they are and what they want. Business travelers want that same technology, which responds to their individual preferences, to be available in their work lives too.

Today, everything a traveler needs is available publicly and is often much more attractive than corresponding corporate offerings:

- Comparison websites and apps – Present trip options in a single view and enable travelers to make informed choices
- Social networks – Share information from friends or colleagues traveling to or familiar with the same destination
- Rating and review sites – Publish opinions about air and hotel experiences, city information and more
- Location-based trip planning and booking apps – Make it easy to plan and book a trip through dedicated channels

Traveler choice

Some companies have decided it's better to let travelers exercise more choice. They allow complete freedom of booking sites and channels, but perhaps constrained by a travel budget and within their travel risk management framework. Others offer corporate tools, but don't require all travelers to use them. The trick is to steer travelers' behavior so they make the right choices for their company, no matter which tools they use to plan, book and make a trip.

[1] The 2014 Traveler's Road to Decision, Google, June 2014
[2] Millennials surpass Gen Xers as the largest generation in U.S. labor force, Pew Research Center, May 11, 2015
[3] Millennials at work – Reshaping the workplace, PwC,

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Introduction

Time to turn engagement theory into practice

Suppliers go direct

Suppliers are trying to influence traveler behavior, encouraging them to book direct in return for benefits like free Wi-Fi. Mobile is the perfect platform for suppliers to reach travelers directly. Using their increasingly powerful customer databases, they know much more about individual travelers than a few years ago. This means they can target, communicate and influence with greater accuracy. Travel managers need to match supplier efforts to sway their travelers' choices.

Making progress towards traveler engagement

The good news is that significant progress has been made towards removing the obstacles standing in the way of traveler managers' ability to effectively engage their travelers.

Obstacle: *Lack of data about traveler behavior*
Solution: Improved business intelligence is helping travel managers not only understand their travelers' behavior, but also identify what behavior needs to change and what they can gain by changing it. It's now possible to measure the impact of behavior management.

Obstacle: *Lack of professional help*
Solution: Companies can now turn to dedicated third-party expertise to help build and execute their traveler engagement programs. There are also plenty of solid success stories to give credibility and momentum to engagement efforts. Thanks to better practice and methodologies, engagement is moving from an art to a science.

Obstacle: *Lack of tools*
Solution: Travel managers now have access to much better tools to engage travelers, especially apps giving travelers what they need while binding them invisibly to the managed travel program. Widespread personal use of travel apps makes it easier to encourage adoption of similar tools in a corporate context.

Later in this paper, we reveal more about these solutions and offer a roadmap for converting engagement theory into a powerful reality to benefit travelers and their companies alike. We also address securing a budget and developing the marketing communications skills necessary to advance traveler engagement.

Taking a closer look at how improved business intelligence can help quantify the benefits of behavior management is a useful starting point.

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Travel managers need to see a comprehensive data-set if they want a more complete understanding of traveler behavior.

Analytics

The key to understanding behavior

The problem is that capturing data from bookings made through unmanaged channels is difficult. Some service providers are doing their best to bridge this gap. They gather data from traveler bookings on unmanaged channels – either directly from suppliers or by having the traveler forward booking confirmations to them. Not only does this give greater visibility of total spend, it also helps travel managers compare booking behavior across managed and unmanaged channels. And, it can help them craft the messages they need to convey in their communications plan.

New and improved tools
Travel managers no longer have to build a picture of behavior solely from spreadsheets with thousands of lines of data. Improved analytics and data visualization techniques have moved us beyond old-fashioned, passive management information systems. A new generation of business intelligence tools are easy to interrogate, understand and act upon.

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Empowering travelers to make smart buying choices

Analytics

The key to understanding behavior

"Travel is the buzz of the company for days after delivery of the travel report cards."

Chris Reinke
Director, North America Strategic Sourcing, Pitney Bowes

DecisionSource: Accessible behavioral analysis

DecisionSource, BCD Travel's data analytics suite, can offer a multi-layered view of traveler behavior. Experienced users can delve into the detail using its analytics features. They can spot trends and use "What If" scenario tools to identify opportunities to make savings. For travel managers with less interest in the detail, the Travel Report Card (TRC) delivers Travel Grades that present traveler behavior in simple and straightforward terms.

