The Cruise Report Card for Travel Agents

The Resource for Agents on Ocean Line Policies



2016/2017

travelmarket report

Voice of the Travel Professional


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PARTICIPATING SUPPLIERS

Carnival · Celebrity Cruises · Costa Cruises · Crystal Cruises · MSC Cruises · Norwegian Cruise Line · Oceania Cruises · Paul Gauguin Cruises · Regent Seven Seas Cruises · Royal Caribbean International · Silversea · Viking Ocean Cruises · Windstar Cruises

LETTER *FROM THE EDITOR*

2016/2017

DEAR TRAVEL AGENT,

Welcome to the first *Travel Market Report* Supplier Report Card, our close look at the practices of travel industry suppliers.

At the specific behest of our editorial advisory board, and speaking for travel agents everywhere, our series of Report Cards will seek out information about how the major suppliers in each sector of our industry interact with travel professionals. We've started with one of the most important sectors of all, the ocean cruise lines.

Our goal is to give you an easy, factual way to look up whatever you need to know about any supplier; the policies and procedures of the various suppliers regarding travel agents and consumers; and the companies who are most supportive of the travel agent channel.

Through the 13 charts laid out in the following pages, we hope to have provided you with a resource you can use when dealing with your clients, and a side-by-side comparison of which cruise lines truly have your best interests in mind.

Though not all cruise lines opted to participate in the project, we feel that the Report Card includes all the lines who truly consider you to be their most important partners, and who feel comfortable showing you what they have to offer next to their biggest competitors. We hope you agree.





We invite you to take a look, and to keep a copy close at hand during your day-to-day dealings with clients and suppliers. As your advocate, *Travel Market Report* always aims to do whatever we can to keep you well informed, and we hope this Report Card continues in that tradition.

Sincerely,
Dan McCarthy, *Senior Editor*
Cheryl Rosen, *Editor-in-Chief*



SALES PERCENTAGE

Despite an increase in online bookings in other segments of the industry, travel agents continue to be the most important distribution channel for cruise lines everywhere. Here's what cruise lines had to say about how much of their sales come from agents:

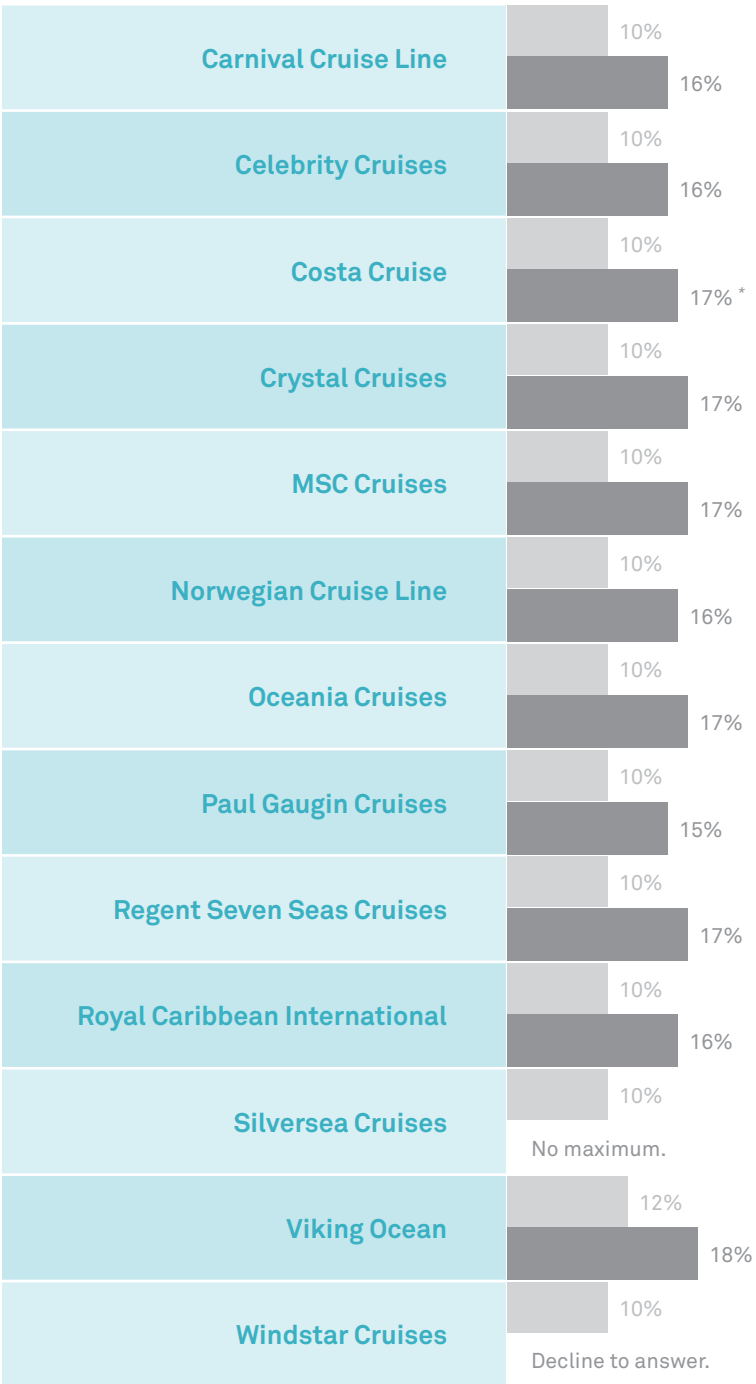
sales percentage

Q:	What percentage of your sales are from travel agents?
Carnival Cruise Line	Decline to answer.
Celebrity Cruises	Vast majority
Costa Cruise	Over 90%
Crystal Cruises	Crystal has one of the highest percentages of business from travel agents of any cruise line.
MSC Cruises	80%
Norwegian Cruise Line	Vast majority
Oceania Cruises	95%
Paul Gaugin Cruises	90%
Regent Seven Seas Cruises	High 80%
Royal Caribbean International	Vast majority
Silversea Cruises	80%-85%
Viking Ocean	The majority of Viking's business comes from travel agents.
Windstar Cruises	Travel agents are Windstar's largest and most important distribution channel.

commission percentage

Q:

- What is your base commission percentage?
- Is there a maximum commision percentage you pay? If so, what is it?



