TripActions
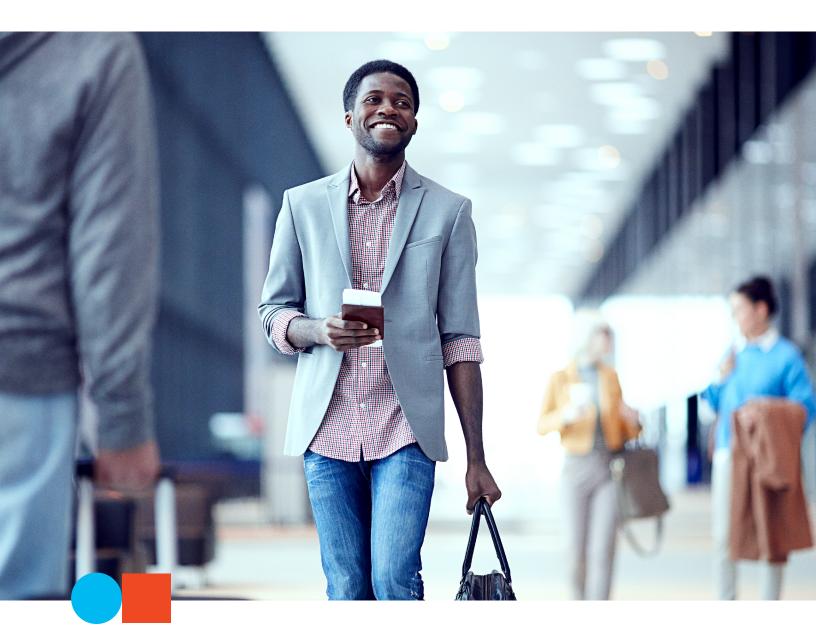
Let's go.

Your guide to making a business case for a corporate travel program upgrade

Make a Corporate Travel Upgrade a Business Priority

✓ STEP 1

Define your overarching goals and KPIs.

✓ STEP 2

Identify and talk to key stakeholders.

✓ STEP 3

Draft your features and functionality wishlist.

Upgrading your corporate travel program can help your business optimize travel spend, improve the road warrior experience to drive adoption, and have a huge impact on the bottom line. But making the case for bringing in a new third-party solution isn't always easy — which is why we've created this ebook to give you everything you need to make a business case for a new business travel solution.

From first a) defining your goals and KPIs to then b) identifying and talking to the right stakeholders and then c) drafting a features and functionality wishlist to guide you on your search, the following pages will serve as your step-by-step guide to successfully building and presenting a rock solid argument for the travel management upgrade your organization needs.

Define Your Travel Program Goals.

You know your current solution isn't cutting it — but what exactly do you want to get out of a new corporate travel program? Your very first step is to decide which business problems you want to solve and what specific goals you want to achieve by implementing a new solution.

While there are several reasons why an organization would want to upgrade its corporate travel program, the most common challenges posed by legacy solutions typically fall into a couple of buckets:

- A badly-designed user experience combined with lack of inventory, personalization, and support are causing today's tech-forward travelers to "go rogue," or book outside the company's provided solution.

- If travelers don't adopt the solution, program managers lose visibility into travel spend and trends, and therefore aren't able to maintain control or optimize programs and policies.

BECAUSE THE CONSUMER BOOKING EXPERIENCE IS BETTER THAN THE VAST MAJORITY OF CORPORATE TOOLS, 50% OF TODAY'S BUSINESS TRAVELERS GO ROGUE.

Example Goal 1: Drive traveler adoption to increase visibility...

50% of traveling employees don't use the corporate travel solution provided by their companies.

Without adoption, companies have zero visibility into what their road warriors are spending, or where they are at any given time. As a result, one important objective for those managing corporate travel programs is to drive improved traveler adoption.

