

# TPI Offers

## 'Dynamic' New Technology Platform

**T**ravel Planners International offers state-of-the-art technology along with a strong support staff to help Home Based agents succeed in their business ventures, said Kim Sherritt, director of agent relations for the full-service Host agency.

Sherritt said that TPI, which has been hosting agents since 1988, is particularly excited about its "brand new technology platform, TPI-Agent RC." (RC stands for Resource Center).

"We beta tested it in June and finalized it at the end of August. It's a very dynamic, very powerful, all-encompassing tool," she said, adding that Home Based agents "don't need to have all types of software unless they want to.

"TPI-Agent RC offers integrated, Web-based tools, which provide our network of agents with a distinct competitive advantage," said Sherritt.

TPI members now have access to an integrated CRM (Customer Resource Management) and back office tools for managing their clients, vendors, bookings, tasks, notes and expenses, she added.

The technology platform connects the agent with vendors and travelers together in a "community-based environment," she said.

As Sherritt explained it, agents can create Web-based travel planning environments, which allow multiple travelers to log in at the same time and communicate with each other and the travel agent in the "same workspace."

"If an agent has a group they are booking, they can E-mail the entire group at one time with the latest information on trip details — and group members can E-mail the agent and each other," she said. There is a safeguard that allows only the agent to make desired travel booking changes or additions.

The program's database contains supplier contacts and an educational section that notifies agents of conference call training and TPI Seminars at Sea.

"Agents can register for these on the site," said

Sherritt. "There's also information on and links to IATAN and CLIA and sellers of travel."

She said that every client who registers on a TPI agent's Web site automatically goes into a client database.

There is also a hotel booking engine, supported by Amadeus, which a client can book on. "It's then cued to us and the agent can follow through," said Sherritt.

An optional cruise booking engine contains nine cruise lines and offers real-time inventory and TPI pricing. A tour booking engine is also in the works.

"We're moving right along, trying to bring as many choices to our agents as possible," said Sherritt.

For more information, visit [www.TravelAgentFromHome.com](http://www.TravelAgentFromHome.com).