

Engaging travelers through social communities



The challenge

A U.S.-based financial services organization has had a long-standing, robust travel program. However, communicating the most important aspects of the program became stale and did not keep pace with the technological capabilities or changing workforce, causing policy compliance to drop.

The company needed to reinforce their travel policies by engaging employees through social enterprise tools and other marketing vehicles.

Results in brief

- **Developed** a community 5x greater than the average social community within the company
- **Received** 1.2 replies per post, 3.5x the average of other communities
- **Ranks in the Top 5** among all company communities for both page views and visitors



72% of all internet users are active on social media

Our approach

Through Advito’s traveler engagement practice, we:

- Identified key aspects of the program that should be communicated to new and experienced travelers.
- Reviewed the most-effective communication channels that could be used to engage different demographics.
- Utilized aspects of the company culture to learn best practices for influencing employee behavior.

Included in this strategy was the creation and management of a rarely used internal social community platform. It provided an online environment where individuals — regardless of title or position — could engage on topics to create a more knowledgeable audience. Social communities can be used to quickly share opinions, stay connected and converse with subject matter experts. Because the business traveler demographic within the company is diverse and spanned multiple departments, the social community was the perfect way to reach a broader audience.

The traveler engagement manager oversaw page development, content development, social nurturing and promotion. Over a six-month period, they generated the following quantitative and qualitative results.



90%

of companies using social technologies report benefits from them

The results

Travelers became more educated on the travel program, which led to better results in key areas of the program. Additionally, because of the success of the page, the internal IT managers recognized the travel program’s social community as a best practice for how other communities should be utilized and managed within the company.

 <p>User Base</p> <p>5x more users Developed a community membership 5x greater than the average of all other company communities</p> <p>Top 5 views/visitors Page views and visitors per month both rank in the Top 5 among all company communities</p> <p>1 out of 5 views Monthly ratio of 5:1 of page views per visitor</p>	 <p>Functionality</p> <p>Customized branding Created logos and icons that fit the parameters and capabilities of the platform</p> <p>Track clicks Utilized “tracking links” to help measure popularity of posts and information, and determine how people were finding the community</p>	 <p>Engagement</p> <p>Consistent posting schedule Wrote original posts on various topics related to travel program goals</p> <p>Increased replies per post Received 1.2 replies per posts, which is 3.5x the average of other communities within the company</p>	 <p>Administration</p> <p>Cross-promotion Crafted over 20 original posts on other community pages promoting the travel program and policies</p> <p>Social nurturing Created compelling comments to spur extended conversations and address questions</p> <p>Monitor & optimize Ongoing monitoring and optimizing of available data to continue success</p> <p>Omni-channel Promotion of the page through other communication channels</p>
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*NOTE: total number of community pages on the company’s platform = 105

Best practices

The success of this project generated best practices that all organizations should consider when launching a social community:

Determine Roles

Social communities benefit from multiple voices sharing information, but the team that handles administration and engagement should be small.

Brand the Channel

Create a name, philosophy and visual elements that appeal to your key audience.

Create a Calendar

Develop a high-level strategy for when you will post, topics to cover, calls-to-action and how you will monitor.

Maintain A Broader Communication Strategy

Social communities have a specific purpose for a specific audience, so they should not be the sole channel to share information. Continue to use proven channels and cross-promote to grow the audiences of all channels.

Define "Success"

An internal social community should not be measured by raw numbers (e.g. # of members vs. # of employees). Success should be based on measuring against other communities within the company.

Over time, a social community breeds a close network of advocates with shared interests. If properly managed, this group will grow to feel comfortable giving regular input, which will attract new users who are more influenced by colleagues, which will encourage even more group participation (because people prefer to give advice if they believe they are being heard). This growth in a knowledgeable audience, interaction and employee trust is the potential a social community has when given the proper attention.



FACT:

You only have

8

seconds

to engage your travelers!

About Advito

Advito is a corporate travel advisory that helps companies modernize travel category management—pushing beyond traditional sourcing and measurement tactics—for better spend outcomes in a data-rich world. We offer a full spectrum of services to help you better manage your program, reduce travel spend and influence traveler behavior.