Coming Soon: Orbitz for Business

After more than a year of collaboration to select a standard travel service to help the University of South Florida System faculty and staff achieve greater customer service and efficiency, a selection committee of USF employees has unanimously recommended Orbitz for Business travel service. USF will be formally launching this service on April 7, 2014 and will require its use as the booking site for all USF employees traveling on university business.

In engaging Orbitz for Business, USF now has one of the largest travel providers and one of the most familiar online booking tools in the world as its travel partner. Orbitz for Business also has experience in providing this service to prestigious higher education institutions such as Yale University and Northwestern University. Many of you already use Orbitz.com to book travel and know how easy and convenient it is to use.

Since the beginning of the year, a pilot project comprised of units with high travel demands (the Office of the President, General Counsel and Government Relations as well as administrative units of the colleges, USF Health and USF World) have tested the Orbitz for Business site as their exclusive travel booking site. This pilot project allowed for further refinement of USF’s Orbitz for Business portal.

Nick Setteducato, AVP for Academic Affairs Financial Management, has led the implementation team, which is providing training sessions for travelers and staff who arrange travel in their departments and divisions.

We will host three face-to-face and one webinar training sessions for travelers and for those who arrange travel at USF. A full list of session dates can be found in GEMS Self Service (Learning and Development, Request Training Enrollment, Search by Course Name – “Orbitz”). We will also be holding a series of town hall meetings to answer any questions you may have. Stay tuned for additional announcements.

In addition to the scheduled training sessions, an easy-to-follow online tutorial will be available at the Orbitz for Business portal.

Orbitz for Business can be easily accessed through My USF under the My Resources drop down menu.

If you have any questions about the implementation process and/or requirements for using Orbitz for Business, please send them to OFBTeam@usf.edu.

We are excited about the many benefits this new program will provide to the USF System and to individual travelers.
USF Orbitz for Business FAQ’s

Q: What is Orbitz for Business?
A: Orbitz for Business (OFB) is a third-party travel management company which offers an on-line booking tool and fully-staffed travel agents for use in booking travel for the USF System.

Benefits to the traveler and the university include:
- Convenience in booking all in one place – Air/Car/Hotel/Rail
- Intuitive, easy to use web-based booking tool directing travelers to economic solutions
- Travel agent experts familiar with USF to provide consistency and also to book complex travel needs
- Ability to locate travelers instantly based upon reservations in central database
- University policy enforcement built-in to the travel reservation system
- Robust reporting to assist the university in managing travel expenses
- Aggregation of USF’s travel buying power for future rate negotiations with airlines and hotels
- No-charge courtesy cancellation of air bookings within approx. 24 hours (subject to airline policies)
- “Low Fare Promise” – guaranteed lowest cost

Q: Is it the same as Orbitz.com?
A: No. Orbitz.com is a direct to consumer website. Orbitz for Business is a travel service customized to meet the specific needs of organizations and companies. It includes an online site for self-service bookings as well as 24/7 travel agents.

Q: Is it required for use 100% of the time?
A: OFB should be used for all USF System business with a few exceptions such as Intercollegiate Athletics and Education Abroad student groups.

Q: When will it be implemented?
A: USF System wide implementation is scheduled for April 7, 2014.

Q: How do you access Orbitz for Business?
A: Through any browser, sign in to MyUSF with your NetID and password and access Orbitz for Business under “My Resources”. Access to all employees begins on April 7, 2014.

Q: How do I get training on Orbitz for Business?
A: USF is setting up several live training sessions for employees which will be conducted by professional OFB trainers. To sign-up visit GEMS Self-Service (Learning and Development, Request Training Enrollment, Search by Course Name – Orbitz”). In addition, there will be a recorded session posted on OFB as well as multiple training modules, user manuals and quick reference documents available on the “Customer Support” link on OFB.

Q: Is there an on-line tutorial that will help me learn how to use Orbitz for Business?
A: Orbitz for Business is easy to use, but if you need additional guidance you can watch an on-line tutorial available on the OFB site.

Q: Is it all on-line or can I work with an agent?
A: Orbitz for Business (OFB) is an online booking tool that is user friendly. USF encourages all users to book online, but there is an option to call an OFB agent whenever needed. The telephone numbers (1- 877-672-4891) and email (usf@orbitzforbusiness.net) to contact an OFB customer service agent are on the USF OFB home page and on the “Customer Support” link.

Q: Does it offer all airline options, e.g., Southwest?
A: Yes, Southwest and all major airlines are available through OFB.