Traveler	Travel Grade	Travel Grade Trend	Online Adoption	Accepted Low Fare	Domestic Adv Purchase =>14 Days	Intl Adv Purchase => 21 Days	Net Air Amount (USD)	Avg Days Adv Purchase Domestic	Avg Days Adv Purchase Intl.	Missed Fare Savings (USD)
Brown. J	47	⬇	57%	100%	0%	17%	66,298	5	9	0
Jackson. A	75	⬆	88%	80%	46%	83%	62,446	30	49	3,105
Jones. F	36	⬆	70%	100%	0%	13%	59,996	6	11	0
Smith. J	27	⬇	50%	33%	5%	17%	52,122	7	12	15,420

Select travelers by department, cost center or part of organization

View data points to support traveler KPIs

Thanks to the TRC, travel data analysis need no longer rely solely on detailed reports and two-dimensional executive summaries. Travel managers can create bespoke reports, choosing metrics that matter to them, and weighting them to reflect the values of their organization. Behavioral metrics include lowest applicable fare acceptance, advance booking patterns, use of online tools and selection of preferred suppliers. The result is a Travel Grade that scores travel behavior out of 100: A simple and clear measure that can be benchmarked and trended over time.

BCD Travel clients find a Travel Grade, for business units or even individual travelers, provides senior executives with the high level insights they demand. It's helped rationalize and simplify reporting, providing greater focus on what's important.

Other clients are being more imaginative. One looked at linking Travel Grades to traveler profiles so that individual travelers can see how they're doing when booking their next trip. This may encourage them to change their behavior to improve their score.

Using DecisionSource, travel managers can now easily present the big picture and make recommendations supported by analytics.

BCD travel

Analytics

The key to understanding behavior

"This program is all about the traveler. If we enhance the traveler experience, we are more likely to get buy in. To achieve this we have to focus on education, on communication, and use our data to mine for trends and behaviors that we would like to change".

Angela Paulus
Global Travel Manager,
Pitney Bowes

Case-study: Pitney Bowes uses BCD Travel's DecisonSource reporting to influence traveler behavior, reduce costs and improve duty of care

The challenge

Pitney Bowes had validated that their corporate travel policy is best in class; however, many employees weren't following the policy when booking trips. Their noncompliance drove up costs and made it difficult to keep track of travelers' whereabouts—an important component of the company's duty of care to employees

Our approach

The global technology company turned to DecisionSource®, BCD Travel's proprietary data management tool, to better understand and manage traveler behavior. With the Travel Report Card, DecisionSource enabled Pitney Bowes to run customized reports defined by business unit or line of business. Travel program leaders saw which departments had the biggest opportunity for improvement with non compliant travelers. Then they reached out to those departmental leaders and began educating travelers about the travel policy and why compliance matters—both to their safety and to the company's bottom line.

The results

Within three months of implementing the customized DecisionSource Travel Report Card, Pitney Bowes was able to significantly influence traveler behavior for the better. The timely, concise reports became a call to action for business unit leaders, who were now able to take ownership of their travelers' noncompliant booking behavior and used education and training to drive change.

The Travel Report Card gave Pitney Bowes actionable insights that helped the company achieve annual savings, including:

- $275,000 savings on 14-day advance air purchase
- $750,000 saved in 2015 by properly managing unused airline tickets—with the opportunity to drive $1 million in annual savings

DecisionSource Security helped the company fulfill its duty of care responsibilities to protect travelers. Pitney Bowes launched an effort to educate employees about travel safety and the importance of updated profiles. This provided an ideal opportunity to communicate to travelers that the company is focused on keeping them safe on the road.

What's more, DecisionSource's easy-to-understand reporting formats inspired Pitney Bowes to create an accessible, at-a-glance overview of the company's travel policy. The "explainer" provides employees with a simplified view of the travel, travel and expense and meetings guidelines they need to follow.

