

GLOBAL BUSINESS TRAVEL



Are travel and meetings managed together in your company? Here's why they should

You can have greater oversight of overall spend and support your duty of care by integrating travel and meetings into a single program management approach. Here's a step-by-step plan and some tips to help get you started.

1. Do a careful review of your company's travel and meetings spend.

Look at data on total spend for travel and meetings in the last year, taking note of bookings per suppliers. Go through commonalities and differences and ask yourself:

- Are there frequently used hotels that are being booked for meetings?
- Are business travelers and meeting planners booking any common hotels? If so, do you have special rates for those hotels?
- Are there airlines and ground transportation providers used across business travel and meetings programs?
- Are airlines giving you better rates for a group of travelers?
- What percentage of bookings are not compliant with company-preferred suppliers?

Tip: An entire meeting held at an out-of-policy location has far more safety risk than a single traveler staying at an out-of-policy hotel.

2. Determine where you can consolidate suppliers.

Narrow down suppliers to a few hotels or other suppliers that can solve for your company's travel and meeting needs. Show suppliers your past spend and discuss the potential for more business with a combined travel and meetings contract. Keep in mind:

- Hotels may be willing to negotiate when they see your numbers on past bookings.
- They may also be agreeable when there's a single form of payment.
- Integrated contracts for smaller meetings and transient travel may be easier to negotiate.

Tip: A travel management company (TMC) with supplier relationships can be a key enabler of integrated contract negotiations.

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3. Gather support for an integrated travel and meetings program.

Get buy-in from senior leaders in finance, procurement, and sourcing as well as travel and meetings. Communicate the potential benefits of this joint approach such as:

- Increased savings and better contract terms.
- Stronger oversight of travelers to meet duty of care requirements.
- Greater clarity and consistencies on travel and meetings spend.

Tip: Alignment from senior leaders can increase the likelihood of employee compliance.

4. Have your legal department create a combined travel and meetings contract.

While contractual language is dependent on your company's needs, here are some general items to include:

- Service level agreements.
- Branding.
- Attrition and cancellations.
- Audiovisual needs.
- Food and beverage.

Tip: Large events may require a separate contract from smaller meetings.

5. Appoint a team to manage travel and meetings and draft a policy.

Assign a lead to oversee your travel and meetings program and appoint regional leads as needed. Have the team draft and oversee a travel and meetings policy that covers:

- All company-approved vendors and travel and meetings suppliers (e.g. airlines, hotels, venues, ground transportation providers).

- The booking channels employees are required to use.
- Guidelines on spend policy
 - Be specific about spend limits and approval processes involving administrative assistants and managers.

Tip: An experienced TMC can create an effective policy, positioning your company for success.

6. Communicate the importance of following the policy.

Relay the benefits of a unified travel and meetings program to all employees via email, intranet, and social channels. Include messages like:

- “We can oversee your well-being when you use approved providers and book all travel and meetings through our company's booking channels.”
- “Booking all travel and meetings within the guidelines of our policy helps us meet our contractual agreements and achieve our savings goals.”

Tip: Incentivizing employees with a company perk or gift card can help drive positive outcomes.



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