

[Agent Issues Insight](#) **Service fees via Travel Agents**

Most agents are satisfied with their jobs, but one of the most challenging aspects of being an agent can be a low income. ASTA in USA and veteran Travel Agent from Axis Travel Centre in Australia have commented.

So, how to overcome that problem? Charge a service fee.

Most professional travel Agents do what they do with passion as a choice of lifestyle and not for wages,

ASTA Manager Ms Lee stated "*The only way that I can think of to bridge that gap of having a low income is to the charging your own fees. I don't think that's ridiculous,*" Lee said. "*Agents bring so much value and expertise to the table that it just makes sense to me.*"

Travel Agents that are well established , such as Max Najar of Axis Travel Centre in Australia stated that there are "20 Points of difference" that travelers need to consider if wanting to see what value a travel Agent provides.

1. *Save volumes of time and hassles and paperwork via shortcutting the booking process*
2. *Engage their professional services to research , offer, book & issue best value deals (not necessarily cheapest)*
3. *Use their industry contacts that no traveller has access to, as many are established contacts used regularly.*
4. *Are obliged by Australian Laws and strict ACCC, Trade practices and Consumer laws to do the correct things whereas most other websites and/or International travel contacts do not and will not bother to comply with and promises or laws , plus the idea of any litigation engaging international lawyers or Government departments is usually totally worthless and ridiculously expensive.*
5. *Offer exclusive financial security should airlines Or suppliers go bust (like Axis Travel Centre in Adelaide South Australia via their "Security Umbrella/BookSafe" FREE Insurance protections.,*
6. *offer a choice, of Airlines, Hotels, tour companies.*
7. *offer a variety of options for airfares, hotel chains and tour companies, not just one or a biased few*
8. *Place into chronological order the booked travel components in a seamless format*
9. *are adept at explaining complex conditions to clients in simple English rather than clients wasting their time and mis-interpreting rules*
10. *are at call 24 x 7,*
11. *Do not take risks on websites with your credit card and passport details but are legally responsible to use and provide such information I a secured and trusted environment*
12. *save time by answering phonecalls and emails and texts quickly rather than waiting on hold,*
13. *know airfare, cruise, travel companies and variables better than any website or consumer can,*
14. *can be trusted whereas websites or 1300 Phone calls cannot,*
15. *offer discounted unadvertised corporate rates of airfares, hotels, cruises , tours and travel insurances,*
16. *have personally experienced a travel component or had staff or recent clients experience such to draw hints and advice from,*
17. *are absolutely qualified in privy Computer reservation System codes and protocols that consumers are not trained in and do not have access into,*
18. *Monitor and manage and advise and issue involuntary flight, Cruise or Tour operator changes that may occur*
19. *Establish a level of trust and confidence in being able to explain, offer, book , ticket and assist in all bookings*
20. *Offer a solid human contact source that no format of technology will ever defeat.."*

If a client , after reading what can be done , is not convinced of the worthiness of being levied a service Fee then a traveler need to only refer to their last Invoice from their lawyer or accountant or plumber or electrician to compare what they have been charged OR simply not waste a professional travel Agents time as there are only a finite amount of hours in day and respect their time , experience and expertise , taking their own risks..

The USA agents who reported they charge service fees were also asked how they charge that fee. They use a variety of models. A flat fee ranging from \$200 USD to \$500 USD was the most commonly reported. Agents are also charging per-person fees, hourly fees, per-transaction fees and other fees that depend on the service.

Lee said all agents should consider implementing service fees, even if they are new and feel they don't have much experience. "*I think there is a lot more conversation in the industry about charging service fees,*" she said. "*And this is my own personal philosophy, but I feel like travel companies in all different verticals are re-examining their income models, whether it be the airlines coming up with their ancillary fees to hotels looking to bring more bookings in the direct channel. So I think it's a great time for travel agents to be redesigning how they make money.*"