

[Home](#) > [Operations](#) > [Business Travel](#) > **Finding and Using a Business Travel Agency**

Featured Vendor

[Group Hotel Rates and Group Travel by HotelPlanner.com](#)

Did you lock in a group rate for your upcoming event? We specialize in business meetings, conferences, weddings, reunions, sports teams or any group.

[Group Hotel Rates](#) | [Hotel Discounts](#) | [Group Travel](#) | [Meeting Planner](#)
[HotelPlanner.com](#)



Work.com How-to Guides:

✓ **Learn** What you need to know.

✓ **Discover** the Web's best business solutions.

✓ **Share** your expertise.

[Learn More](#)



Guide to Finding and Using a Business Travel Agency

The key is to find an agency that saves you both time and money.

By [Betty W. Stark](#)

[Email](#) [Save](#) [Print](#) [Link here](#) [del.icio.us](#) [Add to digg](#)

The problem with booking business travel is that there are too many choices — way too many choices. Bottom line, how can you be sure that you're getting the best airfare, the lowest hotel rate, or the cheapest rental car?

Should you book your own travel on the internet? It's handy, available 24/7, but who do you call if you have a problem when you're on the road? Many small business owners are discovering that is more efficient — and perhaps cheaper in the long run — to have a travel professional navigate the maze of travel options. A good business travel agent can quickly search for low fares and rates. A very good one will go the extra mile and become your personal travel assistant and advocate.

There are three things to consider when selecting an agency:

1. Look for an agency that knows business travel, not just "travel in general"
2. Reservation technology should be advanced, fast, and comprehensive
3. Travel agent skills and customer service should be top-of-the-line

Action Steps

The best contacts and resources to help you get it done

✓ Check professional credentials

The largest travel agent organization in the world is ASTA (American Society of Travel Agents). The NBTA (National Business Travel Association) includes travel management companies among its members.

I recommend: At [NBTA's](#) Web site, look for business travel agencies among the state-by-state list of Allied Members. Check for agent/owner credentials like CTC (Certified Travel Counselor) and CTIE (Certified Travel Industry Executive) conferred by [The Travel Institute](#).

✓ Ask about agency technology

Find an agency with a reservation system that scans ALL fare databases including Web sites. Ask about enhancements like "best fare search," consortium hotel and rental car programs, fare checker, seat checker, unused ticket management and an online booking program. Do they have accounting and reporting technology that tracks travel expenditures and an online booking program you can access 24/7?

I recommend: The major GDS (global distribution systems) are [Galileo](#), [Sabre](#) and [Worldspan](#). Most agencies will have one, large agencies more than one.

✓ Bricks-and-mortar vs. online business travel agencies

Companies like CWT (Carlson Wagonlit Travel) and American Express Travel have a large network of local offices under a national or global corporate umbrella. Online agencies like Travelocity,

Supremely
Useful
9.8
out of 10

[Rate This Guide](#)

[Add Your Comments](#)

Related Guides

- [Guide to Best Web Sites for Business Travel](#)
- [Guide to Buying Overseas](#)
- [Guide to Frequent-Travel Programs for Small Business](#)
- [Guide to Saving Money on Your Business Travel](#)
- [Guide to Selling Overseas](#)
- [Guide to Tax Deductions for Business Travel](#)
- [Guide to Traveling Smart](#)
- [Guide to Writing a Travel Policy for your Business](#)
- **Browse All**

Related Topics

- [Business Taxes](#)
- [Business Travel](#)
- [Company Policies](#)
- [Consultants](#)
- [Cutting Costs](#)
- [International Business](#)
- [Internet Basics](#)
- [Trade Shows](#)
- **Browse All**

Featured Vendors

Expedia and Orbitz offer as much or more technology than traditional agencies, with varying levels of personal service.

I recommend: Check out traditional managed business travel programs CWT ([Carlson Wagonlit Travel](#)) and [American Express](#), and online programs [Travelocity Business](#), [Expedia Corporate Travel](#), and [Orbitz for Business](#).

Tips & Tactics

Helpful advice for making the most of this Guide

- Travel agencies charge service fees. Ask for a complete list upfront.
- Resist aligning with a travel agent just because he/she is a personal or family friend. The key is finding a business travel agent.
- Ask about 24-hour service and an after-hours 800 number. Most business agencies offer this.
- Make sure you have a computer profile in the agency's reservation system; it's a big timesaver.
- You should have a travel policy in place for your traveling staff. Ask your agency for examples and help developing one.
- Ask how you can benefit from the agency's vendor relationships with airlines, hotels and rental car companies.

Featured Vendors

[Group Hotel Rates and Group Travel by HotelPlanner.com](#)

Did you lock in a group rate for your upcoming event? We specialize in business meetings, conferences, weddings, reunions, sports teams or any group.

