



HOST AGENCY CORNER

Partnering With Vendors Adds Luster, Profits

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(This is the second in a series of articles Bonnie Lee is writing about partnerships. The first article on how partnering can grow your business appeared in Travel Trade, Jan. 9.)

I am sure you'll agree that a solid, trusting supplier relationship is priceless. In the first article of this series, I stated, "Partner with strong, capable, honest, reliable, individuals, and you will reap the rewards." Vendor relationships are exactly the same.

Ask yourself, "If I were a vendor, would I be drawn to me? Would I want to partner with me? Am I strong, capable, honest, and reliable? Would I be excited to partner with me? Am I filled with enthusiasm?" If you answered "Yes," you are on your way to another successful partnership.

As an example, let's say your office phone rings on a Tuesday afternoon. A monotone voice says, "I'd like a price to Vegas." Does the tone (or lack of tone) in their voice set the mood for your response? If the caller isn't excited, do you find it hard to be excited?

Before calling your travel partner, practice making your voice burst with excitement.



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You want your partner to want to talk with you, because you are excited. You have an opportunity, and you are excited to share it with them.

Now, what do you do with all that excitement? Remember the retail partnership plan created with the florist, the baker and the hotelier that I discussed in the first article of this series? In that article, I described how I partnered with upscale local retailers to promote the wedding and honeymoon services that we all provide. Partnering with these other retail businesses was part of my strategy to develop a niche in the destination wedding and honeymoon market.

Another Expert

What would happen if you added another expert to that already perfect marketing plan? By including a travel partner at your event, you will raise the level of excitement and validity it has for the public.

Partners are willing and eager to offer booking incentives to agencies promoting and selling their products. The offer of an upgrade, a bottle of wine or a spa credit might be just the "extra" needed for you to win the sale.

Suppliers can also be very helpful in setting the stage for your travel presentations. Tap into their expertise.

There are now four experts by your side. With these kinds of partnerships, you will not only reap success through sales, but also you have begun the journey of a long and profitable relationship with your preferred vendors.

Go the extra mile for your preferred vendors, and they will go the extra mile for you.

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