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Perspectives on the Supply Chain

TWO WORLDWIDE ERC MEMBERS DISCUSS TODAY'S CHALLENGES

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Making Mobility Greener

BY LAUREN LIACOURAS

Global mobility professionals have begun to play a more active role in helping their respective organizations achieve sustainability goals.

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About Worldwide ERC®

Worldwide ERC® is the workforce mobility association for professionals who oversee, manage, or support U.S. domestic and international employee transfers. The organization was founded in 1964 to help members overcome the challenges of workforce mobility.

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EVENTS Calendar

September
2023

Regional Summit

19-20 SEPTEMBER

São Paulo, Brazil

Regional Summit

27 SEPTEMBER

Singapore

October
2023

Global Workforce Symposium 2023

17-20 OCTOBER

Boston, Massachusetts

worldwideerc.org/events-conferences

Webinars

The Immigration Kaleidoscope: Sensemaking in an Uncertain World

This lively panel discussion explored some of the trends and themes impacting the immigration and mobility environment and what the implications are for the next 12-18 months. Specialists from around the globe weighed in on key issues such as the impact of layoffs in the tech sector in the United States, how the global war for talent is shaping corporate immigration policies, and the challenges of remaining compliant in a rapidly changing environment.

Supporting your Expatriate Population Through an Unpredictable Immigration Environment

In this already unpredictable global immigration environment, pandemic-induced backlogs, lengthy wait times, and geopolitical conflicts that further inhibit mobility are sources of increased anxiety for your expatriate employees. How can you provide the support required to help your employees navigate the rocky immigration landscape? In this presentation, global mobility experts shared tips and strategies to help you lead with empathy and provide support for the unique needs of your expatriate employees. Speakers suggested how companies can craft compliant yet forward-thinking global mobility policies to support an empathetic workplace culture.

All webinars can be found at worldwideerc.org/events-webinars.

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Expanding and Enhancing

It's hard to believe 2023 is already halfway through. Worldwide ERC® has had a busy year, but we have much more in store between now and December.

Specifically, I'd like to call out our upcoming regional events in Singapore (19-20 September) and São Paulo (27 September). With relevant, localized programming and the chance to network with other relocation professionals in the area, these events provide a great opportunity for our members in the Asia-Pacific and Latin America regions to come together to catalyze the future of the global workforce.

Registration is open for both events, which you can find by navigating to our events page on the website: worldwideerc.org/events-conferences.

Also on the horizon is our annual Global Workforce Symposium (GWS), which will be held in Boston from 17-20 October. GWS is the only event that brings the entire global mobility community together as one industry, allowing mobility professionals to learn more and connect with relocation experts from around the world.

This year's theme, "Elevating Expectations," reflects our goal to redesign the GWS experience to provide more networking opportunities and increase value for our attendees. This includes several new ways to connect with the broader mobility community throughout the conference.

We are currently building out a robust agenda of panels and speakers for this year's conference, with interactive sessions, roundtable discussions, and case studies on the mobility community's top issues. We are looking forward to engaging our attendees on important topics like environmental sustainability, artificial intelligence, technology, remote work, and immigration. Registration for GWS is open at tinyurl.com/GWS-2023-Registration.

Speaking of sustainability, the cover story of this issue of *Mobility* magazine, starting on page 20, is titled "Making Mobility Greener." Global mobility professionals have begun to play a more active role in helping their respective organizations achieve sustainability goals, and our editorial team spoke with several of them for their perspectives on the topic.

As a reminder, Worldwide ERC launched a major initiative to support the industry with our transition to a more



sustainable future, with research, content, resources, and learning. You can find all that, as well as our other research, at worldwideerc.org/research.

Also in this quarter's issue, we hear from Frederick D. Paxton II, president and CEO of Paxton Companies, and Susan Sainz, director of account development at UniGroup, on issues related to the mobility supply chain (page 28); and learn about the importance of supporting the mental and physical well-being of commercial truck drivers (page 32).

Something Worldwide ERC is tracking closely is the impact of artificial intelligence (AI) on our industry. We are planning to cover AI at GWS 2023, but this issue of the magazine also delves into the topic, specifically how generative AI tools like ChatGPT can and likely will change the way we manage and engage with consumers and, ultimately, relocation referrals forever.

Lynn Shotwell, GMS

President & CEO
Worldwide ERC®



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The Global Evolution of Mobility

BY KAREN CYGAL, SENIOR VICE PRESIDENT, WORLDWIDE ERC®

Over the past month, Worldwide ERC® has met with members from all industry verticals around the world to continue to build out global insights and support our industry. Service partners and corporate HR colleagues share many of the same opportunities and challenges as we continue to embrace environmental, social, and governance (ESG) goals; the introduction and future prospects of artificial intelligence (AI) in our industry; and the further expansion of the role of mobility professionals into new areas of work—all while continuing to help businesses move into new countries, managing risk and compliance through tax and immigration programs, and moving people to new locations.

The role of corporate mobility professionals continues to expand in breadth and depth. There is a mindset in many companies that they need to be able to do more with less to streamline the business and contain costs. Many strategies are being used to achieve new goals, including offshoring roles to new locations, upskilling current roles to take on new responsibilities, automating manual work, and working with service partners to help with the job. All of this is happening while reviewing policies and programs to align with business ESG goals and continuing to work with immigration challenges and opportunities globally.

On a U.S. domestic front, the landscape is also changing. Employees are selling but not purchasing in their new location. Renters are on the rise, which can be a challenge based on the availability of housing in rental markets and short-term accommodations. Move postponements were allowed through COVID-19 and

post-COVID-19 times, but now negotiations are needing to happen to encourage the move or find a different solution. Remote work and super commutes have also made the landscape more challenging, and employees have a different mindset about where they need to work from in the U.S. This opens the door for reimagining U.S. relocation and benefits, but we need to be mindful of business requirements and make sure that employees have the right arrangement to be effective in their roles.

On a regional level, Asia-Pacific continues to see growth and evolution of mobility. Singapore continues to be a main hub, while moves into China are still low but coming back, as is Taiwan. COVID-19 forced companies to look for more locations in the region. Intraregional moves are on the rise, as are domestic moves within the country for China, India, and Indonesia specifically. Companies will need to evaluate the benefits needed for these moves, as packages may be too light. This is especially true as the region continues to battle the war for talent. New immigration rules and visas to attract talent are aiding in this.

Latin America is also seeing more and more immigration rule changes and visas, including digital nomad visas in some countries where they are attempting to attract talent. From a mobility perspective, managing programs that may have a U.S. outbound structure that doesn't fit in the region can be challenging, and corporate HR colleagues are continuing to find creative ways to deliver programs that make the most sense for inbound and outbound employees in the region.

The mobility landscape continues to shift, and we are an industry that will continue to move with the times. Expect more insights to follow as we continue our member outreach and planning. *m*

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Prioritizing Sustainability

This issue's cover story is focused on how global mobility professionals have begun to play a more active role in helping their organizations achieve sustainability goals. So, we asked the YP group: **What is your company doing to make your business operations more sustainable?**



I started working for Global LT this year and quickly realized everything they've done to prioritize sustainability. Our headquarters in Troy, Michigan, has done a phenomenal job implementing sustain-

ability in our new space. I was surprised that we collect coffee grounds, food waste, etc., and use a composting machine to turn it into compost in our kitchen. We removed individual trash cans and have recycling bins. Everyone takes turns taking the recyclables home since the building lacks a recycling service.

