

Peer support a lifeline for SA ITCs

eTravel's 2026 vision –
a single platform

Envoyage – proactive
support during crises

Club Travel's digital
toolkit expands

Travel Counsellors invests
in AI-powered tech

XL – an eye on the future

Sure Travel –
independence+support

ITCs & homeworkers

ITCs and homeworkers continue to demonstrate remarkable resilience. In the current complex travel environment, success is shaped not only by expertise and adaptability, but also by strong connections into a community of colleagues.

Community – the key to sanity

KIRAN MOLLOY

THE COVID 19 pandemic and the years of flight disruptions that ensued proved to the trade the value of community networks.

South African travel advisers now tell *Travel News* that the Middle East conflict has shown the industry once again that when geopolitics upend supply chains, software might be important in troubleshooting and risk mitigation, but it's the community of industry peers that keeps agents sane.

Speaking to ITCs and homeworkers, *Travel News* found common ground when it came to how agents create communities of support and how they maintain connections to help them through the tough times.



Emilene Rangayah

"As an independent travel business owner working from home, there are days when the responsibility can feel overwhelming, especially during industry disruptions. When your clients are looking to you for answers and reassurance, you need a support system of your own," said **Emilene Rangayah**, Director of Emilene's Travel Services.

"Travel is more than my business, it's my passion. During difficult times, conversations with my community remind me why I chose this career. They keep me motivated, informed, and emotionally supported. Working from home doesn't mean working alone."

Channels

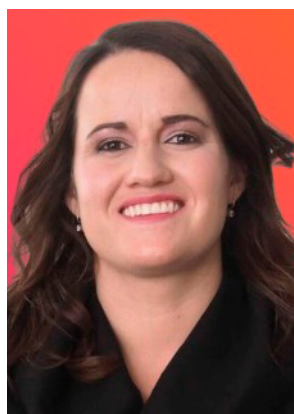
Agents use a variety of social media channels to stay up to date and in touch with their networks of colleagues and agent friends, including WhatsApp, Facebook, and internal host company channels. The rewards of feeling connected have become very important for many ITCs, contributing to their wellbeing while working from home.

"My phone is never far away, and WhatsApp has become my greatest source of connection. I'm part of several travel industry groups where agents and suppliers share updates, help each other solve problems, celebrate successes and sometimes simply remind one another that we're not facing these challenges alone," said Rangayah, adding that LinkedIn, supplier webinars, industry newsletters and Facebook travel groups also played a part.

"It's often a simple WhatsApp message from another travel colleague saying, 'Have you seen this?' or 'How are you coping?' that makes the biggest difference."

Travel Manager at Checkout Travel, **Holly Pereira**, said her favourite channel was Facebook groups, such as Travelinfo's OpenJaw.

"I use OpenJaw daily, even though I do try and research for myself before I ask the question on the group. Through OpenJaw, I have connected with people that I haven't met in person before,"



Holly Pereira



explained Pereira, adding that she became particularly active during COVID.

"Since COVID, I've used the channel to connect with people that are like-minded and I have leaned on them for advice and interpretation and to connect about similar experiences."

Pereira explained that her consortium's head office also played a role in conveying a lot of essential information to their agents, however she found that it could be overwhelming.

"That being said, the representatives at head office are so very helpful and you can have genuinely helpful conversations with them on WhatsApp, so you end up building a relationship with some of the representatives."

Glenda Ingram, Owner of West Beach Travel, also highlighted her head office's curated newsletters, private communication platforms and WhatsApp groups, all

of which assist her with staying in contact with her colleagues and the broader travel industry.



Glenda Ingram

Community

COVID taught agents how to make connections online, however many agree that they established their community connections through years of experience and attendance at in-person events.

Pereira said that, while she had met some contacts online, she had met a large

number of agents and friends through in-person experiences such as educational trips and networking events.

Rangayah added: "I've been fortunate to meet some incredible people through supplier workshops, travel expos, networking events, airline presentations, hotel visits and industry conferences. Every event became an opportunity to build genuine relationships rather than simply exchange business cards."

She said she took every opportunity to attend supplier functions, networking breakfasts, product launches, hotel site inspections and industry events.

"For someone who works from home, these occasions are incredibly important not only for business but for my own wellbeing," said Rangayah.

