



Press Release
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TV adventurer Charley Boorman takes a ride to Travel Counsellors

Actor and renowned explorer Charley Boorman's most recent trip was a little closer to home as he paid staff at Travel Counsellors' head office in Bolton a special visit this week.

Travel Counsellors recently won a competition with adventure holiday specialist Explore after its agents made over four bookings with the firm between 1st February and 31st March 2009. The company was entered into a final line-up of travel agencies, who then had to put their case in writing as to why they deserved a visit from Charley on his bike.

"We were thrilled when we were told we had won the competition," says Commercial Director Kirsten Hughes. "We are all big fans of Charley and really share his passion for travel. It was great to have him here at our head office in Bolton and to hear his tales of exploration and adventure."

Explore's Tanya Durkin, Head of Customer Services, said; "Travel Counsellors argued a very good case for Charley's visit, citing their extensive network of home-based agents, great communication media through their own TV show and magazine and an excitement in the office about the chance to meet Charley that we just couldn't ignore."

Travel Counsellors ran its own competition for agents who wanted to come to the company's head office and meet Charley. The agents who made the bookings with Explore were also invited to meet the man himself. This included Travel Counsellor Sue Clutterbuck, who made the trip from Surrey to meet her hero.

"It was a real privilege to meet Charley," says Sue. "He was such a lovely guy and I could listen to tales of his adventures and travels all day! It was well worth the trip up to Bolton and I found it very motivating and inspirational. I am really looking forward passing his feedback about the numerous destinations he has visited onto my customers!"

Altogether 15 Travel Counsellors from around the country travelled to Bolton to meet Charley who, after he arrived on his bike, signed numerous books and posed for photos with the delighted agents, as well as sharing stories about his travels with them. He also chatted with head office staff who support the agents and help them run their businesses.

Charley also starred on the company's live TCTV show, broadcast to the company's 1,000 plus agents worldwide from the company's in-house TV studio. He answered questions from the agent-filled audience as well as via e-mail from Travel Counsellors across the globe. He evoked lots of laughter as he shared his tales of adventure with best friend and fellow biker, actor Ewan McGregor, and even invited the company's agents in Australia to pay him a visit during his next venture in May when he will be travelling from Sydney to Japan for the sequel to his TV programme 'By Any Means', which will be screened on the BBC later this year.

Charley finished by telling the audience and watching agents what a special company he felt Travel Counsellors was; "I think the Travel Counsellors' concept is amazing and it is such a great way to work whilst allowing that all-important time for family."



Charley has recently completed his epic journey around the world for the BBC2 show 'By Any Means', and has also starred in Sky TV's 'Race to Dakar' and BBC series 'Long Way Round' and sequel 'Long Way Down', in which he travelled alongside Ewan McGregor on a 15,000 mile trip from John O'Groats to Cape Town.

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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 2008) of £245 million, a 16% increase year on year. Founded in 1994 it currently has over 1,000 travel consultants who work from home with the support of over 240 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 Travel Counsellors places all customer money in a Trust account 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 2003-2008, 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.

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