

Success story

A fresh approach to travel resource



An innovative approach to Home Retail Group's travel programme filled its skills gap to achieve its goals.



Savings and cost avoidance.



Of the UK markets' business rail spend managed by us.

As part of a drive for continuous improvement in Home Retail Group's travel programme, new opportunities were identified that could save around 10% of the retail group's total annual travel spend.

Despite a desire for change, Home Retail Group didn't have the level of in-house expertise, or the people available, to support initiatives needed to achieve the savings.

A fresh approach

"We developed the role of an outsourced Travel Optimisation Manager from within our own team of experts. This new, part-time role avoided the need for additional payroll investment on Home Retail Group's part and provided 47,000 employees with an office based specialist they could trust."

Account Manager,
Capita Travel and Events

"The Travel Optimisation Manager was responsible for accelerating the Home Retail Group travel programme, supporting us and our Capita Account Manager's

business plan through day-to-day relationship building."

Contract Manager,
Home Retail Group

The manager built relationships with regular travel bookers, travellers and other influencers of change including finance, procurement, communications and HR teams. He used several methods to support the business plan, including:

- User-group analysis to generate regular feedback on policy and programme changes.
- Face-to-face discussions and educational workshops to influence the desired change in buying/booking behaviours.
- Identifying efficiencies in service configuration to reduce the cost of service and improve KPIs/SLAs.
- Developing processes that encouraged employees to use their preferred agency, programmes and policies in order to reduce costs and avoid unnecessary spend.

The Travel Optimisation Manager established a number of initiatives to improve internal interest and engagement in travel. Following a deep savings analysis, he created user groups of regular travel and meetings bookers and led face-to-face meetings with them to help build trust.

To support our strategy, he implemented several initiatives which contributed to the achievement of savings and cost avoidance in the first year.

This included average room rate/ticket price reductions, achieved by:

- Encouraging travel arrangers to book online via our travel portal.
- Encouraging a switch from Tuesday to cheaper Monday night hotel stays.

- Switching 50% of bookings from the most expensive hotel programme properties to alternatives on the negotiated programme.
- Increasing average flight booking lead-time to 10+ days.
- Encouraging the 'fixing' of outbound rail journey times on the top five most frequented routes.

Outstanding results

Over £500k of savings included the avoidance of venue cancellation fees, achieved by using supplier relationships to either negotiate cancellation or fee reduction, or by reselling the cancelled space to other organisations.

Fee savings included in the total were based on more than a 30% increase in online booking levels,

and additional savings were created as part of fare and loyalty scheme deals with airlines such as Virgin Atlantic and British Airways.

Through subsequent reviews, a further £1.1m potential savings have been identified for the future. The Travel Optimisation Manager continued to support the Account Manager and Home Retail Group to achieve as much of these savings as possible, whilst looking after the needs and welfare of business travellers.

Highlights

- Development of a 'Travel Optimisation Manager' role to fill a skills gap and to help reduce an annual travel spend.
- Several methods introduced to influence bookers in changing their behaviour, including educational workshops, user group analysis and booking process development.
- Switching 50% of bookings from the most expensive hotel bookings to alternatives on the negotiated programme.
- Face-to-face engagement to help build trust.
- Over £500k of savings and cost avoidance.
- 30% increase in online booking levels.

“Our Account Manager has an excellent understanding of our business and identified the benefits we could realise through extra resource to help us with the day-to-day detail.”

Contract Manager, Home Retail Group

If you'd like to know more, get in touch with a member of the team:

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