Matching BCD's reporting tools to Pitney Bowes' business needs increased traveler engagement, improved on-the-road safety and contributed to a significant cut in its annual travel spend.
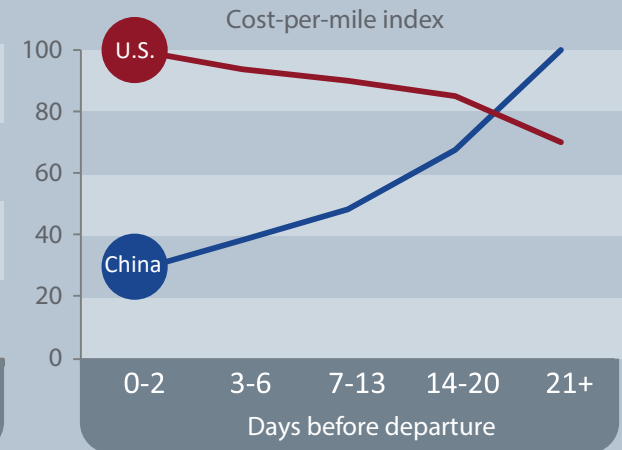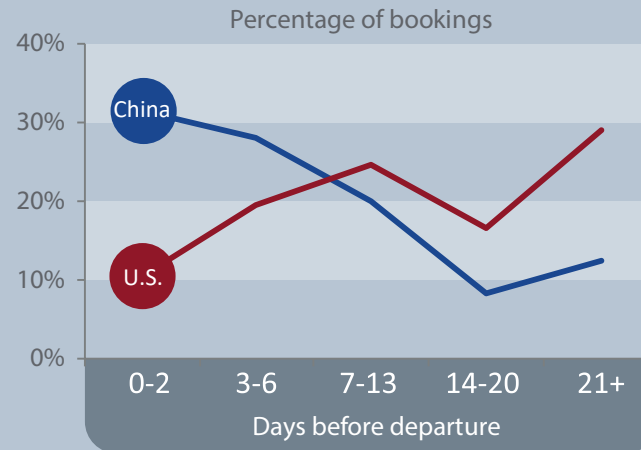
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Advance bookings: Avoid simple assumptions

It's important to understand market context before making decisions about changing traveler behavior.
These charts demonstrate why.

Analytics

The key to understanding behavior

Percentage of bookings

China
U.S.

40%
30%
20%
10%
0%

0-2   3-6   7-13   14-20   21+

Days before departure

Cost-per-mile index

U.S.
China

100
80
60
40
20
0

0-2   3-6   7-13   14-20   21+

Days before departure

The charts show the contrast between the U.S. and Chinese markets for BCD Travel customers. Nearly 30% of U.S. travelers book 21 days or more in advance, but in China the figure is below 15%. Conversely, close to one third of Chinese travelers book within two days of departure as compared to a tenth of U.S. travelers. Why? The answer lies in fares in China, which are more tightly regulated and on an indexed cost per mile basis, tend to fall steeply as the departure date draws nearer. Therefore, travelers in China can wait until the last minute to book, in case their plans change. In the U.S., the cost per mile climbs as the day of departure approaches and travelers book well in advance whenever they can.

BCD travel

Analytics

The key to
understanding behavior

What more will data analytics offer?

Predictive analytics can determine the potential savings resulting from changing specific aspects of traveler behavior—for example, if all travelers booked 10 days in advance. Prescriptive analytics, which is the next evolutionary step, reverses that process. You start with a savings target and prescriptive analytics comes up with a list of behaviors you might change, and by how much, to deliver that target.

A travel manager may ask: "I want to save US$2 million per year. How do I do that?" Prescriptive analytics will "interrogate" the data to produce recommendations for moving the savings needle by the required amount. For example, it might recommend a combination of downgrading hotel policy from upscale to midscale accommodation and pushing the average number of days flights are booked in advance from seven to nine.

