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Leading Travel Industry Analyst Defines New Criteria for Travel e-Procurement

Control, Mobility and Convenience Key to Managing Rising Costs, Meeting Needs of Today's Mobile Workforce

Foster City, Calif. – July 18, 2007 – Rearden Commerce, creator of the first online Personal Assistant and the largest marketplace for services of all kinds, today shared findings from a new whitepaper entitled, “Next Generation Travel Procurement: Addressing the Needs of the Mobile Workforce.” The study, developed by leading independent travel analyst Norm Rose of TravelTech Consulting, states that travel procurement managers must place new importance on control, mobility and convenience as the keys for better managing rising costs and meeting the changing requirements of the always-connected mobile workforce.

“The corporate travel industry today is at a strategic inflection point that requires new techniques to support the changing nature of the mobile workforce,” commented Rose. “To accommodate this reality, online booking tools must encompass a wider variety of on-demand services, and make it easier for the mobile worker to find, buy and manage the services they need while complying with company policies. Selecting an online booking tool can no longer be driven by a simple checklist of features and functionality. Instead, travel professionals must use the guiding principles of control, mobility and convenience as the new criteria for vendor selection.”

The Changing Dynamics of Corporate Travel Management

The whitepaper details how travel management must balance the need for cost savings with satisfying the needs of the employee. This is becoming increasingly difficult as travel costs rise, discounts decrease, and suppliers gain access to frequent travelers through direct Internet channels. In addition, the proliferation of high-speed Web access at home, on the road and via a multitude of mobile devices has enabled people to work effectively anywhere, moving beyond telecommuting to true nomad status.

Consequently, organizations must:

- Find better ways to control both contracted services like air, car and hotel, and extend that control to include the broad range of related services such as dining, car service, airport parking, corporate entertainment, and conferencing that today are unmanaged, ensuring that employees are buying from preferred vendors offering negotiated rates in these areas as well.
- Look beyond the traditional means of employee support to provide a complete range of services, 24x7 and on any device – whether it's a cell phone, a PDA or a laptop.



- Make it convenient for employees to quickly and easily find and purchase the goods and services they need so they can do their “real” job, by integrating multiple services into a consistent user experience. If a company does not offer a broad range of services, employees will inevitably turn to the ever-expanding, consumer-oriented Web sites – without corporate control or benefit.

Based on these guiding principles, a new checklist of criteria is emerging that must drive the vendor selection process. The checklist includes:

- Does the application support the mobile worker on a variety of devices? Corporate booking applications must go beyond simple downloads of itinerary items to enable access to a variety of services available on any device, while still maintaining both employee preferences and corporate controls.
- Is the application keeping pace with the evolving nature of consumer travel sites? Historically, corporate booking technology has lagged behind advancements made in consumer applications. As a result of this lag in technology advancements, adoption of consumer applications has been dramatically higher than corporate tools. In 2006, consumer adoption was at 54% while corporate remained at 36%. As consumer sites continue to rapidly evolve, the employee is no longer satisfied with online booking applications that lack a rich user-experience and, in their absence, will ultimately turn to consumer sites to complete their tasks.
- Is the application extensible with the ability to quickly add new services? To gain control over a larger share of corporate services, the application must be built on a platform to which services can be easily added. To deliver this flexibility for corporate services, the application must be built using a modern architecture based on Web services. A platform that is built using a services oriented architecture (SOA) can enable the addition of any type of content, application, or merchant quickly and easily. This type of platform is critical to create “mash-ups” that integrate disparate sources of information and e-commerce capability into a single, seamless display.
- Is the application extensible with the ability to quickly add new merchants? The corporate administrator must have the ability to provision a new merchant and service options with simple mouse clicks, without impacting employees or existing business processes.

“Corporate travel managers today are facing a challenge: they must control rising costs while satisfying increasing employee demands for convenience,” said Tony D’Astolfo, vice president, worldwide sales, Rearden Commerce. “We believe the principles that Norm espouses of control, mobility and convenience provide strategic travel managers a useful roadmap for selecting a technology solution that delivers improved bottom line results to their travel program, and makes life easier for the employees they serve. “

To read the whitepaper in its entirety, visit www.reardencommerce.com.

About TravelTech Consulting

TravelTech Consulting (www.traveltechnology.com) specializes in developing e-commerce and procurement strategies for travel and technology companies. TravelTech Consulting is led by Norman Rose, a 25-year travel industry veteran with an extensive background in both the corporate and leisure travel markets. As an analyst and consultant for the past 11 years, Norm's focus is on emerging technologies and how they impact business practices in the travel industry. Considered an expert on technology and business trends in the travel industry, Norm has

appeared on CNN and has been quoted in *The New York Times*, *The Wall Street Journal*, and in numerous travel trade publications.

Rearden Commerce™

Rearden Commerce, Inc. is the world's largest online marketplace for services of all kinds. Through Rearden Commerce's online personal assistant, employees purchase services from a trusted network of over 137,000 global services suppliers based on personal preferences and company policies. Rearden Commerce is headquartered in Foster City, CA. For more information, visit www.reardencommerce.com.

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