

Group Tour Programme Manager

Brand:

Branch:

Bristol, UK; Nagoya, JP

Work location:

Office/Hybrid

Reports to:

Japan Product Manager

Our Values

In everything we do at Inside Travel Group, we strive to deliver a Quality and Friendly service with Integrity, Determination and Passion using our collective Knowledge. This is at the heart of the organisation, and the company looks for every individual to demonstrate this daily. Each member of the team is expected to exemplify the company values through their work and professional conduct. We expect everyone to set an example to those around them and to be conscious that they are representing the company when working with customers and partner organisations.

Our Culture

You'll be part of a fun, friendly team of employees, all of whom share a passion for our destinations, a belief in our brands and a strong collective sense of values and purpose. Our work culture is supportive, creative and dedicated, and it's at its best when we all try to lead by example; the more you put in, the more you and the team get out, and it'll be important that you play your part.

Job Purpose

To curate and deliver a commercially successful small group tour programme that reflects our cultural adventures style of travel, creates happy customers who will repeat and recommend us, and contributes to our sustainability goals.

The Role

You will implement the strategy for our Group Tour programme, ensuring an attractive and successful offering that creates repeating and referring customers. Your aim is to ensure that the branded groups product line plays its part in the company's strategic goals.

You will be the voice of the InsideJapan Groups Programme within the company, effectively communicating the sales and product strategy to the business.

You will carry out annual pricing reviews and will be responsible for the launch of new dates and new tours.

You will work with Sales Management to be a resource for training, information sharing, and promoting our group tours across all offices.

You will review customer, sales, and ground staff feedback for the tours to develop and improve our group tours.

You will be charged with commissioning or undertaking competitor analysis and market research. There will be opportunities to undertake product R&D in our destination countries (currently Japan but potentially to IAT destinations like South Korea in the future).

You will ensure that the group tours programme is smoothly administered for both sales and operations.

This includes:

- Managing the production, delivery and development of groups customer documentation and ensuring it is delivered in a timely, accurate, and engaging fashion.
- Providing 'first-line' booking support for the sales teams such as answering queries, resolving booking issues and to provide direction to our booking delivery team when arranging ad hoc services.
- Managing the creation, updates, and generation of groups 'masters' (templates) and 'instances' (departures) during the annual allocation project so that BDT can swiftly reserve services and accommodation.
- Working with other members of the Product and Operations team to keep rates and product information up to date in the Product Maintenance database and pricing masters.

You will be accountable for ensuring that allocation is planned and booked for our Branded Groups. It falls to you to ensure this process is smooth, efficient, accurate and timely.

Relationships

Building, maintaining, negotiating, and sustaining internal relationships will be a key part of what you do every day. Although you will have varying degrees of contact with all our global offices and a vast array of external partners, the key relationships for your position will be:

- Sales Managers: You will work with the Sales Management teams globally to promote sales of group tours via training sessions, booking incentives and Sharepoint posts.
- Booking delivery team: You will be working with various members of the Booking Delivery Team to co-ordinate the procurement of allocation and resolving issues as they come up. A key part of your role will be to increase the productivity and efficiency of our Branded Groups program and much of this will come from overseeing the processes of our Booking Delivery Team.
- IJT Product Manager: The Product Manager will set Group Tour Programme strategy, oversee projects, and give direction; but you will be given leeway and autonomy to carry out that strategy accordingly.
- Product team: Your Product colleagues in our other offices will rely on you and you on them. It will be essential to work as a team and communicate closely to stay aligned and focused on the function mission.
- Field Operations Manager, Insiders and freelance guides: As our eyes and ears on the ground, the Insiders will be a key resource for you. It will be important that you stay connected and in contact with our team of Insiders and the freelance guides who are leading our group tours.
- Marketing: You will be working with the Marketing function worldwide to ensure that the Branded Groups programme has an appropriate marketing plan in place in each territory and for both direct and agent clients. Frequent exchange of information will be vital; you will provide the marketing managers with information

about the programme plans, targets and goals and keep them up to date on sales. The marketing managers will provide you with customer insights to inform groups product design.

Level of budgetary responsibility

You will co-ordinate on the annual budget with the Japan Product Manager to make sure you have a level of autonomy on projects like competitor analysis and research.

What you will be doing

Group tour administration:

- Preparing and managing pricing masters, instance masters, and instances.
- Ensuring that allocation is planned and booked efficiently and effectively.
- Maintaining the client documentation framework for group tours.
- Ensuring that the best possible options for accommodation, experience, and transportation are being included in our group tours.

Sales engagement:

- Sending regular updates to the sales team on the remaining availability of tours.
- Working with sales management to identify gaps in sales team knowledge or training to be addressed.
- Updating the sales team on new itinerary launches and relevant changes to existing itineraries.
- Creating and maintaining resources for sales team.
- Co-ordinate the planning of sales staff on Group tours during FAM trips.
- Co-ordinate additional tours where we perceive opportunity for additional departures/sales.

Marketing engagement:

- Keep marketing regularly updated with group tour availability and highlight promotion opportunities.
- Ensure that web pages and dossiers are kept up to date.
- Liaise with Marketing to produce additional client-facing resources as required.

Continuous improvement:

- Reviewing the addition of new tours and changes to existing tours.
- Collect and process client, sales team, and tour leader feedback.
- Intermittently review tour leader reports for updates from the ground.
- Conduct annual competitor analysis and stay abreast of general industry trends.
- Review, analyse, and address tour profitability and occupancy.
- Proactively provide feedback to the Japan Product Manager about areas where group tour processes could be improved through automation or other developments.