** Plus tactical promotions with bonus commission.*



commission types	Base Cruise Fare	Government Taxes	Ancillary Services	Spa Services	Dining Packages	Shore Excursions
Carnival Cruise Line	YES	NO	DECLINE TO ANSWER	NO	NO	NO
Celebrity Cruises	YES	NO	NO	NO	NO	YES 6
Costa Cruise	YES	NO	NO	NO	NO	YES
Crystal Cruises	YES	NO	SOME	NO	NOT OFFERED	YES 4
MSC Cruises	YES	NO	YES 3	YES 3	YES 3	YES 3
Norwegian Cruise Line	YES	NO	NO	NO	NO	YES 6
Oceania Cruises	YES	YES 4	NO	NO	NO	NO
Paul Gaugin Cruises	YES	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO
Regent Seven Seas Cruises	YES	NO	NO	NO	YES 4	YES 4
Royal Caribbean International	YES	NO	NO	NO	NO	YES 7
Silversea Cruises	YES	NO	NO	NO	NOT OFFERED	NO
Viking Ocean	YES	YES	YES	YES	NOT OFFERED	YES
Windstar Cruises	YES	NO	YES 5	NO	NOT OFFERED	NO

CRUISE COMMISSIONS

So much more goes into a cruise vacation than just the base cruise fare — and the add-ons on ocean cruises often add up to much more than the fare itself. While it's always an agent's job to cater to the client's needs, it does help to know which cruise lines reward you for the hard work and time it takes to turn a cruise into a memory that lasts a lifetime. Here's an outline of which suppliers pay commissions on which products, from government taxes to insurance:

1 *Depending on the service provided. For example, should a client need to rent a mobility scooter, etc., for the cruise, a commission would be paid by Special Needs Group, but not NCL.*

2 *If clients purchase a bundle package that includes air and/or hotel, transfers, etc.*

3 *If pre-booked and pre-paid*

4 *Included in cruise fare*

5 *On select packages*

6 *On group bookings*

7 *If booked through RCI*

8 *Indirectly*

9 *When pre-purchased*

Port Charges	Insurance	Gratuities	Transfers	Airfare	Hotel Accommodations	Pre- & Post-Trip Tours	Other	
NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO		
NO	YES	NO	SOMETIMES	SOMETIMES	SOMETIMES	SOMETIMES		
NO	YES	NO	NO	DECLINE TO ANSWER	YES	DECLINE TO ANSWER	DRINK PACKAGES	
NO	YES	YES 4	YES 4	NO	VARIES	VARIES		
NO	YES 3	NO	YES 3	YES 3	YES 3	YES 3		
NO	YES	NO	NO	NO	YES	YES 5		
NO	YES	NO	NO	YES 4	NO	NO		
NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	YES	YES		
NO	YES	YES 4	YES 4	NO	YES	YES		
NO	YES	NO	NO	YES 8	YES	YES		
NO	YES	YES 4	YES	YES	YES	YES		
YES	YES	NO	YES	YES	YES	YES		
DECLINE TO ANSWER	YES	NO	NO	NO	YES 9	YES	DRINK PACKAGES & UNLIMITED INTERNET	

CRUISE ACCREDITATION

While all of the cruise lines accept Cruise Lines International Association accreditation, many travel professionals are accredited by ARC, IATAN and ASTA. Here's who accepts what:

1 *With proof of CLIA, ARC or IATAN*

2 *Not required*

3 *With copy of appointment letter*

4 *Need copy of TICO license or GST, not ACTA membership, although we encourage same*

5 *Any agency with a W-9 and business license qualifies to be a new vendor*

6 *TRUE, ABTA, ATOL, ABN, ABTA, TTA, Travel Business License or Seller of Travel License*

7 *Business and tax ID*

8 *TRUE, TICO, Tour Operators – (ABA, NTA, USTOA, OMCA, UMA, IMG)*

cruise accreditation	CLIA	ARC	IATAN	ACTA	ASTA	Consortium Affiliation	Other
Carnival Cruise Line	YES	YES	YES	NO	NO	YES	6
Celebrity Cruises	YES 2	YES 2	YES 2	NO	NO	NO	
Costa Cruise	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	7
Crystal Cruises	YES	YES	YES	NO	NO	NO	TRUE
MSC Cruises	YES	YES	YES	NO	NO	NO	
Norwegian Cruise Line	YES	YES	YES	NO	NO	NO	8
Oceania Cruises	YES	YES	YES	YES 1	YES 1	YES 1	
Paul Gaugin Cruises	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	
Regent Seven Seas Cruises	YES	NO	NO	YES	YES	NO	5
Royal Caribbean International	YES 2	YES 2	YES 2	NO	NO	NO	
Silversea Cruises	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	TRUE
Viking Ocean	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	
Windstar Cruises	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES 1	TRUE


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JUNE 2017
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PLUS New & Improved EZ Groups program*
• Discounted group rates & waived deposit
• 10% commission on pre-paid excursions
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EZ GROUPS
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COMMISSION SCHEDULE

Few things are more troubling for agents than having to track down commission checks that are due them. Most of the cruise lines maintain a strict schedule for paying agents their fair share.

commission schedule

Q:	What is your schedule for paying travel agents commission?
Carnival Cruise Line	Weekly schedule for commissions earned. For individual bookings, this occurs once payment is made against the full gross amount. For group bookings, commission is paid seven days after bookings sail return date.
Celebrity Cruises	Base commission is paid when booking is paid in full.
Costa Cruise	Prior to sailing.
Crystal Cruises	Two weeks before sailing.
MSC Cruises	For FIT bookings, once final payment is received and for group bookings, up to 2 weeks post-cruise.
Norwegian Cruise Line	As soon as final payment is made, the commission is automatically sent one week later.
Oceania Cruises	30 days prior to sailing.
Paul Gaugin Cruises	Decline to answer.
Regent Seven Seas Cruises	Commissions are issued starting at 30 days prior to sailing.
Royal Caribbean International	Base commission is paid when booking is paid in full.
Silversea Cruises	Approximately 14 days prior to sailing.
Viking Ocean	29 days prior to departure date.
Windstar Cruises	Commissions begin processing the week that the cruise departs and are generally received by agents 2-3 weeks post-cruise departure.

