30th November 2007 - Hospitality in Focus
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GLENEAGLES STREAMLINES WITH NEWMARKET

One of Scotland's most prestigious hospitality organisations has enlisted the Delphi sales and catering solution from Newmarket to assist in streamlining its operations. The Gleneagles® Hotel, the world-renowned luxury resort in Perthshire, selected Newmarket's Sales Advantage suite of group business solutions. This suite will automate Gleneagles' group, corporate and event management business processes, from the management of leads and responding to request-for-proposals (RFPs) to room diagramming and the execution of meetings and events. Newmarket's technology was selected as part of an upgrade plan to improve procedures across its business.

"We turned to Newmarket because of its complete suite of sales and catering offerings. We want all our business data to be integrated and reside in the same central place so we can streamline our processes and get a holistic view of our customers and operations," said Brett Davidge, Project Manager at Gleneagles. "At Gleneagles, we pride ourselves at being at the cutting edge of customer service."

The Sales Advantage suite consists of several products including, Delphi®, the sales and catering solution, and Diagrams, an application which will allow Gleneagles to easily generate customised floor plans and setups. A key differentiator for Gleneagles will be the ability to provide dynamic, multi-media proposals with eProposal™, and respond instantly to customer requests via MeetingBrokerSM, the online lead management tool. With a premier clientele and high-profile events such as the Ryder Cup, Gleneagles is known for its exquisite property and flawless service. By selecting the Sales Advantage, the resort will be able to further automate and perfect their services.

 Added Brett Davidge from Gleneagles, "Another goal for us is to nurture new business from the prospecting stage through the booking of the business. With MeetingBroker, we aim to respond to leads faster, while improving our understanding and analysis of what channels are bringing us the best results. We constantly want to measure our process and procedures and improve upon them."

"Not only is Gleneagles one of the most prestigious and well-known leisure resorts in the world, it is also a leading meeting venue. We are honoured that they chose the full Delphi Sales Advantage suite to further extend their impressive groups and meetings capabilities," said Steve Lambert, Managing Director International, Newmarket International, Inc.

Newmarket International, Inc. delivers sales, group catering and event software solutions to the global hospitality and entertainment industries. It's suite of business solutions can be found in hotels, casinos, restaurants, visitor bureaus, stadiums, meeting arenas and convention centres throughout the world. The company has over 70,000 users worldwide, with over 9,500 installations in more than 110 countries.

A STROND NEW RSS SOLUTION

The hospitality industry's response to Travelscream Technologies' RSS solution has been positive as marketers have identified the usefulness of the technology and addressed the

continuing need to offer advanced Internet marketing solutions to their customers. RSS (Rich Site Summary) is the common format for sharing content among different websites.

According to Hospitality eBusiness Strategies 2007 Benchmark Survey, hotel marketers should take a holistic view of the entire online environment and adopt a comprehensive, long-term strategic approach to website optimization, Internet marketing strategies and new media formats, including RSS, blogs, social networks, mapping and rich media.

Travelscream Technologies recently upgraded their travelRSS program and other online services to help marketers gain a more proficient online presence both quickly and inexpensively. An annual subscription, which includes RSS feeds filled with news and promotions sent directly from a hotel or resort's own branded website, plus a message board, digital video and the company's travel agent outreach program (Travel Reader), can apparently cost less than one local newspaper advertisement.

Additionally, hospitality providers who serve their website's RSS feeds through the system obtain the benefit of having those feeds directed into a variety of global distribution channels through relationships the company has established with publishers of online content. Such partnerships include popular magazines, newspapers, television channels, social networks and other Internet–based media environments.

"Our Syndicated Channel Partnership program allows our supplier partners to vastly expand their marketing reach to a global audience," said Tom Griffin, founder and CEO of Travelscream, which is a hospitality-focused marketing services company dedicated to the concept of providing RSS-driven travel content through syndicated partnership channels as a primary business model.

The company's client list is expanding quickly and currently includes more than 2,000 world-class properties. Griffin says major hotel chains and global sales and marketing organizations are subscribing along with independent groups and individual property owners. "The ability for travel providers to syndicate their feeds through our dedicated channels has been a major selling factor."

AMADEUS' INITIATIVES

Tourism technology specialist Amadeus has been extremely busy in recent months with a number of initiatives that are tailor made for a variety of tourism and hospitality applications.

Amadeus is a well recognised technology partner for providers, sellers, and buyers of travel. The company provides distribution, IT and point-of-sale solutions to help its customers adapt, grow and succeed in the fast changing travel industry. Their customer groups include travel providers (airlines, hotels, car rental companies, railway companies, ferry lines, cruise lines, insurance companies and tour operators), travel sellers (travel agencies) and travel buyers (corporations and travellers). Amadeus maintains customer operations in 76 countries.

