

## **CWT Issues Research Showing Companies Can Save 10-25% by Applying Best Practices to Meetings & Event Management**

**PARIS, June 24, 2010** — Companies can save on average 10 percent to 25 percent of their Meetings and Events (M&E) spend when they apply best practices to policy and compliance, sourcing, and processes, according to the latest in-depth study from the CWT Travel Management Institute, the research arm of Carlson Wagonlit Travel (CWT), a global leader specializing in business travel management. *Meetings and Events: Where Savings Meet Success* was conducted in collaboration with CWT's M&E technology partner StarCite.

The study also estimates that M&E spend represents on average 0.5 percent to 1.5 percent of companies' revenues, depending on the business sector, or 35 percent to 60 percent of the amount they spend separately on transient business travel. Despite the significant expenditure, many companies do not have an M&E strategy or the policies and procedures needed to optimize their spend and best serve their business objectives. The study identifies eight steps companies can take to maximize M&E management.

According to Christophe Renard, vice president corporate marketing and business intelligence for CWT, effective M&E management brings more than cost savings: "Companies with a high-performing meeting and events program do not seek savings at any price. Instead, they look for a real return on their investment. Their decisions are based on business objectives and they tend to involve stakeholders across the organization, including procurement, to ensure they are taking a balanced approach."

### **Three main levers drive savings**

Savings and return on M&E investment come from three main areas. When coupled with full support from senior management and a well-designed change management program, results are enhanced. Companies with an effectively managed M&E program focus on:

- **Policy and compliance.** Creating or improving a companywide M&E policy and enforcing compliance across the organization are essential.
- **Sourcing.** Working with professional sourcing agencies, selecting a limited number of preferred suppliers for accommodations and venues, enforcing the use of these suppliers, defining standard terms and conditions, and using group airfares drive performance.
- **Optimized processes.** The most successful M&E programs benefit from dedicated technology for online registration as well as strategic meetings management solutions.

### **Eight steps to maximize M&E management**

As strategic M&E management becomes an increasingly important priority for many companies, CWT recommends an eight-step approach to optimize savings and return on investment:

- **Analyze spend and set up the right M&E organization.** Capturing and tracking data companywide and across all categories of M&E spend enables companies to effectively estimate their total costs. A centralized organization boosts efficiency.

- **Design an M&E strategy and policy.** A well-defined M&E policy that supports strategic objectives stipulates precise rules, standard contract terms and specific processes for all to follow.
- **Create an annual M&E budget and events calendar.** This enables organizations to make the best use of their resources, including unused meeting space from cancellations, and provides greater visibility for supplier negotiations.
- **Select and negotiate with suppliers.** Working with preferred M&E agencies, logistics partners and technology providers enables companies to leverage outside expertise while reducing costs. Many companies also work with a limited number of preferred hotels and airlines from their business travel program to drive synergies.
- **Establish a formal planning process.** Clearly defined business objectives, a formal approval process, advance planning, well-chosen destinations, and out-sourcing drive consistency and compliance across the organization and help ensure return on investment.
- **Implement efficient attendee registration.** Replacing manual registration processes with technology saves time, enhances coordination and improves data quality for M&E organizers and attendees. Furthermore, strategic meetings management software provides a more complete solution for processes, sourcing and spend management.
- **Optimize payment and reimbursement.** Using a single mode of payment such as a corporate meeting card for supplier costs and a corporate credit card for attendees' reimbursable expenses enables companies to better manage spend data and drive compliance with the M&E program.
- **Evaluate M&E performance and policy compliance.** Standardized performance indicators that measure satisfaction, savings, supplier performance and compliance enable companies to check their performance against objectives, identify areas for improvement and ensure continuous progress.

Mr. Renard acknowledged that organizations recovering from the economic crisis are reinvesting in the US\$650 billion global M&E market but their priorities have evolved: "Many of CWT's clients are rethinking their approach to meetings and events and are asking us to help them apply the same strategic principles we use for effective business travel management. As a result, our dedicated meetings and events specialists analyze clients' spend, assess their programs, help them define and implement a companywide strategy, and manage sourcing, all of which saves them money while supporting their business plans. With more than 800 M&E employees worldwide, CWT also provides a full range of logistical and creative services to help clients make the most of their M&E program."

Kevin Young, StarCite Senior Vice President, Worldwide Marketing and Partner Management, added: "Process automation helps companies save time and money and enjoy greater visibility over their meetings and events. With StarCite's enterprise platform and services, companies can effectively deploy a strategic meetings management program using online meeting requests and approval routing; a supplier database for easier, more cost-effective sourcing; and attendee management solutions for online registration and electronic updates. From start to finish, there is greater

compliance and control as well as enhanced satisfaction for attendees and M&E professionals.”

### **Research methodology**

Research was conducted between September 2009 and March 2010 and several techniques were used:

- **Surveys** on M&E program optimization involving 222 M&E planners and requestors in 15 countries, as well as an online survey of attendee preferences and registration behavior involving 2,360 respondents from six countries
- **In-depth interviews** with more than 40 M&E experts worldwide
- **Quantitative analysis** of CWT clients’ M&E spend, as well as an analysis of potential savings using a CWT-designed model and a proprietary model from StarCite known as *Strategic Value Analysis*
- **Case studies** of CWT clients

The complete report *Meetings and Events: Where Savings Meet Success* is available at [http://www.carlsonwagonlit.com/en/global/tmi/etm/meetings\\_and\\_events.html?src=EMO7010206](http://www.carlsonwagonlit.com/en/global/tmi/etm/meetings_and_events.html?src=EMO7010206).

### **About Carlson Wagonlit Travel**

Carlson Wagonlit Travel (CWT) is a global leader specializing in business travel management. Present in more than 150 countries, CWT serves companies of all sizes, as well as government institutions and non-governmental organizations. By leveraging both the expertise of its people and leading-edge technology, CWT helps clients derive the greatest value from their travel program in terms of savings, service, security and sustainability. The company is also committed to providing best-in-class service and assistance to travelers. CWT services and solutions comprise four lines of business: Traveler & Transaction Services, Program Optimization, Safety & Security, and Meetings & Events. In 2009, sales volume for wholly owned operations and joint ventures totaled US\$21.4 billion. For more information, please visit our global Website at [www.carlsonwagonlit.com](http://www.carlsonwagonlit.com).

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