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Traveler engagement

Make it a reality

Once travel managers determine how their travelers behave today and how they want them to behave tomorrow, they must then figure out how to drive change.

Updating and enforcing policy is one approach. Though important, it's no longer the only answer. Simply introducing strict policies with zero tolerance (for example, non-reimbursement for non-compliance) doesn't guarantee success. Travelers who don't buy into the program will find ways around policy. Even worse, if too many travelers decide the rules are unacceptably restrictive, employee retention and recruitment may suffer.

The best results are achieved when travelers behave in a particular way because they want to, not because they have to. Success results when a traveler wants to align with company interests. Leaving employees feeling good about their role in a bigger cause is the essence of traveler engagement.

For successful traveler engagement,
travel managers need:

- The right plan
- The right people
- The right communication tools and techniques

The right plan

Define the goals
As already discussed, travel managers need to understand what behavior needs changing and why. This will generate the key messages to communicate, which could include:

- Is this trip necessary?
- Book early.
- Stay within the defined classes of travel.
- Always look for the lowest logical price.
- Don't forget to book flights and hotel accommodations together.

Not all messages are related to saving costs. Others could be about:

- Traveler safety
- Data security on the road
- Reducing travel stress

Getting help
Are your in-house resources stretched thin? Traveler engagement services can generate substantial savings for your travel program. See "The right people" page 16.

BCD travel

Traveler engagement

Make it a reality

Audit your current marketing and communications
Questions to ask include:

- What messages do we communicate to our travelers today?
- Are they clear or do they need to be fine-tuned?
- Which ones are necessary and which ones are not required?
- How often and at what points in the trip lifecycle do we communicate with travelers?
- Are those touchpoints adequate and appropriate?
- Which channels do we use to communicate?
- How successfully do we use those channels?
- What communications channels can we drop and which ones do we need to add?

It's well worth polling and interviewing travelers to help get an understanding of these issues.

Secure a budget
Creating a professional integrated communications campaign to improve traveler behavior requires some investment. The good news: The days of expensive print runs are long gone, and new media prices have fallen too. You don't need a massive budget to produce animated messages.

Even so, there are costs, most notably hiring professional help. This may prove to be the hardest task of all. It's a Catch-22. Without the funds, you can't develop the communications to show how important it is to engage with travelers; but without the communications explaining this importance, you can't win the funds.

One solution is to find a relatively small amount in existing budgets to create a business case. Bring in professional help to design a strategic communications roadmap. This should outline what it will take to achieve the objective and how it bridges the gap between today's traveler behavior and the desired behavior. Take it to senior management, marketing or other relevant departments for budgetary approval.

Brand the travel program
Many travel managers are surprised to learn the benefits of branding their travel programs. Giving the program a name and a visual identity is not a cosmetic exercise. It gives the department visibility and credibility. It also creates a bond with travelers – an identifiable service they trust to look after them when they need it.

Branding is an unfamiliar concept for travel managers, especially those coming from procurement. But it's increasingly necessary to tap into travelers' consumer-like thinking and compete with the strong brand appeal of travel suppliers and many other outside influences.

Build a communication schedule
Schedule a series of campaigns to avoid too much marketing all at once. For each campaign, decide which channels and tools are appropriate for communicating those messages. Travel managers need to use a balance of push and pull communications, so that they don't inundate travelers with information, creating an adverse reaction.

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Traveler engagement

Make it a reality

The next section looks at some of those tools in more detail, but it's important to choose a broad range. Demographics should influence the tools you choose. For example: Millennial travelers may be more receptive to tweets, chat tools like Slack and social networks; baby boomers may be more comfortable with e-mails and, in some important cases, face-to-face meetings. However, it's also important to avoid simple profile stereotypes.

Listen

Communication is always a two-way street. Listening to travelers' messages is as important as delivering the company's messages to them. If travelers are confident that their needs are accounted for, they're more likely to warm to the brand and be much more receptive to messages.

Listening to travelers is also essential to learn what's good and bad about the travel program. Travel managers can then adjust their programs to better meet travelers' needs – and the closer it fits their needs, the less communicating required.