"Nothing replaces sitting across the table from industry colleagues, sharing experiences over a cup of coffee, hearing



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eTravel's vision – one platform

THE travel industry has undergone significant change in recent years. The rise of NDC content, direct airline connections and fragmented booking environments have created new opportunities for travel professionals, but have also introduced considerable complexity into their daily workflows, **Tammy Hunt**, MD of eTravel, told *Travel News*.

In response, eTravel's primary focus for 2026 is the continued development of eTravelNav, a platform designed specifically for ITCs.

"Our vision is to create a platform that combines travel booking, servicing and client management in a single environment," said **Trent Wolff**, Operations Director at eTravel.

eTravel believes that technology should make consultants more efficient, not less personal.

"By automating routine tasks and simplifying workflows, consultants can focus on what really matters, building relationships, understanding their clients and providing expert advice," said Wolff.

This philosophy is central to the development of eTravelNav and the company's broader technology strategy.

The goal is not to replace consultants but to give them better tools.



Trent Wolff

With a reduction in administration and the streamlining of processes, consultants can spend more time focusing on their clients and growing their businesses, Wolff added.

"The future of travel consulting is not technology versus relationships, it's technology that strengthens relationships," said Hunt.

24/7

A standout feature of eTravel is its 24/7/365 model.

Unlike outsourced call-centre environments, after-hours support is provided by eTravel employees who understand the ITCs, their businesses and their clients.

"When a crisis occurs, our consultants are supported by

people they know and trust, creating a more effective and reassuring experience during high-pressure situations," said Hunt.

"In an increasingly automated world, we believe that human connection remains one of the most valuable services we can provide."

Within a competitive market, the most important distinction eTravel makes is that its success is directly linked to the success of its ITCs.

"We do not operate a direct-to-consumer booking strategy. Instead, every investment we make, every partnership we negotiate and every platform we develop is designed to support ITCs in growing their own businesses."

eTravel provides the commercial infrastructure, back-office administrative and accounting support, ticketing support, supplier relationships and operational expertise that allow consultants to focus on building and maintaining their client relationships.

Partners

The company continues to maintain a strong and carefully curated preferred partner programme built on long-term relationships and mutual value.

"We actively seek



eTravel believes in using technology to release ITCs from unnecessary operational complexity. Photo: Pexels

partnerships with suppliers who understand the unique needs of ITCs and who share our commitment to service excellence," said Hunt.

The focus remains on negotiating agreements that provide meaningful commercial opportunities for consultants while ensuring that partners remain accessible, responsive and supportive when assistance is required.

"We've seen growing demand for affiliation with established host agencies that can provide technology, support and supplier relationships," said Wolff.

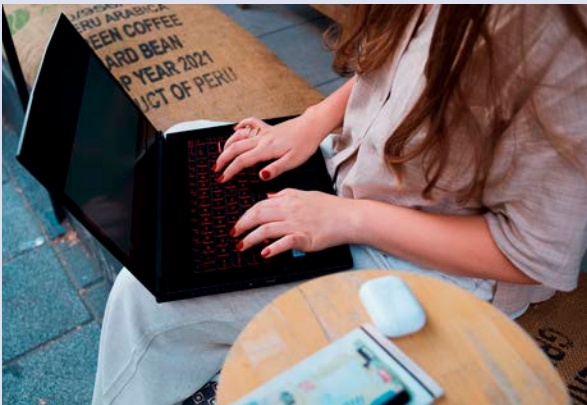
At the same time, consultants still wanted the flexibility and independence that attracted them to the ITC model in the first place. The strongest partnerships were those that offered both support and autonomy, added Wolff.

What's your support structure worth?

THERE'S a type of pressure that ITCs know well. It's that anxious feeling that hits, not when something goes wrong for your clients, but when something 'might'.

When a situation is developing, the information is incomplete and your clients are watching the news and waiting for you to tell them what it means for their trip.

The Middle East crisis produced exactly that pressure, at scale. For South African ITCs (many of them working from home and managing their own books without a back-office team down the corridor), the first few days were, in the words of one Envoyage member "incredibly fast-paced, with constant airline schedule changes, rerouting requests, client concerns and the need to proactively manage existing and pending bookings".



Envoyage's proactive communication and consolidated updates help independent advisers respond quickly when travel plans are affected by changing circumstances. Photo: Pexels

The challenge was both operational and informational. In a situation changing by the hour, the most valuable thing an adviser could offer a client was accurate, timely guidance, which meant sourcing that information quickly, from somewhere reliable, without losing half the day doing it.

