



**PRESS RELEASE**  
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**Travel Counsellors web-cam connects agents around the globe**

Travel Counsellors has introduced an innovative web conference system which enables its 800 plus home-based agents to communicate with each other around the globe via web-cam.

All the company's agents have been given web-cams free of charge, so they are able to utilise this new service when speaking to other Travel Counsellors and staff at the UK head office and worldwide operations in Ireland, the Netherlands, Germany, South Africa, Australia and the USA. Travel Counsellors are one of a select number of companies worldwide participating in the Rapid Deployment Program for Microsoft Office Communications Server 2007.

Office Communications Server 2007 has rich presence capabilities that enable agents to share information about their availability with other contacts, view other agents' availability, and communicate with them right away. Microsoft is using the award-winning independent travel company, renowned for its innovation within the industry, as a case study for this innovative way of allowing home-based agents to communicate.

Travel Counsellors can use this ground breaking technology to hold live conference calls of up to six people, with the screen displaying each person via voice activation.

Commenting on the web-cam system IT Director Paul Speakman said; "As the company continues to expand we want all our Travel Counsellors from around the globe to have access to the latest in communication technology. This system, which has been developed by Microsoft, uses rich presence to enable information workers to communicate with each other more easily and quickly in different locations and time zones."

Using these web-cams means that the company's home-based consultants have visual contact with each other, reflecting Travel Counsellors ethos of building a strong sense of community amongst its agents. Another big bonus is that these calls are free of charge, as opposed to conferencing via a regular phone line.

"The web cams are a fantastic tool for us," says Yorkshire based Travel Counsellor Michael Croft. "It means we can now have face to face contact with our colleagues and, when possible, our clients. Plus it costs us nothing! It's great to work with a company that's genuinely at the cutting edge of travel technology."

**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 800 travel consultants who work from home with the support of over 170 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, Germany, South Africa, Australia 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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