And there are new ways to listen. Online pulse polling is one example, but potentially the best two-way communication of all is conversation through an enterprise social network.

Measure communications ROI

With the help of improved data analysis, travel managers can place a value on the effectiveness of marketing campaigns. For example, the average number of days travelers booked in advance before and after launching a campaign aimed at persuading them to buy earlier. And it's easy to estimate the cost savings achieved by the campaign. You can determine how much tickets booked 21 days in advance cost compared with seven days in advance.

The right people

In the past couple of years, some companies have hired engagement or marketing professionals for their travel management teams. They may do a great job, but there are still very few of them. Only a tiny number of businesses can find the budget to fund a full-time travel marketing employee.

There is another way

A handful of consultancies have set up dedicated engagement practices to handle marketing and communications for travel programs. Advito, the consulting arm of BCD Travel, is one example. It effectively acts as a mini marketing agency specializing in traveler engagement. Its talent includes consultants who build and manage a strategic communications road-map, and specialists, including designers and copywriters, to execute the communications.

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Traveler engagement

Make it a reality

"The biggest challenge is changing the mindset of people. You may have a senior leader say, 'Thou must not do this,' but that doesn't always work. What works is when the employee takes ownership of doing the right thing and changes behavior without it being a mandate from up above."

Ike Ihenacho,
Global Travel Expense and Meetings Manager,
Mondelēz International

Case-study: Mondelēz International boosts compliance and travel program brand while reducing spend by over 20%

At a glance

Industry:
Global snacks production

Annual travel spend:
US$130 million

Annual revenue:
US$30 billion

Results in brief

- Reduced T&E spending by more than 20%.
- Cut last-minute air bookings by 45%.
- Elevated traveler engagement.
- Streamlined traveler communications.
- Strengthened travel program brand.
- Improved policy compliance.

The challenge

Mondelēz wanted employees to:

- Understand and consistently follow the company's travel policy.
- Look for alternatives to travel and, if travel was essential, to plan ahead.
- Use official booking channels – the company's online booking tool or its TMC.
- Make all business travel purchases on a company-issued corporate card.

Travel and procurement managers found that simply mandating policy was no longer working. Business travelers were operating with more autonomy – bringing their consumer travel habits to work. They needed to find ways to engage and influence their travelers, nudging them towards smart buying decisions.

Solution
See next page

Mondelēz International

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Traveler engagement

Make it a reality

"We are producing quantifiable results, among them a significant decrease in spend so far. We're also strengthening our relationship with employees on the road. They understand our travel policy better – not just what it is but why it's important. Actively engaging travelers helps us stay on budget and enhances our travel program brand."

Ike Ihenacho,
Global Travel Expense and Meetings Manager,
Mondelēz International

Case-study: Mondelēz International boosts compliance and travel program brand while reducing spend by over 20%

The solution

Mondelēz called in the Advito engagement practice to overhaul its communications to travelers. Until this point, communications had been unstructured and usually reacted to problems only when they arose. What's more, only limited use was being made of available internal communications channels.

Advito's first priority was assessment. It worked with the Mondelēz travel team to identify and define its travel and meetings program goals. Next it made an inventory of available technology tools. Advito then mapped out an integrated communications plan to engage travelers and influence their purchasing behavior using all available channels. The plan had three main components:

Brand identity

Advito developed a travel and meetings program brand that created a visual identity and established a personality for all Mondelēz communications to travelers. Employees began to recognize the brand and identified it instantly with reliable, easily digestible information about company travel

Improved travel intranet

The communications overhaul coincided with a company-wide intranet update. Advito made information in the site's travel section simpler, shorter and easier to use.

Policy awareness campaign

Advito created a campaign called Traveling the MDLZ Way, using succinct ad-style text and colorful graphics to help travelers understand what was expected of them and why. It included a series on the ABCs of the global travel policy.

Results

The engagement was a major success:

- Overall travel and expense spending fell by more than 20%.

- The number of flights purchased less than 14 days before departure dropped almost 45%.

