

# Integrys Energy Group

## INDUSTRIES

Energy

## GEOGRAPHIES

North America

## TRAVEL MANAGEMENT COMPANY

Travel Leaders

## CHALLENGES

- Manage a growing travel budget after multiple mergers and acquisitions
- Maintain employee satisfaction while driving down spend

## SOLUTION

After a rigorous RFP process involving the comparison of numerous booking tools, Integrys Energy Group partnered with Travel Leaders and implemented the Rearden Personal Assistant. The Personal Assistant's superior user experience led to a 70 percent adoption rate in the first eight months, which provided Rick Seymour, the travel manager at Integrys Group, visibility into the company's overall T&E spend. In just eight months he was able to reduce spend by 10 percent and begin implementing ancillary travel services such as dining.

Continue on to read the entire travel manager profile as featured in Business Travel News, by Seth Harris.

## Profiles In Travel Management: Midwestern Energy Firm Amps Nascent Travel Program

SETH HARRIS

*Business Travel News* – 02/02/09

Newly formed energy and utility company Integrys Energy Group, created through the merger of several Midwestern firms, in a matter of months contracted with a travel management company, implemented an online booking tool, formed a preferred supplier program and launched various support technologies to form a comprehensive travel management structure.

The Chicago-based company has consolidated its travel expenditures, which now total about \$2 million, and expects to save more than \$200,000 in the year following the March 2008 launch of its program.

Already the two-year-old company's corporate card coordinator, travel buying responsibilities fell on the shoulders of Rick Seymour, who realized the potential of an online booking component in the developing program. "We came from a program where there really was nothing," said Seymour. "People were going to Orbitz or Travelocity and booking whatever they wanted to or going directly to the airlines. There is no way of having a controlled spend when that happens."

After creating a travel task force to review bids, including operating unit and administrative assistant representation, the company consolidated its agency services with what is now Minnesota-based Travel Leaders and launched the Rearden Commerce Personal Assistant as its preferred online booking tool.

With senior management support, Seymour used messages in the company newspaper, hyperlinks on departmental intranets, e-mails and in-person training sessions to communicate with administrative assistants, who ran seminars with travelers.

Online booking adoption is at more than 70 percent, said Seymour, who reports through the supply chain organization. "People are used to booking online," he said. "It was a matter of habit."

Until this month, employees were limited to booking air, car and hotel reservations using the Rearden tool. "We were starting out with a brand-new program and we didn't want to hit them with everything. That would have really thrown them for a loop," Seymour said.

The company now has opened such ancillary booking features as dining reservations, and leverages Rearden's relationship with Rewards Network for rebates and discounts at restaurants.

With support from Integrys' IT team, the company is integrating the Rearden tool with its enterprise e-mail and calendar systems.

Seymour also implemented a series of preferred supplier programs, including a preferred carrier deal with Northwest Airlines, and saved \$45,000 on hotel spending alone by aggressively paring properties used in key cities and configuring the online booking tool accordingly. In such key operating cities as Chicago, Green Bay and Milwaukee, Integrys tries to have only two or three preferred properties, Seymour said.

Integrays holds accrued frequent flyer miles and redistributes them when applicable for further air program savings. The company saved \$10,000 by using unused-ticket-tracking technology, with assistance from its travel management company.

Seymour also led the consolidation of a corporate card program, which he said is key for departments adapting to new travel budgets and reporting. JPMorgan Chase issues MasterCard to about 2,000 Integrays cardholders.

Seymour plans to obtain even stronger preferred supplier programs using a full year's comprehensive, accurate spending data in March. "We can go to our preferred airlines," he said, "and say, 'We really know that we spent this much with you. We have it here in black and white. Before, we had a pretty good idea, but here is a report that shows you the marketshare your airline has with us.'"

### **Integrays Energy Group**

Integrays Energy Group is a holding company focused on regulated and non-regulated energy delivery in the United States and Canada. Our subsidiaries and people are creating a premier and growing energy company.

### **Business Travel News**

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