Beyond composting and recycling, the language learning we deliver is also sustainable. We have virtual language teachers all over the globe who also can utilize digital materials. By avoiding the paper used for textbooks and the carbon footprint created by shipping those materials to students, we're taking a proactive approach to sustainable learning. Our most significant impact, though, is delivering live language training online, which eliminates teacher commutes. Every hour our instructors aren't driving to homes and businesses to teach language, we minimize our negative impact on the environment.

RUDY LECHUGA

Vice President for Client Success, Global L

“

We have prioritized direct conservation efforts, purchasing and preserving 20,000 acres of land in a conservation easement to protect biodiversity. We have also invested in electric Tesla trucks for our fleet.





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At Cartus, we've been investing our energy in better understanding how we can operate more sustainably, as well as supporting clients in meeting their own sustainability targets. As a company whose

work is mostly administrative, we have focused internally on restructuring our workspaces, becoming quite mindful of the impact of business travel, and taking advantage of technologies, all of which have driven meaningful change to our direct impact.

However, our greatest opportunity lies in continuing to engage both our clients for their goals and ideas, and our supply chain partners, who look to us for leadership, consistent frameworks, and encouragement, empowering them to move people more sustainably. Small efforts, such as our Discard and Donate program, our sustainable policy recommendations and benchmarking for our clients, and our participation in industry sustainability boards worldwide all add up to make a difference.

KRISTI LUND

Director, Strategic Business Solutions



CapRelo is actively contributing to the community through sustainable practices, volunteering, and outreach involvement. Our parent company, JKMS, established the JK Community Farm, a chemical-free nonprofit farm that grows and donates food to local food banks

and pantries. Our employees actively contribute to the farm and participate in educational programs for students. As an enterprise, we have prioritized direct conservation efforts, purchasing and preserving 20,000 acres of land in a conservation easement to protect biodiversity. We have also invested in electric Tesla trucks for our fleet.

Furthermore, we offer carbon offsetting options for household moves, partnering with ecoloGIT to calculate carbon emissions and purchase offsetting credits. In 2022, we made donations to One Tree Planted in the name of each client, resulting in the planting of over 2,000 trees. We participate in Environmental Protection Agency programs such as SmartWay and WasteWise, focusing on reducing carbon emissions and waste. In partnership with Home Sweet Home, we participate in a Discard & Donate program. *m*

DANA WHITMAN, CRP

Vice President, Global Business Solutions

Key Areas of Compliance in Workforce Mobility



The Worldwide ERC® Compliance Public Policy Forum monitors and, as applicable, engages on the rules, regulations, and standards that impact workforce mobility, which often involves the global and U.S. supply chains. Our public policy article this issue is authored by the leaders of the Forum and focuses on the key compliance areas of data privacy and cybersecurity; the U.S. Office of Foreign Asset Control; and environmental, social, and governance (ESG) initiatives.

DATA PRIVACY AND PROTECTION AND CYBERSECURITY

GEORGE POWDAR, SENIOR VICE PRESIDENT,
GLOBAL REPORTING AND COMPLIANCE, ALTAIR

In today's rapidly changing regulatory landscape, compliance with data privacy, data protection, and cybersecurity regulations are more important than ever to the mobility industry. It's not enough for relocation management companies (RMCs) and the supply chain network to simply promise to comply with regulations; organizations must take action to ensure that their policies and practices align with their promises.

In the data privacy and data protection arena, we have seen a dramatic increase in focus and requirements by larger organizations to demonstrate their capabilities to comply with the changes in regulations and operationalization of their privacy program. The expectation is to take your compliance efforts from promise to performance.

Strategies for Navigating the Complex and Ever-Changing Landscape of Privacy Regulations:

The National Institutes for Science and Technologies (NIST) has issued special publications focused on improving third-party risk management (TPRM) and supply chain risk management (SCRM), identifying the NIST Cybersecurity Framework (CSF) security controls applicable to cyber supply chain risk management. The publications explain how to align risk management processes against these requirements, including how to:

- Prioritize and assess third parties using a cyber supply chain risk assessment process.
- Develop processes for continuously monitoring third-party security postures and determining control effectiveness.
- Identify security gaps and conduct response action plans with suppliers and third-party providers.
- Track the progress of implementing the NIST framework through a four-tier maturity scale.

In the cybersecurity area, the continuous increase in cyberattacks on many organizations is one of the top risks for our industry. We have heard about recent occurrences of cyberattacks and data breaches in companies within our industry. Not only is there cause for concern, but we need to take action to minimize the risks and impact of these breaches on our clients and customers.

The importance of the compliance: Say it, do it, prove it. Understand the cornerstones of privacy compliance and how to operationalize your privacy program and take your compliance efforts from promise to performance.

OFFICE OF FOREIGN ASSET CONTROL

JEFFREY MARGOLIS, EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT AND GENERAL COUNSEL, SIRVA WORLDWIDE INC. The Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC) is a department of the U.S. Treasury that is responsible for developing and enforcing economic and trade sanctions against targeted foreign governments, individuals, organizations, and entities. The targets and sanctions are developed in accordance with U.S. economic policy as promulgated by the executive branch of the U.S. government. Sanctions can be broad-based, prohibiting any activity that may support a sanctioned government, or may be more targeted to prohibit certain activities or



Understand the cornerstones of privacy compliance and how to operationalize your privacy program and take your compliance efforts from promise to performance.

engagement with certain persons, entities, or governments. For example, while almost all commercial activity involving Iran or Cuba is prohibited (unless a special license is secured by a company), the sanctions involving Russia are targeted to specific individuals, banking restrictions, and specific activity.

If an activity or government is sanctioned, then generally any action to support that activity is also restricted. For example, OFAC has restricted the “... sale, or supply, directly or indirectly, from the United States, or by a United States person ... of accounting ... services to any person located in the Russian Federation.” Because OFAC prohibits support of the sanctioned activity, an RMC can be in violation of the sanction if it supports the sanctioned activity such as arranging for the shipment of household goods for a person that conducts accounting services in Russia, or paying the reimbursement of housing expenses of a person conducting the prohibited accounting services. It is also important to understand the scope of the sanctions. Some sanctions only restrict activity by U.S. persons. Other sanctions expand the prohibition to all persons affiliated with the U.S. person.

As part of its sanction measures, OFAC maintains a list of Specially Designated Nationals and Blocked Persons (the “SDN list”). An SDN can be an individual, government, nongovernmental organization, or commercial entity. In fact, banks and shipping vessels can be listed as an SDN. It is important to make sure that anyone receiving



funds or services is not on the OFAC SDN list. Companies can check the SDN list found at Sanctions List Search ([treas.gov](https://www.treas.gov)). In addition, there are companies that provide the SDN check service that also review sanctions lists from countries and jurisdictions around the globe.

In addition to OFAC, many other countries have similar sanctions programs and lists. The United Nations and the European Union have the Consolidated List. Canada has the Special Economic Measures Act (SEMA) and the United Kingdom has the Office of Financial Sanctions Implementation (OFSI). Similar to OFAC, they all maintain lists of sanctioned individuals and entities. Australia, Japan, and Singapore also have their own sanctions programs. All sanctions programs have the common goal of preventing illicit activities that are in support of sanctioned governments or persons by restricting the ability to engage with those

designated governments, individuals, and entities. All sanction programs carry penalties for violations. It is important that companies engage counsel and understand the prohibitions when dealing with activity and persons that could be subject to sanctions.