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Empowering travelers to make smart buying choices

Traveler engagement

Make it a reality

The right tools and techniques

Communications have moved a long way from the days when travel managers bombarded travelers with e-mails and hoped some of them were opened. Today's tools make communications:

- More personalized
- More relevant to what travelers are doing at that exact moment
- More attractive
- More interactive – travel managers can listen, as well as talk

Tips on good presentation

Winning ways to communicate remain the same, whether talking to travelers through a social network, e-mail or any other channel.

Deliver your message up-front

– you have

0:08 SECONDS

The average adult attention span

GIVE THEM AN ARRESTING HEADLINE

Tell them what they need to do right at the start of the communication.

Messages with *compelling* images

94% MORE VIEWS ONLINE

Infographics are very popular

Explore new media

Consider a 30-second animation to promote a policy message.

why as well as what

Whenever possible, explain how the change benefits the traveler as well as the company.

- Lists
- Are
- Good

? Did you know

Facts and stats are also an attention-grabber

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Traveler engagement

Make it a reality

Here are some of the tools travel managers should consider including in their communications strategy.
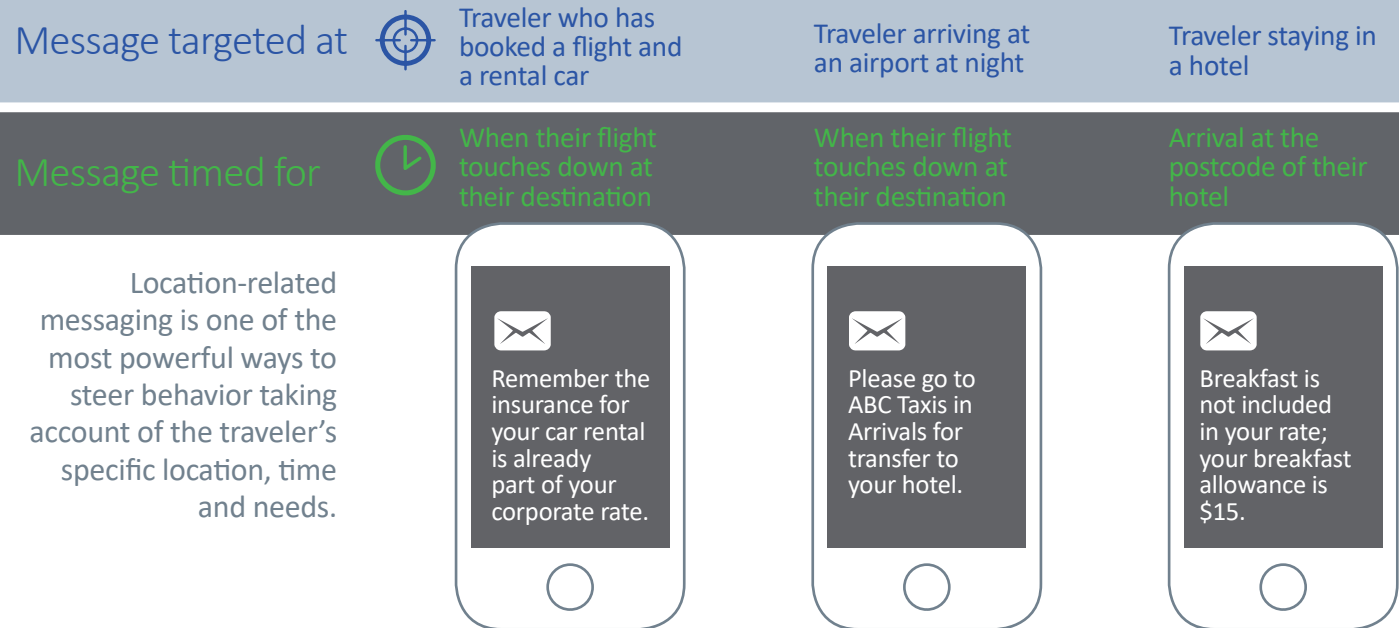
Mobile travel app

Most of the channels discussed below can be used for general education of travelers and to steer decision-making before their trip. But a travel app lets travel managers engage with travelers during their trip. Not only does this influence decisions as they are being made, it keeps travelers safe because they can potentially be tracked and action taken if their journeys are disrupted.