"What made a significant difference was Envoyage's proactive communication," says **Megan Opperman**, an independent agent with Envoyage South Africa.

"The regular updates, consolidated information and access to support meant I wasn't spending valuable time trying to source information from

multiple channels. Instead, I could focus on being there for my clients."

The value Opperman describes is the confidence that comes from knowing, in real time, that you have what you need to guide your clients well. That confidence is harder to manufacture than it sounds, particularly when you're working independently.

"During normal operations, that support may seem less visible," she reflects. "But during periods of disruption, it becomes a vital resource that helps you serve your clients effectively and confidently."

This is precisely the gap Envoyage is built to close. Tools like Product Showroom (a consolidated, live marketplace of preferred supplier deals accessible through the Home platform) and Travify (the network's preferred itinerary and



Megan Opperman

client communication platform) are designed to reduce friction in ordinary conditions.

Reduced friction is a convenience when everything is running smoothly, but when the situation is moving fast and clients need answers, it's a competitive advantage.

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Work for yourself. Not by yourself.

Disruption rewrites ITCs' playbook

CHRISTIAAN SCHULTZ

YEARS of travel disruption have fundamentally changed the ITC model. Success is now defined less by volume and more by resilience, specialisation and the proficiency and confidence to operate in a fragmented global travel environment.

That is the central message from senior industry leaders, who told *Travel News* that COVID-19, airline instability and ongoing geopolitical shocks had shifted the goalposts.

Growth

For **Tammy Hunt**, MD of eTravel, traditional measures of success have become outdated in today's volatile operating environment.

"Historically, growth in travel was often measured by transaction volumes, new client acquisition and turnover. While those metrics remain important, I believe the definition of growth has evolved. Today, growth is increasingly about client retention, trust, operational efficiency and the ability to remain relevant in an environment that changes almost daily."



Tammy Hunt

Hunt added that ITCs were increasingly positioned as trusted advisers rather than transactional booking agents, particularly as complexity across the distribution landscape continued to increase.

"One of the biggest changes we have witnessed since COVID-19 is the growing complexity of the travel ecosystem itself," she said, pointing to NDC, direct airline connections and fragmented booking systems.

"The irony is that while technology has become more advanced, many consultants are spending more time managing systems and less time engaging with clients."



Today's ITCs are valued for their expertise, guidance and post-booking support as travel disruptions become the norm. Photo: Magnific

Hunt said that, despite this rising complexity, technology remained central to supporting consultants, provided it was designed to simplify rather than fragment workflows.

eTravelNav

"This thinking is central to our investment in eTravelNav, our next-generation booking and workflow platform currently in development.

"The goal is not simply to introduce another technology solution. The goal is to simplify complexity, consolidate fragmented workflows and give consultants more time to focus on what truly matters: their clients."

She added that the future of travel businesses would depend on a balance between digital capability and human expertise.

"In a world overflowing with information, the real value lies not in finding answers, but in knowing which answers matter."

Stronger

Chantal Gouws, GM of Envoyage South Africa, said disruption had not had a uniform impact across the sector, but had instead exposed differences in infrastructure and support systems.

Asked whether disruptions had ultimately made ITCs more resilient businesses or more vulnerable as they were now operating in a high-risk environment, she responded: "Honestly? Both – and which one applies depends almost entirely on the infrastructure behind the individual."

Gouws said the most supported consultants had, in

fact, emerged stronger.

"An ITC with the right support structure behind them has actually emerged from this period in a stronger commercial position than before, because the disruptions have driven clients towards advisers they trust and away from transactional booking platforms that offer no recourse when things go wrong. Disruption has been, in a strange way, the most effective advertisement the ITC model has ever had."

Gouws said high-growth consultants across the Envoyage network were those who had moved away from generalist selling.



Chantal Gouws

"The consultants in our network who are growing share one characteristic: they've stopped trying to be everything to every traveller. They've made deliberate choices about who they serve and what they specialise in, which means their clients come to them with trust already established. They also use their tools. Not as a box-ticking exercise, but as an extension of their capacity, so that when a crisis hits,

they're not scrambling to find information or communicate with clients. That's already handled.

"The consultants who are simply surviving are still operating generalist books, competing on price and absorbing every disruption as a personal crisis."

