

# BRADENTON HERALD

**Attention:** Bh Circ Nie/pie  
**Ad Number:** F56475  
**Description:** -  
**Ad Size:** 6 x 21.25"  
**Ad Builder:** Julie Beacham-Hooie  
**Insertions:** 1

**Code:** 001300000  
**Revision No.:** 6  
**Sales Rep:** Kristin Lamphron  
**Rep Phone:** 941-745-7043  
**Rep Fax:** 941-745-7006  
**Date:** Wed, Feb 21, 2007 - 4:22 PM

Client Approval  OK As Is  OK After Corrections Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Insertion Date: Thu, Feb 22, 2007  
 Publication: Local



Newspaper in Education presents



## T H E J O B C E N T E R

### TRAVEL AND TOURISM



With more people having the leisure time and the money to travel, the tourism industry is full of career opportunities.

The thought of a career in travel often conjures up visions of exotic locations, new and fascinating cultures, and strange and wonderful foods. And, yes, all of those things can be part of a career in the travel and tourism industry.

However, careers in this field are also as much work as they are fun. Many who work in this industry spend the majority of their time making arrangements to send others to those exotic locations.

Travel agents, for example, do have opportunities to take familiarization tours — working trips that help a travel agent become familiar with an area so they can make recommendations to their clients more knowledgeably. But most of an agent's time is spent at a desk, working with clients in person or on the telephone.

Typical duties include making travel arrangements and reservations; recommending hotels, restaurants, and cruise lines; and answering questions about passports and weather conditions.

Experience, sales ability, and the size and location of the agency determine the salary of a travel agent.

Tour operators also take familiarization tours. Their job is to look for combinations of destinations, restaurants, and attractions that will appeal to a group of people as a package. A fall foliage tour, for example, would take a group of people to the Northeast to see the changing colors of the trees. The tour might also include a visit to a pumpkin farm, an overnight stay at a 200-year-old bed-and-breakfast, and an afternoon at an area festival. Tour operators are also responsible for ensuring a worry-free tour for their clients.

Cities, states, and national governments all compete for the revenue from the tourism industry. There are government-funded tourism offices on virtually all levels, from local convention and visitors bureaus to national offices set up in foreign countries. Jobs in these offices focus on marketing a particular destination to potential tourists.

Recently, Rose came back to MTI to share his experiences with the current travel class. He has taken a new position away from the hotel side of the industry and is now working as a flight attendant with US Airways. He explained to the class that the application process to become a flight attendant is extremely difficult. The airline knows exactly what they are looking for, Rose said.

The best advice Rose has for anyone wanting to go into the field of travel is: "If you have the will you will make it for sure."

### Max Rose (Not Pictured Here) Bradenton

Max Rose, originally from France, moved to Bradenton four years ago to live with his father. He always loved to travel and always knew he wanted to work in the travel industry. When Rose heard about the Academy of Travel and Tourism at Manatee Technical Institute, he enrolled.

Now a graduate of the MTI Academy, Rose has begun his journey through the travel industry. He has worked for the Hyatt Hotel Corporation in Paris, France; Beaver Creek, Colorado and Washington, D.C. Before working for the Hyatt Hotel Corporation, Rose worked at an all-inclusive resort in Greece.

#### SKILLS REQUIRED

Travel professionals must be detail-minded, articulate, service-oriented, and knowledgeable about airlines, hotels, and destinations.

#### WHERE/HOW TO GET TRAINING

##### Schooling

Government tourism offices prefer employees have at least a bachelor's degree in a subject such as marketing, business administration, or tourism. A degree in English, journalism, or communications can lead to a career as a travel journalist or copywriter. Some larger travel agencies provide training for new employees. Clerks and receptionists sometimes move into travel agent positions after gaining experience. However, many agencies prefer to hire people who have completed travel programs offered by colleges, vocational schools, and proprietary schools. A strong background in math is also important. The American Society of Travel Agents recommends that students make sure a school offers courses in fares, tariffs, and ticketing; industry procedures; computer reservation systems; sales and marketing; and geography. Tour escorts and reservation agents need at least a high school diploma.

A bachelor's or master's degree in travel and tourism may be helpful to an aspiring agency owner or manager.

##### Internships

Internships in the travel industry are available through many colleges and proprietary schools. Check with the institutions you're considering to see if they offer these opportunities.

##### Financial Aid

Grants, scholarships, loans, and work/study programs are available for post secondary and technical school students. For most of this aid, prospective students must submit a Free Application for Federal Student Aid, which is available from high school guidance offices and post secondary education financial aid offices. The Job Training Partnership Act is a federal program that will pay for training programs for people with low incomes as well as for dislocated workers. Contact the nearest office of the Department for Employment Services.



For information on federal student aid, call: (800) 4FEDAID

#### FUTURE JOB OPPORTUNITIES

Employment of travel agents is expected to grow more slowly than the average for all occupations through 2010. Some job openings will arise

as new agencies open and existing agencies expand, but most openings will occur as experienced agents transfer to other occupations or leave the labor force.

#### WORK ENVIRONMENT

Travel agents spend most of their time behind a desk conferring with clients, completing paperwork,

contacting airlines and hotels for travel arrangements, and promoting group tours.

#### RESOURCES - HOW TO FIND OUT MORE

##### BOOKS:

- Travel Prospectives: A Guide To Becoming A Travel Agent By Ginger Todd & Susan Rice
- So You Want To Be A Travel Agent: An Introduction To Domestic Travel By Douglas A. Payette

##### ONLINE:

- www.astanet.com (American Society Of Travel Agents)
- www.nacta.com (National Association Of Commissioned Travel Agents)

##### LOCAL:

M. Terri Parrish, Career Counselor, Manatee Technical Institute 941-751-7900, Ext. 2018 parrishm@manateeschools.net

#### YOU HAVE THE POWER

The Job Center page is published every Thursday in The Herald. Provided by Newspaper in Education - Brandy Braver, Newspaper in Education Coordinator (941) 748-0411 ext. 5031. Creative Design KRP inc. and Julie Beacham - Hooie, Page Editor.

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#### JOB IN THIS FIELD

Job titles	Place of work	Kind of work	Average salary*
Travel agency manager	Office	Oversees running of agency, marketing, and finances.	Salary plus commission (varies)
Travel agent	Office	Helps clients with travel arrangements, makes hotel, air, car, and tour reservations, answers questions.	\$25,150
Tour operator	Office, various locations	Plans and packages tour programs, markets tours.	\$19,940
Tour escort	Office, various destinations	Leads organized trips; coordinates travel arrangements, routes, and stops.	\$12,000-\$35,000
Travel writer	Office, various destinations	Produces written information on destinations for brochures or magazines.	\$25,000-\$35,000+

\*Salaries may vary depending on region and experience. Sources: Chronicle Guidance Publications and Occupational Outlook Handbook.