[Group Hotel Rates](#) | [Hotel Discounts](#) | [Group Travel](#) | [Meeting Planner](#)
[HotelPlanner.com](#)

[Hoover's: Travel Agencies](#)

Provides in-depth business and public/private company information, including profiles, industry overviews, financials, officers, competitors and news.

[www.hoovers.com](#)

[Travel Agencies: HotelReservations.com](#)

Discounts up to 70% on Hotels, Motels, Resort Reservations. Search hotels by Price, distance & star rating. Book online OR call 1-800-447-4136

[HotelReservations.com](#)

[MasterCard: Business Travel](#)

Offers a range of credit cards specifically designed for the unique needs of corporations, including purchasing oversight and expense management.

[www.mastercardbusiness.com](#)



Recommended Solution Providers

[Back to top](#)

[AllBusiness.com: Travel Agencies](#)

Directory listing of international travel agents.

[Abacus Travel](#)

Corporate travel management company and business travel agency.

[Boskov's Business Travel](#)

Business travel management company.

[Travel Institute: Find a Travel Professional](#)

Search for a certified travel professional or specialist by city, state, zip code, agent name, or desired destination

[American Express Travel Specialists](#)

Search for a travel specialist by interest or destination.

[Stevens Travel Management](#)

Independent travel management company for small and mid-size corporations.

[GTI Carlson Wagonlit Travel](#)

Corporate travel program management services.

[Mastercard: Business Tr](#)

Offers a range of credit cards specifically designed for the unique needs of small businesses.

[www.mastercard.com](#)

[Marriott Hotels: Business Travel Deals](#)

Save 5% on business travel when you book Marriott with your American Express® Business Card. Learn more at [marriott.com/opensavings](#)

[Enterprise Rent-A-Car: Travel and Tourism](#)

Great cars, low rates and free pickup. Worldwide locations offering airport rentals, vans, trucks, car rentals and long-term rentals.

[www.enterprise.com](#)

[Business Travel Expense Reports: Concur Technologies](#)

Lower travel and booking costs with our on-demand travel management service. View a webinar or get your free white paper now!

[www.concur.com](#)

[Franchise Opportunities | Wyndham Worldwide](#)

Official franchising site for Ram, Wingate, Howard Johnson, Super 8, Travelodge, Days Inn, Baymont and more. Free investor information.

[www.hf.wyndhamworldwide.com](#)

[Hotwire: Travel in Hawaii](#)

Traveling for pleasure? Flexible dates? Find airline, hotel and rental car deals you won't see anywhere else.

[www.hotwire.com](#)

[Travel Agency Software Directory](#)

Compare travel agency software using Capterra's free, comprehensive directory.

[www.capterra.com](#)

[ExpenseWire: Travel Expense Management](#)

Expense Management 2.0. True demand expense management. Advanced features, 30 days free trial.

[www.expensewire.com](#)

[Travel Franchises For Sale | BizBuySell](#)

Search more than 41,000 Franchises and find a Travel Franchise or other Franchise for sale.

[www.BizBuySell.com](#)

[Travel Franchise](#)

Hundreds of franchises in the United States. Find your business opportunity.

[www.FranchiseGator.com](#)

[Garber Travel](#)

Corporate travel management company.

[Travel Company: TTC Global Network](#)

Independent global business travel management network.

[VTS Travel Direct](#)

Corporate travel management.

[GlobalStar Travel Management](#)

Partnership of leading travel management companies.



Best Sites to Learn More

[Back to top](#)

[National Association of Commissioned Travel Agents \(NACTA\)](#)

Association for independent travel agents, home based travel agents and outside sales travel agents.

[TIA: Travel Industry Association of America](#)

Trade association of the travel industry.

[Travel Institute](#)

Community of knowledge and insight for all travel professionals with information and resources for travelers.

[American Express Business Travel](#)

Small business travel solutions.

[NBTA: National Business Travel Association](#)

Organization of the business travel management community.

[askBTE.com: Business Travel Executive](#)

Independent informational resources for managed travel professionals.

[BTNonline.com: Business Travel News](#)

News and research for corporate travel managers.

[Business to Business Travel North America News: Travel Agents](#)

Editorial archive of corporate news and information about travel agents and their services.



Best Blogs and Forums

[Back to top](#)

[Inc.com: Business Travel Forum](#)

Business owners, experts, and editors discussing tips for traveling.

[AllBusiness.com: Business Travel Blog](#)

News, information, resources and reviews.

[TravelPost.com: Business Travel Archive](#)

Travel advice, tips and ideas.



Comments

[Back to top](#)

[Add Your Comments](#)

Email Save Print Link here del.icio.us Add to digg

Is any content on this page inappropriate? To let us know, please [click here](#).