Why aren't travelers using the tools given to them by the organizations they work for? In today's digital-first era, many legacy corporate travel tools simply aren't keeping up with their counterparts in the consumer travel space. Used to the mobile apps, personalized search results, and wealth of choice available in their off-the-clock travels, today's road warriors don't want to spend an an hour or more endlessly scrolling through options that don't suit their needs and preferences.

IN A RECENT TRIPACTIONS SURVEY, THE **#1 FRUSTRATION TRAVELERS HAD WITH A COMPANY TOOL WAS LACK OF INVENTORY,** FOLLOWED BY THE TIME SPENT BOOKING — **83% OF THOSE SURVEYED SAID IT TAKES THEM OVER AN HOUR TO BOOK A BUSINESS TRIP.**

It's important to consider that employees don't always think about spending company money the same way as they do their own. In our survey, **respondents considered price last after factors like flight times or a hotel's star rating when booking company travel.**

Another obstacle is the serious lack of support that comes with so many of today's travel programs — TripActions' 2018 business traveler survey revealed that **64% of travelers feel they have to fend for themselves when something goes wrong** on the road, and only **8% said their travel agent proactively reached out if plans changed unexpectedly.**

The goal, then, is to increase adoption by improving the end-to-end traveler experience. If your travelers aren't bogged down by the provided tools and processes, feel they have the support they need should something go awry, and are empowered to make the decisions that are best for both themselves and the organization, they're more likely to book and travel in policy with the solution provided.

MANY FORWARD-THINKING ORGANIZATIONS ARE GETTING IN FRONT OF 'ROGUE' BEHAVIOR ALTOGETHER BY OFFERING EMPLOYEES INCENTIVES FOR BOOKING MORE COST-EFFECTIVE LODGING.

REWARDS SUCH AS GIFT CARDS, PERSONAL TRAVEL, OR TRAVEL UPGRADES ARE GENUINELY EXCITING TO EARN, AND **EMPLOYEES ARE ENCOURAGED TO BE MORE CONSCIOUS ABOUT SPENDING ON THE COMPANY DIME WHEN THEY'RE GIVEN A SHARE OF THE SAVINGS.** WHEN MORE EMPLOYEES ARE INCENTIVIZED TO BOOK IN ONE CENTRALIZED PLACE, **BUSINESSES HAVE BETTER VISIBILITY INTO AND CONTROL OVER TOTAL TRAVEL SPEND AND SAVINGS.**

Example Goal 2: And then optimize your travel spend.

Once they've conquered the adoption problem and can collect all the data, many travel program managers are then faced with the question of how to best surface, understand, and utilize that data. By tackling this challenge, they're better equipped to optimize spend, influence traveler behavior, and ultimately, see more success with the overall program to help drive company growth.

The ultimate goal here is three-fold. To get the most out of your program, you should ideally be able to:

- **Identify trends to intelligently iterate policy:** Once you get visibility into what, where, when, and how your travelers are booking, you can easily identify ways to curb unnecessary spend and create new policies that take behavior into account.

- **Generate dynamic policies with smarter tech:** With AI and machine learning-driven technology powering your road warriors' searches and bookings, you can take into account variables such as locations and dates to match each individual trip with its own dynamic policy.

- **Enjoy cost-effective supplier relationships:** Pull reports and identify the trends that will help you negotiate better rates with your most utilized airlines, lodgings, and other suppliers.

Other potential objectives might include providing better duty of care, improved reporting capabilities, streamlined travel expensing, or enhancing road warrior wellness.

As you work on your business case presentation, you'll want to be as clear as possible about how you expect to implement positive change across the organization and solve your and others' particular business travel-related challenges.

First, you'll need to **get cross-functional buy-in** from anyone whose role is affected by business travel, and then **compile a wishlist of features that** — if implemented — would ease everyone's pain points.

Who to include:

Travel

Start with the dedicated travel team if you have one at your organization. A more user-friendly tool will drive more adoption, thereby providing more visibility into spend along with better duty of care. And because it's keeping track of all company travel, it will also offer robust reporting capabilities and prove true program ROI.

