



# TRAVELMANAGERS

personally yours

## TravelManagers Australia and technology

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TravelManagers' parent company House of Travel has invested heavily in technology over many years and it is paying off. It is widely acknowledged they are the market leader in automated booking processes and the linking of the travel consultants desktop to accounting systems and other areas of the business. This linkage includes all customer communication channels with the understanding that communication across all areas of the business is vital as the company strives to maintain its position as the very best travel agency in the business.

A recent development specific to TravelManagers in Australia, implemented by Matthew Harris, House of Travel's Australian-based director of IT, is the company's in-house intranet system. Content is selected for its relevance to the Australian market and local business but where common benefit exists, e.g. destination and product information, the Australian personal travel managers will share data with the 1,100 members of House of Travel's New Zealand intranet users also.

The launch of the new TravelManagers intranet which was released 11 August has brought many benefits to the business, for both its administration and support staff and its personal travel managers (PTMs). Future improvements will benefit the company's partner suppliers and its PTMs' customers.

Features of TravelManagers upgraded Intranet with its online booking tools are;



- **Promo Manager** – a visually appealing method for displaying marketing and product information to PTMs making new information easier to see in a timely manner.
- **Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)** – provides for a quick reference facility to allow common, useful or new information to be easily distributed and accessed amongst the community of PTMs
- **Feedback Component** – the successful launch of this new upgraded intranet was due to heeding the early feedback of PTM Beta testers. It is anticipated that the intranet will continue to be improved based on the feedback contributed by all users.
- **Statistics** – in addition to the Feedback Component the intranet provides extensive information as to how it is being used which allows TravelManagers administration to monitor improvements and changes to ensure they meet the users' identified needs and add value.
- **NEWS** – daily news items are available from a range of worldwide sources and are placed on a single page for PTMs to bring themselves up to speed with developments and trends external to TravelManagers.
- **Navigation** – using a variety of techniques, whether searching, menu driven or buttons the PTM can quickly move to the required information.
- **SEARCH** – to assist with the massive amount of content that is specific to TravelManagers Australian PTMs which has been provided by TravelManagers and other sources the search facility within the intranet allows PTMs to quickly find the information they seek.
- **Links** – an extensive collection of useful links to other websites and resources is maintained and will be added to as appropriate. This facilitates the community of PTMs sharing the best the web has to offer.
- **Message Board** – provides a community area for the PTMs to share their insight, experience, knowledge and business tips with their colleagues. Instant communication between PTMs and between PTMs and TravelManagers Support for seeking advice on suppliers, product and destinations including facilities such as restaurants, hotels, local transport and all sorts of visitor attractions.

Other technology available to PTMs includes;

- **Online training** – TravelManagers has invested in technology to provide online training to its members.
- **Technical Support** – TravelManagers has invested in technology to provide one on one support to its members whether it be a "how do I do this" query or "how do I fix this" query.

Future improvements planned for TravelManagers exclusive use are;

- **Supplier Update Distribution System** - based on survey responses from PTMs, workshops and information gleaned from intranet testing, TravelManagers has designed a unique method for distributing supplier information. Based on the extensive industry knowledge held by House of Travel Australia's executive team it is believed this will be superior to anything currently used elsewhere in the industry.
- **Webprofiles** – to assist the PTMs with local marketing, TravelManagers has invested in a solution to allow the clients or potential clients of a PTM to stay in touch via weekly email bulletins generated on the PTM's behalf and personal web pages.

Initial feedback from individual personal travel managers, in the three weeks the upgraded intranet has been operating, has been very encouraging. Below is a summary of these comments which provides a good feel for the networks acceptance of this important business tool.

**Aileen Collins:** Carrara QLD - Congratulations Matthew, you've done a miraculous job!!

**Teresa Malecki:** Glenbrook NSW - Great work on the new intranet. I love it! It's easy to navigate and easy to use. I highly recommend it to all PTMs. It certainly has some time saving devices on it. I always used the old intranet daily. For the new PTMs the FAQ is a great addition, it should help them a lot. Love the feedback box too, easy to send a message whilst you are on the intranet so you don't have to flick back to your emails, that way you don't forget!

**Kathy Purves:** Ellenbrook WA - WOW! Love it! Especially the forum - YAY!

**Cathy Moir:** Gymea Bay NSW - Love the facility to send a page via email (especially for communicating with admin support and for new recruits).

**Mandy Rogut:** West Ryde NSW - It's really great and easy to use. It gives heaps of info and it's quite easy to find things.

**Chris Dobson:** Geraldton WA - It's a fantastic improvement and much easier to find what you are looking for. Great job guys!

**Alison Johnson:** Farmborough Heights NSW - It only seems like a short time ago that we were talking about this and I can't believe its up and running – fantastic effort.

**Liza Beylerian:** Lysterfield South VIC - I have gone through all the sections including the search area and it works! All the new features you have added are great and will be very useful.

This new version of the intranet includes all personal travel manager and head office contact details, commission rates, up-to-date tactical deals and other current offers. PTMs who participate in educational trips are invited to write reviews of their experiences to share with their peers.

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