

PRESS RELEASE

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Travel Counsellors sees sales increase by 37% in March

Travel Counsellors has seen sales increase by over a third (37%) in March. For the period March 1-31 sales increased by 37% to £14.8million, compared to £10.8million for the same period last year.

The company's average booking price during the month increased by 3% from £1,411 to £1,455; while bookings overall increased by a third (33%) and passenger numbers by 22%.

During the first three months of the year (Jan 1- March 31) Travel Counsellors has seen sales increase by over a quarter (26%), with commissions increasing by 31%. Since the start of the year the average booking price has increased by 4% from £1,514 to £1,582; while bookings overall increased by 20% and passenger numbers by 14%. Phenix, the company's dynamic packaging system, accounted for 10% of all bookings during the first three months of the year.

Every month an average of 10 experienced travel consultants decide to leave the high street to join Travel Counsellors. Travel Counsellors has increased its number of consultants in the UK and Ireland from 557 at the beginning of January to 588 at the end of March. Over the past 12 months (April 2005 – end March 2006) Travel Counsellors has increased its total number of consultants by 29% from 461 to 588 and it expects the same level of growth this year. Its retention level remains among the highest in the industry at 87%, and Travel Counsellors aims to increase this still further.

Commenting on the company's performance, managing director Steve Byrne said: "We are doing extremely well – not only in terms of sales, but also in encouraging more experienced travel consultants to leave the high street and join us. But we cannot afford to be complacent, we have to keep improving and moving forward. It is our responsibility to do everything we can to enable our Travel Counsellors to be even more successful and grow their business, and to continue to recruit the very best travel agents. "

Mr Byrne added; "We already have so much that no other homeworking company can offer but we are not going to stand still. For experienced travel consultants looking to be the best they can be, and who want to give themselves the best possible chance of success working from home, there is no better company for them."

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EDITOR'S NOTES: Travel Counsellors PLC is one of the UK's largest independent travel companies with turnover at the end of its last financial year (Oct 312005) of £150 million, a 17% increase year on year. Founded by chairman David Speakman in 1994 it currently has over 588 travel consultants in the UK and Ireland who work from home with the support of over 110 staff at the company's head office in Bolton, Greater Manchester. During 2005 the company expanded into Southern Ireland where it now has 18 consultants and the Netherlands, where it has seven consultants to date. Travel Counsellors places all customer money in a Trust account, administered by the Barclays Bank Trust Company, which guarantees a 100% refund in the event that a supplier collapses. Travel Counsellors was the winner of the prestigious Queen's Award for Enterprise in 2003 and the winner of the technology in business category of the 2005 CBI Growing Business Awards.

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