Q: Are there fees associated with using Orbitz for Business?
A: Online airfare bookings are $5.00 and Agent-Assisted Bookings range from $20-28 (depending upon airline). There is no charge for on-line car or hotel bookings.

Q: How are bookings paid for?
A: One credit card should be used for each purchase; this may be a PCard or a personal card. If your travel, in total, is to be expensed to University resources (e.g., E&G, contracts & grants) use the USF P-card for the purchase. If a portion of your travel is personal or cannot be fully reimbursed by University resources, use OFB and charge to your personal card and get reimbursed for the business portion.
Q: Is a Travel Authorization (TAR) required for use of the system?
A: University policy requires an approved Travel Authorization in the FAST Travel Module prior to making any commitments to travel, incurring expenses or traveling. Therefore, entry of an approved authorization number is a requirement for booking travel on Orbitz for Business.

Q: What are Business Advantage hotels?
A: Orbitz Business Advantage hotels are offered as a low-cost hotel option for USF travelers. They require prepayment and a majority of the hotels can be cancelled with full refund as long as cancelled more than 48 hours in advance. Users should read the cancellation/change policy when booking all hotels.

Q: How are conference hotel rates and room blocks handled?
A: Hotels negotiated for meetings or conferences will need to be confirmed through the conference meeting organizers. Orbitz for Business may have a lower cost for a room at a conference hotel, so we advise travelers to check before booking a hotel room directly through a conference website.

Q: How do I book complex international trips?
A: Round trip and even one stop International travel can easily be booked online. Complex itineraries, International or domestic, may be booked through an OFB customer service agent (Call 1-877-672-4891).

Q: Can travelers book a reservation with Avis and Enterprise at the state contracted rate?
A: OFB has loaded the contracted rates for Enterprise in the State of Florida and Avis nationally.

Q: Is there ability to hold air reservations without ticketing?
A: For most airlines, OFB allows users to hold an airline reservation for approximately 24 hours. You may cancel the booking on hold at no charge. If the traveler elects to have the ticket issued, the OFB transaction fee will be charged along with the cost of the airfare.

Q: How can I book travel for groups?
A: Each USF traveler must have their own unique approved Travel Authorization (TAR) number from the FAST Travel Module for travel to be arranged in OFB. Groups of more than one USF employee traveling together can be booked more efficiently by using the “Book this trip for another traveler” feature, which will permit copying of one trip’s itinerary into another booking. Once one traveler or the travel arranger has booked the flight, the travel arranger should go under My Trips and My Travelers. Locate the traveler that the flight is associated with and click “Book this trip for another traveler” on the right side of the page under “Trip tools”. Travel for groups consisting of only one USF employee and up to eight students can be arranged by changing the number of travelers in the drop-down box on the airfare search criteria page from one to the total number of travelers in the group (up to nine).

Q: How are seat upgrades or early boarding fees handled?
A: Optional services offered by the airline should only be purchased via the airline (website or other means) and are the responsibility of the traveler to confirm and purchase. Please note that seat selection fees, costs for seat upgrades, premium seating, upgrades within economy or coach and early boarding fees are personal convenience items and are not reimbursable USF travel expenditures. If you have checked baggage, remember to add this option on the airline website when you check in for your flight 24 hours prior to flight departure.

Q: How do I obtain a travel arranger manual?
A: Travel Arranger quick reference document and manual are available through “Customer Support” link on USF’s OFB site.

Q: Can my delegate or administrative support person arrange my travel?
A: Yes, delegates can be established within the Orbitz for Business profile. If your delegate has been set up as an arranger they may arrange your travel. (Delegates in FAST are still set up using the Delegate Assignment Request available through USF Travel.) Standard profiles are being created for all USF employees. When logging onto OFB the first time, please make sure all items on the profile are completed for the travelers as well as the travel arrangers before making any reservations.

Q: Is there a low-price guarantee?
A: Yes, the details of the Orbitz low price guarantee are available by clicking the link, “Low Fare Promise” in the lower left corner of OFB.

Q: How do I know the information I enter into the Orbitz for Business website is secure?
A: Orbitz for Business employs physical, administrative and technical safeguards to help protect the confidentiality and integrity of personal Information and to reduce the risk of loss, misuse, unauthorized access, disclosure or modification of personal information. When personal information is sent to our service providers, we require in our contracts with them that they protect all personal information in a manner consistent with the principles articulated in this Privacy Policy. For more details click the link “Your Privacy Rights” from the lower left corner of the OFB home page. ADDITIONAL FAQs: There are non-USF Orbitz for Business FAQ’s accessible on the OFB site under Customer Support.