Full service

Mladen Lukic, MD of Travel Counsellors South Africa, said TC's definition of a Travel Counsellor was someone who had based their business model on a personalised, bespoke, outcomes-based supplier of travel products.

"That's very different from a transactional-based business model that is simply product placement."

Clients were now more demanding, said Lukic.

"In principle, COVID has enhanced our growth potential, because since COVID, many more customers – and that's the same for leisure as well as corporate – insist on a significant measure of personalisation.

"In addition, there's a much stronger post-booking requirement. If you operate a transactional business model, your interaction with a customer ends with a transaction. For Travel Counsellors, it's different – we look after the customer from the very first enquiry to after the booking is completed and beyond."

Lukic added that COVID-19 and subsequent global instability had accelerated demand for full-service, post-booking support.

"An overwhelming majority of people who buy travel, be it business or leisure

travellers, insist on post-booking management. And it is not entirely, but largely, motivated by the experiences they have had, not just during COVID, but the Middle East crisis and everything else happening in between."

He added that clients' loyalty had to be earned. "Customers are open to loyalty given that they can see the value in the long-term relationship."

Lukic added that travellers were now more informed and more sensitive to risk than before, particularly in relation to routing and safety considerations.

New environment

ITC industry leaders concur on a core theme: disruption is no longer the exception but the operating environment.

Gouws said the biggest misconception was that stability would return and that travel professionals simply needed to hold on until it did.



Mladen Lukic

"It isn't. Volatility is the operating environment now – not an interruption to it. The ITCs who are building future-proof businesses have accepted that and built accordingly. They've invested in client relationships that can withstand disruption and in tools that reduce their operational exposure when things go wrong. They've also built networks that give them collective knowledge and support they couldn't access alone."

Hunt added: "The misconception is that growth requires calm conditions. The reality is that the consultants thriving right now are the ones who stopped waiting for calm."

"Running a successful travel business is very demanding. It requires a significant level of sophistication and experience," said Lukic.

Club Travel expands digital toolkit

CLUB Travel has expanded its technology offering for ITCs, with the continued evolution of its all-in-one CLUBhub platform marking its most significant development.

“We have successfully integrated EDIFACT, NDC (via multiple aggregators), LCC and negotiated deals into a single interface. Recent enhancements include the launch of our ‘Wallet & Markup’ feature, which allows agents to effortlessly add fees to e-tickets and choose payment processing options (card swipe or EFT), with mark-ups flowing directly into a prefunded wallet,” **Jo Fraser**, Executive Manager of the Club Travel Franchise, told *Travel News*.

The company has also launched ‘My Account’, a secure, centralised portal located within the ‘OURweb’ section of CLUBhub.

“It provides our partners with self-service access to specific documents like



Jo Fraser

monthly statements, override files, contracts, etc., which eliminates the need to request these documents from the various departments in the business. A notification is sent to the agent whenever a document is published in their account,” said Fraser.

Further platform enhancements planned for the second half of the year include Fare Families on NDC, CLUBhotels, multiquote

functionality, improved itineraries, traveller information autofill and enhanced self-service capabilities for changes, voids and refunds.

Not alone

“Our philosophy is ‘independent but never alone’. We provide a full support ecosystem 24/7/365. Consultants have access to agency-branded websites, automated package distribution and logo design services, enabling them to professionalise their brand while we handle the backend heavy lifting,” added Fraser.

According to Fraser, providing competitive airfares, preferred supplier deals and technology that streamlines operations frees consultants to focus on what matters most: the client relationship.

And as the bulk of Club Travel’s partners are remote, its support structure is designed for digital-first collaboration.



Club Travel aims to free ITCs to focus on client relationships through competitive airfares, preferred supplier deals and technology. Photo: Magnific

“Through our intranet portal, OURweb, and constant communication channels, consultants stay updated on deals, market news and incentives. We host regular webinars, industry Indabas and networking opportunities to ensure that, despite working remotely, our consultants feel connected to the larger ‘Club Travel family’,” said Fraser.

Training

“Whether you are a new entrant needing intensive onboarding and mentorship or an experienced consultant needing access to deep GDS overrides and NDC content, we

tailor our support.” Fraser emphasised that continuous professional development remained a priority, with consultants receiving ongoing training on all intranet and fare systems, supplier product webinars and systems workshops.

