



PRESS RELEASE
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Travel Counsellors sees December sales surge

Travel Counsellors has reported booming sales over the festive period, with worldwide sales in December up by 40% compared to the previous year, reaching £10 million.

The company's UK sales for this month are up by 25% compared to 2008, and 15% compared to figures from 2007. It has also seen a surge in late bookings for the Christmas period (19 – 31 December), with a 29% increase in people booking throughout the months of September to November to spend the festive season abroad compared to the same period last year.

Travel Counsellors Managing Director Steve Byrne comments; "We have seen a dramatic increase in sales in December as people look ahead of the doom and gloom and decide its time to look forward to their break for next year. We have also seen late bookings over the Christmas season rise, despite the many events taking place within the industry at the moment. These are all very promising signs and show our focus on customer service and providing unique added value, such as that of our own financial trust, are ensuring our sales remain strong and our customers are coming back to us."

The company has seen a rise in popularity for medium and long haul travel amongst its customers with many travellers looking to escape the euro zone and get better value for money. Egypt is the number one holiday destination over the Christmas period, knocking Tenerife off the top spot. Sydney has also come in as the third most popular destination compared to only being number six the previous year.

Travel Counsellors expects its strong sales to continue, with overall sales so far this financial year up by 50% from 19.7 million to £30 million. The company has seen phenomenal sales in its overseas operations, accounting for 21% of the company's revenue for the last financial year (ending Oct 31 2009) of £255 million, with the company forecasting this to rise to 30% for 2010 and 35% for 2011. Already overseas sales for this financial year are up from £3.6 million to £8 million.

Byrne adds; "We are experiencing impressive growth despite the current economic downturn and the many failures within the industry, such as the recent collapses of Globespan and Allbury Travel. We are proud that we can offer the reassurance to our customers that unlike ABTA agents and other travel agents we can financially protect all component parts or anything that the customer buys from us through our own Financial Trust, which is a reassuring guarantee in what has become a minefield within the travel industry. This combined with the fact that we support our growing family of 1,100 plus agents in all areas of their businesses so that they can focus solely on their customers is proving a winning formula and we are looking into 2010 with extreme positivity and optimism."

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About Travel Counsellors: Travel Counsellors is the world's largest home-based travel company with turnover at the end of its last financial year (Oct 31 2009) of £255 million. Founded in 1994 it currently has over 1,100 travel consultants who work from home with the support of over 170 staff at the company's UK headquarters in Bolton and overseas offices. The company operates in the UK, Ireland, the Netherlands, South Africa, Australia, Canada and the US. In the UK, the Travel Counsellors Trust financially protects everything booked by the customer free of charge. Travel Counsellors was the winner of the prestigious Queen's Award for Enterprise in 2003-2008, the technology category of the 2005 CBI Growing Business Awards and was voted Travel Agent of the Year by readers of the Guardian, Observer and Guardian Unlimited in 2006, 2007 & 2009.



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