



## **PRESS RELEASE**

**9 June 2008**

### **Travel Counsellors launches in Canada**

Travel Counsellors, the world's largest home-based travel company, is delighted to announce its expansion into Canada.

The company has over 920 home-based agents and now operates in eight countries worldwide. Travel Counsellors is confident that its concept, which is based around providing customers with the very highest levels of personalised travel advice, will be a huge success in Canada.

Travel Counsellors has been planning its operations in Canada for the past six months. Headed by well known industry professional Lynda Sinclair, the operation's headquarters will be based in Toronto with home-based agents operating throughout the country using the company's award winning technology, adapted to the Canadian market.

The company's official launch into the country last week proved a huge success, with events in Vancouver and Toronto and presentations from Chairman David Speakman and Managing Director Steve Byrne, along with Lynda Sinclair revealing to the industry how she plans to continue Travel Counsellors' success in Canada.

Key representatives and suppliers from the Canadian travel industry were told how Travel Counsellors believes in giving the best, most professional travel consultants from both leisure and corporate travel backgrounds everything they need to build their own, successful travel business. All administration is taken care of so that individual Travel Counsellors are empowered to do what they do best – create the perfect travel itinerary for their clients.

Last year Travel Counsellors successfully launched in South Africa and Australia, with further operations in Ireland, the Netherlands, Germany and the USA. The company's overseas agents now account for over 20% of its consultants.

Group Managing Director Steve Byrne says: "We are delighted to launch Travel Counsellors in Canada and the response we have had so far from the industry has been fantastic. It has been part of our plans to launch in Canada for some time - we believe the market is ideal for us and we are looking forward to offering customers, agents and suppliers a new way of doing business. Our Travel Counsellors are successful because they are committed to building lasting relationships with their customers and we look forward to bringing all the tools, experience and technology that we have developed to Canada."

Counsellors in Canada will be able to sell a full range of travel products, benefiting from both the company's existing global travel deals and its new partnerships with key Canadian suppliers. Agents who join the company will benefit from a three day training course in Toronto which will include in-depth training on the company's technology. This includes its ground-breaking dynamic packaging system, Phenix, which allows its agents to quickly and easily search and compare different travel options for specific dates in a matter of minutes, and its innovative Contact Centre which allows each agent to create, administer and market to their own personal customer database.

Steve Byrne adds; "This expansion will hugely benefit our existing agents as we continue to build on our global buying power and are able to re-invest in the tools and technology to support our agents and enable them to grow their businesses. Our Travel Counsellors also have the reassurance that they are working within a large, innovative company that is constantly moving forward, whilst always maintaining the unique family ethos that makes Travel Counsellors so special."



Travel Counsellors has launched a Canadian recruitment website for experienced travel professionals interested in finding out more about working as Travel Counsellors in the country - [www.travelhomeworking.ca](http://www.travelhomeworking.ca). The company also unveiled its website designed specifically for Canadian consumers, which can be accessed at [www.travel-counsellors.ca](http://www.travel-counsellors.ca)

**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 2007) of £212 million, a 21% increase year on year. Founded in 1994 it currently has over 920 travel consultants who work from home with the support of over 200 staff at the company's head office in Bolton. The company operates in the UK, Ireland, the Netherlands, Germany, South Africa, Australia, the US and Canada. 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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