



Our Top 10 Travel Savings Tips to Take Away

Follow our top 10 tips to save money and make your travel budget go further.

1. Initiate a Travel Policy

Writing a travel policy is an essential first step for any organisation with regular travel requirements. Clearly set out guidelines around which airlines, cabin classes, ticket types and hotels your staff can book. Put steps in place so that exceptions can be tracked and justified. Once written, don't forget to communicate the policy - it may seem obvious, but if employees don't know about it or can't find it, they can't follow it. Ensure your staff understand the importance of following the policy and the wider benefits to your organisation.

It's also advisable to regularly review your policy. When projects change, your top destinations may change and it might be necessary to renegotiate route deals or preferred hotels. Your Account Manager will review your organisation's travel programme regularly & work with you to ensure you get the most out of your budget.

2. Find the best fares for each trip

Travel requirements usually differ from trip to trip. Sometimes a traveller is best served by the cheapest, most

restricted ticket, but if it's likely that plans will change, a more flexible ticket might work out better in the long run, saving you money on cancellation and amendment fees. Special flexible tickets exist for Humanitarian, Faith and Educational organisations which often provide the best of both worlds (low price and flexibility); work with a travel partner that provides access to these tickets as part of a wider fare choice.

3. Understand what you get for your money

Being charged separately for baggage, food and drink by airlines - a practice known as 'unbundling', is becoming more common place. Be conscious of this when looking for flights, as what on the surface seems like a great fare, may increase considerably during the buying process as non-inclusive items are added. Sometimes an 'all inclusive' ticket can provide best value, even if the initial fare is higher. When booking hotels, ensure you understand what payment method you're using. Some hotel rates can be pre-paid & some are to be paid on departure. Likewise, check what the rate includes- e.g. is it room only or B&B?



4. Book Earlier

It is proven that the smaller the gap between your booking date and travel date, the higher the price you pay. Whilst it's impossible to book all tickets weeks in advance as some last minute travel is unavoidable, work to extend the 'average' booking window across your organisation and you will save money. (Our analysis shows that airline ticket prices rise on average by £4 per day as cheaper tickets are sold).

Most Humanitarian/Academic airfares can be held up to 11 months in advance of travel, allowing you to take advantage of lower fares with no obligation. The same applies to domestic rail - fares are released by rail operators 12 weeks in advance of departure. Take advantage of these Apex fares. Eurostar and hotels also release their lowest rates first so it pays to book early when you can.

5. Measure your travel expense

Use management information reports (either internally or through a travel partner) to measure your travel expense. These reports will provide a window into travel patterns and booking behaviours, allowing you to identify where savings can be made. Use these reports to target savings and monitor success.

6. Educate your travellers

Work with your travelling employees to understand what drives their choices, and provide them with some simple tips on how to achieve the best value travel options for your organisation. There are some easy steps that will satisfy everyone and ultimately drive savings - for example, being flexible

with travel dates, even by a day or two can make a real difference, as can considering alternative airports. It is also worth joining corporate loyalty schemes offered by many airlines - benefits can include free flights and cashback.

7. Avoid peak travel periods

Avoiding the academic holiday period may seem like an obvious suggestion, but by booking your travel off-peak you can save significant amounts of money. Sometimes dates are not optional, but when they are (such as meetings), bear this in mind. Airfares can frequently be up to double the cost if travelling in peak season, as can rail tickets if travelling during peak hours. If hotel rates seem particularly high, check local events calendars or ask the hotel - there may be a big conference going on which is pushing up the prices.

8. Know when to use what booking method

Booking travel independently online can seem like a good idea, and can sometimes be the most effective way; but it can also cost you time and money. Simple point to point domestic journeys are usually straight forward to book on your own; however, when travelling internationally or on more complex itineraries, dealing with a specialist agent is always best. Why spend hours searching for fares when an agent can find them in minutes? What's more, self-booking tools offered directly by suppliers don't have access to the range of specialist fares you might be entitled to or offer additional benefits such as support in an emergency or the ability to pay by invoice.

9. Travelling in a Group?

If you are travelling in a group of 10 or more passengers, special group rates exist and can be negotiated directly with the airlines via your TMC's Groups Team. Group rates offer you the ability to pay a deposit and reserve seats up to 11 months in advance, only paying the balance and providing names 8 weeks before travel.

10. Work with experts in your sector

Either employ someone in your organisation, work with a consultant, or align yourself with a travel partner that understands your requirements and the market you operate in. A good travel provider will work with you to develop a strategy to save on your travel budget and add value through consultative processes.