

CASE STUDY SWANSEA UNIVERSITY

THE COMPANY

Swansea University is a research-led university that has been making a difference since 1920. The University community thrives on exploration and discovery and offers the right balance of excellent teaching and research, matched by an enviable quality of life. Swansea University has 8 colleges spread across its two campuses which are located on the coastline of Swansea Bay. It is the third largest university in Wales in terms of number of students.

Annual travel spend

£3M

Online Adoption

84 %

TRUST ME

How did you first hear about our service? via the Crown Commercial Services Public Sector Global Travel & Venue Solutions Framework

What challenges/problems necessitated a change? Swansea University did not have a managed travel programme and travellers used any travel source they preferred. This resulted in no visibility into our travel spend, lack of control of enforcing our travel policy and no understanding of where our travellers were.

What were you looking for in a solution? We were looking for a solution that was simple but offered the ability to drive compliance to policies, including Duty of Care, visibility into spend, while being nimble. Swansea was looking to reduce the number of expensed travel spend.



With James Thomas

*Senior Category Manager –
Swansea University*

What made our solution stand out over others that you researched?

Travel Planet's ability to integrate into any system, as well as the rich content were paramount. Further, Travel Planet's business model of invoicing Swansea for travel has helped to reduce to number of expense claims and 'out of pocket' expenditures. Offline service was also very important to some of our users.

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How did you implement/introduce our solution?

The solution was designed collaboratively with Travel Planet and stakeholders from across Swansea University over several months. A plan of workshops was provided following the initial meeting, allowing the University to coordinate availability of key resources and ensure that discussions were relevant. The Integration Director and project team worked with the SU implementation team to support achievement of the set milestones.

As a test system configured to specific requirements was unavailable, the decision was taken by Swansea University to trial with a pilot group initially, giving both Swansea and Travel Planet the opportunity to consider feedback gathered. Following this, training was delivered virtually to the remainder of the organisation, with a question and answer session held with user guides and support documents provided in advance to share internally.

How did our team help with implementation?

The team presented innovative ideas and shared knowledge from prior experiences that helped stimulate internal discussions and support development of the solution. A flexible timeline was offered, with a willingness to work around University project and resource constraints.

The input received ensured that the customer journey was easy to navigate and efficient, whilst incorporating the necessary controls within the booking flow to support compliance with the University's travel policy.

What was the initial reaction of your users to our product?

The overall system was positively received but the University approval process caused challenges for some end users initially. The decision was taken to review the travel policy and subsequently increase the value of approvals within the system to improve the balance between functionality and control. Travel Planet actioned the request promptly and the system reconfigured within 24 hrs.

How has our solution helped since implementation?

The reaction to the implementation of Click and Control has been positive from across Swansea University. The easy to navigate system has proved popular with end users and the integration with our ERP System has streamlined the end to end process from bookings through to approvals and subsequently payment of invoices.

Has this solution saved money and/or increased productivity? Whilst direct comparison with pre pandemic travel expenditure is challenging, a significant shift from offline to online bookings has helped to reduce expenditure via lower booking fees. Access to the CCS negotiated rates programme via the easy to use solution has reduced time expended to search and create travel itineraries; previously created manually via the internet, which was time-consuming and gave no guarantee of the most effective itinerary or best available fares. The Business Intelligence module is a great support as it allows travel expenditure to be closely monitored within the overall organisation and individual departments.

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What have you been most impressed with?

Travel Planet have continued to be proactive since the roll out of the system by identifying cost savings reports and implementing system messages to support end users with the end to end process. They have examined ways to develop the system capability and the customer service has provided an excellent standard of service by being readily available to support manual bookings and resolve queries promptly.

What plans do you have to use our solution in the future?

We are keen to continue with the collaborative relationship to understand how future developments within both the sector and Click and Control platform can benefit the University.

Is there anything else we should know? In terms of Lessons Learnt from implementation, the provision of a configured test system would have enabled further testing of the full process including file transfer between Travel Planet and Swansea University prior to Go Live.

Can you tell us your company approximate Annual Travel Spend (Pre-Covid) ?
Approximately £3,000,000 (ex VAT)

What is your business challenge as a business travel manager in your company after covid 19?

Furnishing staff with an effective system and customer service to facilitate the return to 'business as usual.' Cost savings are a critical part of this exercise and implementing a managed travel programme, along with these factors are key to ensure the organisation has is able to closely monitor expenditure and identify further opportunities.