ENVIRONMENTAL, SOCIAL AND GOVERNANCE INITIATIVES

WALTER N. DANNEMILLER III, VICE PRESIDENT, LEGAL, DWELLWORKS LLC

With the rise of ESG initiatives, corporate sustainability practices have been cast directly into the spotlight. To keep pace with these expectations, the temptation of greenwashing—the practice of making misleading claims about one’s sustainability practices—is ever looming. So, how can companies and their supply chains work together to meet sustainability demands while protecting against greenwashing traps?

-
1. **Define Your Requirements and Abilities.** Independent development of sustainability goals and acknowledgment of inherent limitations to those goals is key to meeting targets. Companies: Take notice of who comprises your supply chain—conglomerates with dedicated ESG departments or sole proprietors with limited capabilities? Supply chains: Take note of who your clients are and whether you can meet even a scaled-back version of their expectations.
 2. **Clearly Communicate Your Expectations and Limitations.** Companies cannot expect their supply chains to implement endless libraries of policies and methodologies on their own. If companies want resilience and compliance within their supply chains, clear, digestible direction is foundational. Similarly, supply chains that blindly accept sustainability requirements for the sake of revenue make a mistake. Real commitment to these initiatives starts with a willingness to learn.
 3. **Actively Engage.** Companies and their supply chains should actively engage with

one another on sustainability issues impactful to them. Collaborating on industry initiatives, sharing resources, and participating in thought leadership leads to more tailored and achievable sustainability goals for all. Sustainability goals are not stagnant, so why would your engagement with your most critical partners be?

4. **Report on Achievements and Failures.** In all cases, be transparent with your sustainability achievements and failures; this can help build trust with stakeholders and demonstrate your commitment to sustainability, not to mention the avoidance of ethical and legal implications of greenwashing.

Corporate sustainability initiatives are material in today's world. But in order for these initiatives to remain relevant and impactful in the long term, it is vitally important that the demanded standards are agreed upon, measured, and appropriate, not overburdensome or unattainable. For companies and supply chains alike, it's time to take a realistic look at your practices and commitments and adapt accordingly. *m*

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**Visit worldwideerc.org/gms-detail
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The Numbers

Environmental Sustainability

There is no denying that the relocation of employees has a large environmental footprint, and many in our industry have been actively engaged in reducing our impact. Global mobility and human resources professionals are willing to do their part, according to research from Worldwide ERC conducted in 2021.

For the full study, visit worldwideerc.org/research.

The Italian government allocated

€15 million

toward a plan to turn a contemporary art museum into a sustainability and research hub.

Mobility

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Government Initiatives

Governments around the globe are fulfilling their obligation to act on climate change in many ways. Some are passing laws or regulations to require industries, companies, or citizens to take certain environmentally friendly actions. Some are imposing mandatory reporting and monitoring of supply chains. Others are investing in the green industry and providing incentives for change.

The United States is targeting a

50-52%

reduction in national emissions by 2030 from 2005 levels.

The European Union has a goal to reduce emissions by

55%

by 2030 from its 1990 levels.

Brazil has committed to reducing its national emissions by

37%

by 2025 from 2005 levels and a further

43%

reduction by 2030.

Singapore hopes to achieve a

36%

reduction in national emissions by 2030 from 2005 levels.



Engaging HR in Mobility Initiatives

For most business leaders, the relocation of employees is not top of mind when they think about environmental sustainability. At the same time, senior corporate HR leaders are taking sustainability as a serious matter and are planning to implement real changes to achieve their goals.

90.5%

of senior HR leaders reported that their organizations possess a sustainability strategy approved by top leadership.

88.9%

confirmed that management had committed sufficient resources and funding to support the organization's sustainability efforts.

Corporations are leveraging their supplier networks to devise and deliver on sustainability goals, with

56%

encouraging or requiring suppliers and business partners to meet specific sustainability criteria.

Adopting public policy positions is the second most common strategy for managing corporate sustainability goals.

51%

adopt public policy positions in pursuit of their sustainability goals.

CHROs and HR executives report that organizations are betting big on the promise of digitalization to deliver on sustainability goals. Respondents rank digitalization more frequently than any other tactic cited

(56%)

and the issue is tied as the number one priority among all initiatives.



MAKING MOBILITY GREENER

Global mobility professionals have begun to play a more active role in helping their respective organizations achieve sustainability goals.

By Lauren Liacouras



Sustainability efforts, inclusive of ESG (environmental, social, and governance) assessments, have become more prevalent within the mobility industry. Over the course of the last several years, sustainability has moved up in the priority rankings, demonstrating a greater urgency for global businesses to understand the impact of relocation programs on the environment.

As concerns over the effects of climate change continue to grow, global mobility professionals have begun to play a more active role in helping their respective organizations achieve both governmental and corporate sustainability goals.

Additionally, more and more organizations are venturing to build sustainability into their mission statements as a means to be more attractive to new talent. To remain competitive in the market, the integration, compliance, and longevity of sustainability practices are crucial.

Green Practices on the Rise

In 2022, Worldwide ERC® released its research report, “The Road to Sustainability,” comprised of feedback from 900 chief human resources officers and senior human resources leaders at multinational firms regarding their plans to achieve their organization’s sustainability objectives. Mounting pressures from executive leadership, customers, and staff have prompted global mobility



As the world recovered from the COVID-19 pandemic, there came a widespread opportunity to re-evaluate ways to reduce mobility's carbon footprint.

professionals to engage in sustainability practices on a deeper level.

The report revealed key data points, which drew a strong correlation between intentional sustainability practices and large-scale improvements in the mobility sector. Nearly all research study participants confirmed the existence of a sustainability strategy approved by company leadership. Of those that did not yet have a strategy, over 69% stated that a formal strategy was in the works.

Beyond the breakdown of sustainability efforts among survey participants, the report laid out planning considerations that remain top of mind for global mobility and relocation professionals. The considerations include leveraging supplier networks for additional support in reaching established goals, avoiding major reductions in employee relocations, devising a public policy strategy, and integrating digitalization.

As the world recovered from the COVID-19 pandemic, there came a widespread opportunity to re-evaluate ways to reduce mobility's carbon footprint. Using paperless file management, relying on hybrid or electric vehicles, and encouraging more eco-friendly housing practices all qualified as tangible steps in giving the industry a greener edge. Moreover, global supply chain disruptions because of the pandemic further supported the

need for wider adoption of sustainability practices. COVID-19 proved an inciting incident for leaders to streamline supply chain operations and minimize further operational failure risks.

Maura Carey, vice president of content and research with Dwellworks, says that, while complex, there has been more of a concerted effort to calculate the scale of the mobility industry's environmental impact.

"We work in a very disparate industry, which makes data collection more difficult," Carey says. "However, we are consistently doing our own calculations in an effort to track our industry's carbon footprint in a more productive and accurate way. For example, we know that the hotel industry is laser-focused on this type of in-depth data tracking, but it becomes tricky to discern from the data available when people are using hotels, or alternative accommodations like corporate housing, for leisure versus relocation. That is something we're looking to refine as we move forward."

Understanding and Integrating ESG

ESG is transforming the corporate sustainability landscape within the mobility industry; however, many organizations face challenges in determining how to get their footing as they set goals to lessen their environmental impact. The origins of ESG stem from a wave of outside investors who sought to pledge funds to organizations that incorporated sustainability into their business operations.

The integration of ESG has become more prevalent, due especially to the impact of the pandemic. ESG, in conjunction with specific sustainability objectives, keeps organizations accountable for their efforts. It serves as a means to help leaders implement reasonable measurements for their goals, reach specific performance milestones, conduct audits, and ensure compliance. Additionally, ESG acts as a failsafe for business investors, helping them avoid major losses should companies behave in a risky manner, as well as ensures ethical behavior.