“Our model is built on ensuring every partner has the product knowledge to compete, from intensive onboarding for new agents to advanced training on our robotic ticketing tools and new platform features. We are dedicated to ensuring our partners have the resources to thrive in a shifting travel landscape.”

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Travel Counsellors boosts ITC support

TRAVEL Counsellors South Africa is investing in industry-leading, AI-integrated technology, wrap-around support and business development tools that help ITCs run more efficient, profitable businesses.

Bradley Pearsall, Corporate Business Development Manager at Travel Counsellors South Africa, told *Travel News* that this included further enhancements to its corporate travel toolkit, designed to support complex policy management, approval flows and multi-traveller bookings for SME and mid-market clients.

“We’re also focused on expanding opportunities through initiatives such as TC Teams, which allows Travel Counsellors to collaborate, grow and scale their businesses while maintaining their independence. For corporate specialists, TC

Teams enables access to complementary expertise such as groups, MICE and VIP travel, creating seamless support for business accounts across leisure, incentive and purely corporate demand,” Pearsall added.

Travel Counsellors believes the key is to remove the administrative burden so TCs have more time to focus on what they do best: building relationships and delivering exceptional service.

“Our AI-integrated technology, including our travel app and TC Co-Pilot, the AI-powered TC assistant, simplifies every aspect of a TC’s business, from quoting, booking and invoicing to marketing and content creation.”

For Corporate TCs, the company’s technology offering also includes intuitive reporting, myTC Insights, a state-of-the-art travel data management

platform, as well as myTC Locate, a cutting-edge duty-of-care solution.

“Together, these tools help enhance the service our Corporate TCs provide to their clients. They’re able to quickly interrogate spend, compliance and travel patterns, provide real-time traveller tracking and risk management, and deliver the level of data and governance that business decision-makers now expect from their travel partners,” Pearsall said.

Travel Counsellors’ Head Office has advanced support teams, made up of subject matter experts, who assist with everything from operations and finance to supplier liaison and crisis management.

“For those looking to scale, TC Teams provides a flexible model for collaboration and growth without sacrificing the personalised service that clients value. TCs



Bradley Pearsall

who work within a TC Team earn, on average, 129% more than those who don’t. We’ve seen countless success stories across our community,” Pearsall added.

This form of collaboration also allows business owners to draw on specialist expertise from their peers, creating opportunities to expand their own offering.

“This is especially powerful for Corporate TCs,

who are able to service larger SMEs and mid-market accounts, introduce extended hours cover and build specialist roles (such as implanted consultants or dedicated group handlers) within a flexible, home-based model.”

Alongside technology, the company is investing in valuable training and development opportunities that enable TCs to tackle real-world business challenges head-on.

“This includes expert-led social media training, business coaching and commercial partnerships designed to help them thrive. On the business travel side, we are also prioritising training in areas such as travel policy consulting, negotiating SME programmes, duty-of-care and sustainable business travel so our corporate TCs can position themselves as true strategic partners to their clients,” said Pearsall.

FREEDOM NEEDS A FRAMEWORK

The best ITCs are independent, experienced and client-focused. But behind every strong travel business, there should be a strong support system. **XL Travel** gives independent consultants access to the tools they need to thrive:

- XL TRAINING
- XL SUPPLIER RELATIONSHIPS
- XL NATIONAL TRAVEL NETWORK
- XL TRAVEL TECHNOLOGY



‘The future is personal, predictive and pro-active’ – XL Travel

ARTIFICIAL intelligence is reshaping the way travel advisers work. It’s automating repetitive tasks such as fare comparisons, itinerary building, visa look-ups and routine client queries, says **Franz von Wielligh**, Head of Innovation for XL Travel.

For ITCs especially, this unlocks efficiency and scale that was once the preserve of large agencies.

Broad roll-out

“The future of travel is personalised, predictive and proactive and XL intends to lead that shift in Southern Africa and beyond,” says Von Wielligh.

XL Travel has moved deliberately to embed AI across its entire value chain and it has been implemented across XL’s platform, from customer-facing tools to back-office operations. On the client side, XL has rolled out AI-driven chatbots and



Franz von Wielligh

intelligent content search, while its marketing teams are investing in AI-enabled customer relationship management (CRM) systems that personalise email campaigns, loyalty messaging and targeted offers based on travellers’ past behaviour.

