



## **PRESS RELEASE**

**23 April 2007**

### **Travel Counsellors Introduces Revolutionary Training Programme**

Travel Counsellors, the UK's leading independent travel agency, is launching thetravelacademy, the travel industry's most in-depth professional franchise training programme that allows people from different professions to run their own travel business. Through a dedicated 12 month training programme, with further ongoing support, people from outside the travel industry will be able to join the company as 'Travel Counsellor Associates'.

Building on the solid foundations of creating and managing travel businesses since 1994, the award winning Company will equip Associates with all the skills they need to make their business a success. They will be given the highest level of training and business development support including a two week residential course and home-based on-line tutorials, carried out by vastly experienced travel professionals at the Company's head office in Bolton. Modules include everything from acting out customer related scenarios and business planning, to seminars focusing on the power of marketing the business.

The Travel Counsellors are supported by over 140 staff in head office and have access to the best technology in the travel industry. Associates will be trained to use the Company's state of the art technology, from their dynamic packaging system Phenix, which allows Travel Counsellors to quickly and efficiently tailor make trips for their clients, to their own personalised web page and online training. In addition newly appointed Travel Counsellor Associates will receive a laptop and a full suite of marketing tools.

The Travel Counsellors franchise has been recognised by the British Franchise Association. Associates will invest a minimum fee of £10,000 to be trained and own their own franchise. This will cover all training and set-up costs and the right to use the TC trademark and brand. The Company can also offer preferential banking and lending terms to Travel Counsellor Franchisees through Barclays Bank. Newly appointed Travel Counsellor Associates will be in control of their own travel franchise, whilst receiving ongoing sales and marketing support from the Company's head office.

On completion of thetravelacademy programme the Associate can graduate as a Travel Counsellor and will then join an elite team of home-based Travel Counsellors across the UK, currently each with an average of 18 years experience in the travel industry. Travel Counsellors can expect a successful career with all the benefits and flexibility of running their own business from home, including an improved overall work life balance and greater job satisfaction. The Company's unique low cost business model also means that Counsellors are able to enter the travel market with little overhead costs whilst being in control of their own travel business.



Commenting on the launch of thetravelacademy, Travel Counsellors Managing Director Steve Byrne stated, "Travel Counsellors is extremely proud of the thetravelacademy. We have created a unique programme that offers the highest level of training to professionals from outside of the travel industry who have a passion for travel and customer service, equipping them with all the tools and skills they need to become the very best travel experts worldwide and join the cream of the travel industry. We believe these professionals will welcome the opportunity to work in the best industry in the world and participate in the most in-depth travel franchise programme in the UK."

The Company is one of the UK's largest independent travel companies, with over 740 Travel Counsellors working from home throughout the UK and also overseas, with the Company now operating in Ireland, the Netherlands, Germany and the US.

Travel Counsellors is the only travel agency to be the winner of the prestigious Queen's Award for Enterprise 2003-2008. Readers of the Guardian, Observer and Guardian Unlimited recently voted Travel Counsellors 2006 Travel Agent of the Year.

For more information visit [www.travelcounsellors.co.uk](http://www.travelcounsellors.co.uk)

## **ENDS**

**About Travel Counsellors:** Travel Counsellors PLC is one of the UK's largest independent travel companies with turnover at the end of its last financial year (Oct 31 2006) of £175 million, a 17% increase year on year. Founded in 1994 it currently has over 740 travel consultants who work from home with the support of over 140 staff at the company's head office in Bolton. In the UK Travel Counsellors places all customer money in a Trust account which guarantees a 100% refund in the event that a supplier collapses. The company also operates in Ireland, the Netherlands and the US. 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 2006 Travel Agent of the Year by readers of the Guardian, Observer and Guardian Unlimited. In 2007 the company won the Accenture Innovation Award and the Outstanding Achievement Award at the Travel Weekly Globe Awards.

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