

East Cork Travel benefits from advanced travel technology

Amadeus Case Study

East Cork Travel Group is one of the fastest growing travel agencies in Ireland. A thriving business that has been in operation since 1995, the group comprises 2 distinct areas - Discover Travel specialising in tailor-made privately escorted holidays to suit the discerning long-haul traveller, and a Budget Travel franchise. It sells to the Irish travel trade (B2B) together with a consumer-facing (B2C) business for the general public.



"My advice is to go for the best product - even it that means turning down a slightly better deal. Better technology pays for itself many times over in the long run."

Brendan Barry,
Managing Director,
East Cork Travel Group

Business Environment

Like many travel agents in Ireland, the withdrawal of airline commissions and the introduction of Internet booking around the turn of the century through airline websites for simple, point-to-point flights (for example, Dublin to Paris return) proved a challenge to East Cork Travel Group. With the Internet driving prices down and airlines actively recruiting consumers to book direct, the company needed to re-evaluate the way it did business including its value proposition and the tools it employed.

Seeing that consumers could easily book their own simple, short-haul flights, the company decided to focus on selling more complex, long-haul destinations which typically include 4-6 flight segments per booking. This was an area that online booking could not cater for and it was the catalyst that led to the creation of Discover Travel. The booking of long-haul itineraries enabled the East Cork Travel Group to demonstrate the benefits of using experienced travel professionals and thereby add value to their customers' travel planning and purchasing.

Use of Technology

East Cork Travel Group utilise the latest Amadeus Selling Platform for reservations and ticketing. They also use Amadeus FareXpert Mark-up & Distribution module to mark-up airline fares (ATPCo Cat 35). The group also use Viewdata.

The difference Amadeus makes to business efficiency:

- > Mark-Up & Distribution enables reservations agents to automatically quote special airline (contract) fares alongside regular published fares.
- > The automated process of receiving airline fares through the Mark-Up & Distribution tool saves time and dramatically improves fare accuracy.
- > Accurate fares result in fewer Agency Debit Memos (ADMs). Since the introduction of Amadeus FareXpert fare filing technology, ADMs resulting from incorrect manually loaded airline fares have been reduced to zero.
- > Airline contract and IT fares used to be accessible to just a few specialists within the organisation, but with the introduction of Amadeus, everyone can access these fares to offer competitive and accurate price quotations.
- > The local support and customer service offered by Amadeus Ireland is very good. East Cork Travel sees that Amadeus takes pride in building relationships with its customers.
- > Due to the logical entries and automated tools, consultants at East Cork Travel Group actually have little need to contact the Amadeus help desk.
- > Amadeus Help Pages offer a wealth of instant information to assist travel consultants to quickly ascertain the correct entry required to complete a task.
- > A growing business (2008 is the best year ever) demands greater efficiency. Faster, more streamlined processes are achieved in part, through the deployment of automated Amadeus travel technology tools for selling and administrative functions.
- > Amadeus System reliability is much better than what had been experienced using competitor systems – which could be out of action for hours at a time.

Migrating to Amadeus

East Cork Travel Group had experienced migrating GDS (from Galileo to Worldspan) in 1997, prior to the introduction of Amadeus in 2007 as the company's sole Global Distribution System (GDS). Although the migration from Galileo to Worldspan was difficult and there was a general indifference to customer service, the switch to Amadeus proved very different. It was seamless.

The smooth transition to Amadeus was no accident. It required careful planning on the part of Amadeus and East Cork Travel Group. Two-day conversion course training was timed to coincide closely with the actual cutover date.

Then, for a short period after migration, Amadeus personnel were available on site to offer any assistance required. This meant there was no loss of productivity even on the first day following the successful migration!

One of the main reasons why the management at East Cork Travel Group agreed to migrate to Amadeus was due to the rave reviews from travel consultants who had previously used Amadeus. Consultants cited the ease of use (including logical formats) together with excellent reliability and system uptime as the key reasons to grow the business with Amadeus travel technology.

Since the migration, it has become apparent that Amadeus is continually moving forward to meet the needs of 21st century travel professionals and their customers. The company's focus on customer partnership and innovative technology has proved a breath of fresh air for East Cork Travel Group.

In the words of Amadeus customers

"The migration to Amadeus from Worldspan was seamless. Thanks to the careful planning and support of the local Amadeus Ireland team, the switchover was completed in one day. The company is very happy with the move to Amadeus and the benefits we now enjoy, particularly the fast, accurate fare filing solution. I know there is a great deal of competition among travel technology companies, but my advice is to go for the best product – even if that means turning down a slightly better deal. Better technology pays for itself many times over in the long run."

Brendan Barry, Managing Director, East Cork Travel Group

"The time spent creating a manual fare build in our previous GDS could be 5 minutes per booking, which soon adds up to hours of wasted time. The chance of making errors was also very high due to the complex entries. This resulted in Agency Debit Memos which proved costly and the whole process was completely inefficient. This contrasts greatly to how much easier marking-up fares and quoting them has become with Amadeus FareXpert.

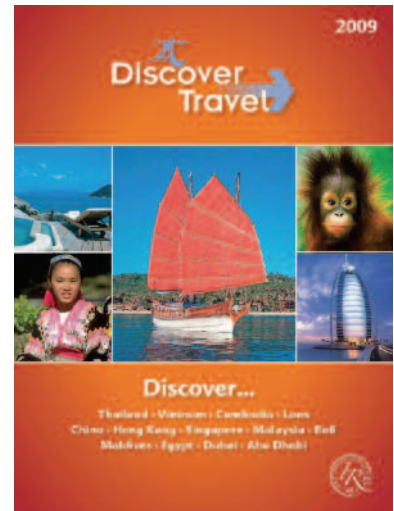
Our consultants also benefit from the flexibility of the Amadeus Selling Platform with its interchangeable Graphical and Cryptic screens – which suits new and experienced GDS users. Having used 3 different GDSs, I can honestly say that Amadeus is my favourite. I'd recommend it to anyone."

Majella Jones, Manager of Discover Travel

About Discover Travel

Discover Travel specialises in tailor-making holidays to suit the requirements of long-haul travellers. All itineraries are privately escorted incorporating the freedom, content and flexibility that makes for unforgettable travel experiences.

Destinations include: Abu Dhabi, Bali, Cambodia, Dubai, China, Egypt, Hong Kong, Laos, Malaysia, Maldives, Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam.



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Manager,
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