THE WORLD TOURISM ORGANISATIOIN AND AMADEUS SIGN A COLLABORATION AGREEMENT

The United Nations World Tourism Organisation (UNWTO) - the United Nations agency for sustainable tourism and the leading international organization in the field of tourism - has signed a collaboration agreement with Amadeus, a leader in technology and distribution solutions for the travel and tourism industry, aimed at the development of joint initiatives in relation to studies and analyses of the tourism sector at a global level.

The World Tourism Organization (UNWTO/OMT) is a specialized agency of the United Nations and the leading international organization in the field of tourism. It serves as a global forum for tourism policy issues and a practical source of tourism know-how.

Through this agreement, the UNWTO and Amadeus will jointly take advantage of the statistical information that Amadeus possesses on travel bookings categorised by main origin and destination locations. In this way, Amadeus will actively participate in the programmes that the Secretariat of Affiliated Members develops jointly with other UNWTO departments in areas such as measuring the flow of tourists and drawing up tourism forecasts as well as in the area of international cooperation.

The statistical information provided by Amadeus will be included in publications drawn up and used by different UNWTO departments, and they will also collaborate when carrying out specific studies about forecasts for regions and countries in accordance with the needs of the organisation and its members. Similarly, Amadeus will participate in seminars and conferences organised by the UNWTO to support the dissemination of statistical information and highlight the collaboration.

 The UNWTO is in charge of collecting, analysing, publishing, standardising and improving tourism statistics and promoting their integration into the United Nations system. Its Secretariat for Affiliated Members supports all of the initiatives designed to strengthen the organisation's work programme through its members, especially in the area of awareness of and access to up-do-date and reliable information on the evolution of tourism.

Among their objectives is the promotion and development of tourism with the aim of contributing to economic development, international understanding, peace, prosperity and universal respect, the observance of human rights and universal freedom.

ATTENTION ALL TRAVEL MANAGERS

Nearly all companies using a self booking tool (SBT) are failing to benefit from increases in productivity by not integrating their SBT with expense management systems. This is according to a new study commissioned by Amadeus and undertaken by the Business Travel Research Centre at Cranfield University, and the Association of Corporate Travel Executives (ACTE).

The research, based on an online survey completed by 168 ACTE members and interviews with nine companies, focused on the impact of travel technologies, specifically the integration of travel management tools and how their integration affects corporate productivity. Whilst 45 per cent of respondents had already integrated an SBT with the corporate intranet and 32 per cent with their HR database systems, only 9 per cent of companies overall had integrated their SBT with an expense management system. An additional 13 per cent of companies were just starting out on SBT integration projects with their expense management systems.

The research was conducted in the third quarter of 2007 amongst 168 corporate travel managers. 80 per cent of the companies that participated in the survey were large scale purchasers of travel products with nearly 30 per cent of the group spending more than $100m a year. The largest numbers of responses were from US travel managers (54 per cent), followed by those in Europe (29 per cent) and Canada (7 per cent). Within Europe, most responses were from the UK, Netherlands, and Belgium.

Productivity benefits are tangible

According to the respondents, the most significant productivity benefits to be realised through integrating SBTs with expense management systems were in the area of data accuracy and consistency, specifically in the service industry, including:

- Reduction of time spent on reporting travel expenses
- Automatic transfer of data and traveller profile information updates
- Reduced need for manual input of travel data

This adds further weight to the findings of a recent study by the Aberdeen Group, which found that the cost of processing expense reports in companies, where the process was fully automated, was a saving of 50%, to do the same work in companies where the expenses reconciliation process was a fully manual process.

Drivers to successful integration

No matter what the solution the company is seeking or how far along it is in the process, the research showed that travel managers need to be aware of the drivers to integration and follow some basic guidelines to help ensure a successful project:

- Senior management approval key to accomplish evaluation process:
  - Developing appropriate metrics will be key to winning support and provide a baseline to appraise the success of the new integrated system.
- Integration project must be a priority in the IT Department:
  - Anticipating complexities of the project with IT is vital as many large companies with multiple locations utilize both electronic and manual processes, making integration more difficult.
- Consistent worldwide processes and employee awareness fundamental to increase policy compliance:
  - Training employees to understand and follow consistent processes will influence compliancy.
- Standardization of other internal processes necessary before integration plan is implemented:
  - Simplifying and standardizing local processes within the constraints of local regulations is very important before any new expense management system can be implemented.

Modular approach more attractive

Responses also confirmed an overwhelming favourability towards modular third-party integration solutions, rather than a tailored approach. By modular, the study implies that we would see a number of these systems connected together by middleware that provides links between these separate disparate systems. Whilst tailored systems fit perfectly with the way each company conducts its business, additional time and cost of development, and the need for considerable ongoing IT support, updates and redesign makes a modular solution more attractive. One large-sized financial services company had adopted a modular approach for this reason, and due to the speed at which it could be implemented alongside legacy systems.