OVERBOOKING

Overbooking continues to be a major issue in all segments of the travel industry. While many of the lines questioned said they don't book over capacity, some still do. Here's the rundown:

overbooking

Q:	Do you overbook? If so, how do you handle commissions?
Carnival Cruise Line	Decline to answer.
Celebrity Cruises	No, we do not overbook.
Costa Cruise	No, we do not overbook.
Crystal Cruises	Yes. At our discretion, we may overbook to maximize inventory utilization. Commission will be paid according to the category paid by the guest.
MSC Cruises	No, we manage to the ship's capacity.
Norwegian Cruise Line	We conservatively and smartly manage our inventory based on past booking trends and current market conditions.
Oceania Cruises	Yes, commission is paid on sailed business.
Paul Gaugin Cruises	No, we do not overbook.
Regent Seven Seas Cruises	Yes, commissions are protected.
Royal Caribbean International	No, we do not overbook.
Silversea Cruises	Decline to answer.
Viking Ocean	Yes. Viking does minimal overbooking and travel agents have never and will not lose commission due to overbooking.
Windstar Cruises	Not currently.

NON-COMMISSIONABLE FEES

No cruise line surveyed pays agents commission on every single item in which they play a role. Here's what cruise lines don't pay agents for:

non-commissionable fees

Q:	Do you offer products & services to consumers that aren't commissionable to travel agents?	What services and products are included in your non-commissionable fees?
Carnival Cruise Line	YES	Decline to answer.
Celebrity Cruises	YES	Decline to answer.
Costa Cruise	YES	Ancillary services.
Crystal Cruises	YES	Air and shore excursions on *Crystal Symphony* and *Serenity.*
MSC Cruises	YES	Anything purchased onboard.
Norwegian Cruise Line	Rarely. Commissions are protected.	Decline to answer.
Oceania Cruises	YES	Decline to answer.
Paul Gaugin Cruises	YES	Shore excursions and air.
Regent Seven Seas Cruises	YES	Airfare, government fees and taxes, Regent Choice excursions and certain onboard services.
Royal Caribbean International	YES	Decline to answer.
Silversea Cruises	YES	Silversea provided shipboard credits, shore excursions reserved in advance and specialty restaurants.
Viking Ocean	NO	Viking doesn't nickel and dime our guests or our travel partners.
Windstar Cruises	YES	Onboard purchases and pre-purchased shore excursions.









MSC CRUISES INTRODUCES THE EZ GROUPS PROGRAM: Groups Booking Made Easy

Booking groups with MSC Cruises has never been easier. The Swiss-based cruise line has singlehandedly created a new and improved program designed to make doing business with MSC Cruises much more efficient, smoother and a lot easier. This groundbreaking program suitably named EZ Groups will not only make group bookings comprehensive but it will also have the ability to increase the number of group bookings made.

With the implementation of simpler features and an innovative user friendly layout, affinity & promotional groups can now create customizable and valuable experiences for group clients.

DISCOUNTED GROUP RATES & AMENITY POINTS

Features and benefits of EZ Groups include earning up to 8 Amenity points. Agents can choose from a list of amenities to add extra perks to their group for their clients or for themselves. Amenity points are determined by sailing date, itinerary & season and are listed on the group rate sheets. There are competitive discount group rates available locking in the best price which are lower than the prevailing FIT rate. With EZ Groups, there is now a consistent program for the over 150 destinations we visit. The pricing structure, amenity points & amenity menu and more are now the same for all Caribbean and Mediterranean sailings making it a lot easier to book based on your group clients travel preferences.

In an effort to reward agents, MSC has also updated the Amenity master advantage points menu adding even more value to your group. Agents can choose from reduced tour conductor requirements, stateroom gifts, shipboard credit, stateroom discounts, bonus commission, cocktail parties and more. The best part is these amenity points are now available on *www.msccruisesagent.com/groups.* Before completing your group request, agents can now download all of the information needed right from the MSC Cruises agent website.

WAIVED DEPOSITS ON GROUPS

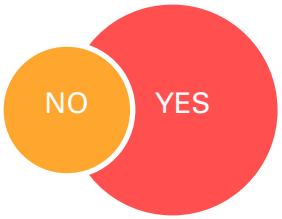
The benefits get better. For groups of 16 staterooms or less, the initial good faith deposit will be waived. Additionally, FIT bookings can be transferred into an existing group at the contracted group rates while the group rate is available. If group rate is no longer available, FIT bookings may be transferred while maintaining the higher FIT rate. In all cases, group amenities will be applied. Also, if the standard group rates are reduced, existing groups will be matched to the new lower group rates.

CONSUMER PROTECTION ON AMENITIES

Because your clients rely on you to provide the best service and industry perks, MSC's EZ Groups program has consumer protection for amenities where features such as shipboard credit & stateroom gifts, are protected down to the first booking you made in your group.

EZ Groups is now available and applies to all new groups on Caribbean & European sailings starting with April 2017 sailings — including our two new builds debuting next year, *MSC Meraviglia* & *MSC Seaside.* Experience for yourself easier groups booking with MSC's EZ Groups.

