



Integrating Travel Into Your Expense Management

Introducing TripLink

Introduction

As a growing business, you know that your employees are vital to your success. They aren't just worker bees; they are the lifeblood of your company. Your employees are your partners. As partners, you trust them to make decisions on your behalf, and in the best interest of, the business. You trust that they will do the right thing, but they often don't know what the right thing is when it comes to T&E.



**40%–
50%**

40-50% of employee travel is booked outside of corporate travel systems.

— PhoCusWright's U.S. Business Traveller: Managed, Unmanaged, and Rogue 2012 report.

You may have a travel policy and budget guidelines for your business, but you know they don't always work. Out of policy booking can cost your company big time—but it seems to happen all the time. In fact, 40%–50% of employees book outside of guidelines or company policy.

This can happen for many reasons, either:

- Employees don't know where to find the policy.
- Employees believe the policies are unreasonable or out of date.
- The policy is only enforced after the expense is made.
- Employees book travel based on what's easier for them, not the company.

Airfare and hotels are two of your biggest expenses.

Between 8-12% of your businesses controllable spending comes from T&E, with airfare and hotel being at the top—your big-ticket items.

It's important to focus on managing this spend because, when reduced, it can have a huge positive impact on your bottom line. But how can you stay up to date with your businesses finances without knowing what your employees are spending on travel? Travel spending is virtually impossible to manage without real-time visibility into employee purchases. Right now, you don't know what your employees spend on hotel rates or airfare until they submit an expense claim. It takes weeks before a completed expense claim crosses your desk, and by then, it's too late to influence that spend. Be proactive and use spending data—your newfound visibility—to save your business money.



8–12% of your businesses controllable spending comes from T&E.



How do you fix this problem?

You might have basic travel guidelines, or even a full-fledged travel policy for your business. But, as you know, that doesn't always work.

The next logical step would be drafting and implementing, or editing, a company-wide travel policy. Unfortunately, travel policies rarely have the desired affect for small and medium-sized businesses like yours. Plus, they take time to create and enforce. Time that you could be spending focused on what matters most—growing your business. Large enterprise companies negotiate preferred rates with travel vendors, but most small and medium-sized businesses can't take advantages of negotiated rates with vendors since they don't spend enough on travel to earn meaningful supplier discounts. The traditional travel policy isn't always the answer—and it probably isn't right for your business.

Adding more rules won't work.

Some companies add rule after rule with hopes of controlling employee spending on travel. These companies often forget, however, that travel is not static. Rates change based on season and can fluctuate drastically at the drop of a hat. A blanket policy that sets maximum hotel rates often just doesn't work because many hotels in many cities are more costly than any reasonable blanket limit. This is frustrating and discouraging for employees.



How do you fix this problem?

When it comes down to it, employees book travel based on what is best for them. Your employees, just like everyone else, are motivated by rewards. Special promotions or reward programs can easily seem like the best option when an employee is booking travel on their own. However, this often leads to out of policy spending and limited visibility into your company's cash flow. Whether you want to admit it or not, rewards programs have a greater impact on your employee's travel purchase decisions than your company guidelines or travel policy. Your company doesn't reward employees for booking within travel policy, but the airline or hotel chain will reward them for the purchase alone. It's likely that the only time your employees hear about the travel policy is when they are dealing with the ramifications of out of policy spending after the trip—adding more stress to their already busy days.

The Problem with Travel Expense Policies:



Travel is not static, there's change of seasons and rates.



Employees book on rewards that work best for them.



Out of policy spending is only known after the trip is booked.

Why aren't the policies effective?

Employees understand that travel policies are a necessary evil, but they probably don't put much stock in them. When possible, employees prefer to book travel in their own way, using rewards programs.

Employees believe...

- **Cost limits are out of date**—employees know that guidelines are rarely updated and can often ignore crucial details of a trip. These cost limits seem unfair and irrelevant.
- **They can find cheaper deals on their own**—98% of travellers believe they can find a better deal for their company if they have the freedom to shop around.
- **It's so convenient to book on mobile apps**—Travellers love the convenience of managing travel on mobile devices.
- **They want those points**—rewards programs and perks have greater impact on travel purchase decisions than hard-to-remember company policies.

