



For Immediate Release:
March 31, 2006

For More Information Call:
Michele Simon, Director of Marketing
Topaz International, Ltd.
503.254.4242

Booking Business Travel via the Internet

Portland, Oregon – March 31, 2006 – For the past five years Topaz International has provided comparative studies of corporate travel airfares between corporate travel agency booked itineraries and various public internet sites, including Orbitz, Expedia, Travelocity and airline direct websites. In 2005, the Topaz findings show that business travel itineraries booked by a designated corporate travel agency averaged \$56 less than the same itinerary booked on a public internet site, the smallest margin in five years. In addition, the average agency fare and average internet fare were the lowest they have been since we started these comparisons.

	Agency Fare Equal or Lower	Agency Fare Higher	Average Agency Fare	Average Internet Fare	Difference
2001	93.26%	6.74%	\$458	\$629	\$171
2002	91.13%	8.87%	\$594	\$748	\$154
2003	91.02%	8.98%	\$503	\$572	\$69
2004	93.57%	6.43%	\$478	\$558	\$80
2005	93.29%	6.71%	\$427	\$483	\$56

Additional comparisons are shown below with the results broken down into three groupings based on the travel volumes of the corporations. In the chart below, smaller corporations do not see the same differences in price paid for airline tickets; versus corporations with larger volumes of air spend. However, the smallest companies do better than some of their larger counterparts who should have greater discounts because of their volume.

2003	Agency Fare Lower	Agency Fare Equal	Agency Fare Higher	Average Agency Fare	Average Internet Fare	Difference
Less than \$20M	64.14%	25.49%	10.37%	\$522	\$554	\$32
\$20M to \$99M	80.09%	11.82%	8.09%	\$490	\$602	\$112
\$100M and Greater	95.01%	0.35%	4.64%	\$445	\$581	\$136

2004	Agency Fare Lower	Agency Fare Equal	Agency Fare Higher	Average Agency Fare	Average Internet Fare	Difference
Less than \$20M	64.44%	28.32%	7.24%	\$501	\$574	\$73
\$20M to \$99M	85.63%	6.13%	8.24%	\$451	\$515	\$64
\$100M and Greater	97.01%	0.08%	2.91%	\$514	\$665	\$151

2005	Agency Fare Lower	Agency Fare Equal	Agency Fare Higher	Average Agency Fare	Average Internet Fare	Difference
Less than \$20M	83.13%	11.02%	5.8%	\$434	\$490	\$56
\$20M to \$99M	69.52%	22.80%	7.68%	\$416	\$464	\$48
\$100M and Greater	73.02%	18.2%	8.73%	\$431	\$504	\$73

“The five years of Topaz data of comparative airline distribution channel alternatives shows that the gap between performance of online alternatives and traditional agencies are closing” said Bradley Seitz, President and CEO of Topaz International. “However, is the game over? I think that what we are seeing in these results, and what we will continue to see, is the desire of the airlines to control and price their product where they can obtain the most value. They have recognized that while their distribution channels are wide, pricing must be a little more consistent among all the channels”.

“The complexity will continue. Airlines must raise their rates to compensate for the recent losses in the industry and the continuing rise of fuel costs. The challenge of every corporate travel leader will be to ensure that they have processes in place to locate and book the lowest alternatives, and validate that their service providers are giving the levels of contracted offerings that have been agreed to.”

Topaz International will continue to conduct these studies where we compare data between traditional booking sources and various internet sources, giving corporations the ability to measure the performance of their travel program against alternative distribution channels.

About TOPAZ International

Topaz International provides strategic support to the corporate travel management professional. With over 25 years of experience analyzing travel related expenditures, Topaz is a world leader in airfare & hotel auditing, providing benchmark information and consultancy services to improve the delivery of corporate travel services. Supporting travel managers, buyers and agencies, Topaz helps improve performance and facilitate cost savings through four succinct services: A - Auditing for independent performance evaluation, including airfare, hotel & rental Car; B - Benchmarking for comparative data review and data comparisons between similar companies; C - Consultancy to address specialized advisory services including travel Programs & policies; D - Development toward learning in the travel industry and training toward continuous improvement.

Company Website: <http://www.etopaz.com>

Topaz International Contacts:

Bradley Seitz
President & CEO
E: brad.seitz@etopaz.com
V: 207.797.9154

Michele Simon
Director of Marketing
E: michele.simon@etopaz.com
V: 503.254.4242 x302