

Strengthening Supplier Relationships

Leverage supplier sponsorships for the greatest impact



About the Client

Our client is a leading provider of global corporate travel management services and is listed in the Top 10 on the Travel Weekly Power List.

The Challenge

Our client's corporate and leisure travel consultants are front-line associates assisting travelers with booking airlines, hotels, and car rentals. The organization wanted to create an incentive to reward consultants for booking preferred suppliers. With different airline, hotel, and car rental partners to choose from, suppliers wanted the opportunity to influence consultant behavior in support of their brand. The funds from their marketing programs are earmarked for programs that help educate consultants, inform them of new promotions, and drive booking performance.

Previously, consultants were involved in many disparate programs and there was a lack of brand visibility. There was confusion around what to sell and when to sell it, and there was no way to organize the supplier funds and connect their efforts to measurable objectives.

The Solution

With the flexibility of Creative Group's proprietary incentive program platform, we built a customized supplier "portal," allowing individual suppliers to advertise their brands and deliver informational and educational content. Consultants each received a common "point bank account" that the suppliers pay into for a variety of brand-building activities, such as performance on quizzes and overall sales.

Suppliers use the portal to promote their brand in the following ways:

- "Buy" space on the portal as if it were an electronic billboard
- Conduct ongoing incentive programs for their brand
- Run micro-training programs anytime during the year and reward consultants for their scores on quizzes

All points, regardless of brand, aggregate in each participant's bank account, therefore, each promotion becomes more valuable to the consultant over time.

The online platform allowed our client to aggregate supplier-sponsored content and connect it to outcomes and results. Because the platform also standardized the program elements, it increased alignment and drove desired behaviors by clearly communicating each promotion to all consultants.

The Outcome

Although the program is less than a year old, the client was delighted with the early results.

- The program launched in late 2018; it realized 85% agent engagement, 30 days into the program
- Five (5) suppliers signed on to run promotions within 60 days of launching the program
- Subsequently, every month of the year has already been "sponsored" – meaning a brand has committed to running an incentive or quiz during that month
- Suppliers have said there is nothing as comprehensive as this program for influencing agent engagement with their brands

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