Best wishes for a prosperous and joyful 2014!

2013 was a busy and eventful year for UC San Diego for travel and entertainment. Over 21,500 MyEvents' transactions were handled (up nearly 4% from 2012) and almost 32,500 MyTravel claims were processed (up well over 15% from 2012).

During the year, we have appreciated receiving your comments and suggestions. In many cases, specific enhancements to processes, additional training opportunities, and improvements to accessibility were direct results of your communication with the UC San Diego Travel team.

Here is a recap of some of the 2013 activity:

Early this summer Business and Financial Services (BFS), launched BFSupport as a model for BFS to respond as efficiently as possible to inquiries. Travel and Entertainment participated in the Phase One and now manages approximately 1,000 cases a month and maintains an average customer satisfaction score of 4.3 on a scale of 1 to 5. For 2014, BFSupport will be enhanced with a richer knowledge base to assist customers in accessing information pertaining to travel and entertainment topics.

In August, UC’s travel management program, Connexxus, marked the introduction of the new Connexxus portal. The intuitiveness of the new portal takes the guesswork out of booking and includes new discounted rates with partner airlines. In addition, all bookings made with Balboa Travel (online or with an agent) qualify for FareGenius, a new feature which scouts for a drop in fares and rebooks if a lower fare is identified. Several thousands of dollars have already been identified and returned to departments under this new feature. FareGenius is also available to faculty and staff for their personal travel when booked through Connexxus.

During September, the first annual Disbursements and Travel University (DTU) event was enjoyed by nearly 500 attendees. Each one-hour breakout session for MyTravel, MyEvents, Connexxus, and the Travel Card program had between 80 and 90 attendees. The department plans to repeat this successful event in 2014.

This fall, MyEvents underwent an enhancement that permits payments to the payee’s Travel Card, thereby eliminating the need for paper forms and completing the transition to a 100% paperless process. In addition, MyEvents’ search feature for incomplete and completed documents was enhanced with the ability to search by prepared date and by preparer ID.

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To end the year, in December, MyTravel had several enhancements that provided greater access to attachments and the ability to enter expense data and attachments prior to the end date of the trip. While the trip cannot be submitted until after the travel return date, this feature will allow users to preload known expenses, such as registration fees. In addition, restrictions that required paper travel requests have been removed, permitting MyTravel to be 100% paperless. A new enhancement planned for early 2014 will allow users to cancel trips that have been approved and for which there are no advances (currently, users can cancel trips only if they have not been approved).

We look forward to serving you in 2014 and welcome your feedback and thank you for your support.

-Faye McCullough

Connexxus of the future!

Your input so far has revved the engine for achieving major improvements to Connexxus. From a brand new portal to the addition of convenience and cost-saving features, many enhancements start as a suggestion from travelers or travel preparers like you.

To continue improving Connexxus, let us hear from you about how we can best work together in 2014. Our outreach and training sessions are most effective when you help define the needs and expectations.

If you could arrange for a Connexxus session customized for your department:

- What topics would you like to learn more about?
- Where would it be held?
- Would a focus on training be best? (For example, demos on how to use the portal/ how to book travel.)
- What features, discounts, and promotions would you like to see added to the program?

We encourage you to provide comments, suggestions and feedback to connexxus@ucsd.edu, and stay tuned for updates!
What's new in Suite 415?

The Disbursements and Travel space underwent some slight modifications over the break. There are two changes that will affect you:

• Our hours for check pick up, meeting with staff, etc., has been significantly expanded. Our doors are open to serve you from 8:00 am to 4:30 pm.

• The entrance to our space has shifted slightly east. It is still Suite 415, in the same building and floor.

New Mileage Reimbursement Rates for 2014

Effective January 1, 2014, the mileage reimbursement rate decreased half a cent from 56.5 cents per mile to 56 cents per mile. The special rate for moves also decreased half a cent from 24 cents per mile to 23.5 cents per mile. MyTravel will automatically apply the new rates based on trip start date. Accordingly, mileage reimbursements that cross over years should be broken out into separate MyTravel claims.

The Mileage Reimbursement Rates page and Sample Mileage Log in Blink has been updated to reflect the decreases with separate worksheets for each year.

Check in with your health at work and while on travel

During travel you may have many unexpected encounters including an attack on your health, especially during the winter season. Keep in mind that there is no documented research to show that it happens any more often than in a normal working environment as you encounter a sick person and their germs. Also, with improved technology most newer planes filter the air with HEPA filters similar to those used in hospitals according to the CDC. Fresh air is also introduced into circulation of planes. However, we still should be mindful of helpful tips that will support staying healthy:

• Wash hands frequently

• Stay hydrated

• Request to change your seat if a nearby passenger is coughing or sneezing

• Consider immunizing protection

There is a plethora of info online to keep all of us informed. This info was derived from WebMD online; click on the link below to view the full article:


Our good health contributes to our wealth!