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CTCs, CTMs sell more, earn more money, stay in industry longer – CITC survey

TORONTO — Certified Travel Counsellors and Certified Travel Managers sell more and make more than their colleagues who have not attained those designations.

This is the finding of the CITC National Survey on the value of the professional designation. Some 664 travel professionals took part in the survey, although not all answered every question.

The results mirrored many of the conclusions arrived at by The Travel Institute (ICTA) in the U.S.

On average CTCs earn \$34,600 per year compared with non-CTCs who earn, on average, \$31,812 per year. In the survey, 36% of CTCs and CTMs earned \$40,000 or more last year, compared with 27% for non-CTCs.

In addition, CTCs and CTMs reach managerial positions more than

non-CTCs. Some 43% of CTCs/CTMs held positions of manager or owner, compared with 32% for non-CTCs.

CTCs and CTMs also generate more sales than non-CTCs, according to the survey, generating on average \$715,500 last year, compared with non-CTCs at \$705,400 (averages based on a low of \$200,000 and a high of \$2 million). Some 55% of CTCs generated \$500,000 or more in sales, compared with 48% for non-CTCs.

CTCs/CTMs stay in the travel industry on average 27.6 years compared with 23.1 years for non-CTCs.

Steve Gillick, president and COO of the Canadian Institute of Travel Counsellors, said that “travel agency owners and managers who wish to maximize their bottom line should take note of the results. Designated travel professionals make a quantifi-

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able impact on the industry. Rather than cutting back on professional development, now is the time to review your agency corporate culture and include support of the CTC and CTM designations.”

Steve Crowhurst CTC, president of SMP Training, who reviewed the preliminary survey results, noted that “the Return on Investment on an employee should be three to four times the salary. The figures indicate that agency revenue is down—which again emphasizes the need for agencies to train their staff.”

Gillick added that more and more consumers are using CITC’s National Directory of Certified Travel

Counsellors to find the top professionals in their neighbourhood.

“The growing popularity of The Inside Track, which is our free consumer newsletter, and the recent move by the Canadian Tourism Commission to link consumers to the National Directory, has given travellers a lot of needed confidence in the skills of CTCs and CTMs.”

Gillick said that by year-end The National Directory of Travel Professionals will also list the Specialist Qualifications of members.

Other survey results reveal that on the whole, travel counsellors are most concerned with: (ranked from most important to least important, based on the 10 available choices) 1 Erosion or reduction of commissions; 2 Low levels of compensation; 3 Online travel sales to consumers; 4 Bypass of suppliers; 5 Professional image of travel counsellors; 6 Job security; 7 Availability of reduced-rate travel benefits; 8 Supplier bankruptcy/financial instability; 9 Opportunities for professional advancement; 10 Quality and amount of available training.

Travel counsellors considered the most satisfying element of the job: (ranked from most important to least important, based on the 10 available choices) 1 Helping clients get the best value for their money; 2 Accomplishing detail work quickly and correctly; 3 Generating sales for the agency; 4 Helping clients make travel decisions; 5 Interacting with different customers; 6 The opportunity for personal travel; 7 Handling reservations and ticketing; 8 Working in a rapidly changing industry; 9 Participating in educational activities or events; 10 Working in a highly competitive industry.

Another finding showed that travel

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counsellors would recommend a career in travel, on average: Yes 59%, No 41%.

The CITC National Survey was conducted with the assistance of Travelweek. Christine Usvaltas CTC of Travel Cuts in Mississauga won the 15 day/14 night land only package on The Imperial Cities of Morocco, sponsored by Trek Holidays as an incentive to participate in the survey.

Sabre wants to end AC contract because it doesn't get all fares

TORONTO — Sabre wants out of its contract with Air Canada because it is forcing travel agents to book its lowest fares online by not making them available through the GDS.

In a notice of motion filed last week with Ontario's Superior Court of Justice, Sabre accused Air Canada, which was granted protection from creditors on April 1, of using its insolvency to "act with impunity and take unfair and improper advantage" of Sabre.

The GDS says that the airline

restricting access by Canadian consumers "to an entire array of fares and flights."

Not only is Sabre prevented from accessing fares and flights available to travel agents at Air Canada's own website, Air Canada is providing financial "cash rewards" of 9% to travel agents in Canada who book on the airline's site.

Air Canada said it had no comment because the matter is before the courts.

Joe Herzog, vice-president and general manager for Sabre's Canadian division, said, "We're asking the court to push us to mediation, or at least enable us to enforce our contract. We want to find a middle ground, because right now it's a lose-lose-lose situation, and who's caught in the middle? The travel agents."

More than a third of Air Canada's total ticket sales worldwide come through Sabre, he noted.

Sabre originally signed an agreement with Air Canada in 1990 which was amended the next year and provides for either company to quit the contract on 30 days notice.

But Sabre can't use this provision at the moment because Air Canada is now under the Companies Creditors' Arrangement Act.


Sabre, which operates Travelocity.com, the second-largest online-travel agency, and GetThere, a provider of web-based travel reservations for corporations, estimates the airline's actions will cost it 1.2 million bookings a year, or about US\$5.27 million.

Sabre last year recorded a \$214.1 million profit on revenue of \$2.06 billion.

Sabre also powers Destina, and according to Herzog, the GDS has "a good relationship with Destina... [we] have been their booking engine through other difficult times. Hopefully this one will be no different."

U.S. postpones new passport rules for Visa Waiver countries until Oct. 24, 2004

WASHINGTON — Any of your clients who are citizens of many of the 27 countries in the U.S. Visa Waiver Program will now have until Oct. 24, 2004 to get machine readable passports to enter the U.S. without a visa.



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