There are various apps that travel managers can customize for their travelers. However, many travel managers opt for an app provided by their TMC – BCD Travel's TripSource is a leading example. Services available on TripSource include:

- Itinerary management
- Flight alerts (such as flight delays or gate changes)
- Maps and directions
- Ability to share itineraries with friends and family
- Access to travel history
- Hotel booking*, with air booking to follow
- Custom messaging

Message targeted at	Traveler who has booked a flight and a rental car	Traveler arriving at an airport at night	Traveler staying in a hotel
Message timed for	When their flight touches down at their destination	When their flight touches down at their destination	Arrival at the postcode of their hotel

Location-related messaging is one of the most powerful ways to steer behavior taking account of the traveler's specific location, time and needs.

✉ Remember the insurance for your car rental is already part of your corporate rate.

✉ Please go to ABC Taxis in Arrivals for transfer to your hotel.

✉ Breakfast is not included in your rate; your breakfast allowance is $15.

For more tips on mobile strategy, see the BCD Travel white paper Mobilize your travel program.

* available in select countries

BCD travel

Traveler engagement

Make it a reality

Enterprise social communities

Enterprise social communities like Salesforce Chatter and Microsoft Yammer are becoming the water-coolers of the corporate virtual world. They are where employees meet to chat about business-related activities – and one subject they love to discuss is travel.

These communities can be used to reach out to travelers, delivering key messages about smarter behavior. Just as importantly however, travel managers can "listen to" conversations, which means they can learn quickly about any problems with the travel program and (gently) correct misinformation.
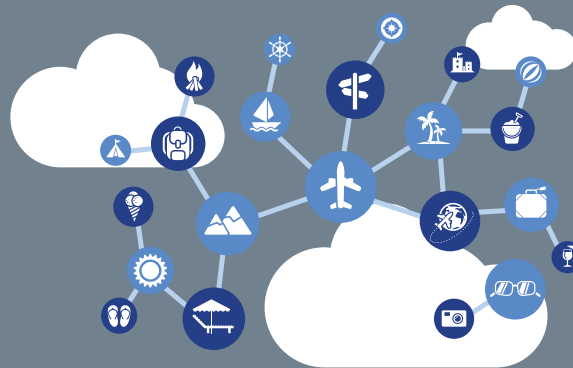
Tips on building a travel social community

Travel social communities can be very powerful communications tools, but some travel managers have launched communities only to see users lose interest after a few months. Advito has created a social community playbook , which explains how to get this project right. Tips include:

- **Determine roles** – Social communities benefit from multiple voices sharing information, but the team that handles administration and engagement should be small to keep the "voice" of the program consistent.
- **Brand the channel** – Create a name, philosophy and visual elements that would appeal to your target audience.
- **Plan your interaction** – Develop a high-level strategy for when you will post, topics to cover, calls-to-action and how you will monitor the conversations.
- **Listen** – It's as important as talking. Travelers must always feel safe sharing their opinions, even if they are critical. The very fact they are engaged in the conversation makes them useful, not obstacles. Respond fast and constructively to comments.

BCD travel

Traveler engagement

Make it a reality

Case-study: Financial services company builds a travel social community

The challenge

This U.S.-based company had a mature travel program but communication was stale, and policy compliance was dropping. As part of a wider engagement program with travelers, Advito recommended developing a travel community on the company's little-used social community platform.

The business travel page includes customized logos and icons designed by Advito. It also created contemporary and relevant content, in line with the company's goals, and structured it to support a steady stream of planned content. By using tracking links, it's possible to see what employees are reading, adjust future content based on the popularity of existing content and find out what employees think of the community.

The results

- Within six months, membership of the corporate travel community page was five times bigger than the average across all company communities.
- Business travel entered the Top 5 pages for most views and visits.
- Posts attracted more than three times as many replies as the average for the company's entire social community.
- Key performance measures improved. As traveler awareness of the travel program increased, so too did the overall results in key aspects of the program.

