

Trends in Travel...What You Should Know

The number one trend in the travel and tourism industry today is a move toward greater opportunities in outside sales, as home-based agents and/or as independent contractors. Here's the scoop...

- More and more brick and mortar travel agencies are closing their storefront locations and the owners are taking their businesses back home.
- Due to ongoing economic stress, employees from many industries are seeking additional ways to supplement their income.
- Unemployed individuals are in search of job opportunities that are immediately available and offer convenient, flexible work schedules.
- The baby boomer are at or nearing the age of retirement. They are living longer and are increasingly savvy travelers, creating increased opportunities in the travel business. In addition, many retirees themselves are looking for challenges after leaving their "9 to 5" careers, and are realizing the incredible opportunities available to them in outside travel sales as independent contractors.
- In addition, outstanding associations are currently in place to assist the needs of the outside sales/home-based/independent contractor in the travel industry. In particular are two national organizations whose sole purpose is to provide support and guidance for these individuals: Outside Sales Support Network (OSSN) www.OSSN.com and the National Association of Commissioned Travel Agents (NACTA) www.NACTA.com.

Some of the many advantages of working in outside sales, or as a home-based agent and/or independent contractor include:

- Setting their work hours.
- Maintaining control over their selection of clients.
- Delegating work to assistants, as desired.
- Making great profits, due to the lack of overhead expenses.
- Receiving commissions and/or revenues based on productivity.
- Having the opportunity to simultaneously work for another organization.
- Many opportunities for training due to a flexible schedule.
- Planning group trips that allow independent agents to travel for **FREE!**

The second major trend in the travel industry today is "specialization," or targeting a niche within the industry. The possibilities are endless!

Examples of these career specializations might include focusing on:

- A certain destination – Italy, Japan, France, Ireland, India, Australia, Hawaii, etc.
- A type of activity – scuba diving, architectural tours, cooking tours, wine-tasting tours, following sports teams, golfing, etc.
- A portion of the population – physically challenged, gay and lesbian, senior citizens, families, etc.
- A specific type of travel – cruises, honeymoons, group travel, etc.