Get your travel team onboard:

- If you can find a traveler-friendly solution that employees will actually use and even like, we're sure your travel team will be all ears.

- It's crucial that travel managers are able to provide duty of care for all of the organization's travelers, so a solution that makes it easy to do so will be a hit.

- A solution that lets travel managers build in requirements to set dynamic policies will free up their time for other important to-dos.

- Finance will likely be a fan of a solution they can count on to work without much oversight.

Finance

Your finance team will find value in solving both of the above challenges. As it's such a large item in the overall company budget, they of course want to optimize travel spend where they can. And in order to save on travel, they need visibility into what, where, and with which suppliers your travelers are booking.

Get your finance team onboard:

- Showcase how your desired solution will result in increased policy compliance and cost savings.

- Hone in on how more traveler adoption means more visibility into travel spend — overall, by cost center, and even by individual traveler.

- Three words: Credit card reconciliation. If you can confidently promise one-click reconciliation, you'll be in good shape to move your business case forward.

- Finance will likely be a fan of a solution they can set and forget without much oversight.

ON AVERAGE, TRAVEL AMOUNTS TO 10% OF OVERALL COMPANY SPEND.

Human Resources

The team responsible for your company's people will love the idea of bringing in a travel solution that makes road warriors happier, calmer, and more productive on the road.

Get your HR team onboard:

- Showcase a solution that makes it easy for candidates to book their own flights and lodging within your company's policy perimeters.

- HR will appreciate an agile travel program that can reflect the company culture as the team continuously grows and scales.

- Demonstrate how this upgrade will improve the overall employee experience, helping to attract new talent and retain your current workforce.

80% OF TRAVELERS FEEL MORE EXCITED ABOUT THEIR JOBS AFTER A BUSINESS TRIP, AND 90% VIEW TRAVELING FOR WORK AS A PERK.

Travelers

To drive adoption and see the desired results, you should make sure the employees who actually have to use the travel solution and adhere to your policies are onboard.

Get your business travelers onboard:

- Providing the vast inventory and technology-driven personalization found on consumer sites will keep travelers in your booking experience (and a solution with a mobile app goes a long way, too).

- A solution that offers proactive 24/7 365 live human traveler support will help make business travel a simple and seamless experience for your road warriors.

- By combining a user-friendly experience with flexibility and choice, we can all but guarantee you'll hit a home run with your organization's travelers.

By including the right stakeholders across the business in your corporate travel upgrade initiative, you'll get the buy-in you need to better vet vendors, strengthen your case, and start drafting your presentation.

Define your corporate travel solution wish-list.

What corporate travel management pain points do you want to solve? Building a wish-list upfront will help you in your search for the right solution for your business. Here are some examples of what you might want to include:

The solution surfaces a wide range of inventory across flights, lodging, cars, and rail:

✓ It connects to a variety of technology integrators to offer all available inventory at the best prices.

✓ It displays all available flight and fare details across suppliers in a way that's easy to understand.

✓ It lets travelers book every aspect of their trip in one place.

The solution takes both personalization and policy into account:

✓ AI and machine learning-enabled technology learns from travelers' preferred suppliers, loyalty clubs, and more to surface the options most likely to be booked from the get-go.

✓ By taking information such as date range and location into account, it can calculate the fair market price for each individual search and make it easy for travelers to see what's in and out of policy.

✓ It offers a variety of filters so road warriors can easily search for the options that best suit their needs and preferences.

The solution offers full visibility and robust reporting:

✓ It gives you more visibility into traveler behavior and trends by driving adoption with a user-friendly experience, a mobile app, vast inventory selection, incentivized booking, and always-on proactive support.

✓ It offers visibility into all your travelers' whereabouts at any given time so you can provide better duty of care.

✓ It lets you track spend across travelers, departments, and cost centers, and set up real-time dashboards that visualize the data most relevant to your business.