For XL agents and ITCs, these capabilities are supported by a suite of

integrated technologies. Travolution, a multi-GDS and NDC-enabled front end, simplifies quoting, booking and ticketing through AI-enhanced fare optimisation. XLGO, the group’s proprietary client dashboard, brings together trip management, sales tools, expense management and real-time health and disruption updates in a single platform.

AI is also being used behind the scenes to improve consultant productivity. A reminder prompt tool analyses consultant GDS inputs and generates intelligent nudges to enhance performance, while XL Academy provides ongoing skills development, including the group’s exclusive AI Trading Masterclass.

“In practice, agents are using predictive pricing to anticipate fare drops and spikes, generative AI to draft proposals and travel plans faster, AutoQC to catch

errors before ticketing and AI-powered disruption alerts to rebook clients proactively during delays or strikes,” says Von Wielligh.

The group’s focus on automation is complemented by a strong emphasis on personalisation. Smart CRM segmentation enables destination-specific promotions; dynamic packaging recommends relevant add-ons such as lounge access or insurance; and post-trip feedback is analysed to help refine future offers.

Next steps

The next milestone is conversational AI on the XL Holidays platform, according to Von Wielligh.

Consultants will simply send a WhatsApp message or email to XL’s AI agents, which will conduct searches, package options and return ready-to-book results. The

group sees this as the first step towards conversational booking across its wider ecosystem.

For ITCs, the proposition extends well beyond technology. XL homeworkers receive full access to the group’s portfolio, including NDC aggregators, intranet point-of-sale solutions, OBTs, a mobile app, a dynamic leisure booking tool and training platforms.

XL Travel retains none of its ITCs’ service fees or supplier commissions. ITCs keep 100% of what they earn, paying only on a per-ticket basis under a pay-as-you-go model.

The company’s view is that AI is not a threat to the human touch but an amplifier of it. “By stripping away admin, our agents and ITCs can spend more time building meaningful client relationships,” says Von Wielligh.



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- KIM CADER, ENVOYAGE

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'Experience the advantage of belonging'

THE ITC market continues to grow rapidly, and while flexibility and entrepreneurship remain attractive, today's consultants are looking for something more valuable: the ability to build profitable, scalable businesses without sacrificing the personalised service their clients expect, says **Stefan van der Merwe**, Sure Travel CEO.

"At Sure Travel, we believe the future of the ITC sector lies in combining independence with back-up support to achieve meaningful commercial advantage. By joining Sure Travel, you will be joining a valuable platform for mentorship, collaboration and business development."

Van der Merwe explains that many consultants enter the independent market to gain greater control over their careers but they soon discover that success requires more than flexibility.

He believes access to

competitive rates, strong supplier relationships, efficient technology, marketing support and operational expertise all play a critical role in sustainable growth.

"This is why we have officially launched the fully supported hosted ITC programme that combines entrepreneurial freedom with comprehensive back-office support and the



Stefan van der Merwe

strength of one of South Africa's most trusted travel consortiums. The model also enables Sure Travel members to develop into professionally operating ITC host companies, with the guidance and support needed to scale sustainably."

According to Van der Merwe, one of the strongest trends is the demand for increased productivity at a time when consultants want to spend less time on administration and more time building relationships, securing new business and creating exceptional travel experiences.

"Administrative overload is the enemy of growth. By removing operational friction, we give consultants the space to focus on what drives revenue and builds long term client loyalty. Equally important is commercial competitiveness. In today's market, access to the right products at the right price can make a significant difference



ITCs can focus on growing their businesses while benefiting from the support structures and commercial advantages offered by Sure Travel. Photo: Magnific

to profitability.

"Through Sure Travel's preferred supplier partnerships, consultants gain access to some of the most competitive rates, incentives and commercial agreements available in the South African travel industry. These relationships create opportunities for consultants to improve margins, increase earnings and deliver greater value to their customers," he says.

Sure Travel's strength lies in the combination of independence, support, commercial strength and mentorship. Consultants retain ownership of their client relationships and personal brands while benefiting from Sure Travel's buying

power, supplier partnerships, technology platforms, marketing resources and operational support structures.

Sure Travel also offers a unique rewards programme aimed at driving sales towards targets with preferred suppliers.