90% *of cruise lines surveyed have a travel agent section on their website.*



1 *Plus tactical promotions with bonus commission.*
2 *Only if they're part of the coop program.*
3 *Not encouraged.*
4 *Based on annual revenue performance.*
5 *Only on 100% penalized bookings.*
6 *May vary slightly, but generally is the same.*
7 *Not currently, but is planned.*
8 *All rates other than Approved Rates require the express written authorization of Carnival before being offered in any media.*
9 *Only for commission overages on a respective booking with this condition.*

website & commissions

	Does your website have a travel agency section that allows agents to register and track bookings and revenue?	Does your website offer white-label solutions for travel agents?
Carnival Cruise Line	NO	YES
Celebrity Cruises	YES	YES
Costa Cruise	YES	YES
Crystal Cruises	YES	NO 7
MSC Cruises	YES	YES
Norwegian Cruise Line	NO	YES
Oceania Cruises	YES (BOOKINGS) NO (REVENUE)	DECLINE TO ANSWER
Paul Gaugin Cruises	YES	NO
Regent Seven Seas Cruises	YES	YES
Royal Caribbean International	YES	YES
Silversea Cruises	YES	YES
Viking Ocean	YES	YES
Windstar Cruises	NO	NO

10 *Qualified partners who complete relevant data, security and technology reviews.*

11 *Must submit an agency check for the net amount prior to the final payment date of booking.*

12 *Only within the cancellation period.*

13 *Only to past guests and we always include a "Contact Your Travel Professional" call to action.*

14 *Agents can offer "Value Adds" such as gift cards, additional onboard credits or other gifts that do not exceed 5% of the gross per person fare.*

15 *If a Travel Partner wishes to pay the net amount due on the booking, they must submit an agency check for the net amount prior to the final payment date of booking. Net payment does not include commission and must be submitted by agency check.*

16 *Travel partner's commissions are protected for bookings that are cancelled within the full cancellation period (100% cancellation penalty).*

17 *If the agency is packaging cruise with land.*

18 *However, they can offer a value add that does not exceed 5% of the cruise.*

19 *A group summary can be requested and it shows commissions.*

20 *For groups.*

Do you currently take consumer email addresses from travel agent bookings to use for direct-to-consumer marketing campaigns?	Do you run promotions to encourage consumers to book their next trip onboard?	When marketing to agency clients, do you include the booking agency's call to action?
YES	YES	YES
NO	YES	YES
NO	YES	YES
YES	YES	YES
NO	YES	YES
YES *13*	YES	YES *13*
NO	YES	YES
YES *13*	YES	YES *2*
NO	YES	YES
NO	YES	YES
NO	YES	YES
YES	YES	YES
YES *13*	NO	NO

*Website and Commission Issues continued on page 18

continued from page 17

1 *Plus tactical promotions with bonus commission.*
2 *Only if they're part of the coop program.*
3 *Not encouraged.*
4 *Based on annual revenue performance.*
5 *Only on 100% penalized bookings.*
6 *May vary slightly, but generally is the same.*
7 *Not currently, but is planned.*
8 *All rates other than Approved Rates require the express written authorization of Carnival before being offered in any media.*
9 *Only for commission overages on a respective booking with this condition.*

website & commissions	If you do direct-to-consumer marketing, do you include a "call your travel agent" call to action all of the time?	Is your commission range different if an agency belongs to a marketing group or consortium?
Carnival Cruise Line	YES	DECLINE TO ANSWER
Celebrity Cruises	YES	YES
Costa Cruise	YES	YES
Crystal Cruises	YES	YES
MSC Cruises	YES	YES
Norwegian Cruise Line	YES	YES
Oceania Cruises	YES	YES
Paul Gaugin Cruises	YES	YES
Regent Seven Seas Cruises	YES	YES
Royal Caribbean International	YES	YES
Silversea Cruises	YES	YES
Viking Ocean	YES	YES
Windstar Cruises	YES	YES

10 *Qualified partners who complete relevant data, security and technology reviews.*

11 *Must submit an agency check for the net amount prior to the final payment date of booking.*

12 *Only within the cancellation period.*

13 *Only to past guests and we always include a "Contact Your Travel Professional" call to action.*

14 *Agents can offer "Value Adds" such as gift cards, additional onboard credits or other gifts that do not exceed 5% of the gross per person fare.*

15 *If a Travel Partner wishes to pay the net amount due on the booking, they must submit an agency check for the net amount prior to the final payment date of booking. Net payment does not include commission and must be submitted by agency check.*

16 *Travel partner's commissions are protected for bookings that are cancelled within the full cancellation period (100% cancellation penalty).*

17 *If the agency is packaging cruise with land.*

18 *However, they can offer a value add that does not exceed 5% of the cruise.*

19 *A group summary can be requested and it shows commissions.*

20 *For groups.*

Do you offer other channels (OTAs, for example) a different commission range?	Do you allow agencies to mark up any cruise fares?	Do you allow agencies to rebate to their clients?
DECLINE TO ANSWER	NO 8	NO 8
NO	NO	NO
NO	YES	YES 3
NO	NO	NO
YES 4	NO	NO
NO	YES 20	NO
NO	YES	NO
NO	NO	NO
NO	YES	NO 14
NO	YES 20	NO
DECLINE TO ANSWER	YES 17	NO 18
NO	NO	NO
NO	YES	YES 3

*Website and Commission Issues continued on page 20

continued from page 19

1 *Plus tactical promotions with bonus commission.*
2 *Only if they're part of the coop program.*
3 *Not encouraged.*
4 *Based on annual revenue performance.*
5 *Only on 100% penalized bookings.*
6 *May vary slightly, but generally is the same.*
7 *Not currently, but is planned.*
8 *All rates other than Approved Rates require the express written authorization of Carnival before being offered in any media.*
9 *Only for commission overages on a respective booking with this condition.*

website & commissions	Can commissions be netted against checks in a weekly summary?	Do you add a surchage on credit cards to cover merchant fees?
Carnival Cruise Line	YES *9*	NO
Celebrity Cruises	YES *11*	NO
Costa Cruise	YES	NO
Crystal Cruises	YES *19*	NO
MSC Cruises	DECLINE TO ANSWER	NO
Norwegian Cruise Line	NO	NO
Oceania Cruises	NO	NO
Paul Gaugin Cruises	YES	NO
Regent Seven Seas Cruises	NO	NO
Royal Caribbean International	YES *15*	NO
Silversea Cruises	DECLINE TO ANSWER	NO
Viking Ocean	NO	NO
Windstar Cruises	NO	NO