Pre-trip nudges

There are many techniques that can steer travelers towards cost-effective, compliant booking choices. Some examples include:

Embed zero-budget thinking

Encourage travelers to think of every trip as an unbudgeted expense which they need to justify.

Promote smart non-travel alternatives

The best way to save money on travel is to reserve trips for high-value meetings. Where it makes sense, promote virtual meeting options as an alternative to travel. The potential of virtual collaboration and the rise in improved virtual conferencing technology prompted BCD Travel and Advito to team up with Cisco to create strategies that help companies save money by keeping travelers at home.

Create destination packages

Put standard, easy-to-book packages for major destinations on the booking tool. These can include preferred airlines, hotels and even ground transportation suppliers, as well as advice about safety, dining and so on. It makes travelers' lives easier while also promoting compliance.

BCD travel

Traveler engagement

Make it a reality

Use price benchmarks
Give contextual pricing for a route so travelers can understand at point of booking whether their choice is a good price. These could include average fare paid by the company, lowest fare and the negotiated fare with preferred carriers.

Use booking tool pop-ups
Pop-up messages on the booking screen can prompt travelers to change their behavior. Promoting virtual conferencing alternatives is one example. Warning travelers that their out-of-policy booking will be recorded is another.

Post-trip engagement
Engagement is undeniably most effective before and during a trip. But consider the benefits of communicating with travelers after a trip too. Allow travelers to share their experiences about a trip through the travel social community and show that their opinion is valued. Be sure to address any issues they raise and support any compliant behavior and decisions. That will make them a stakeholder in traveler engagement efforts.

Consider gamification
Gaming-type incentivization, which acknowledges and rewards travelers for certain behaviors, was an emerging trend in 2013 but its adoption in business travel has been limited. Gamification techniques can be powerful engagement and motivational tools, but a gamified travel program requires upfront investment and ongoing running costs.

Traveler engagement is coming of age

In 2013, we talked about traveler engagement theory. Today, we have traveler engagement practices that actively drive better compliance and savings for a growing number of companies.
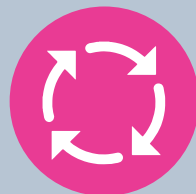
Five pillars of engagement provide the basis for steering travelers to the right choices more subtly, but effectively, than has been possible before:

Conclusion

Intelligence
Better insights into traveler behavior; and better insights into precisely how behavior needs to change to drive savings and other benefits.

Method
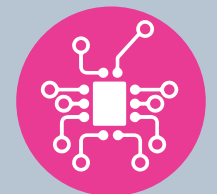A clear set of practices for how to engage travelers, and emerging success stories.

Marketing
Better use of consumer branding and communications techniques.

People
Professional help to introduce those practices.

Technology
More personalized tools and channels for communicating, especially mobile apps and social communities.

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About BCD Travel

BCD Travel helps companies make the most of what they spend on travel. For travelers, this means keeping them safe and productive, and equipping them to make good choices on the road. For travel and procurement managers, it means advising them on how to grow the value of their travel program. In short, we help our clients travel smart and achieve more. We make this happen in 110 countries with more than 12,000 creative, committed and experienced people. And it's how we maintain an industry-leading client-retention rate of 97%, with 2015 sales of US$23.8 billion. For more information, visit www.bcdtravel.com.

About BCD Group

BCD Group is a market leader in the travel industry. The privately owned company was founded in 1975 by John Fentener van Vlissingen and consists of BCD Travel (global corporate travel management), Travix (online travel: CheapTickets, Vliegwinkel, BudgetAir, Flugladen and Vayama), Park 'N Fly (off-airport parking) and joint ventures Parkmobile International (mobile parking applications) and AERTrade International (consolidating and fulfillment). BCD Group employs over 12,500 people and operates in 110 countries with total sales of US$ 25.6 billion, including US$ 10 billion in partner sales. For more information, visit www.bcdgroup.com..

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