

TRAVELLERS CHOICE DEALS IN SUCCESS

THE exclusive partnership between Travellers Choice and “deals provider” TripADeal continues to go from strength to strength, and has been a key driver in attracting new members to the cooperative, according to MD Christian Hunter. Launched in late 2017, the arrangement has also seen strong results for agencies to embrace the platform, exemplified by Brisbane-based Travellers Choice member Ucango Travel & Cruise, which last month became the first

agency to surpass one million dollars in annual TripADeal bookings.

Hunter told *travelBulletin* sales were increasing month-on-month, with members giving great feedback on TripADeal which had been very proactive in working with the agents. “The bundled offers provided through TripADeal are perfect for database marketing, meaning agents are able to attract new bookings and opportunities for add-on sales,” he said. And as these

clients see the service and expertise provided by the agent, many return and make repeat bookings of other products. “Our agents end up with new customers they would otherwise never have come across,” Hunter added.

He said the fact that TripADeal is ATAS-accredited was also a key benefit. Travellers Choice has been highly supportive of the AFTA accreditation scheme, and requires all members to be part of the program – not

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Travellers Choice



Travellers Choice's Justin Michael, Robyn Mitchell, Trent Bartlet, Christian Hunter and Nicola Strudwick.

just to ensure their financial stability but also as a key differentiator and marketing advantage. ATAS accreditation is also highly relevant to the new TC Pay payments platform, launched at the Travellers Choice conference late last year in partnership with Zenith Payments. TC Pay is aligned with the AFTA Chargeback Scheme (ACS), protecting agents from chargebacks when their clients make bookings with any ATAS-accredited supplier. The comprehensive financial solution is another key benefit of Travellers Choice membership, Hunter noted, and as well as simplifying credit card processing with no monthly fees, also includes a B2B payment portal enabling agencies to earn thousands Qantas points on their own regular bill payments.

Hunter said key initiatives for Travellers Choice in the last few months had included gaining a better understanding of member businesses so the group can continue

to offer highly relevant services and membership benefits. “We have found that members who are most engaged with our offerings are more likely to be successful – we want to broaden our services to meet any gaps,” he said. Many of the organisation’s benefits are available at no extra cost as part of the regular membership fee, including comprehensive marketing support, training and in-house digital expertise.

Marketing Manager Robyn Mitchell highlighted the wide range of options offered by her team. “We support our members across the full extent of their businesses, giving support in areas like graphic design, signage, social media and more,” she said. Three recent webinars for members, part of a newly introduced ongoing program to boost agent skills, have focused on a “new year, new marketing,” better engaging with CLIA

cruise training, and a “Facebook Page Health Check” which have been very well received, Mitchell added. “We’re now basically a mini-marketing agency for our travel agency members, supporting them across the full extent of their businesses”.

Also new to the Travellers Choice offering is the Wetu Itinerary Builder, allowing agents to quickly create “alluring, content-rich, interactive travel itineraries that are proven to increase sales conversion rates”.

All of these benefits are on top of the financial advantages of Travellers Choice membership, with its mutual structure seeing members share in rebates and receive an annual dividend, Hunter noted. The group is actively recruiting new member-shareholders, with a dedicated website outlining Travellers Choice’s features and benefits at www.travelagentschoice.com.au.