10 *Qualified partners who complete relevant data, security and technology reviews.*

11 *Must submit an agency check for the net amount prior to the final payment date of booking.*

12 *Only within the cancellation period.*

13 *Only to past guests and we always include a "Contact Your Travel Professional" call to action.*

14 *Agents can offer "Value Adds" such as gift cards, additional onboard credits or other gifts that do not exceed 5% of the gross per person fare.*

15 *If a Travel Partner wishes to pay the net amount due on the booking, they must submit an agency check for the net amount prior to the final payment date of booking. Net payment does not include commission and must be submitted by agency check.*

16 *Travel partner's commissions are protected for bookings that are cancelled within the full cancellation period (100% cancellation penalty).*

17 *If the agency is packaging cruise with land.*

18 *However, they can offer a value add that does not exceed 5% of the cruise.*

19 *A group summary can be requested and it shows commissions.*

20 *For groups.*

Do you prominently display the agency's name and phone in confirmations and documents?	Do you pay commissions on non-refunded cancellation monies paid?	Do you make your product and prices fully available in all GDSs, B2B websites, call centers, and other portals?
YES	YES	YES *10*
YES	YES *12*	YES
YES (NAME) NO (PHONE NUMBER)	YES	YES
YES	YES	YES
YES	YES	YES
YES	YES	YES
YES	YES *5*	YES
YES	YES	NO
YES	YES	YES
YES	YES *16*	YES
YES	YES	YES
YES	NO	YES
NO	YES	NO *7*



LEARNING TO SELL CRUISES:

TRAINING PROGRAMS STEP UP FOR 2017

By Cheryl Rosen

How do you learn how to sell a complicated, complex product that has hundreds of options, prices, ships, destinations and room classes? Any travel professional will tell you, it's not easy. That explains why the cruise lines have put so much time and thought into their training programs — and why they are still tweaking them as the calendar turns to 2017.

Perhaps the biggest change in the works is at MSC Cruises, which will officially launch its first certification program for MSC Specialists for the new year.

"We're developing a brand new program that will launch in January, just in time for WAVE, which as you know is the busiest time for booking cruises, and a great time for travel agents to get immersed and close those bookings," says executive VP Ken Muskat. "We've always depended on doing webinars and road shows and seminars at sea and ship visits to educate the trade, but having an online, on-demand program that agents can do whenever they want will help us take it to the next level."

Like every good training program, MSC's new program will be "very quick and easy, with interactive videos and a few quiz questions to reinforce what they've learned," Muskat said.

Upon completion of the various modules, travel agents will be eligible for a variety of rewards, though the details have not yet been set, he said.

At the high end of the spectrum, Norwegian's award-winning and well-established NCL University, begun in 2011, also will be tweaking its training offering — which has seen a whopping 14% increase in usage so far this year — for 2017.

It will retain its three-tiered format of core classes, electives and graduate courses, said VP of key accounts Alex Pinelo — but also will "try to simplify the program, add new content, make the courses more succinct and requiring less time for completion, so it will be easier to navigate. And we'll add some new reference materials and some new and exciting features that will roll out throughout 2017."

The core classes cover the basics; the electives are about the various destinations to which Norwegian sails, the ships, The Haven and the suites, accessibility, loyalty programs, meetings and incentives, and weddings and honeymoons. Graduate courses are aimed more at helping agents sell — from social networking skills to marketing. "We want to support our travel partners, to make them better educated on the various components of the industry, to make then better producers for our brand," Pinelo said.

Rewards are generous; specialist program graduates who also book three qualifying cruises get a free cruise for two.

Holland America Line also is adding new courses to its program for 2017. Its HAL Academy Specialist Training Courses series launched in July 2016, and so far more than 1,000 Travel professionals have taken its Alaska and the Yukon: The Great Land = Great Sales for You, course, the company said. The courses, developed in collaboration with industry training expert Dr. Marc Mancini, include a combination of video instruction, reading and interaction, and include downloadable marketing tools.

HAL announced in November that it is adding a "Panama Canal and More' course, which takes just 15 to 20 minutes to complete. It includes information about HAL's Panama Canal cruise and tips on how to uncover the motives of people who take a Panama Canal cruise, to determine which clients are most likely to buy one.

Rewards are generous; specialist program graduates who also book three qualifying cruises get a free cruise for two.

100% *of cruise lines surveyed include a travel agent call-to-action in all of their direct marketing.*

co-op marketing

Q:	Do you provide co-op marketing?	How does an agency qualify?
Carnival Cruise Line	YES	Decline to answer.
Celebrity Cruises	YES	Based on conversation with Celebrity sales manager.
Costa Cruise	YES	We pay 50% on pre-approved campaigns or agents can earn up to 2% of their total sales if contracted.
Crystal Cruises	YES	By contacting their strategic business development manager and providing a market plan that shows viability for both partners to invest fund likely to result in a favorable return on investment for both parties.
MSC Cruises	YES	The agency builds and comes up with an agreed upon marketing plan together with their BDM.
Norwegian Cruise Line	YES	A conversation with a business development manager, illustrating a business plan or a plan against a specific revenue goal, or proven revenue productivity.
Oceania Cruises	YES	Review the opportunity with the local regional sales and marketing director for approval.
Paul Gaugin Cruises	YES	The agency must have at least one agent that has graduated from the Pearls Program to participate in our direct mail program. Also the directors of sales have a co-op budget which enables them to develop marketing plans with individual agencies.
Regent Seven Seas Cruises	YES	Any agency qualifies for co-op marketing, we analyze all plans submitted for effectiveness, however, the decision to participate is managed by our directors of sales and marketing/business development managers using variables such as the medium, target audience, reach and level of agency production.
Royal Caribbean International	YES	The territory strategic account manager and the agency owner review their marketing plan and co-op advertising opportunities and agreed-upon marketing initiatives.
Silversea Cruises	YES	We look at the sales potential of the agency.
Viking Ocean	YES	Agents should contact their director of business development who will assist in creating a marketing plan.
Windstar Cruises	YES	Agencies should submit marketing plans to their regional sales manager for review.



