



7 DEADLY PITFALLS OF BUSINESS TRAVEL

Bookings made 14 to 20 days prior to departure cost 24% less than those made less than 7 days out.



Bookings made 7 to 13 days prior to travel cost 9% less.

Brand and hotel points are the #1 deciding factors in finding a room.

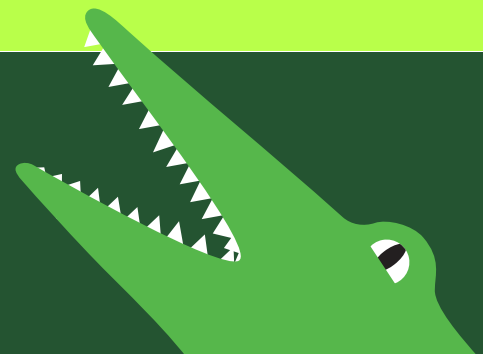
73% of business travelers prefer location to amenities when looking for somewhere to stay during a trip.



The average cost of manually processing just one (1) business invoice is \$24.

70% of business travelers surveyed in an online poll work for companies that have no clearly defined policies on travel brand usage and booking channels.

26% of your company's hotel invoices are just plain wrong.



NOT ENOUGH TIME

1

Most of us don't schedule sufficient time to get everything done. Let's face it: Our lives get busy. But booking travel too late will cost you! Data from Travel Leaders show bookings made 14 to 20 days prior to departure cost 24% less than those made less than 7 days out. And bookings made 7 to 13 days prior to travel cost 9% less.

When you save your booking for the last minute, you're much more likely to make a hasty decision. You might pick a room that's \$20 higher than company budget or one without any of the amenities that you need. Searching for hotel reservations when you need a room fast is kind of like grocery shopping when you're really hungry. You're going to pay too much, and you might not even get what you need.

READY YOUR RENTALS

2

Not getting insurance on that rental car can cost you far more than affordable rental insurance would, but it seems as though many travelers aren't mindful of the benefits of insurance. 42% of respondents surveyed by The National Association of Insurance Commissioners (NAIC) were "either thoroughly confused or had only a rough idea about insurance." Make sure you choose wisely when insuring your company's rental car!

Does rental insurance come with your regular auto insurance? Great. If not, you'll probably get four options at the rental counter for insuring your ride, and all of them come in at a slightly different daily price. Your company can choose to get Liability Insurance, Personal Accident, Personal Effects Coverage, and Collision Damage Waiver, depending on your needs.

What's the difference? Liability Insurance costs around \$10/day and protects your company from potential lawsuits. Personal accident and personal effects insurance can be as low as \$1 per day and can really pay off when reducing medical costs or safeguarding your company's assets. Personal accident insurance covers medical costs in the case of an accident. Personal effects insurance takes care of all corporate property that you'd like to insure in your rental car. Collision damage insurance ranks as the most expensive at approximately \$15 per car, but it's well worth it; this insurance waives financial responsibility for any car damages.

BILLS, BILLS, BILLS

3

This one will blow your mind: 26% of your company's hotel invoices are just plain wrong. What does this mean over time? Your company not only loses money now but also later from repeated invoicing mistakes.

Read that stat again: Over one quarter of the bills your company gets back from hotels are totally wrong. Can you imagine how much you're overpaying due to inaccurate invoices? Not to mention unauthorized charges. Many hotels sneak higher nightly rates onto your bills and even add in extra charges on the client's credit card.

Why are you still trusting hotel accountants with your company's financial future? Do you really think they're keeping your business' travel costs in mind? Consider this: according to studies by PricewaterhouseCoopers, the average cost of manually processing just one business invoice is \$24. Remember: too many of these invoices are coming back with big errors, which drives up labor and general expenses even more. Maybe it's time to trust a travel manager to sleuth out faulty charges and eliminate future risks.

GIVE IT BACK

4

Did you know that some states consider you a citizen after you've stayed there for a certain number of nights? You could get reimbursed for taxes pertaining to extended stay lodging.

Did you get your extended stay lodging taxes reimbursed? We're betting you didn't. That's right! Most businesses don't know that they could be refunded for many of their lengthy hotel stays.

How? You are often granted the tax benefits of a citizen if you stay a certain number of consecutive nights in a particular state. But how many nights do you have to hang in there to qualify for a refund? It gets confusing. The number of room nights required in order to get reimbursed varies widely by state. Also, some states leave the determination of eligibility up to the individual counties or parishes, making it even more difficult to figure out.

Many hotels don't come clean with the details, so securing a travel advisor who can overcome these hurdles will greatly help you in getting all your travel funds back. We're talking tens of thousands in refunds here. Get your fair share of lodging taxes reimbursed!

BLURRED LINES

5

Wouldn't it be nice if your travelers knew exactly what their travel policy was so that they could follow it? According to a PhoCusWright survey, a massive 70% of business travelers surveyed in an online poll work for companies that have no clearly defined policies on travel brand usage and booking channels.

How do your travelers follow a travel policy if they don't even know what parameters your company has set in place? Company travel policies prove useful in solving issues such as: highlighting reimbursement totals for lodging, dealing with unauthorized charges, and managing single vs. double room expectations.

Identify and clearly define the parameters, and travelers will learn how to plan accordingly. Corporate travel managers help delineate the guidelines for the program that best serves your corporate needs.

GET YOUR PRIORITIES STRAIGHT

6

Priorities, priorities, priorities! According to recent USA Today report, Choice Hotels found that 73% of business travelers prefer location to amenities when looking for somewhere to stay during a trip. Speaking of amenities, free WiFi wins the popularity contest for amenities for business and leisure travelers alike. What matters most to your company?

Would you rather have a longer commute in the morning or a cheaper room? Many travel programs prioritize their most important assets from top to bottom. Does your company value price? Locations? Amenities? Room quality? Your company might not have created a comprehensive list of key travel values, but an effective travel manager can help you figure out your must-haves. Furthermore, they can use this info to get you the specialized travel program that aligns most closely with what matters to your company.

Unfortunately, amenities are disproportionately low on hoteliers' lists of hotel priorities; but 77% of guests still consider them when booking a room. Travel advisors step in and get their guests the hotel amenities they value while weighing any potential added costs. Need truck parking? A mini fridge? Whatever amenity you need to see, an effective travel manager will find a way to make it happen.

LOYALTY IS REWARDED

7

Did you know that business travelers are 4x more likely than vacationers to consider rewards points when booking? According to a 2015 American Express Global Business Travel Report, brand and hotel points are the #1 deciding factors in finding a room.

Did you know that hotel seekers consistently choose one particular brand over others? They do this because they can trust their preferred brand to be similar across different markets. Guests love that kind of predictability. But another major incentive in choosing the same brand is taking advantage of reward points at their brand of choice. Rewards points are a huge draw for guests because they can add up to enough free nights to plan a vacation, future business trips, or other perks. However, many business travelers ignore options that would align more closely with their company's budget; instead, they book the brand that gives them their preferred reward points. Brand focus can blind travelers to huge savings opportunities.

Get started today! Creative Lodging Solutions can save your business from falling into these seven pitfalls before it's too late. If your business has already been affected by these travel risks, CLS will work hard to refund tax dollars, define travel policies, or help you identify and implement an optimized travel program. Finding risks and consequently overcoming these obstacles proves an effective measure in giving our clients what they deserve -- an expert lodging team that sees these and other risks as prime opportunities to help your business thrive. CLS - Travel Management Made Easy.

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