



Just Plain Unfair

Think about it. Would you extend unsecured finance to your customers for over 90 days, as part of your upfront deal, before you had even negotiated your rates? Didn't think so. That's why I find it shocking when I hear that the biggest challenge travel agents face today is being asked by their customers to do just that.

Whilst in most other types of retail outlets 'cash is king', this is not the case in terms of the travel industry. The International

Air Transport Association (IATA) requires travel intermediaries to provide financial security in the form of a bank guarantee, which is calculated according to a set of financial criteria. This calculation is based on the cash sales transacted within their business and certain minimum requirements are set. An understanding of bank rules and regulations quickly show that this money is inaccessible and reflects as a liability on one's financial statements. In the event that the travel intermediary defaults on any airline payment, IATA will offset the guarantee to recover any amounts owed to their member airlines.

Cash is often the chosen method of procuring travel, but it does place an immense financial burden on the travel company, particularly when there is a probability that they should do it for free, taking into consideration that the customer has an expectation that the travel professional will be available on a 24-hour basis.

It is also assumed that sufficient investment is made in training, in order to provide customers with intellectual expertise and most importantly, the company is expected to continually invest in the latest technology to afford them seamless booking processes and streamlined reconciliation, which lends itself to efficient travel expense management compliant with company budgets.

If you compare the average cost of the travel intermediary's professional fee against the total cost of the transaction and the amount of hours spent on the reservation, it is inconceivable that a customer should expect that the travel company should provide 60 days interest-free funding on any portion of their travel budget. That's just plain unfair.

Robyn Christie



You take care of business while we take care of you.



DDB South Africa 31788

www.crestahotels.com

Experience the true warmth of African hospitality at Cresta Hotels, where we'll do whatever it takes to make your business trip a success. Cresta Hotels is one of the largest hotel groups in the Southern African region, managing and operating thirteen properties.

Cresta Hotels hosts four different gateways each designed differently for you to choose which travelling experience will best suit your individual needs. 'Urban Heartbeat', 'Urban Oasis', 'African Roots' and 'African Fingerprint' are found across Botswana, Nigeria and Zimbabwe. Enjoy all the finest creature comforts while you take care of business and we take care of you.

African Roots

Cresta Bosele, Botswana
Cresta Botsalo, Botswana
Cresta Oasis, Zimbabwe
Cresta Riley's, Botswana

Urban Heartbeat

Cresta Jameson, Zimbabwe
Cresta President, Botswana
Cresta Thapama, Botswana

Urban Oasis

Cresta Lodge, Botswana
Cresta Lodge, Zimbabwe
Cresta Marang Gardens, Botswana

African Fingerprint

Cresta Churchill, Zimbabwe
Cresta Mowana Safari Lodge, Botswana



CRESTA
Hotels