✓ It allows you to easily report on your program results — from top-saving departments to NPS scores — to demonstrate the solution's impact on your bottom line, employee satisfaction, and more.

FORECAST THE ROI.

Upgrading your corporate travel program will help you cut down costs, increase revenue, and increase road warrior satisfaction. Here are a couple of ways to predict what concrete results you might see with a corporate travel program upgrade:

TRAVEL SPEND

[(Annual Spend - X% Predicted Savings) - (# of Trips/Year)(Cost Per Booking) - Program Cost] - Annual Spend = Total Savings

LOST PRODUCTIVITY COSTS:

[Time Spent Booking (ex. 1+ Hours) + Time Spent Supporting Travelers When Something Goes Wrong] - [Time to Book on an Upgraded Solution + Time Spent on Support with an Upgraded Solution]

TRAVELER SATISFACTION:

% of Travelers Who Do Use The Provided Solution

How to vet prospective solutions.

1. **Identify your executive champion:** Getting a decision maker on your side from the beginning will help you move through the steps more seamlessly.

2. **Prepare to vet your top contenders:** Draft your corporate travel solution RFP and send it out to your preferred vendors to jumpstart the evaluation process.

3. **Identify the potential Achilles heel for each vendor:** Be aware of what problem areas you might run into with each potential solution, and the impact those weaknesses might have on your overall travel program and organization.

4. **Ask for references:** The best way to see what kind of success your travel program upgrade will bring is to ask those who have already invested in the solutions you're looking at implementing.

5. **Determine and show the potential range of business outcomes:** Be prepared to speak on the potential benefits you might see from the best case scenario with each vendor, along with the consequences of the worst case.

Best Practices For Building Your Case.

A few important things to consider as you prep for your presentation:

- To make sure nothing's lost in translation and all questions are answered in front of the entire group, try to get everyone in the same room at the same time.

- To ensure your attendees remain focused and engaged, don't schedule your presentation at lunchtime or the tail end of the day.

- Prep your decision makers with all the right documentation and information — and the agenda — before you present.

- Have concrete numbers ready to rock and roll so you can prove you've done your homework and are thinking of the impact on the business first and foremost.

How to present your business case:

- The best way to format your presentation is by telling the story with slides (we suggest using your branded template in Google Slides or PowerPoint). Start by covering your overarching goals and expected outcomes, highlight 2-3 vendors, and wrap up by outlining your recommendation along with forecasted ROI.

- Keep your presentation short and focused, and as you plan your slide content, be sure to leave ample time for Q&A at the end.

- Specify your proposed timelines and action items at the end of your meeting, and send a followup email that clearly lays out next steps for each attendee.

GO FORTH AND MAKE YOUR CASE!

With this handy ebook as your guide, you're now well-equipped to make your rock-solid business case for a corporate travel upgrade.

To learn even more on how to successfully upgrade your travel program to increase traveler engagement, visibility, and control, get in touch with the TripActions team of travel experience experts.

At TripActions, we believe being there in person is powerful. It enables employees to build relationships, close deals and drive growth. Fast becoming the default for corporate travel, TripActions is the modern business travel platform that combines the latest AI-driven technologies with unrivaled flight, lodging and rental car choice and 24x7 365 live human support to delight employees, finance leaders and travel managers alike—all while empowering organizations to seize travel as a strategic lever for growth.

Delivered within a powerful, easy-to-use mobile-first interface, TripActions helps over 2,000 customers globally—including WeWork, Aston Martin, Lyft, Expensify, Dropbox, SurveyMonkey, Sara Lee Frozen Bakery and the ACLU—reduce average booking time from 60 minutes down to six while achieving an unprecedented 90% traveler adoption, 95% traveler satisfaction and up to 34% savings on lodging alone.

The future of business travel has arrived. Power your organization's growth and delight your employees with TripActions. Let's go! Learn more at **tripactions.com** or on the **TripActions blog**.