ONBOARD WITH YOU

DEAR TRAVEL AGENT,

If you follow my Facebook page, you know how much I think **TRAVEL AGENTS ROCK!** In fact I believe it so strongly that our team made t-shirts and buttons with the phrase. I wear my button in the office almost every day and have been known to show up to a meeting or two wearing my t-shirt. Thank you to the more than 18,000 of you who are now part of my Facebook community. I am humbled by your support and the momentum we're continuing to build together.

One of the reasons I really enjoy the interaction we have on our Facebook page is because it allows me to keep in touch with thousands of you directly while I'm in the field. The sales team and I enjoy reading your comments, sharing selling tips and discussing trends with you, so thanks to everyone for your continued engagement and feedback!

Our sales team and I are continuously out on the road meeting with travel partners just like you. I'm so proud of our outstanding sales team and their efforts in strengthening our commitment to the trade. We offer agents a sales team that boasts a wealth of experience, and develop impactful travel partner programs so we can collaboratively grow our business together.

I look forward to seeing you in the year ahead – and if we don't have a chance to connect, please send me a shout out on our Facebook page. And most of all, keep rocking!

Warm Regards,

PLEDGE

Carnival is committed to working with travel partners, will be accessible and engaged with the trade, will be focused on helping grow both new and past guest business, will recognize innovative partners and will seek feedback to ensure stronger travel partner relationships.

PROGRAMS

Dozens of award-winning travel agent programs utilized by hundreds of thousands of agents each year are offered to drive business growth and success for travel professionals. Carnival will continue to innovate by introducing new programs as part of "Onboard with You."

PEOPLE

The sales leadership team boasts more than 200 years of combined experience while each Business Development Manager on the Carnival team has been with the company for an average of 16 years. These teams are committed to working with travel agents on supporting their business and helping them grow it.

ONBOARD WITH YOU
TOGETHER WE'RE BETTER

Carnival®
GoCCL.com

Almost 60% of cruise lines surveyed have a referral program for their preferred travel agencies and every single one who does have a program, besides Holland America, bases an agency's inclusion on sailed revenue.

referral program

Q:	Does your website/ company have a travel agency referral program for preferred agencies?	If yes, how do agents get onto the referral/preferred list?
Carnival Cruise Line	Decline to answer.	
Celebrity Cruises	YES	To qualify for this listing, an agency must have a minimum of $5,000 in sailed revenue for the Celebrity Cruises brand during the previous 12 months, and reservations must be booked under their own agency phone number, not a host phone number.
Costa Cruise	NO	
Crystal Cruises	YES	Agents must have $25,000 in sailed revenue in a 12 month period to qualify. With higher levels of revenue production, one can be shown as a Crystal Expert.
MSC Cruises	NO	
Norwegian Cruise Line	YES	If they are registered in Norwegian Central, they will be included.
Oceania Cruises	NO	
Paul Gaugin Cruises	YES	PEARLS Partners selling $25,000 or more in revenue per year are featured.
Regent Seven Seas Cruises	YES	The request would need to be reviewed by the director of sales and marketing. Agencies are considered on level of production and commitment to selling Regent Seven Seas Cruises.
Royal Caribbean International	YES	To qualify for this listing, an agency must have a minimum of $5,000 in sailed revenue, for the Royal Caribbean International brand, during the previous 12 months, and reservations must be booked under their own agency phone number, not a host phone number.
Silversea Cruises	YES	Based on revenue.
Viking Ocean	NO	
Windstar Cruises	NO	

fam trip policy

Q:	What is your fam trip policy for travel agents?
Carnival Cruise Line	Discounted travel agent rates are distributed to all individual travel agents who are signed-up to receive Carnival e-mails (agents may sign-up at GoCCL.com). Rates are subject to availability and are available on a first-come, first-serve basis.
Celebrity Cruises	We have Meet Me Series, which can be arranged with a Celebrity sales manager.
Costa Cruise	We offer multiple trips a year at a reduced rate, some escorted and some not. We also offer a fam reimbursement program where agents earn gift cards for cruises sold within 60 days of their return.
Crystal Cruises	We post agent rate cruise on our agent site year-round.
MSC Cruises	MSC offers seminars at sea multiple times throughout the year as well as ship tours when any of our ships are docked in their homeport. All can be coordinated through the travel agents BDM.
Norwegian Cruise Line	At BDM discretion or offered to travel partners through headquarters. We want every travel partner to experience our product.
Oceania Cruises	We offer travel agent reduced rates and more information can be found in our travel agent center at *https://www.oceaniacruises.com/agent/agent-login/*
Paul Gaugin Cruises	We offer reduced rate travel to industry partners with verification of employment. Confirmation is typically given inside 30 days of sailing.
Regent Seven Seas Cruises	All agent partners may submit requests for reduced rates with confirmation from 30-7 days prior to sailing. Agent rate depends on agency production.
Royal Caribbean International	We have land familiarization events that are planned through the local strategic account manager. Typically an invitation is sent to the travel agency advising them of the fam opportunity. In addition, we provide a Seminar at Sea experience which creates and combines both classroom learning and the cruise experience. Travel agents can partner with their local strategic account manager for an invitation throughout the year.
Silversea Cruises	The travel agent center of our website offers a list of travel agent reduced fares
Viking Ocean	Fam trips are available based on availability and demand. Travel agents can contact their director of business development and/or inside sales for availability.
Windstar Cruises	Windstar regularly offers reduced rates for our travel agent partners. A downloadable PDF of the most current rates as well as the terms and conditions of this offer is available via our Travel Agent Center: *http://www.agentcenter.windstarcruises.com/Default.aspx* In addition, Windstar offers "Star FAM's," which are free cruises and agents only need to pay NDA's, taxes and gratuities.