Commenting on the findings, Marcos Isaac, Director of Corporate & Distribution Channels, Amadeus, said: "Our recommendation for any company looking to pursue an integration project, would be to first evaluate the existing travel and expense management processes, measuring the time from pre-trip to report submission to reimbursement. This will give a clear picture of where enhancements to productivity can be made, and help win senior management support. By simplifying and standardising IT systems, and agreeing a roll out strategy and incentives for traveller buy-in during the change process, the benefits in terms of productivity can reach 50% according to the Aberdeen study and can create a better overall travel experience."

Solutions for corporations

Amadeus' vision is to provide the next generation of travel technology that encourages collaboration amongst all players within the travel industry. To realise this they are investing in a range of technology solutions and components that will allow the integration of content, data and systems whether they are part of Amadeus or whether they are from third party suppliers. Over the next years, the company will expand its approach to corporate travel. By providing the technology solutions that span before, during and after all travel steps, the existing online booking tool will evolve beyond trip booking to provide the Total Trip Experience for corporate travellers. Their move towards mobile technology is an integral part of the vision of what the travel experience should be.

The company's corporate travel solution, Amadeus eTravel Management, helps corporations to manage their global travel programmes more efficiently and cost-effectively. The solution helps business travellers plan, personalise and purchase their trip while remaining compliant with the global travel policy.

Over 1,500 corporations worldwide with more than one million active users utilise Amadeus e-Travel Management to integrate all the elements of their programmes into one intuitive and easy-to-administer solution. Customers include Altría, Cemex, Daimler Chrysler, Ericsson, Huntsman, Nestlé, Total and Thales.

EASYJET'S NEW CORPORATE TRAVEL MARKET DISTRIBUTION DEALS

EasyJet will target the $90 billion* European corporate travel market with new distribution deals with Amadeus and Galileo, part of Travelport GDS.

This business development will enable corporate travel agencies to view and book easyJet flights within their preferred GDS environment, alongside other carriers to make both easy comparisons and bookings.

This is the first time that a major European low-fares airline has made its inventory available to the GDS providers. EasyJet, Amadeus and Galileo recognise the demand from the corporate travel market for easier access to easyJet's low-fares and attractive business-related services. The airline also aims to grow its proportion of business passengers, currently around 20%, through the managed business travel segment, which is largely booked by travel agencies through their GDSs.

Distribution through Amadeus and Galileo is specifically targeting travel agencies specialising in business travel and easyJet will apply a point-of-sale fee (the same principle applies to all non-internet sales, such as telephone and airport sales) to the cost of the airfare.

To enable the agreements, Amadeus and Galileo have separately delivered new technology to connect each GDS directly to easyJet's inventory, allowing travel agents, for the first time, to make bookings on the airline within their everyday workflow and channel.

The agreements represent the next step in the evolution of the low-fare airline industry and reinforce the value of the GDS as a sales channel bringing gains for the low cost airline segment.

Andy Harrison, easyJet's Chief Executive, said: "This is a major step forward in our strategy to attract more business travellers. EasyJet has always appealed to businesses by offering an excellent high-frequency, flexible product between Europe's major airports and now Europe's travel managers and their clients can book with easyJet, therefore removing the last barrier to the corporate travel market. EasyJet will maintain its direct sell business strategy, by adding a point-of-sale fee we can ensure our website remains our primary distribution channel and fares will always be cheapest when booking direct online. However, even with the point-of-sale fee, easyJet seats sold through the GDS will still be dramatically lower than those offered on any of the traditional airlines."

David Jones, Executive Vice President, Commercial, Amadeus, said, "This agreement with easyJet underscores and validates the effort we have made to understand and offer a tailor-made solution for the low fare airline segment. We have built a solution that connects the GDS directly to the inventory of ticketless carriers, enabling them to distribute efficiently through the GDS. Using this technology we can now offer business travel agencies key easyJet content, with a booking process that is integrated directly into their regular work process."

Bryan Conway, Managing Director, EMEA, Travelport GDS said, "By integrating easyJet's services directly into our core GDS, we are able to offer even richer content to our business travel agents and their customers. Galileo can now provide agents with the same straightforward and highly efficient way to book this content as they have with other airlines, whilst also offering today's low-cost carriers with a simplified means to distribute to the travel trade."

Amadeus has been carrying out detailed pilots in Germany, France, Spain and UK which ended in November. As soon as these pilots were concluded, Amadeus made easyJet flights available to all eligible agencies worldwide. EasyJet flights were also available through Galileo in the UK by the end of 2007 and the rest of Europe was included in the New Year.

This announcement is the latest development in easyJet's campaign to increase its proportion of business passengers, currently around 20%. EasyJet offers an extensive route network, high frequencies to main city airports and low-fares and this move follows the recent introduction of business passenger targeted services such as speedy boarding and the hop on an earlier flight for free policy.

Links:

Amadeus - www.amadeus.com
EasyJet – www.easyjet.com
Newmarket, International, Inc – www.nwmarketinc.com
Travelscream Technologies - www.travelscream.com.