

Case Study



This new travel program managed by JTB allowed Sojitz Corporation to reduce costs by 9%.

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JTB Business Travel Helps Sojitz Unlock Savings Plus Risk Management Benefits



In the 19th century, Japan became home to companies that dealt in a wide range of materials and products. Known as “sogo shosha,” many of these trading houses are still thriving in the 21st century.

Sojitz Corporation is one of these traditional trading companies still in operation. It works with major corporations like Boeing and Nike, and it employs about 40,000 people worldwide—including 1,000 team members in the Americas.

In 2013, Sojitz embarked on a project to unify all of its U.S.-based business units under a single travel policy and travel management company (TMC).

Searching for a TMC to Integrate With Concur

During this effort to bring all business units under one managed travel program, Sojitz selected Concur as its travel technology to manage expense. It then needed a TMC that could integrate with Concur while also providing a high level of customer service, attractive pricing and cost avoidance services.

“We reached out to JTB Business Travel because we knew that they were going to be able to integrate into the Concur platform in a way that allowed Sojitz to maximize content and pricing as the airlines were doing at the time,” said Maritza Diaz, Sojitz’s VP and general manager of human resources and general affairs.



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JTB Business Travel also offered a management model with zero fees rather than a transactional, fee-heavy model. “Our business units didn’t want to spend a lot of money when calling up the travel agent or a lot of money for online booking,” Diaz said.

The final decision on a TMC required consensus among all of Sojitz’s business units. Gaining consensus among so many different stakeholders can be difficult, especially at a Japanese company where consensus is highly valued. But the potential savings, negotiated rates and rebates available through a program managed by JTB became clear—which made getting consensus far easier.

JTB Business Travel Helps Sojitz Gain Internal Buy-In

The integration of JTB Business Travel and Concur went smoothly as Sojitz launched its new travel platform. The more challenging task would be getting policy compliance from traveling team members.

JTB partnered with Sojitz to sell the new travel program internally, providing materials and communications as needed. Much of the communication was face-to-face with high-volume travelers, as the team at JTB took a personal approach to sharing the new travel program’s benefits.

The internal sales pitch worked over time, especially as Sojitz’s travelers began to experience JTB’s services during the booking process and taking the actual trip. Sojitz’s travel management team kept a direct open line of communication with senior leaders at JTB so that feedback could be quickly sent and changes implemented as needed to ensure a high level of customer service.

Keeping Tabs on Global Travelers

Improved Risk Management has been one of the biggest benefits to emerge from Sojitz’s relationship with JTB. As a company with employees around the world, it’s important that Sojitz know exactly where its team members are located at any given moment.

Bringing all U.S.-based business units onto a single platform and one TMC has given Sojitz the visibility needed to properly manage risk and live up to its duty of care obligation to employees.

This visibility also allows JTB to provide effective Trip Disruption Assistance, whether a traveler’s flight has been canceled or a traveler’s suitcase has been stolen. No matter where Sojitz employees are located in the world, JTB Business Travel can provide immediate assistance.

Building on the Business Intelligence JTB Business Travel Provides

More than 5 years after choosing Concur as its travel technology and JTB Business Travel as its TMC, costs of running a managed travel program are more than 20% lower than with an alternate TMC. Sojitz also has access to data and business intelligence that it did not have before, allowing the company to better report on its travel spend and make changes to optimize its travel program.

“We get a lot of data each year, and we strategically meet internally every six months to look at the numbers and present to senior management,” Diaz said. “We’re now able to show the benefits of common services and use the data to help us stay on track.”