Carey says that, for Dwellworks, ESG has made its way to the forefront in the company's strategic planning.

"ESG became a formal initiative for us in 2021 and was driven, first and foremost, by several



external factors,” Carey says. “The conversation around sustainability was heating up, so we proceeded to define specific goals for ourselves. Our environmental goal was tied to the reduction of greenhouse gases. Our social goal encompassed intentional action in the diversity, equity, and inclusion space. Despite already being compliant on the governance side, we committed to ongoing relationship-building with our clients, which included protecting their environmental interests.”

According to Carey, implementing ESG practices improves sustainability outcomes. While many start by instituting sustainability goals, a more practical approach is to establish specific processes to measure progress first.

“Documentation matters,” Carey says. “Good intentions are important, but companies need to prove that they are doing everything that they can to fulfill their commitments. Get as many of your policies and practices in place, and then it will become easier to identify what can be done relative to sustainability.”

Tammy Clower, client services project manager, and Brian Potts, executive vice president for the Americas, with Altair Global, shared that their organization’s journey with ESG began in 2013.

“ESG is important to Altair for many reasons,” Potts says. “What started as awareness of our own impact has now become a mission. The more we learned about being accountable for what we do in the world, the more interested we became in how we impacted it. Over the last few years, the need for action from all organizations has increased. We want to do our part and inspire our team members, supplier partners, and clients to be aware of what we can do together to make the world a better place in the global mobility industry and beyond.”

As the years have passed, Altair has become fixated on improving reporting mechanics to inspire greater confidence when sharing findings with key stakeholders.

“We began reporting greenhouse gas emissions data in 2022 and plan to report even more in 2023,” Clower says. “We have gone through the steps of awareness, discovery, disclosure, and management, but now we are venturing to share details of our journey with our team members and supplier partners. Our net-zero target, which we plan to publish this year, is zero percent for Scopes 1 and 2 by 2025 and Scope 3 by 2035.”



Measuring ESG

When implementing ESG practices, organizations employ specific measurement units to track progress against their targets. With over a decade of experience in the ESG space, Altair has devised an elaborate system to measure advancement toward its goals so that information is readily available to share with leaders and board members.

“At Altair, our sustainability targets are reviewed and updated quarterly,” Potts says. “This year, we presented our ESG achievements and future goals to our leadership and management teams. We are also in the process of sharing that inspirational presentation with all of our team members. Education and awareness are core tenets of this mission.”

Altair has held a Silver ESG rating since 2013 with EcoVadis, a business sustainability ratings provider, which evaluates the policies, measures, and reporting published by companies concerning environmental, labor practices and human rights, fair business practices, and sustainable procurement issues.

“We are proud to say our overall ratings score has increased every year since we began this process with EcoVadis,” Clower says. “Since 2019, Altair has provided climate change reporting

to CDP, a global disclosure system for environmental impacts. In 2022, our score improved to a B-, which is their Management Level ranking. Additionally, we received the top score of an A at the Leadership Level ranking in these specific categories: Governance and Business Strategy, Financial Planning and Scenario Analysis.”

While it is important to acknowledge major thresholds of progress, Carey says that incremental improvement with small, intentional steps is what helps organizations reach their sustainability goals in the long-term.

“Let’s say, for example, we want to start with lower water usage or the elimination of plastics within corporate housing. There are task lists available to help people pledge responsible behavior,” Carey says. “You can understand what your current greenhouse gas emissions are without an immediate and dramatic reduction. Once you become consistent in your commitments and general awareness, you can measure progress and report out results more effectively.”

Expanding Responsibility to Advance Sustainable Practices

Efforts to improve environmental impact encompass an organization’s ability to involve all

employees, not just senior leadership. Companies like Altair have developed specific work groups to extend the sustainability conversation and determine the next best steps to advance its goals.

“We formed an ESG Committee, which consists of senior leaders from human resources, reporting, compliance, operations, and supply chain,” Potts says. “This committee is responsible for determining our net-zero goal based on science-based targets, formulating sustainable development goals (SDGs) in accordance with the 17 SDGs from the UN Global Compact, developing key performance indicators, creating our annual ESG Report, and reviewing and adjusting targets and metrics on an ongoing basis.”

Beyond the larger committee, Altair launched individual subcommittees. Since its inception, the company’s Environmental Team has gathered annual data for greenhouse gas emissions (GHG) for Scopes 1, 2, and 3, developed environmental requirements for its third-party supplier partners, and created environmental reporting to be used as part of Altair’s annual ESG Plan.

Additionally, Altair created the Team Member Resource Group LIFE (Lean In For the Environment) in 2022, which aims to raise awareness and inspire action to make positive environmental decisions. Altair has also laid plans to offer training for its supplier partners in and to share updates relative to its ESG journey.

A challenge when aligning expectations between internal stakeholders and suppliers is to keep all parties on the same page. As responsibilities increase for external players, it becomes paramount to establish clear performance standards.

“Having one roadmap that is universally accessible makes set standards more tenable,” Carey says. “To accurately track progress in our industry year after year, it is helpful to have a certifying body that can confirm these specific standards are being met across the board. While there will always be difficulties calibrating expectations among internal stakeholders, investors, and suppliers, establishing a plan can help streamline integral conversations.”

Preparing for Future Challenges

More and more companies around the world are adopting sustainable practices and employing ESG

measurements. However, challenges that currently exist, and those yet to come, support the notion that more effort is needed to preserve the environment on a global scale, due in large part to the steady pace of relocation programs with no signs of reduction.

“We believe that several things can be done to improve outcomes,” Clower says. “First, more legislation globally, nationally and locally will create mandatory requirements by organizations. Second, we need to see an increase in company requirements for ESG reporting. Lastly, we need to establish a universal method for collecting and reporting data since different organizations use different metrics, standards, and timelines.”

Despite its demonstrated success in aiding organizations in their sustainability journey, ESG remains a divisive topic. Heavily politicized, some organizations exercise restraint when it comes to widespread implementation.

“Some believe ESG to be a burden as opposed to an opportunity,” Carey says. “Instead of focusing on the extremes of whether it is a good or bad idea, I think we need to focus on the strategic value that ESG encompasses. We need to divert our attention to what really matters and the positive impact it has on a broader scale, not just in the mobility industry, but every industry.”

As sustainability and ESG continue to permeate strategic planning conversations, it remains clear that there is one shared end goal among organizations.

“There are so many ways as human beings that we divide ourselves into different social constructs—alliances by country or company or even community,” Potts says. “The one tangible thing we all have in common is that we currently have just one planet we can live on. Utilizing sustainability as a driver in both our professional and personal lives is necessary to get everyone on a united front to make critical change.” *m*

Lauren Liacouras is a senior coordinator on the Worldwide ERC® content team.

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An aerial photograph of a tugboat pulling a barge on a river. The water is a deep blue, and the tugboat is white with green and red accents. The barge is partially visible on the left side of the frame, showing its colorful deck. The image is split vertically, with the left half showing the water and tugboat, and the right half being white with text.

PERSPECTIVES ON THE

SUPPLY CHAIN

Frederick D. Paxton II, president and CEO of Paxton Companies, and Susan Sainz, director of account development at UniGroup, discuss some of the issues related to the mobility supply chain.

Supply chain issues have plagued global trade since early on in the COVID-19 pandemic. While the backup has improved since then, companies continue to face many challenges. We caught up with two representatives of Worldwide ERC® members, Frederick D. Paxton II, president and CEO of Paxton Companies, and Susan Sainz, director of account development at UniGroup, to discuss some of the issues related to the mobility supply chain.

