

## Hilton Hotels Corporation Rolls out Flexible Work-at-Home Program for Reservations Agents

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Flexibility Attracts Highly Talented Workforce, Enables Agents to Skirt Effects of Rising Fuel Prices Associated with Work Commute

Hilton Hotels Corporation has developed a flexible work-at-home program, called Hilton@Home, underway within Hilton Reservations & Customer Care (HRCC). The highly flexible program enables HRCC to attract talented individuals for reservations and customer support positions who prefer to work from the comfort of their own homes while providing the first critical interaction for prospective guests calling upon reservations and customer services.

'Today's consumer demands a heightened level of customer service, and HRCC delivers with motivated home-based sales and service professionals,' said Russ Olivier, senior vice president, HRCC. 'Today, more than 800 Hilton@Home agents book global travel and provide customer care for more than 3,000 hotels with 500,000 rooms among nine brands that comprise the Hilton Family of Hotels. This unique career offering from a world-class organization attracts experienced and educated professionals who may not otherwise consider a customer contact position in the typical call center environment.'

Applicants for employment at HRCC largely come from stay-at-home parents, dual career professionals, retirees, students, primary caregivers or special needs individuals - all who prefer the at-home working environment. The program's flexibility, thorough self-managed training and on-line connectivity help attract a high-caliber, diverse work force who appreciates the value proposition of work from home, without the hassle or cost of a commute. 'In addition, rising fuel costs largely are averted with a non-existent work commute,' added Olivier, 'which is highly relevant to our current workforce and prospective candidates in today's economy.'

Specific program components include:

Customizable work schedules online - Agents are given complete control over the balance of their personal and professional priorities by being able to choose their own work schedules online, 24/7. Work schedules become the complement to team member lives as opposed to a 'barrier' to creating optimum work-life balance - representing a fundamental and refreshing shift from the norm.

Advanced technology enables HRCC to bring sophisticated tools and resources directly to the agent desktop. Agents have fast access to a rich, on-line knowledge base enabling superior customer support to book for virtually any hotel stay around the world. Additionally agents can access their own performance metrics and personalized scorecards from their desktop - a full view of where they are today and where they need to go to achieve their personal best.

Training courses for new hires and for existing team members are a blend of classroom and on-line training. By early 2009 new agents are scheduled to be able to complete new hire training from home through a series of self paced training courses, virtual classroom courses and a virtual learning lab.

Chat rooms and social activities enable at-home agents to communicate with their peers online and off. These professional and personal exchanges help create and sustain an environment of strongly informed and connected team members. Team meetings and one-to-one monthly meetings with management are held virtually - all resulting in communications that are seamless, fluid and frequent.

Environmentally Friendly Advantages - HRCC has helped reduce the carbon footprint of team members who no longer have to commute in a traditional sense. Energy consumption in contact centers also will be reduced through the program. HRCC already has reduced its required facility footprint by approximately 10% in 2008.

'A work force of inspired, educated and experienced team members bolsters the customer experience,' said Olivier. 'Happy team members result in happy guests -- the proof is in the longevity demonstrated by highly capable agents and the increased satisfaction scores from guest surveys.'

### **About Hilton Reservations & Customer Care**

Hilton Reservations & Customer Care (HRCC) is a division of Hilton Hotels Corporation with the primary focus of providing worldwide voice reservations and customer service for the Hilton Family of Hotels and Hilton HHonors program. HRCC operates four U.S. contact centers (Dallas, Tampa, Fla., Hazleton, Pa., and Hemet, Calif.) and five international centers (Mexico City, Glasgow, Singapore, Tokyo and Cairo), comprising more than 3,000 team members worldwide and serving more than 98,000 customers per day.

HRCC operates a state-of-the-art multi-brand central reservation system (CRS) and provides a full range of reservation services including telephone reservations, travel agent support, frequent guest customer service, Internet reservation support, and email services. HRCC employs over 800 reservations specialists working from their homes through its exclusive Hilton@Home program.

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