SILVERSEA®

FOLLOW YOUR CURIOSITY

With 9 intimate ships sailing to over 800 destinations on 7 continents, Silversea can satisfy the curiosity of the most inquisitive traveller. Our ultra-luxury ships can explore secluded harbours where big ships cannot go, providing your clients an all-access experience ashore, while our all-inclusive indulgences can elevate their experience to create the journey of a lifetime. Inspire your clients to wander the world with Silversea and embark on a voyage of discovery.

SILVERSEA'S ALL-INCLUSIVE LIFESTYLE
All-suite Accommodations | Butler Service in Every Suite
Fine Dining Options | Wines and Spirits throughout the ship | Onboard Gratuities

For more information and to reserve your suite, please contact your travel professional, call Silversea at 888.978.4071 or visit Silversea.com





EARN MORE WITH SILVERSEA CRUISES

Today, travellers are as varied as our world. But the enlightened traveller enjoys being inspired by an unsurpassed number of destinations and adventures, being escorted to all seven continents in unsurpassed style, and sailing aboard the most exclusive all-inclusive boutique size ships, complete with butlers in every suite, free internet, and an unrivalled gourmet experience. In other words, they love sailing with Silversea.

These travellers and explorers live life at the pinnacle; they command the absolute best in their vacations, their adventures, their experiences, their cuisine, their entertainment, their accommodations, and of course, their memories. When it comes to meeting and exceeding these travellers' exacting standards, no cruise line is better equipped than Silversea.

Only Silversea goes to all seven continents, visiting over 800 captivating destinations. Silversea is also the only cruise line to offer both classic voyages and expedition itineraries. Travellers choosing Silversea's classic voyages will see the world from one of nine vessels, ranging from only 296 guests to 596 guests on our new flagship Silver Muse, arriving April, 2017. Expedition voyagers explore the far reaches of the planet from the comfort and luxury from one of four specially equipped vessels. These smaller 100- to 260-guest ships are specially designed so they can get closer to Earth's rarely seen treasures, and they are staffed with expert marine biologists, ornithologists, anthropologists, botanists, and the like – turning excursions into involving, not-to-be-missed experiences.

Making the experience carefree, Silversea voyages are all-inclusive Gratuities, room service, select wines, premium spirits, and many other beverages are always included.

Adding to the pampering experience, Silversea boasts a staff-to-guest ratio of nearly one-to-one, meaning your clients' whims and wishes will not only be met in grand style, they're often anticipated. Additionally, regardless of category, every suite has its own butler, catering to your clients' every need – from arranging dinner reservations and excursions, even packing their luggage.

Ensuring spectacular views, every Silversea suite is ocean-view, most have private verandas, and regardless of category, each suite has among the most generous space-per-guest in both luxury and river cruising.

This generous space makes in-suite dining a pleasant proposition, especially considering room service is complimentary. Of course, should your clients wish to dine in the onboard restaurants, there are numerous exquisite options. Anchored by Silversea's Italian heritage, food is of the utmost importance. Add our partnership with Grands Chef Relais & Châteaux and it's easy to see why Silversea is renowned for culinary excellence.

Silversea offers the best value proposition of any cruise line. Many clients pay for their voyages in full, six months before their voyage, saving an extra 10% in the process. Book your clients with Silversea and you reap the rewards of a high-value transaction. Silversea offers the lowest non-commisionable fares in the industry and pays commission of hotels, airfare and transfers, land programmes, and more.

To learn more, visit *Silversea.com* or call 888.978.4070

100% *of cruise lines surveyed offer seminars in agency and regional training seminars for their travel agent partners.*

TRAINING

Training is the bedrock on which agents build their business. Knowing a product inside and out is the first step toward being able to recommend and then sell it. Here's what the cruise lines have to offer in terms of training for travel agents:

training	Seminars In Agency Office	Regional Training Seminars	Video Training	Teleconference/ Webinar Training	Certification Program As Specialists
Carnival Cruise Line	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
Celebrity Cruises	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
Costa Cruise	YES	YES	NO	YES	NO
Crystal Cruises	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
MSC Cruises	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
Norwegian Cruise Line	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
Oceania Cruises	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
Paul Gaugin Cruises	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
Regent Seven Seas Cruises	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
Royal Caribbean International	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
Silversea Cruises	YES	YES	NO	YES	YES
Viking Ocean	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
Windstar Cruises	YES	YES	NO	YES	YES

how to sell more cruises

Q:	What can travel agents do to more effectively sell your product?
Carnival Cruise Line	Participate in Carnival Passport learning program that is available at *GoCCL.com*. Join a Carnival Conversations event. Attend a Seminar at Sea. Join Carnival's email list to receive the latest calendar and to read Carnival's Onboard with You agent newsletter.
Celebrity Cruises	Work with your Celebrity sales manager and register for Five Star training. Learn about our brand and how to build their business; leveraging all the tools and resources that Celebrity Cruises provides such as *Cruisingpower.com*
Costa Cruise	Understand that it has broad appeal across many niche desires, wine loves, foodies, spa lovers, destination collectors and those seeking a truly international immersion throughout their entire vacation.
Crystal Cruises	By being a focused partner with regard to ongoing staff training, product promotion, and marketing in as many media as the agency has the ability to do so effectively.
MSC Cruises	The number one thing travel agents can do is work with their BDM to become educated on all things MSC Cruises. The BDM will then help them put together a sales and marketing plan.
Norwegian Cruise Line	Most important, know that we build our promotions around value, not price. They are intended to give travel partners something to base their conversations on other than the 'cheapest cruise.' Our Free at Sea promotion gives agents what they need to increase commission earnings by opening the door to a value conversation versus price. Other important things: enroll in NCL U, learn everything about the product and the brand — possibly earn a free cruise — and reach out to your BDM to build a business plan. Sail with us, or if not possible, visit one of our ships in a homeport near you.
Oceania Cruises	We have a Oceania Sales Specialist Academy that can be found at our Travel Agent Center *https://www.oceaniacruises.com/agent/agent-login/.*
Paul Gaugin Cruises	Participating in our PEARL's program will give an agent the knowledge, marketing support and ongoing training to better sell Paul Gauguin Cruises.
Regent Seven Seas Cruises	Highlight our inclusiveness and compare it with the costs of our included items on other premium and luxury lines. Our value proposition resonates with our guests who appreciate the ease of booking and having most everything included in one price. Our most successful agents sell the flexible and customized experience our six-star product offers.
Royal Caribbean International	At Royal Caribbean we have many resources and tools to assist any travel agent to learn about our brand and to build their business such as partnering with their strategic account manager and business development specialist; leveraging all the tools and resources that RCI provides such as *Cruisingpower.com*, *www.LoyaltoYouAlways.com* (Travel Partner website), University of WOW certification, utilizing Espresso (RCI's booking tool), participating in regular webinar events and more.
Silversea Cruises	Participate in our training programs and webinars by reaching out to their local area sales director. Also become certified by taking our Travel Agent University course online.
Viking Ocean	Agents can contact their director of business development for marketing support and product training support. Viking also recommends travel partners register and complete all available courses on the Viking Travel Agent Academy.
Windstar Cruises	Learn more about us! To know us is to love us. Take our Star Specialist program. Join us onboard for a Fam. Reach out to your regional sales manager for individual or office training. Windstar Cruises is 180 degrees from ordinary. Agents should learn about what sets us apart so that they can properly match their clients to our brand.



