

TECHNOLOGY

THE START-UP SHAKING UP CORPORATE TRAVEL

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LOCOMOTE HAS BEEN DUBBED AS ONE OF THOSE GREAT AUSSIE SUCCESSES YOU'VE NEVER HEARD OF, WITH BIG CLIENTS LIKE ANZ, ALLEN & OVERY, AND MEDIBANK UNDER ITS BELT.



So who are they?



Locomote is a home-grown software company that aims to take the headache out of planning and booking company travel.



A pain point for most corporates, Locomote's software endeavours to make things easier, more efficient, and also saves businesses up to 35% on travel administrative costs.



"We are more efficient, more innovative, and can reduce fees and become more competitive," ceo and investor Philip Weinman told *Travel Weekly* recently.



"WE HAVE A HELICOPTER VIEW OF THE INDUSTRY, COMPARED TO THE CLUNKY, SLOW PROCESSES OF SOME CORPORATES."

Many companies still use complex, laborious processes to organise business travel, and some are stuck doing it over email and spreadsheets, with no simple interface to manage it all.

With Locomote, travel requests, duty of care, authorisations, and stacks of other stuff can be logged and tracked from any browser or mobile device, anywhere in the world.

The whole Locomote system is even smart enough to allow company travellers to bypass approvals if the company permits it and the booking request is within the guidelines the business sets.

Locomote was founded by cousins Ross Fastuca and David Fastuca, and funded by Dr Clive Sher, and Weinman.

According to **The Age**, one of the secrets to its early success has been frustration within the corporate world with how business travel is managed, leaving the door for industry disruption wide open.

"You still have manual interaction and there are all these different forms," Fastuca told *The Age*.

"We also found that the booking aspect of corporate travel is just one element. There's also financial savings, duty of care, corporate governance, and operational efficiency.

"CORPORATES ALSO NEED THEIR TRAVEL AND EXPENSES TO BE MANAGED EASILY. IT'S NOT AS SIMPLE AS BOOKING A TRIP TO HAWAII – THERE ARE ALL SORTS OF THINGS THAT HAVE TO BE TAKEN INTO CONSIDERATION."

The company has been running with around 180 clients for over a year now, but Weinman says it's not aimed at challenging the travel agent industry, but rather working alongside it.

Locomote's platform gives control of travel processes and data to the user rather than a travel company, while another advantage is the saving on travel budgets and reduced approval times.

According to *The Age*, Fastuca predicts that while travel agents will still play a role in helping to organise corporate travel, they will have to reconsider how they do business.

"I DON'T THINK THAT THERE IS A NAIL IN THE COFFIN FOR TRAVEL COMPANIES BUT THE CORPORATE TRAVEL INDUSTRY IS NOT GOING TO BE RUN IN THE SAME WAY AS IT IS TODAY," FASTUCA SAID.

Weinman agreed, telling *Travel Weekly* that the aim was to challenge the way business was done for corporate travellers.

"The operations of travel agents are enhanced with Locomote, not overtaken," he said.

"A smart agent will run with the technology through tools like smart ticketing. We are helping to boost the user experience, and make it a lot easier to book corporate travellers."

CORPORATE TRAVEL

LOCOMOTE