How would you characterize the current health of the supply chain?

Frederick Paxton (FP): The current supply chain is out of intensive care and in recovery. However, there needs to be multiple lifestyle changes for this supply chain to recover fully. The lack of infrastructure and the age of the ships, containers, trucks, etc., all need to be improved, especially in the U.S. where we lag behind the technologies of the ports like Singapore, Hong Kong, and Antwerp. The current administrations new infrastructure plan is finally addressing this; I just hope it's not too late.

What are the biggest issues your company is seeing right now?

FP: Right now, the war in Ukraine, Middle East peace, and global warming. All these affect the shipping flow of our supply chain.



Immigration reform is key to always supplying the best local talent. Allowing various visa programs to flourish to keep the competitive market for labor to stay open and vibrant.

Susan Sainz (SS):

- California's AB5 law – Working with our network so that each agent know how or if it impacts them.
- Data security is impacting industries nationwide and remains a top area of concern and opportunity in the transportation industry.
- Sustainability
- Risk retention and third-party insurance costs have increased dramatically due to macro-environment factors and large nuclear verdicts within the overall transportation industry.

Can you talk about the current driver shortage and speak to the challenges the tight labor market presents for your business at the moment?

FP: For our company, we were already working globally, so many of our team members were already working remotely. This allows us to connect with the best talent in our industry. Our team is also very diverse in language, culture, and location. This allows us to mirror our transferees and recruit the best talent.

SS: According to the American Trucking Association (ATA), trucking is responsible for one in 16 jobs in the U.S. overall. As one of the nation's largest employers, the trucking industry faces myriad issues associated with recruiting, training, and training its workforce. ATA is estimating a need for over 100,000 qualified truck drivers in the over the next 10 years.

Why the shortage? The average age of a driver is 55 years of age. To compensate for the shortfall, ATA is lobbying to change laws to change the age you can obtain a CDL to cross state lines to 18 years old.

Those agent van operators who drive for the Mayflower and United Van Lines brands on the corporate relocation side do not bump docks. They are responsible for physically loading and unloading a customer's most valuable possessions. They are also responsible often for securing local background-checked labor. According to U.S. Department of Labor, the transportation and warehousing companies



increased hourly wages 17.7%, and labor has been slow to return to pre-pandemic numbers. This means it is harder and more expensive to source local labor.

To manage some manpower shortages, UniGroup has been developing a middle mile program, creating teams of local crew members to handle the origin and/or destination and, in most cases, the driver and crew members are home every night. We then use CDL cross-country drivers for power lanes. Efficiencies like these will enable us to build out a stronger local team and retain drivers for the long haul.

The UniGroup container program has been in place for 15 years. Given the success of the program and challenges related to drivers and labor, we have enhanced the container program. Year-to-date, UniGroup has completed more than 9,000 container household goods moves. The program offers additional customer benefits and also helps mitigate labor challenges and driver shortages.

What do you think needs to occur for the worker shortage to subside?

FP: Immigration reform is key to always supplying the best local talent. Allowing various visa programs to flourish to keep the competitive market for labor to stay open and vibrant.

SS: Factors such as inflation and slower hiring market trend should ease some of the pressures.

What trends are you seeing in the mobility/worker relocation space?

FP: Trends are important to look at but, ultimately, you need to be doing right by your client and their recruiting and talent needs by ensuring no matter who is taking a new position that mobility enhances that process. It should be helping to open the doors to acquire and retain the best talent no matter where on the globe they are needed.

SS: Currently, our agents are receiving move initiations from national account clients, but many transferees were waiting to sell their home this spring before wanting set move dates. *m*



TRUCKING ALONG

A stylized yellow graphic of a commercial truck. The truck is yellow with white wheels and a white outline. The text 'TRUCKING ALONG' is written in large, bold, teal letters across the top of the truck's body.

The importance of supporting the mental and physical well-being of commercial truck drivers.

By Teela Gleason, CRP, GMS-T



For decades, over-the-road commercial truck drivers have been essential to our country's economy and well-being. Despite the layers of service workers contributing to the movement of goods and products, drivers are largely to thank in their own right. Commercial truck drivers move more than 70% of all freight within the United States—equating to 10.93 billion tons—and 80% of essentials used in U.S. communities. Without them, goods like food, raw materials, and medicinal products might prove challenging to find.

Shift gears to the moving industry, and the statistics are just as impressive. With more than

30 million people moving annually, the household goods moving industry is paramount to mobilizing talent when and where the business need exists. To be successful in this industry, van operators must have strong mental stamina, emotional intelligence, and be in good physical condition.

The Period of the Pandemic

Prior to the pandemic, almost 28% of truckers surveyed were found to be suffering from loneliness, followed by 27% from depression, with close percentages reporting chronic sleep challenges, anxiety, and other emotional problems. Almost overnight, stay-at-home requirements impacted everyone except for essential workers. The trucking



industry was classified as “essential,” and van operators in the moving industry rolled on.

Suddenly, these van operators needed to find contactless alternatives to historically hands-on processes and were faced with the need to practice safe distancing while wearing masks and gloves to move relocating employees. This labor-intensive work is not easily performed under these conditions, yet like in many other critical industries, this group of professionals persevered through it, while simultaneously facing additional setbacks as restaurants closed and supply shortages surmounted.

Post Pandemic Re-entry

As businesses began to re-open and strict “contactless” rules eased, demand increased amid a sea of newly developed issues like increased operational costs and labor shortages that forced adaptation yet again. The result yielded an even larger decline in the mental well-being and health of these road warriors with higher amounts of fatigue, diabetes, and depression reported. In a profession mostly made up of men (14% women reported as of 2021), mental well-being has been largely ignored in overall health measurements, a critical oversight that is beginning to change.

Van Operator Perspective

To gain proper perspective, I looked to a few road warriors for input on what life “was” and “is” like on the open road. “As van operators, we didn’t have a break, during or immediately

after, the pandemic. It was important for me to maintain my structured routine to ensure I remained healthy while on the road. For me, it was about making my own meals and making sure I stayed active,” says Chris Stoskopf, van operator for Suddath. “I know there were van operators who struggled with maintaining healthy routines, which was exacerbated by labor shortages and demands that forced us to think and operate differently.” Stoskopf went on to share that his family and operations team at work were instrumental in helping him overcome challenges. “They were my support group and were there as needed to help me cope with obstacles and overcome hurdles.”

As many of the pandemic-related obstacles were mitigated, other stressors have increased. Uncertain economic and housing market conditions, for example, weigh heavily on van operators’ minds. Now is the time for mental wellness among van operators to shift into high gear.

Promoting Holistic Wellness

To help put some of these issues into perspective, Torrey Laueremann, manager of safety policy with the American Trucking Associations (ATA), shared some of the biggest physical risks identified in an in-depth global study, sponsored by the Transportation Research Board (TRB) and Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration, in partnership with the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health. The report shares highlights from a first-of-its kind

international conference that brought together members of public- and private-sector agencies, academic and research institutions, and transportation and health industries to explore the health and wellness of commercial truck and bus drivers, and their crucial link to overall road safety. Top physical risks identified included:

- Obesity/lack of physical fitness and the resulting health complications often tied to it, such as diabetes, hypertension, and cardiovascular disease
- Sleep apnea or other sleeping disorders leading to driver fatigue
- Musculoskeletal disorders or other ergonomically related injuries

As the focus on mental health risks continues to gain equal attention to the physical challenges, Lauermaann shared that the ATA is currently revamping its Driver Health and Wellness Hub to incorporate mental health tips. To be successful, companies in transportation will need to integrate holistic approaches to health and wellness support as a cultural discipline.

