

AstraZeneca

Travel program consolidates
70 countries in seven months



Biopharmaceutical giant saves 15% on managed travel spend after gaining data-enabled visibility into 95% of its corporate travel program.

Challenge

AstraZeneca had multiple travel management companies serving employees worldwide. Traveler data was siloed, so the company didn't have a timely, clear, centralized view of more than half of trips. Program fragmentation eroded travel buying power and the ability to drive consistent savings and innovations across markets. This also made duty of care compliance difficult and reduced AstraZeneca's ability to use data to improve trip experiences.

Kerrie Henshaw-Cox, AstraZeneca's travel leader, sought a way to increase data-enabled visibility into travel spend; capture more savings; enhance traveler experiences and safety; and better connect travel to corporate sustainability efforts. She also wanted agility and flexibility that would allow her program to keep pace with rapid changes in technology and traveler expectations. Her solution: Partner with BCD Travel to consolidate travel across 70 countries—and get the implementation done in seven months.

At a glance

Challenge: AstraZeneca wanted centralized visibility into and management of its travel program worldwide

Approach: Global program consolidation and implementation under BCD Travel

Results:

- 15% savings on managed travel spend in one year
- 95% of managed travel spend is rolled into consolidated program data
- 100% visibility into trips booked through BCD
- 86% traveler satisfaction

Key BCD Travel platforms

DecisionSource® for program insights and analytics

TripSource® for trip management

SolutionSource® for third-party technologies

About AstraZeneca



Headquartered in
**Cambridge,
England**



61,100
employees
worldwide



US\$22.5 billion
in annual revenue



**Sales
by geography**

31% U.S.; 30% emerging
markets; 24% Europe;
15% rest of world



**Future-forward
plan**

Deliver 10 new medicines to
patients by 2020; improve lives of
200 million patients by 2025; reach
\$50 billion in sales by 2025

“We needed comprehensive, consolidated data to understand where out-of-policy spend was happening and then make improvements.”

— Kerrie Henshaw-Cox, AstraZeneca travel program leader

Approach

The first step of the global consolidation was ensuring top-level support. The chief executive officer’s endorsement of Henshaw-Cox’s plan led to buy-in across business units and markets. The second step was to build a great team of travel professionals and project managers. AstraZeneca brought in eight people; BCD brought in five. They worked as one team from the start, all committed to a shared vision for “smart, simple and safe” travel. “We found solutions together,” Henshaw-Cox said. “The whole team worked to drive progress. All of our reputations were on the line, and we were all equally committed to making it work.”

The third step was to use the program overhaul as a vehicle for change. AstraZeneca leaders had identified the corporate travel program as key to Spend Smart 4 Growth (SS4G), an executive-driven initiative to ensure spending matched business goals. “Under SS4G we had a directive to align and reduce costs, yet nobody wanted to stop travel that supported research and development or sales. We needed to find the right balance,” Henshaw-Cox said. “We knew we could achieve savings if travelers would just follow the travel policy, but it wasn’t being enforced.

“We needed comprehensive, consolidated data to understand where out-of-policy spend was happening and then make improvements. And we needed executive support to address out-of-policy actions,” she explained. “If employees understood that travel program compliance and savings were important business goals, we were certain they would make the right decisions about trip expenses—and they did.”

In the final step, the team developed and rolled out a traveler engagement campaign that could be customized locally. It used social media, travel fairs, the company intranet and timely messages to educate employees about program benefits, policy requirements, on-the-road security and smart spending. A related campaign targeted travel arrangers, educating them on the program’s scope, supplier strategy and policy guidelines.

The engagement strategies forged during the implementation continue today—part of Henshaw-Cox’s ongoing efforts to explain what she calls the “so what” of corporate travel to AstraZeneca leaders and employees.

Results

AstraZeneca, in partnership with BCD, successfully implemented 70 countries in seven months across all business units. The travel team also rolled out Concur's online booking tool in 34 of those markets. (Today, the program covers 75 countries, and travelers in 56 markets use the Concur OBT.) Among the benefits of the global program:

- A year after implementation, AstraZeneca saved 15% on managed travel spend, benefitting from previously untapped savings, cost avoidance and technological innovation.
- Traveler compliance to policy rose 15%; volume with preferred suppliers increased 15%; and transaction fees dropped 26%.
- Consolidated program data now covers 95% of AstraZeneca's managed travel spend, and the company has 100% visibility into trips booked through BCD. That makes program performance and sustainability metrics timelier and more accurate.
- AstraZeneca can tap its own program performance data, rather than relying on supplier reports, which increases supplier accountability.
- VIP travelers making frequent trips between the U.K. and the U.S. now get dedicated agent service 24/7/365.
- End-to-end travel booking and expense processes simplify trips and save time and money.
- Program operations are efficient and agile. The travel team can shift priorities quickly to get ahead of trends.
- Traveler satisfaction is up: 86% of travelers are satisfied with the program, and 91% feel safe and cared for on business trips.

Key benefits of consolidating data across the globe

- **Enables reporting and behavior management across business units, as well as by region.** Senior executive team leaders are accountable for their teams' travel spend and committed to encouraging change for the better.
- **Increases leverage with suppliers.** The constantly updated stream of program data enables dynamic, year-round supplier management.
- **Identifies ways to redirect more spend toward core company initiatives,** such as pharmaceutical research and development, patient care and business expansion.
- **Sets the agenda for what's next in program improvements.** Global reporting identifies program strengths and weaknesses, creating a roadmap for the travel team.

The successful implementation elevated the travel team's role and reputation. Henshaw-Cox, who was named Business Travel Awards' Travel Buyer of the Year in 2019, gives regular reports to AstraZeneca's executive team. She's become a trusted adviser to other senior leaders who seek guidance on how to drive progress under SS4G. "Our consolidated travel program enables the travel team to better support AstraZeneca business leaders as they deliver against their specific business unit objectives," Henshaw-Cox said. "That targeted support helps them to achieve their results."

For more information, visit bcdtravel.com.