When you don't have visibility into your employee's travel bookings, you are flying blind with your business finances. Companies frequently tell us that they have:

- No **visibility** into spending until expenses are submitted, approved and entered into the accounting system.
- No **transparency** into travel bookings to control inappropriate spending before it happens.
- No ability to keep tabs on travellers to help ensure their **safety** on the road.



There's a better way to manage your travel costs.

You need to know where your money is being spent before it has been spent. And the good news is, there's a better way! Gain visibility into spending as it happens to avoid surprises later on. Create a partnership of savings with your employees.



Partner with your employees— give them flexibility while you get added visibility.

Your employees are your greatest asset, and even more importantly, your biggest partner. But how do you create that partnership when it comes to travel spending? Employees want flexibility when they book travel, and your company wants visibility into spending. Seems like a no-win battle? Well, it was until now.

Introducing Concur's new core service, [TripLink](#), which pulls every reservation into Concur Expense, no matter where it's booked. This provides your travellers with the freedom to book how they want, while providing fully integrated expense reports and giving you instant visibility into travel spending as it happens. Employees simply forward travel confirmation emails on to Concur!



Simply put...

- TripLink gives business travellers **flexibility** to travel how they want, giving them crystal clear **price targets** which help them book within policy while reaping the rewards.
- TripLink seamlessly **captures** and **provides** transaction data to you via Concur Expense.
- You get **insight** into spending and **visibility** to where travellers are at any given moment.
- Your travellers get the perfect trip experience—and you become the hero.



Help create employee partnerships with rewards.

Even better, TripLink incentivises your travellers with gamification. Price-to-Beat, a game-like solution inside of Concur Expense with TripLink, creates a partnership of savings among your employees! Price-to-Beat provides your travellers with clear, relevant price targets for airline and hotel purchases each time they travel based on data of what the average price for hotels and airline is at that time and location.

Additionally, Price-to-Beat allows you to influence the price you want your travellers to beat—with airlines, with hotels, within specific markets and brands, etc. For example, you can set your company's Price-to-Beat 10% lower than the average Concur recommendation. If travellers beat that price, they earn Concur Travel Points which they can use for future trip upgrades.



Help create employee partnerships with rewards.

TripLink brings this solution to ALL of your reservations—no matter where the travel is booked.

With all of that information fully integrated into your expense management system, you can truly understand the opportunities for savings.



TripLink includes Concur's award-winning Triplt to keep all travel details in one place. With a simple electronic itinerary viewable on the web or mobile app, Triplt combines all of their reservations in one place—no matter where they are booked. Learn more about Triplt [here](#).

With TripLink, you will gain...

- **Better visibility:** Get the complete picture, detailed reporting and insight on all your travellers' spending trends and buying behavior.
- **Lower costs:** With TripLink, you can enforce your policies and spending guidelines on all transactions, no matter where they're booked.
- **More control:** TripLink provides a complete view of all your travel spending before and as it happens so you can budget more effectively and more accurately manage your cash flow.



With all that data, you can do great things.

Conclusion

You may be asking yourself “why would my employees participate in a program like this?” The answer is simple: you provide them with tools that make travelling and completing expenses easier.

When your travellers don’t have the tools to use, you don’t get accurate spending data. When you don’t have accurate spending data, you don’t have visibility into your company’s travel expenses. With Concur, your people get the freedom they crave and the rewards they want. You get visibility and cost savings. Everybody wins!

Your employees will be more productive when you give them the tools to make life easier. Let them book the *perfect trip*.

[Learn More About TripLink](#)





Concur is a leading provider of integrated travel, expense and invoice management solutions. Concur's easy-to-use cloud-based and mobile solutions help companies control costs, save time and protect employees. Concur's open platform approach enables companies to select integrated services offering a total spend management solution. Concur on-demand services process over \$50 billion in T&E spend a year—equal to roughly 10 percent of the world's T&E spend.

concur.com.au

Check out how Concur embeds your T&E policy directly into its cloud-based, mobile expense management solution.

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