

# The top 10



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9. Corporate Travel Services (CTS Travel)

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Philip Weinman, 43, Alan Kras, 42, and David Payes, 45

Victoria

**Started:** Five years ago with \$5000 in capital. The trio had run other businesses in a range of industries.

**The Niche:** Weinman travelled extensively, and regularly ran into problems that should have been anticipated and prevented. He says his travel agents did not understand the specific needs of corporate travellers because they were used to booking holiday trips.

**The Strategy:** After listening to feedback, CTS Travel quickly expanded, adding divisions such as conference and events management, "travel therapy", graphic design and incentive-scheme development. To ensure good customer service, they inverted their management structure, surrendering control to the travel consultants. "They have absolute decision-making power because they have the knowledge of a client," Weinman says.

**The EDGE:** CTS Travel's low staff turnover means clients get to know the consultant handling their account and are less inclined to change companies. All staff have a share of the profits built into their pay, as well as regular rewards. CTS Travel describes itself as a "no boundaries" office - there are no dress codes, no strict working hours and staff can do whatever they deem necessary to please a client.


**RESULTS:** Turnover is expected to climb from \$31 million in 1997-98 to \$56 million this year. The company is preparing to open a Sydney sales office, which is expected to boost turnover to between \$86 million and \$95 million in 1999-2000.

Smartest Move: CTS Travel hires staff with a corporate background rather than a travel background. The company then trains them to be travel consultants, so they understand the business world and their clients' needs.

The future: With new offices in Brisbane and Canberra, CTS Travel will be in four capital cities. The company also plans to expand its non-travel divisions. The growth in electronic ticketing means the company will be able to deal with clients anywhere in the world. But Weinman says the next challenge is to bring executives to Australia from South-East Asia, a major untapped market.

- Astra Hauquitz

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