SEEING THE BIG PICTURE:

CRUISE LINES LOOK TO THE GROUP MARKET

By Cheryl Rosen

If one customer is good, a group of them is surely better.

Like all players in the travel industry, the cruise lines always have their eye on the group market, be it corporate incentive programs looking to bond and reward, or inter-generational families celebrating grandpa's 80th birthday. And as the ships — and the market — get bigger, so too does the focus on group business.

For the cruise lines and the travel agents who fill them, "group business is one of the fastest and easiest way to grow your database," says Vicki Freed, senior vice president of sales and trade support & service at Royal Caribbean International, which defines a "group" as travelers booking eight or more staterooms. "When you have a group with a common interest, you will find members of the group actually 'selling' or bringing in their friends who share the same interest. These are clients you would not have reached — so focusing in on groups becomes a great way to grow your overall sales and meet new clients."

Paul Gauguin Cruises, too, appreciates the value of the group. "We find that Paul Gauguin groups are set up and promoted much earlier than most other cruise lines because Tahiti is to many people a 'bucket list' experience and because it will probably be a once-in-a-lifetime trip," said Sandy Stevens, vice president of sales & guest relations. Often "a booking will morph into a group, as a couple celebrating a benchmark occasion starts talking to family and friends about the cruise they're going on and pretty soon those family and friends want to join them…..and it's a group!"

The cruise lines roll out the red carpet for groups, offering dedicated vacation planners and onboard coordinators to make sure everything runs smoothly, and help arranging group excursions and events. Many offer groups their own areas on the ships as well as on the cruise line's private island.

To help attract affinity groups, such as clubs whose members have a shared interest, for example, Regent Seven Seas this fall launched a program that makes it easier for a group leader or influencer to accompany the group, and offers extra amenities to attendees or to the group. Called Affinity Group Advantage, it lets each group choose whether to receive an amenity or a contribution to the sponsoring organization.

For corporate groups, Norwegian Cruise Line, for example, offers dedicated group coordinators, private cocktail parties and award ceremonies, Beach Olympics and scavenger hunts on its private island, menus with company logos, private shows and sports tournaments, a group-specific channel on the stateroom TVs, and team-building activities. Perhaps the best choice for a group is the Pride of America, which has seven meeting rooms and Diamond Head Auditorium, a multi-level, circular facility with multiple AV screens.

Like all players in the travel industry, the cruise lines always have their eye on the group market...

The Charters & Incentives Program at Oceania Cruises, meanwhile, includes the option of taking over a whole ship. Its R-class ships, holding up to 670 guests, offer flexible and customizable itineraries and complete security and exclusivity for large groups. Smaller groups on regular sailings get their own cocktail party with premium brands and hot and cold hors d'oeuvres, complimentary A/V equipment and meeting space.

And at MSC Cruises, the new *MSC Seaside*, which will debut in December 2017, was built with groups in mind, with a main lounge designed to hold nearly 1,000 guests. On its Fantasia-class ships, groups can charter the entire MSC Yacht Club and have their own private enclave and restaurant, and travel agents earn 10% commission on pre-paid shore excursions on all group bookings.



travelmarket report

Voice of the Travel Professional

The Cruise Report Card for Travel Agents was born during a meeting of Travel Market Report's Editorial Advisory Board. In the course of brainstorming ways TMR might be of service to our readers, they suggested it would be helpful to have one reference book that contains all the details of all the policies of all the suppliers in the travel industry. So we begin our project here with Volume One, which covers the Ocean Cruise Lines; Volume Two will focus on River Cruise Lines. By the time we are done, we hope to have a multi-volume reference you can keep at hand and consult any time you want to check the policies of any supplier with whom you deal.

AND IT'S ALL THANKS TO:

Marlys Aballi, *Connection to Cruise, Redlands, CA*

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Tony Fragapane, *Voyages Concierge Deluxe Travel, Quebec, Canada*

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Scott Koepf, *Avoya Travel/American Express, Vista, CA*

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Kate Murphy, *Wings Travel Group, Blue Bell, PA*

Norman Payne, *UNIGLOBE, Ottawa, Ontario, Canada*

Gary Silverstein, *Mann Travels, Charlotte, NC*

Richard Vanderlubbe, *tripcentral.ca, Hamilton, Ontario, Canada*

Jennifer Wilson-Buttigieg, *Valerie Wilson Travel, New York, NY*

Disney Cruise Line, Holland America Line, Seabourn Cruise Line, Cunard Line and Azamara Club Cruises were also given the chance to participate in the Report Card but declined and/or could not meet the deadline.

Travel Market Report will update this document on our website if or when information changes or another cruise line chooses to participate.

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Voice of the Travel Professional

