



Case study - Clover

About

Clover's rich history spans over a century when a group of farmers met in the lush Natal Midlands to discuss the establishment of a butter factory. Almost 120 years later, the proudly South African-listed company is still passionate about the milk procurement industry and has become a household name among South African families. It is this family ethos that has for decades driven South Africa's dairy industry leader.

Situation

Rooted in tradition and with considerable care for its employees, Clover strives to create a pleasant and motivating work environment where employees are treated fairly and are provided with the skills, ability and tools to do their jobs.

Of course, this extends to the 700 travellers that travel domestically on behalf of Clover – a large portion of the 9,600 employees that have made Clover their "home away from home".

FCM Travel Solutions joined the family in March 2014, managing the account for three years before it recently went to re-tender.

"We went through a new RFP process and were re-awarded the account from 1 September 2017, with a focus on achieving a higher percentage of savings and more visibility and involvement of their Key Account Manager," explains Eleanor Neethling, Key Account Manager FCM Travel Solutions.



Approach

At Clover, FCM Travel Solutions runs a very hands-on travel programme, with two dedicated in-house consultants and regular workshops. “We see Clover regularly, keep things very transparent and communicate frequently,” says Eleanor.

This is because relationships are very important to Clover. “They extend the same care they have for their staff to their suppliers to build long-term relationships and the relationship we have built is one of mutual respect. Clover has a mature approach, is open to negotiation and never dictates to us, or vice versa.”

On-the-ground support is essential and this is one of the reasons why an in-house works so exceptionally well for the organisation when in many other companies an in-house would be regarded as “old fashioned”.

“The excellent service our consultants have provided over our original tenure was a major factor to re-winning this account,” says Euan McNeil, FCM Travel Solutions South Africa GM.

“Clover enjoys the person-to-person contact and because the staff turnover at Clover is so low, we are able to build a very personable relationship with their travelling staff. Our in-house consultants really feel like they’re part of the Clover family.”

FCM Travel Solutions provides strategic and operational support to Clover. “We have worked with Clover to change their travel policy to suit their needs and have implemented a Portal tool that helps them to manage their traveller profiles better and access reports,” says Eleanor.

Clover also has access to the FCM Mobile App, providing travellers with additional functionality and tools such as online check-in, push notifications on flight statuses and itinerary management.

In line with Clover’s great focus on the wellbeing of its staff, FCM is offering a leisure programme, FCM Lifestyle, allowing employees to book leisure travel. FCM offers up to 10 free bookings per month, waiving the service fees. Thereafter, Clover covers the service fees as a perk to their staff.

“Our FCM Lifestyle service means that Clover has access to a leisure consultant, who is totally mobile and visits their office to consult. The organisation also makes it more affordable for their staff to travel by offering to deduct the cost of the travel from their salary if they choose. Interestingly, the ability to offer a formal leisure programme was one of the requirements in Clover’s RFP,” concludes Eleanor.

Results

While technological innovation is an important component of travel management for many corporates, for Clover relationships and face-to-face interaction remains even more important.

FCM Travel Solutions has balanced the need to introduce efficiencies within Clover’s travel programme through technology, with the hands-on approach of an in-house, dedicated consultants and an engaged Key Account Manager so that Clover and its staff receive the care and consideration that already exists within the company’s culture.

In addition to our on-the-ground team at Clover, we also provide the full backing of our product team and a personalised finance team for all statements and invoices.

Furthermore, to achieve the savings that Clover required, we have kept our monthly management fee very competitive and have proposed a new hotel programme that will result in additional savings.

Highlights of FCM’s travel management approach on behalf of Clover:

- A dedicated, engaged Key Account Manager and in-house team mean that Clover gets the hands-on treatment it needs for its travel programme.

- Seamless balance between technology and personal human interaction.
- Strategic direction helping to shape travel policy and the ability to leverage the global supplier relationships held by FCM Travel Solutions.
- Programme Savings through new hotel programme and competitive management fee.
- A dedicated FCM Lifestyle service for Clover staff providing holiday advice and planning services.

“With Clover, we’re more than a supplier of travel. It’s a true partnership – one founded on mutual respect and strong relationships that reflect the ethos with which both companies operate. We have worked as a team to reduce costs, streamline travel processes and ensure the wellbeing of Clover’s travelling staff. With this new leisure extension to our services, we look forward to sending more of the Clover family safely on their travels,” Euan.