

CASE STUDY



BFC SOLUTIONS SIMPLIFIES TRAVEL PROGRAM WITH VIRTUAL CARDS

BACKGROUND

BFC Solutions is the largest preventative maintenance service provider for commercial HVAC systems in the United States. They have nearly 500 employees and provide services at over 150,000 sites.

Typically, travel reservations for employees of BFC Solutions are booked only 2-3 hours before they're set to check in. Workers occasionally encountered issues on the job, requiring them to stay onsite longer than anticipated. The unpredictability of last-minute requests made managing employee travel extremely difficult.

Jessica Kolb, Manager of Fleet Administration at BFC, tried many different solutions to make travel easier for her employees, but had little success. Prepaid cards ran out of funds because of the traveler's extended stays. Direct bills were sent at inconvenient times or during a slow business season, and credit cards would go over authorization limits. They set up a call-center and hired four new employees, however that wasn't efficient because they only spent a half a day booking travel.

BFC was also challenged with finding a payment method for their 250-350 warehouses across the US. They used one form of payment for all locations and unfortunately the exposure was so great, the payment method was frequently compromised and delayed vendor payments. On average, their payments process was taking four days to complete.

Jessica knew BFC needed a simplified travel program, so they decided to onboard Direct Travel, a Travel Management company (TMC). After learning the pain points of BFC's other solutions, Direct Travel recommended Corporate Spending Innovations (CSI), one of their partners. CSI offered a one-time use virtual credit card, so each reservation is booked and paid for in the exact amount of the reservation.

"I knew what it was like dealing with hotels over the phone, so I had my doubts that CSI could streamline the entire process," remembers Kolb. "I wasn't 100% sold but we were willing to try."

SOLUTION

In an effort to completely restructure their travel program, BFC solutions decided to implement three new programs simultaneously - Direct Travel (TMC), Deem (Booking tool), and CSI Travel (Virtual payment solution). Setting up all programs at the same time allowed BFC to quickly correct issues they noticed across all platforms.

"We wanted to just 'rip the band aid off' and get all solutions up and running at once," said Kolb. "We had a very small window to operate in, so it was very important that all three pieces of the process work together seamlessly."

"What helped the process during the implementation stage, was the CSI Account Manager and Sales Rep were always readily available to address any questions or concerns."

RESULTS

BFC Solutions has been using CSI Travel for almost 2 years. Each traveler now books their own reservation within the parameters BFC has established through Deem and Direct Travel. A virtual card is created automatically for each reservation within the CSI User Platform. Over the years, Jessica learned what her travelers needed to have a successful trip and created a streamlined process for a seamless check-in. BFC has also been able use special reporting fields with unique identifiers to help with their reconciliation process.

"Reconciliations didn't really happen before," added Kolb. "We had to take a percentage of what we had and move on. With the new processes, we have all of the information we need, line by line and traveler by traveler. It's more than we expected, and we are able to easily track our results."

"One-time use virtual cards eliminated our exposure of warehouse payments, and we reduced the time it takes to process travel payments to one day. We couldn't be happier with the solution."