



Media Giant Simplifies Travel Processes Using GetThere

COMPANY OVERVIEW

British Sky Broadcasting Group (BSkyB) operates the United Kingdom's most popular digital television platform, Sky digital, and is a leading broadcaster of sports, movies, entertainment and news. The company has 10,000 employees based primarily in the U.K.

EMBRACING E-BUSINESS

In 2001, Ray Wooldridge joined BSKyB as the travel procurement manager. His first initiative was to create a formal travel programme that streamlined travel processes by leveraging technology.

After examining travel activity at BSKyB, Wooldridge discovered that the majority of travel was occurring between three main offices in the U.K. Wooldridge realised that these trips could easily be booked online because of their simple point-to-point itineraries. Other travel activity at BSKyB included international travel by SkyNews and SkySports staff covering major world events.

As Wooldridge researched online booking options, he realised there weren't many robust systems that were worth the costs most vendors required up front. The new-and-improved version of GetThere's online booking product, solid backing by Sabre Holdings and a comprehensive presence in Europe made GetThere the obvious choice for BSKyB.

"BSkyB had the right profile for moving business travel online," said Wooldridge. "GetThere fit in well with the company's strategy to embrace e-business wherever possible."

EASE OF USE TRANSLATES INTO ADOPTION

Prior to rolling out the system, BSKyB travellers and IT staff tested the system. IT staff determined that no formal traveller training was required because of its ease of use.

Travellers immediately felt comfortable with the booking system because of its intuitive booking path. They liked the ability to select air and car options on a single page that would then guide them through the rest of the booking process without having to worry about forgetting a step.

The ability to select seat and meal preferences were also viewed as favourable perks by travellers. The site felt familiar to travellers because it was customised to reflect BSKyB's corporate image.

After officially rolling out the GetThere system in April 2004, the company reached 52 percent online adoption by the end of June.

"Response to the new tool has been absolutely phenomenal. More and more of our travellers continue to book their own trips online," said Wooldridge. "It's not unusual to see booking activity on the weekends—a surprising benefit."

BEST PRACTICES

Wooldridge understood the importance of working closely with key groups inside and outside of the company to gain confidence and support for the new online travel initiative. Best practices that helped facilitate a successful programme included:

Executive support—After presenting the benefits of moving online, Wooldridge gained full support from the company's senior management. Their endorsement helped validate online booking to the rest of management and staff at BSKyB.

Travel agency support—Wooldridge worked closely with his travel agency staff to ensure that they fully embraced the company's move to online travel. One month after the rollout, agents started to promote the online system, redirecting and assisting callers to book trips through GetThere.

CORPORATE TRAVEL PROGRAMME

- 10,000 employees (U.K.)
- Majority of travel occurs between three main offices
- Rolled out GetThere to U.K. April 2004

BENEFITS

- 52% adoption within 2 months
- Lower fares selected when tickets are booked online
- Simplified procurement processes

booktravelonline

BSkyB travel site logo





“We've noticed that travellers book even cheaper fares when they examine their travel options and book online through GetThere.”

**Ray Wooldridge,
Travel Procurement Manager
British Sky Broadcasting**

Traveller support—During the rollout, Wooldridge also offered to spend time with any traveller uncomfortable using technology. He felt that spending a few minutes with a traveller was minimal investment to permanently convert them to online booking.

Marketing—Wooldridge also drove marketing activities to increase awareness and popularity for the online booking programme. He customised and branded the site “BookTravelOnline” and created a comprehensive travel intranet site that included a link to the system. Wooldridge also created an internal buzz about the new booking system by issuing promotional employee emails and conducted monthly drawings for free plane tickets.

TRAVELLER ACCOUNTABILITY

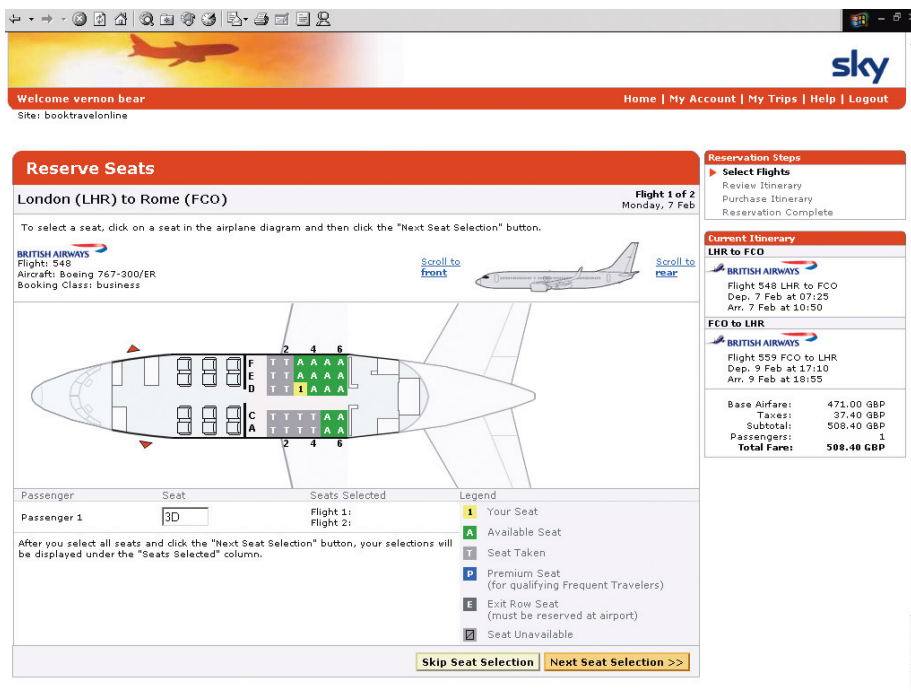
Moving to an online travel programme helped BSkyB tidy up travel processes that transferred more accountability to individual travellers.

As travellers became responsible for booking their own trips online, they began to book more cost-effective travel options.

“Our policy is such that employees can travel business class, providing the fare is less than the standard economy fare. We've noticed that travellers book even cheaper fares when they examine their travel options and book online through GetThere.”

Wooldridge also scrapped the old-fashioned travel requisition process and travelers began to book trips using their individual corporate cards, which further simplified the process.

“At the end of day, empowering travellers to book their own trips online means that they are taking responsibility for travel costs. From what we are seeing, that translates into real efficiency and savings for the company.”



Seat Selection page of BSkyB online booking site

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