Managed travel must evolve to keep pace with rapidly changing technology and traveler expectations

CWT suggests most critical areas of focus within the travel ecosystem
Our world is becoming increasingly digital, with travelers who intuitively make decisions on the fly based on access to continual information at their fingertips. All of this creates a whole new set of opportunities and challenges for managed travel.

At the same time, the “travel ecosystem” has become somewhat of an industry buzz word, but what does it really mean for travel buyers and suppliers? In the following, CWT shares its travel ecosystem and highlights the most critical areas where we think all industry parties should be focused for maximum benefit, now and in the future.

**Focusing on largest opportunities**

CWT has defined the travel ecosystem in terms of the activities that occur over the lifecycle of a trip – **pre-trip, during the trip, and post-trip** – from the perspective of both the travel manager and the traveler. New and emerging trends, such as personalization and consumerization, are increasing traveler expectations of the user experience associated with business travel.

Managed travel providers have an opportunity to respond to those expectations with new technologies and approaches, while still respecting and accomplishing the fundamental goals of travel management. The largest areas of opportunity CWT sees today for organizations to further improve their programs and the traveler experience include **door-to-door booking, mobile, and Big Data**.

**LIFECYCLE OF A TRIP**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pre-travel</th>
<th>During travel</th>
<th>Post-travel</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Door-to-door booking</td>
<td>Mobile</td>
<td>Big Data</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Door-to-door booking**

Universally, travelers indicate they think about their travel in terms of a trip from start to finish – not as a series of transactions, which is how the travel industry has historically viewed travel. Technology is responding to this more holistic view with the emergence of door-to-door capabilities that enable entire trips to be seamlessly researched and booked, including everything travelers need from the moment they leave home to the moment they return home.
CWT believes door-to-door is the future of online booking in managed travel, and we’re investing significantly in this area. We’re partnering with KDS to bring exclusive functionality to mutual clients who use the KDS Neo door-to-door platform, making this industry-leading tool even more essential for travel managers and travelers.

What’s in it for me?

主治旅行者

› Understand **total cost** of each trip before it is approved
› **More elements of spend** get booked through the program
› Travelers are attracted to the **consumer-friendly interface** and **intuitive user experience**, keeping them compliant
› **Travel booking** is **quicker and easier** than ever before, allowing them to stay focused on their business

主治旅行管理者

› **Availability of company-preferred rates** and content via a traveler-friendly mobile tool
› **Ability to manage travel on-the-go**
› Access to information on **spend booked via mobile channels**
› **Improved traveler compliance** by offering mobile services with a leading user experience
› **Ability to quickly access travel information and respond to changes** that arise during the trip
› Enhanced experience with **differentiated services** offered based on geo-location
› **Quick receipt of critical messages** during emergencies

Recommendations

› Door-to-door will quickly become the new normal as consumerization continues to proliferate managed travel. Take time now to view a tool like KDS Neo in action (your CWT representative can facilitate) and anticipate the potential benefits to your organization, both in terms of cost control and savings, and in terms of traveler satisfaction.

Mobile

Smartphones and tablets have become commonplace in our personal and professional lives, so logically the travel program must be accessible via mobile devices to remain relevant to travelers. While most existing travel apps only solve specific, isolated problems that travelers encounter on the road, CWT believes the best mobile solutions will provide a one-stop shop that spans anything a traveler might need during a trip – including the ability to book and modify travel – while maintaining compliance to the managed program.

CWT is already delivering some of that functionality today via its proprietary mobile app, and we’re busy building a mobile platform that will make even more contextualized services available at travelers’ fingertips in the future, enable our travel counselors to deliver more proactive service to travelers while on-the-go, and empower travel managers to manage aspects of their program via mobile devices.
“Big Data” has become a buzzword in many industries, but mounds of data are useless without the ability to distill meaningful insights from all of it, and translate those insights into specific benefits for organizations and their travelers.

While travel managers have long used large amounts of data to identify opportunities for improvement and drive negotiation strategies, the new frontier is using data to create a better traveler experience, including the ability to quantify previously intangible elements like stress and productivity. CWT has done some proprietary research in this area, using data from 15 million business trips, and we’ll continue to look for ways to refine data into specific insights for our clients, including via the next-generation reporting platform we are developing.

The landscape of managed travel has changed significantly and is continuing to evolve rapidly. Travel buyers who embrace the new digital reality – and strive to proactively address it in their programs – will be best positioned to uncover new program opportunities while improving traveler compliance and satisfaction in the process.

**What’s in it for me?**

› The ability to get even smarter and more proactive in managing travel
› Identification of new opportunities to save money and improve travelers’ lives
› New organizational thinking on travel that uses data to create a more personal and relevant traveler experience

**Recommendations**

› If you aren’t using mobile functionality or apps to help facilitate your company’s travel, your travelers are surely doing it without you. Work with your travel providers, such as CWT, to consider your current program challenges and identify those that could be helped by mobile.
› Test use of particular apps or tools with a limited number of travelers, and incorporate their feedback before a broader roll out.

› Consider all of the sources of data currently available through the travel program, and whether you’re using all of the information available to inform decision making. For example, where could data help you better understand the root causes of a current challenge?
› If you need help extracting meaningful insights from your data, just ask for it. Your travel management company, industry consultants, and others can assist.
› If you identify information that would be helpful but that you don’t have access to today, explore how to get it for the future.