"Success for an ITC today is about more than independence and money in the bank. It is about building a profitable, resilient and sustainable business that one day can function without you, so that you can actually travel yourself. Our role at Sure Travel is to provide the platform, the ecosystem and the guidance to make that possible. Join us to experience the advantage of belonging," says Van der Merwe.

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Giving ITCs the tools to grow

THE future belongs to travel entrepreneurs who can combine meaningful client relationships with powerful digital tools, while remaining free to build a business that is uniquely their own, says **Yasmeen Khan**, MD of Travel Connections.

She said Travel Connections believed that independence should never mean isolation.

“Our recent brand relaunch reflects the evolution of our business, combining nearly four decades of travel expertise with modern technology, global partnerships and a future-focused approach to supporting both consultants and clients. Our Partners Connect network has successfully supported independent consultants for many years and continues to evolve alongside the changing needs of the travel industry,” said Khan.

She added that while many host models focused primarily on systems and revenue shares, Travel Connections focused equally on relationships, business development and personalised support.

Direct access

“Our consultants enjoy direct access to executive leadership, operational experts, finance specialists, sales support and account management resources, ensuring they always have experienced professionals behind them. We understand that every consultant’s business is different, which is why our approach is flexible, collaborative and tailored



Yasmeen Khan

to individual goals and ambitions.”

Khan believes that Travel Connections’ revenue-sharing model remains one of the most competitive in the South African travel industry.

“We believe success starts from day one. That is why every new consultant receives a company-issued laptop, immediate access to our technology ecosystem and the full support of our operations, finance and leadership teams.

Technology

“While many host agencies offer access to booking tools and supplier agreements, Travel Connections goes further by combining enterprise-level technology, hands-on support and genuine partnership. Our consultants are never left to navigate challenges alone and have access to a team that is invested in their long-term success.”

Indeed, technology remains a major focus for Travel Connections and its consultants have complete

access to its latest cutting-edge technology ecosystem, incorporating AI-enabled tools designed to enhance productivity, streamline operations and elevate the client experience.

“At the heart of this offering is our dedicated ITC Agent Dashboard, a central business hub that provides consultants with direct access to the travel tools, supplier resources, reporting platforms and operational systems required to run their businesses efficiently from a single location. Consultants also benefit from customised Power BI reporting, delivering real-time visibility into business performance, turnover, revenue and growth trends, empowering them to make informed decisions and manage their businesses proactively,” said Khan.

Travel Connections’ innovative Mobile Connect App is another key differentiator and provides consultants with a powerful value-add for their clients.

“The app delivers seamless itinerary management, traveller communication, real-time travel updates and duty-of-care functionality, enhancing the overall traveller experience while reinforcing the consultant’s professional service offering,” said Khan.

Consultants also benefit from preferred supplier partnerships, NDC-enabled content, full finance and administration support, commission tracking, quality control, refunds management, 24/7 operational assistance and direct access to executive leadership.

Community is the key

From page 2
about new destinations or simply catching up after a busy period.”

Social media did not always create these relationships but it strengthened them, said Rangayah.

“WhatsApp, Facebook, LinkedIn, and even a quick voice note have helped us stay connected long after the event has ended.”

Kindness

Pereira said her networks had been essential for her to vent her frustrations to a community that understood the challenges she faced on a day-to-day basis.

“Through these means, friendships have stemmed and I use those as a channel to receive advice or just let off my frustrations, because, sometimes, it is difficult to explain my challenges to someone who is not a travel agent.”

For Ingram, being part of her network has become indispensable because it provides more reliable information about ongoing events that impact the travel industry.

“As a person who doesn’t watch mainstream news due to all the propaganda,

these platforms are essential in staying informed with regard to events affecting travel,” she said. “I can then effectively communicate to my clients on their bookings if they are affected or advise them accordingly in times of geopolitical turmoil.”

Rangayah said her community was one of her biggest sources of motivation and inspiration.

“These conversations remind me that I’m part of a much bigger travel family. One of the things I love most about the travel industry is that it’s incredibly collaborative. We may work for different businesses, but when a flight is cancelled, borders suddenly change or a client needs urgent assistance, everyone comes together. I’ve experienced that kindness first-hand, and it’s something I deeply value,” she said.

“I often leave industry events and meets feeling inspired, re-energised, and excited about what’s ahead. They reinforce why I love this industry so much. The friendships I’ve built over the years have become one of the greatest blessings of my career.” ■

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