Steps to Drive Change

Identifying and raising awareness about the risks is an important part of the process, but what can drivers and companies do together to address them?

SOME STRATEGIES FOR IMPLEMENTING A SUCCESSFUL PROGRAM INCLUDE:

- Create awareness and instruct your fleet on how to identify stressors that can lead to depression, loneliness, or hopelessness.
- Provide access to professional resources that can offer help anonymously.

- Encourage a stigma-free atmosphere of openness and support, including facilitating a buddy system that allows drivers to connect with their peers.
- Focus on financial well-being by educating your fleet on how to manage costs and maximize return on the road.
- Encourage exercise and lifestyle movements that promote overall health.
- Encourage or incentivize preventative care, including regular physicals.
- Support work-life balance and focus on incorporating “downtime” to recharge.
- Support intellectual wellness by offering virtual programs that teach new skills.
- Celebrate and recognize driver contributions as an essential organizational element.

Final Thoughts

As the research study noted above observes, “Healthier drivers can lead to improved morale, lower driver turnover, reduced medical and worker’s compensation costs, and increased roadway safety by decreased accident risk.” It’s in everyone’s interest to pursue this important goal.

Consider some of the suggestions, and do your part to help relieve the heavy load carried by our critical and beloved van operators. With peak season upon us, any action taken now will undoubtedly help drive awareness and promote disciplines that help us all move mental and physical well-being priorities for our drivers forward. *m*

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Identifying and raising awareness about the risks is an important part of the process, but what can drivers and companies do together to address them?



Will ChatGPT and AI Impact the Mobility Industry?



ChatGPT is a new artificial intelligence tool that may change the way we manage and engage with consumers and, ultimately, relocation referrals forever.

By Teresa Howe



ou may have recently heard some buzz around ChatGPT-3 and ChatGPT-4 (Generative Pre-trained Transformer). This is not some fly-

by-night tech. It is already becoming an integral part of marketing and lead management. As an example, it is being used to write MLS property descriptions for real estate agents. It is a tool that is going to change the way we manage and engage with consumers and, ultimately, relocation referrals forever. You may think that mobility should only have a human touch, but reserve your judgement until you read further.

Previously, artificial intelligence (AI) was mostly used to help understand information. These new generative models, based on large language models (LLM), are about producing new content and data. These LLMs are probability models that are built around predicting and producing information in language patterns. Now there are more powerful elements that are called transformer-based models that take various prompts into context and associate certain solutions based on previous data points, patterns, and information gathered.

ChatGPT is already being used quite aggressively by some real estate agents and companies to pre-screen internet leads and to set up appointments. Many website chatbots you engage with when making any type of online inquiries from all business types are supported by some form of this type of AI.

Why We Need to Understand ChatGPT's Power

Remember when cellphones were new and then, low and behold, creators took it further and we could text? We thought that was so advanced. We never dreamed we would be able to basically run a business and our lives from a smartphone, get answers to questions in a split second, and throw away our cameras and watches. But here we are.

You may think of AI as robots and movie magic. While we have been surrounded by dystopian AI movies for years, it all seemed so Hollywood and far-fetched. But, as we know, art imitates life, and the very things that were created in the mind

of a writer are now starting to look more and more like reality.

So, what can ChatGPT do? It can:

- Brainstorm
- Conduct research
- Strategize
- Negotiate
- Create social media posts and invitations
- Create content, scripts, songs, and poems
- Custom images and graphics
- Automate emails
- Transcribe audio interviews
- Summarize documents and articles
- Take tests
- Debug computer programs
- Admit its mistakes
- Have full-on conversations with us

I'll Bing It

ChatGPT is created by humans managing data points, and, already, ChatGPT version 4, which came out recently, is trained on 100 trillion parameters to allow it to “think” and source data. By the way, AI is not powered by the internet; it is actually the opposite.

Microsoft's Bing search engine announced it will be powered by ChatGPT. This is a game-changer for Microsoft because we don't say we are going to Bing something; we say we are going to Google it. Within two days of announcing the upcoming Bing launch powered by ChatGPT, there were 1 million people on the waitlist for the beta. According to Statista, Bing has 1.2 billion users worldwide. But Bing also only has about a 4% of the world's search market, compared to Google's 92%, according to Statcounter GlobalStats. Google recently got its AI model known as Bard AI up and running to power the Google chatbot after a failed soft launch with glitches.

The thing about AI is we can still fool it if we know we are engaging with it. But the average person just wants answers and doesn't really care if a human is behind it as long as they get the information they need and it is correct. And with every day that passes, it is becoming more sophisticated and establishing more capabilities. It will already reject inappropriate requests and correct itself.

It is not supposed to be political, but there are those who say it does have some algorithmic bias that appears based on the prompts that are given by the human using it. Some heavy users are even saying it has a bit of a dark side. Let's face it, AI will never have a moral compass, so if a user gives dark prompts, it may reflect that prompt. The OpenAI website readily disclaims that some information may be incorrect. ChatGPT is certainly the most sophisticated AI model out there at this point, and since it only launched in November 2022, we must consider this a public beta test. There will be flaws, and users will spend time trying to trip it up.

Recently, OpenAI started limiting Bing chats to five questions and replies with a total of 50 chats per day per person. Previously people could chat for hours, but it was becoming apparent that very long chat sessions were confusing the AI system. Answers were becoming nonsensical or delivered in a tone that was reflective of the chat partner and not appropriate. Sometimes it abruptly ends the conversation with an apology that says "I'm still learning, so I appreciate your understanding and patience." Well, at least it's polite.

It's All About the Prompt

The key to getting the information we want out of this type of AI all depends on the prompt we

give it. And we have to be specific. It is more about engineering the prompt than writing it. If I wanted to summarize an article I read or a class I took, I could apply the AI to that material with specific prompting to target certain points, and I could get a beautifully written summary. It does better with data requests previous to 2022, so I guess it is still catching up on current events.

At this point, people still need to read what ChatGPT writes. For people who are poor writers, it is a dream come true. We can actually prompt it to write something in a romantic, practical, or business-like tone. It can write poems or rap lyrics if given the topic via a detailed prompt. There are already many different types of AI programs out there; even AI can be applied to programs like Canva and LinkedIn to generate custom images and content.

Let's Use it for Good

The scary thing about AI is that it can be used for good but also for evil. You have probably already seen manipulated videos of prominent people saying things that they did not actually say. That was done with a form of AI by using voice cloning and image and video manipulation.

One of the challenges with this type of technology is that it is rapidly advancing, and there should be some legal guidelines to govern it. It is up to the creators to self-monitor, but the minute they sell their technology, they lose control of it. As with any new creation, the creators, for the most part, have the best intentions for it (think social media). But there are bad people right now thinking about how they can impersonate someone or extort something. And the challenge is that our leaders who actually make the laws have no clue what advanced AI learning even is. So, it will be years before any government regulations are put into place and, by then, the cat will be out of the bag.

We Can't Fear It

I heard someone say the other day, "Won't this type of AI eliminate jobs?" Yes, it absolutely will ... eventually. Did cars eliminate the need for the horse and buggy? Yes, but it also created thousands of new jobs in car manufacturing and



We can't trade our experience for data points, but this information may reinforce what we already think by providing historical data.



road building. So, it comes down to trading certain skills and jobs for others.

