

A photograph of a large commercial airplane on a runway, viewed from a low angle. The plane is in the process of taking off or landing, with a significant amount of white smoke or steam trailing from its engines. The runway is lined with colorful lights (red, green, blue) in the distance. The sky is overcast.

Reducing the cost of air travel

With focus among travel manager's still firmly set on reducing a company's business travel costs, there are two essential elements that need to be considered to help realise air savings opportunities:

Flexibility – when choosing ticket types, departure times and locations.

Forward Planning – to achieve the most cost effective travel itineraries.

By planning in advance, being flexible with ticket selection and having a stringent corporate policy, air travel costs can be significantly reduced.

Restricted Tickets

Considerable savings can be achieved by booking a restricted ticket rather than a flexible ticket.

Although it can sometimes be daunting booking a restricted ticket a long way in advance, in many cases the savings achieved are so great that any change fees incurred are offset by saved amount.

Saturday Night Stopover

On occasions the cost of an air ticket can be considerably cheaper if it includes a Saturday night stopover. You must ensure though that the extra cost of the hotel and dinner is still cheaper than the saving opportunity.

Avoid Peak Times

Be flexible in the time you book your meeting. Airfares are generally higher when departing during peak times (0800–1000 & 1700–1900).

Travelling on a Tuesday, Wednesday or Thursday can often prove more cost effective and where possible avoid Monday mornings and Friday afternoons.

Combine Trips

Think ahead when planning business trips. Can you combine trips to reduce the cost of travel? If you are planning International trips try combining the trips into a multiple air itinerary as this can often work out a lot cheaper than paying for two return trips.

Advance Purchase

Encourage your travel bookers to book as far in advance as possible to maximise savings potential. The cost of an air ticket generally becomes more expensive closer to the day of travel.

Alternative Departure Airports

Flexibility in departure airport can often lead to savings opportunities as long as this saving isn't offset by the additional transfer costs.

Airline Loyalty

Does your company have a preferred airline? If so ensure all travellers are enrolled on the airline's loyalty scheme to take advantage of promotional upgrades and special offers.

Class of Travel

Is it imperative to travel in business class? Consider the savings that Premium Economy or Economy can deliver.

Compare 'web airlines'

Include web airlines in any applicable fare searches to ensure you are achieving the best possible fare.

Do be sure to check out what additional costs are incurred though (speedy boarding, baggage check etc) as these can often heavily impact the total flight cost.

Connecting or Indirect Flights

Is it possible to take a connecting or indirect flight via another airport? Indirect flights can often work out a lot cheaper than paying for a direct alternative.