

Certified Travel Counselor (CTC) Program

Skill Area: Contemporary Issues Elective Course

Home-Based Travel Agents



About the Author	
Introduction	5
Overview	5
Objectives	5
Reader's Guide	6
Pre-Test	7
Unit 1: Home-Based Travel Agencies	8
History	8
Evolution of the True Independent Contractor	11
What Is an Independent Contractor?	13
Developing a Business Concept	14
Commissions and Overrides	14
Fifteen Opportunities for Profit in the Travel Business	15
Developing a Business Plan	17
Unit 2: Starting Your Home-Based Travel Business	21
Establishing Your Business Name	21
Organizing Your Business	21
Obtaining the Proper Licenses	22
Opening Your Business Bank Account	22
Your Stationery and Business Cards	23
Establishing an Office for Your Home-Based Travel Agency	23
Your Home Office	24
Your Home as a Business Meeting Place	26
Your Professional Image	28
Selecting Your Key Travel Suppliers	29
Key Considerations When Negotiating an Agreement with a Host Agency	31
Your Independent Contractor Agreement	34
Unit 3: Developing a Marketing Plan	38
Defining Your Market	38
Quantifying Your Desired Marketing Exposures	39
Establishing a Marketing Budget	40
Allocating Your Marketing Budget	40
Mapping Out Your Marketing Plan	40
What Opportunities Exist in the Community to Promote Travel?	46
Travel Marketing Techniques	47
Unit 4: Legal Issues and Protecting Your Business	53
Insurance	53

Table of Contents

•	Credit Card Sales	54
•	Disclosures	55
•	Tax Benefits for Home-Based Travel Agencies	59
•	Summary	63
•	Application Activity	64
•	Post-Test	69
•	Test Preparation Hints	70
•	A Note to Facilitators	72
•	Glossary	75
•	Answer Key	76
•	For Further Study	79
•	Supplemental Reading	80

Introduction

Overview

Storefront travel agencies have faced great challenges in recent years. Inflation and decreased commissions have changed the way many travel agencies operate. At the same time, advances in telecommunications and computer technology have allowed business to be conducted from any location that has a phone jack and an electrical outlet. All these factors have contributed to a growing trend within the travel industry—the establishment of home-based travel operations.

As a home-based travel agent, you can sell tours and cruises while enjoying the freedom of working from your own home. And by focusing on the more profitable areas of travel, you can create a successful business.

This course will take you through the steps of setting up and marketing your home-based travel agency—from creating a business plan to advertising and promoting your business.

Learning Outcomes

After completing the readings and activities of *Home-Based Travel Agents*, you will be able to

- Develop a business plan for your home-based business.
- Select opportunities for profit in the travel industry.
- Establish an efficient office equipped with the technology needed to conduct your business.
- Develop a marketing plan.
- Recognize the legal and accounting issues you must address as a home-based travel business.