Will AI replace mobility and relocation staff? It might take on the role of pre-screening transferees, assigning agents/brokers, scheduling and monitoring the progress of moves, and making adjustments as it converses with your prospects. It can respond based on many previous similar situations and data points. Some of that is already happening with referral management software and CRMs.

But, ultimately, someone will need to ensure that all of those moving parts are working together and giving all of the stakeholders what they need. Your staff may shift to be focused on new sources of business, strategic planning, and training supported by AI. Or they may focus on dealing with complex problem resolution, which may also be powered by AI with their oversight. We can't trade our experience for data points, but this information may reinforce what we already think by providing historical data. So, the skill set may need to be elevated a bit, which may mean hiring people with bigger-picture thinking, but there would be savings in the way of fewer lower-level staff due to more automation.

I know we like to say that relocation is a people business with a need for hand-holding and a

personal touch. I don't disagree with that, and I believe there are certain things that need to be handled with human benevolence, but I do think there are many functions that can be automated and guided by what we have learned over the years to take some of the flaws out of the processes or tasks that are currently driven by humans. AI won't take over the world, but it can make some tasks and functions easier if used in the capacity for which it was intended. I encourage you to get on the bandwagon and be a part of this AI revolution that is rocketing us into the future of business.

Take the Plunge

There is a free version of ChatGPT to explore: openai.com/blog/chatgpt. Here is an article about how to set up an account and use it: businessinsider.com/how-to-use-openai-chatgpt-viral-ai-chatbot-steps-photos-2023-2. Happy AI learning! *m*

Teresa R. Howe, SCRP, SGMS, is a principal at TRH Consulting. She coaches and consults with the relocation, mobility, and real estate industries to help companies generate more revenue, get more customers, and create loyal fans.



Are You Partnering With the Right HHG Providers to Increase Client Satisfaction?

Content provided by the Relocation Directors Council

BY CHER DULANEY





Moving and storage in corporate relocation can have a significant impact on the transferee, who is the employee or employees being relocated. It is a stressful and complex process that requires careful planning and execution to ensure a successful move. The relocation management company (RMC) plays a crucial role in the process by managing the entire relocation from start to finish, making it a streamlined experience for the transferee.

The impact of moving and storage in corporate relocation on the transferee is significant. The relocation process can be stressful and overwhelming, as it involves packing up and moving one's entire life, including personal belongings and family members, to a new location.

Transferees may feel anxious about leaving behind their familiar surroundings and settling into a new environment. Additionally, they may have concerns about their job performance, family's adjustment, and other challenges that come with relocation.

This is where it is crucial for the RMC to come in with reputable service providers. They provide a comprehensive range of services that help transferees navigate the relocation process with ease. RMCs work closely with the transferee to understand their specific needs and requirements, develop a customized relocation plan, and execute that plan efficiently. This includes partnering with superior real estate brokerages, arranging for moving and storage services, packing and unpacking, shipping household goods, arranging temporary housing, and providing cultural training.

By providing these services, RMCs help transferees feel supported and empowered throughout the relocation process. They take care of all the details, leaving the transferee free to focus on their job and family. Additionally, RMCs provide a single point of contact throughout the process, which helps ensure clear communication and coordination between all parties involved.

The importance of RMCs in the relocation process cannot be overstated. They bring a wealth of expertise and experience to the table, enabling them to anticipate and resolve any issues that may arise during the relocation process. They also



have a deep understanding of the moving and storage industry, which allows them to negotiate favorable rates and ensure that the transferee’s belongings are transported safely and efficiently.

An experienced provider goes beyond the household goods. Many providers have experience moving businesses. This is where they can truly flex and show their value to the client. Minimal downtime of office productivity is key to this type of move, making the experience for the client truly turnkey event. Imagine moving your entire business within 24-48 hours. Your employees walk into the new workspace on Monday morning with their office set and ready for the day.

The desks are set up, computers are connected, and the coffee pot is ready to brew. Regardless of how many times you have made a move, they are all different. You have different circumstances, different family dynamics, and overall different needs. We all know we come with a lot of “stuff” these days. Probably more than some of us would like to admit. You could be an art collector with valuable pieces that require specialized packing or crating or precious family heirlooms that hold more sentimental value than monetary value. Either way, it’s important. It is crucial to be working with a reputable service provider. A household goods (HHG) provider needs to know you and what is important to you as their client. With any relocation, the key word is pivot.

“

With any relocation, the key word is pivot. How well does the provider pivot when a not so favorable situation may arise?

How well does the provider pivot when a not so favorable situation may arise?

We all know the unexpected happens, and the provider must work as a solution-based provider. The client (employee/transferee) does need the bad news; they need to know what you are doing to correct the problem and move forward to accommodate the timeline.

As moving is typically the final part of a relocation, a negative or positive experience has the potential to leave a lasting impression and could influence the employee’s opinion of the company. This not only impacts morale, but also retention and recruitment efforts for the organization. Are you partnering with the right HHG providers to increase client satisfaction? *m*

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Spotlight

Seoul, South Korea

BY LAUREN LIACOURAS

Although its population exceeds 10 million, Seoul makes expatriates feel right at home. While largely homogenous, Seoul natives harbor a welcoming nature toward foreigners who are new to the city. Additionally, the various districts within Seoul nurture their own unique attributes, which provides expats myriad opportunities to find their niche.

A modern and exciting cosmopolitan city that boasts stunning architecture, exquisite cuisine, and lively nightlife, there is never a shortage of things to do or places to explore.



Snapshots



Bali, Indonesia



Hanoi, Vietnam



Doing Business in Seoul

South Korea ranks as the sixth largest manufacturing hub in the world (accounting for 3% of global exports) and has cultivated a high-tech, service-based economy. Its major contributions consist of electrical equipment, vehicles, vehicle accessories, and petroleum oils.

Koreans stand firm in their business etiquette practices; therefore, expats should prepare to conform to cultural standards. Trust underpins all business exchanges in Seoul. Early on, Koreans tend to steer the conversation toward more personal topics before delving into brass tacks. Invitations to dinner or other social engagements should seldom be turned down, as

this can easily break trust with colleagues. Korean is the default language in business conversation, although English is frequently spoken at the senior level.

Also of note is the presence of hierarchical systems entrenched in South Korean business culture, which are based on position, age, prestige, and gender. Concerning attire in a business setting, expats should adhere to the established dress code. Men often wear black, blue, or brown-colored suits, while women are discouraged from wearing revealing clothing, including tight skirts, blouses with low necklines, and sleeveless tops.



Immigration and Permits

When applying for a visa, it's important for applicants to choose one that best captures their intent while staying in the country. The South Korea business visa is the most predominant type for expats looking to both live and work in Seoul.

During the application process, the applicant must specify to their employer and the staff at the South Korean embassy if they are seeking a single or multiple-entry visa. If applying for a single-entry visa, the expat will need a re-entry stamp from the immigration office at the airport should they leave the region for vacation or business. In order to change the visa to multiple-entry, the expat needs to register for an Alien Registration Card (ARC).

Beyond amendments to a visa status, an ARC is required to open a bank account, sign a lease, apply for a driver's license, and more. To file for an ARC, applicants will need their employer's business registration number, a passport photo, and to pay an application fee.

On average, work permits are valid for one year and take between two and four weeks to process. Once an expat's visa has been approved, the Ministry of Justice will issue a Certificate of Confirmation of Visa Issuance (CCVI). The applicant is then responsible for submitting said certificate, along with relevant visa application forms, to the South Korean embassy or consulate.

