

TTG Asia Media drops 'travel agent' title

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EFFECTIVE today, TTG Asia Media is dropping the title 'travel agent', and substituting it with 'travel expert', 'travel consultant' or 'travel professional'.

TTG Asia will also refer to travel agencies as travel firms or travel companies. The only exceptions are ticketing agents or agencies and consolidators.

The move is one outcome from the first TTG Travel Agent Conference held in Singapore last month, and is meant to further inspire the trade to adapt to a changing business environment, where it is clear they must add value in order to survive.

Many travel professionals have moved beyond the narrow confines of ticketing or merely booking a hotel room, making the term 'travel agent' increasingly an outdated and restrictive title.

TTG Asia Media took inspiration from the various speakers at its conference, in particular Adrian Caruso, master business coach from TA Fastrack Australia, who motivated the audience – a roomful of travel experts – to think differently.

"What is it that you are selling? A product? A service? A dream?" asked Caruso. "No. The answer is, YOU. You have become the product."

Caruso urged travel professionals to present their clients with a list of their credentials and why they should buy from them, instead of presenting clients a brochure full of products (see TTG Asia group editor Raini Hamdi's blog, [Don't sell yourself short](#))

Said Darren Ng, managing director, TTG Asia Media: "We hope to lead this change, which we feel is simple, yet significant and a powerful way to shift the mindset.

"The next step is for us to urge the national travel professional associations in the region such as MATTA, NATAS and ASITA; overseas associations such as ASTA and AFTA; and global bodies such as UFTAA and WTAAA to follow suit."

So goodbye 'travel agents' – and welcome, travel experts.