

U.S. CITIZENSHIP AND IMMIGRATION SERVICES (USCIS)

Industry:

United States Government Agency

Geographies:

Thirty domestic divisions, with 20% International travel

Situation:

The U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) is a bureau under the Department of Homeland Security. CI Travel began working with the agency in 2008, and now issues more than 5,000 tickets annually. The unique role of the USCIS often involves employee travel throughout the world, on short notice to locations that can be difficult to access, requiring flexibility and creative problem solving, along with cost-effective agency relationships. USCIS' travel spend surpassed \$9.5 million in Fiscal Year 2009.

Objectives:

- Implement a travel partnership that aligns all departments, while providing flexibility
- Consolidate the various practices of multiple previous agencies in various locations
- Bring the travel program into compliance with government rules and procedures

Challenges:

- Implement comprehensive travel management program in under one month
- Improve the ability of the USCIS to quickly respond to world events and crises
- Arrange travel to remote and difficult locations, on short notice
- CI Travel caught errors in nearly 100 percent of the international travel that had been booked at inaccurate higher fares by the previous agency, and rebooked them at the correct lower government fare

Ensuring a Smooth Transition

CI Travel began working with the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) in 2008, and implemented a comprehensive travel management program for the agency in under three weeks. The travel program was successfully integrated so quickly thanks to the USCIS's commitment to a true strategic partnership. CI Travel put together a comprehensive transition plan and worked daily with partners at the USCIS and their incumbent agency to ensure a smooth turnover.

More than 500 travel profiles were transferred and updated, and during this process CI Travel discovered that the previous travel agency had an incorrect understanding of government fares and the complexities of international travel. CI Travel caught errors in nearly all international travel that had been previously booked at inaccurate higher fares. Nearly 100 percent of this travel was rebooked by CI Travel at the correct lower fare at a significant cost savings to the USCIS.

Commitment to Quality

The USCIS has a very intricate international travel program. When a situation like the earthquake in Haiti arises, members of the USCIS may open a mini-office in or near the affected country in order to help with refugee travel. As with Haiti, an international crisis can occur on extremely short notice with no prior warning, and requires a travel program that is flexible enough to transport USCIS employees quickly and safely to locations that may be remote.

The contracting officer for USCIS wrote in her first annual review:

“(CI Travel’s) level of service is top-notch. They are always responsive to my inquiries. They record each telephone conversation with the “customers” to ensure accurate responses and excellent customer service. Any issues that arise under the contract are immediately brought to my attention. They contact me weekly via e-mail and phone and we have a strong relationship. Their careful monitoring of the contract has afforded USCIS numerous cost savings where they book travelers for less money than the traveler requested.

They are always asking what they can do more to assist our agency and how they can improve customer service. Their professionalism is unparalleled and I enjoy the working relationship that we have. Given what I know today about the Contractor’s ability to execute what they promised in their proposal, I definitely would award to them today given that I had a choice.”

About The U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services

U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) is the government agency that oversees lawful immigration to the United States. USCIS secures America’s promise as a nation of immigrants by providing accurate and useful information to their customers, granting immigration and citizenship benefits, promoting an awareness and understanding of citizenship, and ensuring the integrity of our immigration system. There are more than 18,000 government employees and contractors of USCIS working at 250 offices across the world.

About CI Travel

CI Travel is one of the top 15 business travel management companies in the United States, and a top ten American Express Travel Representative Network member. With locations in ten states, CI Travel manages travel for a broad range of clients in the manufacturing, government, consulting and services markets and has more than thirty-seven years of experience providing high quality travel service to corporations and government agencies. CI Travel has received an unprecedented six Best Travel Management Program of the Year awards from the Society of Government Travel Professionals. CI Travel has been recognized by both Travel Weekly and Business Travel News as one of the leading travel management companies in the United States.