Family and Living

Given the population size in this bustling capital city, apartment living is the most prevalent and affordable option when relocating to Seoul. However, expats may find it challenging to secure housing, if their employer has not already done so. Despite this common hurdle, there are often property listings within online portals or expat social media groups to facilitate relocation. Typically, rental leases are set for one-year terms. Furnished, or serviced apartments, are also available. These residences are more appropriate for short-term stays, as they can be more expensive than non-serviced apartments.

Public education standards in Seoul are top-tier; however, the language of instruction is Korean, which deters expats from sending their children to these institutions. South Koreans place a heavy emphasis on academic performance. Typical school days involve eight hours of public school instruction and an additional six hours reviewing schoolwork at private institutions called hagwons. For those who wish to continue the curriculum from a previous institution, expats can enroll their children in an international school where the language of instruction is English. Unfortunately, enrolling in an international school comes at a high cost. This being the case, many expats choose to homeschool their children, leaning on online courses through accredited institutions.

When living in Seoul, owning a car is both unnecessary and heavily discouraged. With an integrated public transit system, expats can get around the city with ease. The Metro subway system is a clean and efficient mode of transport with stops conveniently located no more than 10 minutes from any destination. Additionally, buses are color coded for easy navigation.





Unexpected Seoul

Beyond its mainstay attractions, Seoul offers an abundance of hidden gems that appeal to both native Koreans and foreigners. Located on the 13th floor of the Seoul Metropolitan Government's Seosomun Building, the Jeongdong Observatory provides some of the best views across the city. Visitors need not worry about fighting crowds for a decent viewing spot, as the observatory is relatively unknown among tourists.

Every Friday and Saturday evening between the months of March and October, the Bamdokkaebi Night Market transforms the Yeouido Hangang Park into a not-to-be-missed celebration of food and culture. Visitors of the night market can enjoy an array of food trucks, live K-pop music, and handmade crafts from local designers.

For those seeking affordable shopping locations, Seoul is famous for its many subway malls. These underground, modern complexes are fit to satiate anyone's shopping itch while allowing patrons to remain well within their budget.

Bali, Indonesia

Picturesque beaches and expansive jungles make Bali one of the best places to live in Asia. Expats and digital nomads can enjoy the tropical lifestyle without incurring the staggering expenses of residing in similar areas. On top of its breathtaking scenery, Bali locals are exceptionally welcoming, making it easy to integrate with those native to the region.

In 2022, Indonesia announced its plan to roll out a digital nomad visa as part of its new sustainable tourism model, which would be valid for five years. At present, expats and digital nomads can apply for a temporary visa. Options include the visa on arrival (30 days), the tourist visa (60 days), or the business visa (180 days).

To keep cost-of-living expenses down, new residents can choose to share a villa, with either natives or other expats, furthering the ease of assimilation. Additionally, Bali plays host to a number of co-working spaces and cafes to promote networking and amiable exchanges with other foreigners.

For those looking to maintain an active lifestyle, new residents will find no shortage of gyms and yoga centers throughout the region. Backpacking and surfing are also popular pastimes when seeking opportunities to stay fit while outdoors.



Hanoi, Vietnam

As the capital of Vietnam, Hanoi vaunts a rich history. An affordable city with a vibrant culture, Hanoi proves popular among expats, digital nomads, and English teachers. Formerly a commercial city, Hanoi now stands as an active industrial and agricultural center.

Although one of the more significant expenses, Hanoi offers budget-friendly living accommodations both in the city center and on its outskirts. Compared to other major Asian cities such as Hong Kong or Singapore, living costs in Hanoi are relatively low. Expats traveling to Hanoi between May and October can coordinate housing at a lower price.

While war-related aggressions caused damage to many historical landmarks, there are still several sites open for exploration, including the Co Loa citadel, the Mot Cot Pagoda, and the Temple of Literature. Additionally, visitors would be remiss not to experience Hoan Kiem Lake (Lake of the Restored Sword). A dynamic tableau, this stunning locale is home to a rare breed of turtle as well as boundless recreational activities.



In addition to endless sightseeing opportunities, Hanoi offers cuisine that explodes with flavor, namely their noodle dishes. Pho bo, a beef noodle soup considered a national dish in Vietnam, is a must-try for those new to the city. Bun Cha also sits at the top of any foodie's list—a dish that consists of grilled pork strips over steaming rice vermicelli noodles.

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BY KAREN BANNON, DIRECTOR OF GLOBAL MARKETING AND ESG &
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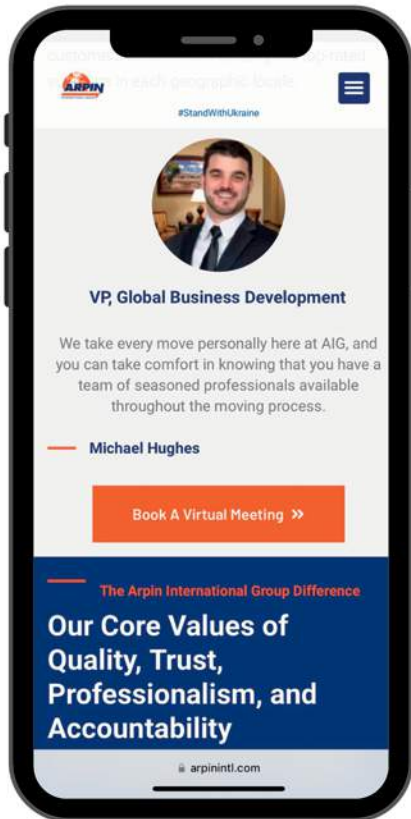
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Mobility Matters

Global Sustainability Practices

Growing environmental challenges have made sustainability practices increasingly important for current and future generations. From water preservation to reducing food waste, here's how countries around the world are working to mitigate their impact.



1

Populations across the northeastern states of India have depended on natural water sources for generations. To meet the challenges of water scarcity, they engage in “rooftop harvesting”—the practice of collecting rainwater in tanks, which can then be filtered and put to use in gardens, irrigation systems, or directly consumed. The practice is increasingly spreading to urban areas to combat inconsistent water supply.

Source: downtoearth.org.in

In 2016, France banned grocery stores from throwing away unsold, edible food. The food-waste law requires surplus edible products to be donated to charities, which produces an estimated 226 million meals a year. Stores also benefit from this policy—they can claim a tax break on up to 60% of the donated food's inventory value.

Source: PBS.org



2



3

Japanese citizens may commonly own vehicles, but during the work week you won't find them on the road. Bikes and commuter trains are the most common form of transportation in the country, with personal vehicles being reserved for weekend recreation. This cultural norm, combined with efforts to completely convert public transport to electrical power, has resulted in a steadily decreasing carbon footprint.

Source: sustainablereview.com



4

More than 40% of Chile's Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) is comprised of marine parks and reserves. With nearly 1,500,000 km² of their oceans under official protection, the country has earned international recognition for its efforts to preserve these natural habitats. Chile is also a member of several international alliances focusing on ocean protection, making it the leader in Latin American marine conservation.

Source: marcachile.cl



5

The Swedish town of Växjö has built environmentally friendly high rises to reduce CO₂ emissions. Originally invented in Germany, these “passive houses” are built to keep cold air out and human-generated heat—from things like cooking and movement—in. The high rises use less energy to stay warm during the harsh winters, cutting down on both CO₂ emissions and operating costs.

Source: theguardian.com



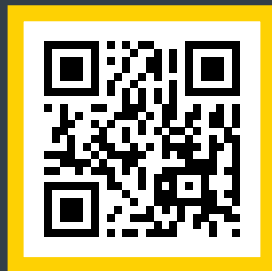
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