Conference Review

**The Revenue Management Club, Holmes House, London, UK,
8th May, 2003**

The Revenue Management Club, initiated in January by Consultecom Limited, held its second meeting on the 8th May, in London. Delegates were welcomed by Steve Marchant, MD of Consultecom, who then led the first session on Objectives and Common Issues.

From suggestions put forward at the meeting in January, the agenda comprised a workshop on benchmarking followed by a presentation on data warehousing.

The group offers an independent forum for members from the travel, tourism and leisure sectors to discuss openly issues relating to revenue management, to benefit from each others' experience, and to promote best practice within the use of revenue management techniques. Members can also benefit from a number of discounts on services.

Tim Rosen gave a presentation on the importance of data warehousing in supporting revenue management. The presentation described how the availability of high-quality information is a prerequisite for a successful revenue management system. This information has to come from a variety of systems, including reservations, to be linked together with typically two to three years of historical information, before being fed into the revenue management system. This all has to take place early enough to allow the revenue management system to complete all its processing before the start of the next day's business.

The presentation gave an overview of some of the design and implementation considerations, and outlined a number of issues and potential pitfalls in data warehousing, including the risk of overspecification leading to cost and time overruns.

The workshop on benchmarking was facilitated by Brian Mullen. The overall purposes of benchmarking were explored, and then the workshop identified 15 aspects of benchmarking, requiring research, ranging from forecast accuracy through to indirect benefits such as reducing marketing wastage. These were separated into four groups — technical, human, direct and indirect benefits.

There was discussion on a range of issues, which illustrated the diversity of views within the group. The importance of forecast accuracy was hotly debated, with some suggesting the ability to detect and react to variance was more important than the accuracy of the original forecast.

Brian will be progressing these issues, using small teams made up from members of the Revenue Management Club to carry out and coordinate research. These teams will be feeding back on an ongoing basis to future meetings of the Revenue Management Club.

For more information please write to: info@revenuemanagement.org.uk.

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