Processes:

- Contribute to the continuous improvement of booking and sales processes for our group tours.
- Update internal process documents to ensure we have up-to-date resources and general procedural manuals.

Training:

- Conduct onboarding and training for Booking Delivery Team members and create/maintain any relevant training materials required.

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- Conduct regular training sessions for existing booking delivery team and product team members to build expertise/share best practice/increase efficiency.
 - Create SharePoint posts and modules to educate our sales teams about our branded groups with a view to increasing conversion rates, ensuring customers get booked on the right tour, and increasing knowledge about the experience on the ground.

Other work and cross-functional responsibilities:

- Assist with administrative tasks such as maintenance of the database and client documentation as operationally required.
- Assist with cross-functional work when required.

Outputs & Deliverables

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- Regular SharePoint posts about our group tours
 - Sales and departures reports
 - Competitor analysis reports
 - Sales and training materials
 - Process documentation
 - 'Problem tour' reports
 - Tour masters and instances
 - Occupancy updates
 - Profit analysis reports
 - Regular tracking and monitoring of Group Tours KPIs

Outcomes & KPIs

You will work with your line manager and the Head of Operations to develop clear and objective metrics to evaluate your performance and help you understand whether you are achieving your goals and meeting your responsibilities. These will be developed and discussed with you on successful completion of the recruitment process.

What you will need

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- Fluent/native speaker English (spoken and written)
 - In-depth experience and knowledge of Japan as a tourist destination
 - Previous experience within a sales or operational role in the travel industry
 - Previous experience building and maintaining mutually beneficial relationships with internal and external stakeholders
 - Able to manage a varied and complex workload independently, prioritising appropriately and approaching others for support when needed
 - Competent working with complex data sets and spreadsheets, with an understanding of mark-up and margins
 - Good communicator and collaborator; able to work with other departments and managers in a constructive and honest way in order to get the job done
 - A good understanding of how group tour operations work including risk points and mitigations

What we are looking for from you

We are looking for a confident, collegiate and enthusiastic individual whose love and knowledge of Japan shines through in everything they do. You'll exhibit a real passion for exciting, commercially viable group tours product, understanding what appeals to different markets and client types, as well as familiarity with what works for our brand.

Relationships are key to success in this role – a confident and charismatic communicator, you'll be someone who maintains a positive and professional demeanour whatever the weather, leveraging this to build mutually beneficial partnerships with our partners and suppliers.

As well as maintaining a professional and friendly demeanour with external stakeholders, you will also be someone who can design inspirational itineraries that engage and empower our marketing and sales teams. Your ability to empathise and actively engage in solving any issues will ensure you build familiarity, trust and expertise in our product range across all branches.

Beneficial skills and experience

- Proficient communicating in Japanese (written and/or spoken)
- Familiarity with interpreting rate cards and applying terms of contract
- Experience of directly interacting with suppliers from a business development perspective
- Experience of advanced Microsoft Excel data manipulation and modeling tools
- Experience of delivering training sessions
- Familiarity with marketing concepts and market research in practice
- Familiarity with the US/UK/Australia leisure travel markets
- Understanding of sustainable tourism and the practical implications for Group Tours Product

Pay and Conditions

It is expected that the majority of your initial induction and onboarding will take place in the office. We are happy to consider applications for hybrid, or remote working in line with our flexible working policy, subject to demonstrating task competency.

UK

Base Salary	From £28,857 - £31,533 per year
Hours	37.5 hours per week
Holiday	25 days annual leave, rising by one day each year to a maximum of 28 days, plus statutory holidays, plus an extra day's leave for your birthday
Health	Employee Assistance Program; Enhanced parental leave
Pension	3% employer pension contribution
Bonus	Annual discretionary performance-related bonus of up to 125% of monthly salary
Benefits	Hybrid working • Volunteering leave • Regular staff socials • Discounted travel for staff, family and friends • Discounts via Perkbox • Designated learning and development time

JP

Salary	From JPY 4,568,315 - 4,991,921 per year
Hours	37.5 hours per week

Holiday	23 days annually plus national holidays and an extra days' leave for your birthday.
Health	The Company has enrolled you in the Japanese Health Insurance, Employee' Pension Scheme and Employment Insurance, for which you and the Company share the premiums. Also, you are covered by Labour Accident Compensation Insurance, for which the Company bears the premium Annual Health Check
Bonus	Annual discretionary performance-related bonus of up to 125% of monthly salary
Benefits	Hybrid working • Volunteering leave • Regular staff socials • Discounted travel for staff, family and friends • Discounts via Perkbox • Designated learning and development time

About Inside Travel Group

Inside Travel Group Ltd is a growing travel company whose head office is in Bristol, with other sales branches located in Broomfield, Colorado and Brisbane, Australia, and an operations branch based in Nagoya, Japan. The company consists of specialist travel brands, InsideJapan Tours which was established in 2000, and InsideAsia Tours, established in 2012 and specialising in travel to South-East Asia. The multi-award-winning company offers unique group tours, tailored travel, and cultural experiences that few get the chance to discover. Our team have had years of experience living, working and travelling in destination countries, and we offer unrivalled advice and support, whatever the customer budget or personal interests. Our holidays grant people the chance to experience both the popular and little-known aspects of local culture, giving customers an insight into the diverse character of the country they are visiting.
