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Booking Business Travel via the Internet

Portland, Oregon – March 20, 2008 – For the past seven years Topaz International has conducted comparative studies of airfares between actual corporate travel management company booked itineraries and various public internet sites. By exactly replicating business trips on public booking sites, like Orbitz, Expedia, Travelocity, and airline direct websites, we are able to compare low fare performance. The results from 2007 found that business travel itineraries booked by a designated corporate travel management company averaged \$56 less than the exact same itinerary booked on a public internet site.

	Agency Fare Equal or Lower	Agency Fare Higher	Average Agency Fare	Average Internet Fare	Difference
2001	93.26%	6.74%	\$458	\$629	\$171
2002	91.13%	8.87%	\$594	\$748	\$154
2003	91.02%	8.98%	\$503	\$572	\$69
2004	93.57%	6.43%	\$478	\$558	\$80
2005	93.29%	6.71%	\$427	\$483	\$56
2006	94.03%	5.97%	\$508	\$583	\$75
2007	94.85%	5.15%	\$442	\$498	\$56

Further evaluations were conducted to determine if the volumes of corporate airfare spend influenced the results. In the charts below, smaller corporations generally have lower priced airline tickets when compared to corporations with larger volumes of air spend. However, larger corporations are saving more per ticket than some of their smaller counterparts, most likely because of the greater discounts obtained due to their high travel volume.

2007	Agency Fare Lower	Agency Fare Equal	Agency Fare Higher	Average Agency Fare	Average Internet Fare	Difference
Less than \$20M	79.06%	15.50%	5.44%	\$428	\$474	\$46
\$20M to \$99M	82.54%	11.11%	6.35%	\$426	\$490	\$64
\$100M and Greater	84.77%	11.24%	3.99%	\$484	\$562	\$78

2006	Agency Fare Lower	Agency Fare Equal	Agency Fare Higher	Average Agency Fare	Average Internet Fare	Difference
Less than \$20M	77.74%	17.34%	4.92%	\$436	\$473	\$37
\$20M to \$99M	80.29%	10.03%	9.68%	\$667	\$820	\$153
\$100M and Greater	90.53%	5.34%	4.13%	\$556	\$663	\$107

2005	Agency Fare Lower	Agency Fare Equal	Agency Fare Higher	Average Agency Fare	Average Internet Fare	Difference
Less than \$20M	83.13%	11.02%	5.8%	\$434	\$490	\$56
\$20M to \$99M	69.52%	22.80%	7.68%	\$416	\$464	\$48
\$100M and Greater	73.02%	18.2%	8.73%	\$431	\$504	\$73

2004	Agency Fare Lower	Agency Fare Equal	Agency Fare Higher	Average Agency Fare	Average Internet Fare	Difference
Less than \$20M	64.44%	28.32%	7.24%	\$501	\$574	\$73
\$20M to \$99M	85.63%	6.13%	8.24%	\$451	\$515	\$64
\$100M and Greater	97.01%	0.08%	2.91%	\$514	\$665	\$151

2003	Agency Fare Lower	Agency Fare Equal	Agency Fare Higher	Average Agency Fare	Average Internet Fare	Difference
Less than \$20M	64.14%	25.49%	10.37%	\$522	\$554	\$32
\$20M to \$99M	80.09%	11.82%	8.09%	\$490	\$602	\$112
\$100M and Greater	95.01%	0.35%	4.64%	\$445	\$581	\$136

“What does this all mean and is it really relevant in our marketplace” said Bradley Seitz, President and CEO of Topaz International. “The ongoing game of finding the lowest airfares continues to be a major focus of travel managers all over the globe. They are demanding services that will find the lowest fares for their corporate travelers, and if the travel management companies do not find them, the travelers certainly will. Distribution of all travel products continues to be fragmented and a great cause for headaches all over the world. Full content is not full content, availability is not consistent, and as I have said in the past, the overriding desire of the airlines is to control and price their product where they can obtain the most value.”

“The complexity of our business remains to this day. These studies continue to show that while the differences are less than in the past, they still exist and it should be the goal of all leaders to have processes in place to locate and book the lowest alternatives, and validate that their service providers are giving the levels of contracted offerings that have been agreed to.”

Topaz International will continue to conduct these independent studies where we compare data between traditional booking sources and various internet sources, giving corporations the ability to measure the performance of their travel program against alternative distribution channels.

About TOPAZ International

Topaz International provides strategic support to the corporate travel management professional. With 30 years of experience analyzing travel related expenditures, Topaz is a world leader in airfare & hotel auditing, providing benchmark information and consultancy services to improve the delivery of corporate travel services. Supporting travel managers, buyers and agencies, Topaz helps improve performance and facilitate cost savings.

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