

AS SEEN ON



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HOME-BASED TRAVEL BUSINESS

That's the Ticket!
by Bridey M. Orth

Tami Pruitt never intended to become a travel expert, but she found her way to this lucrative industry and for four years has been seeing big success.

For years Tami worked in retail and sales with a Family business. While it felt good to be part of a family business, working retail meant being tied down to the hours dictated by the shopping center where their storefront was located. So when the time came for Tami's mom to retire from the business, Tami decided against keeping it and instead tried something new.

She enrolled in a travel school and for six months got a basic education on the travel industry and its many nuances. She also took a refresher course in geography, something critical for travel agents.

But because Tami had spent so many years in the family business, she couldn't see herself finding a job in an agency working for someone else. "I think once you've had a taste of your own business, it's hard to work for someone else. I wanted to make all the decisions," reveals Tami.

When she saw an ad in a travel magazine for TIX Travel, Tami knew she was getting close to her new dream of having her own travel business. TIX Travel, based in Nyack-On-Hudson, NY, offers a business opportunity to anyone interested in the travel industry. There's a flat fee and a minor annual fee for someone to obtain a TIX dealership and run their own travel and ticket business.

And just recently TIX Travel launched their Internet web site, www.tixtravel.com. The site integrates travel, entertainment tickets and their unique business opportunity.

This online opportunity wasn't available when Tami was checking into TIX Travel because there wasn't a lot of online travel business at that point. However, today the dealership can be established on the Internet as well as in a home, office, and storefront or integrated into an existing business.

Tami's business, Spirit of the West Travel, has an Internet presence (www.bcity.com/spirit-travel) that she developed before it was available through TIX Travel. She says she gets a lot of business from the Internet. But because she specializes in honeymoons, she attends two to three bridal shows each year. "Seventy to 80 percent of my business is in honeymoons. I pick up a lot of business from the bridal shows here in Austin, TX. In fact, I was the only travel agent at the last show I attended; my booth was pretty busy that day," Tami shares.

When Tami was getting Spirit of the West Travel off the ground, she found TIX Travel to be an invaluable resource. "They were informative and have answered every question I've ever had. They're helpful and encouraging and have been very patient," she says.

Tixtravel.com provides complete training and technology solutions for all levels of experienced entrepreneurs, so experience in the travel industry isn't a pre-requisite for this opportunity. Richard Klein, president and founder, says, "tixtravel.com has successfully helped over 350 people launch their own travel and ticket businesses. We train agents on how to get and keep clients, use the reservation systems and how to consistently get great deals on travel arrangements.

Our services are sold through our network of agents. Web visitors who do not have an agent are referred to one of our agent specialists for personal assistance."

The travel section at Tixtravel.com features live reservations for airline tickets, hotel accommodations and car rentals. In addition, there is a real time low fare search, CHEAPTIX discount tickets, cruise and tour planning. A complete suite of travel tools is also available, including weather, maps, flight tracker, currency converter and headline news.

The ticket section features special access to sold-out tickets to concerts, theater and sporting events. Tixtravel.com also offers complete packages including event tickets, accommodations

and transportation. In addition, there are concert and sports team schedules, seating plans, news and shopping.

For Tami, having her own travel business has been fun and exciting. One of the biggest perks she sees in her travel career is being able to learn all about the world and then going to see it. “There’s a lot of research and leg work involved, but it’s wonderful when you get to go see places in person after spending so much time studying them,” says Tami. revealing that one of her favorite spots is just south of Cancun. “Playa Del Carmen is just now being developed, but they’ve got zoning restrictions that will keep the big high rises out of the city. They’ve kept the jungle intact, the beaches are beautiful and it’s relatively inexpensive.”

Tami admits that it was scary to jump into something new like a travel business, but she had a lot of help along the way from TIX Travel. Each year her sales double the previous years, which is better than she’d ever dreamed. Tami also has the flexibility of a home-based business, which means she has more time for herself and her family.

“We’ve got two kids so whenever they’ve got something going on at school, all I have to do is put the answering machine on and go see them. It’s wonderful that I can do that,” she shares.

Richard Klein deals with people on a daily basis who are looking for the chance to leave their current jobs and start their own home-based business. Tami was one of those people and because she had an interest in travel and wanted to be the one calling the shots in her business, this was the right opportunity for her.

Richard says, “Starting your own business represents an enormous milestone in your professional life... Independence means more control over your business; the freedom to run it the way you feel it should be run, with no one making your decisions, telling you to sell products you don’t believe in, or standing over your shoulder.”

To get a complete information kit about getting a TIX Travel Startup Package, visit them online at "www.startyourowntravelbusiness.com".

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