ON SUCCESSFUL CORPORATE TRAVEL SAVINGS INITIATIVES

INTRODUCTION

Business travel costs are rising rapidly, presenting new challenges for companies striving to manage their budgets effectively. Flights alone are [$200 (£159.76) more expensive](#) on average in 2024 compared to pre-pandemic levels, while corporate accommodation costs remain a significant portion of travel expenses–averaging $146 (£116.62) per night.

In fact, a global survey revealed that 60% of travel suppliers cite rising costs as their most pressing challenge, underscoring the growing financial strain on organisations.
For businesses, these cost increases raise significant hurdles, for example:

- Higher operational expenses: Travel-related fees consume more financial resources, putting additional strain on budgets.
- Time-consuming booking processes: Inefficiencies and human errors from outdated workflows create unnecessary delays.
- Fragmented expense visibility: Insufficient tracking of compliance and cost-saving opportunities undermines effective cost management.

While these obstacles are significant, they are not insurmountable. Thanks to modern travel management solutions, businesses can centralise processes while leveraging data-driven insights to uncover actionable opportunities for improvement.

Against this backdrop, this white paper explores how organisations across various sectors are addressing these challenges with Roomex's corporate travel solutions. Real-world case studies will show us how leading companies successfully reduce costs, streamline workflows and improve employee satisfaction, providing a practical framework for others looking to optimise their travel programmes.

Applus⊕

CASE STUDY #1: APPLUS+

THE CHALLENGE

Applus+, a global leader in testing, inspection and certification, faced significant hurdles in managing the complex travel needs of its 23,000+ workforce, spanning 70 countries. These issues led to operational inefficiencies and frustrations for both employees and travel managers.

Key challenges included:

- Inadequate booking processes: Applus+ struggled with a fragmented and overly complicated travel system. [Managing accommodation](#) for multiple teams across different countries and projects, often running simultaneously, was a daunting task. The lack of a unified platform led to delays in booking and an inefficient use of resources.
- Limited visibility into travel spend: Applus+ lacked a straightforward way to track expenses and savings. The absence of comprehensive analytics made it difficult to monitor spending patterns across regions, hindering the company's ability to make data-driven decisions on how to optimise its travel budgets and identify potential corporate travel savings opportunities.
- Out-of-pocket expenses for employees: Employees were required to pay for meals and other travel-related costs upfront. This led to lengthy reimbursement cycles, often causing frustration among travelling staff and contributing to the company's administrative burdens.

THE SOLUTION 💡

Faced with these obstacles, Applus+ sought to:

- Streamline booking processes
- Gain better control over travel spending
- Improve the employee travel experience

To meet these objectives, Applus+ partnered with Roomex to implement a centralised travel management software that delivered the following benefits:

RoomexStay 🛎️

This [flexible and user-friendly booking platform](#) consolidates Applus+'s hotel reservations, allowing travel managers to handle everything in one place. The system also enables Applus+ employees to easily filter accommodation options based on price, location and amenities to align with the company's travel policy.

The inefficiencies of Applus+'s previous, fragmented system are now a thing of the past, saving time and reducing administrative tasks. RoomexStay's straightforward design also makes it easy for new team members to use.

RoomexAnalytics 📈

This [powerful reporting tool](#) provides Applus+ with detailed insights into its travel spending, savings and booking trends. Customisable reports allow the company to track key metrics, such as:

- Check-in/check-out dates
- Nights booked
- Location-specific expenses

Thanks to this increased visibility, Applus+ can monitor its travel costs more effectively and uncover opportunities for time and cost savings.

RoomexPay virtual expense cards 💳

Prepaid cards linked directly to bookings enable Applus+ employees to use meal allowances without paying out-of-pocket, eliminating the need for staff to carry company credit cards or submit time-consuming reimbursement claims after their trips.

Integrating RoomexPay into the booking process also simplifies expense tracking, with all meal expenses recorded and paid on the same Roomex invoice as accommodation costs. This streamlined approach significantly reduces time spent on admin and improves the employee experience by making sure they are never left out-of-pocket.

CASE STUDY #2: EVILLE & JONES

THE CHALLENGE

Leading UK food safety inspection and veterinary services provider Eville & Jones came up against several obstacles in effectively managing their corporate travel programme. Approximately 60-100 of their employees travel across England and Wales each month, and a lack of a unified solution led to the following challenges:

- Limited visibility and control: Employees booked accommodation independently through various leisure travel websites, leading to a disorganised travel programme. This made it difficult for the company to track travel spending and maintain consistency in accommodation choices.
- Inefficient management processes: Travel managers had to rely on time-consuming manual processes, such as spreadsheets, to monitor bookings and expenses. This added complexity to the travel management workflow and made it harder to monitor compliance and booking details.
- Out-of-pocket expenses for employees: Many hotels require payment upfront, forcing employees to cover accommodation costs and submit reimbursement claims after their trips. This process caused delays in repayment and led to dissatisfaction among travelling workers.
- Difficulties finding relevant and reliable accommodation: Sourcing affordable and reliable accommodation near job sites proved time-consuming and inefficient. Travel managers struggled to find good-quality options that aligned with the company's travel policies, leading to stress and missed opportunities for corporate travel savings.

THE SOLUTION 💡

Eville & Jones needed a travel management platform to:

- Consolidate bookings into a single, easy-to-manage system
- Provide clear visibility into travel spending and uncover cost-saving opportunities
- Eliminate the burden of out-of-pocket expenses for employees

Roomex meets these needs with a comprehensive solution that offers the following:

- Better visibility into travel spend: Roomex provides real-time insights into bookings and travel-related expenses. This allows Eville & Jones to identify trends, track compliance and spot cost-saving opportunities.
- Putting an end to out-of-pocket expenses: Employees no longer have to pay for accommodation upfront. Instead, bookings are billed centrally through a monthly invoice, removing the need for reimbursement claims and reducing the administrative workload for travel managers.
- Efficient and centralised travel management: Roomex provides a unified platform for managing all accommodation bookings. Travel managers can monitor reservations in real-time, making it easier to confirm that no bookings are lost or duplicated. Employees also have the flexibility to make or modify their reservations as needed while the travel team retains full visibility and control.
- Access to affordable, reliable accommodation: Roomex lists a variety of accommodation options, including Travelodge hotels across the UK, which are cost-effective and conveniently located near job sites. This makes it easier for employees to find suitable accommodation quickly, allowing them to focus on their work without wasting time searching for hotels.

CAIRNCROSS

CASE STUDY #3: CAIRN CROSS

THE CHALLENGE

Cairn Cross, a leading civil engineering firm based in Leeds, employs a team of around 50 professionals working on infrastructure projects across the UK. The company experienced substantial hurdles in managing its frequent hotel bookings for team members who often travel to various project sites.

Each week, Cairn Cross needed to book approximately ten rooms, with stays ranging from one to four nights. Handling these reservations while making sure the accommodation was both suitable and cost-effective became a complex task.

Several specific challenges complicated the booking process:

- Limited visibility: Managing bookings across different travel providers made it difficult to track expenses and monitor accommodation costs, which meant it was hard to assess overall spending or identify potential corporate travel savings.
- Lack of a centralised platform: Without a unified booking system, sourcing and managing accommodation near project sites was time-consuming and inefficient, particularly when team members worked across multiple regions.
- Complicated payment processes: Employees were often required to make on-site payments, which led to delays in reimbursement and added to the administrative workloads of both employees and travel managers.
- Social responsibility: Cairn Cross wanted to prioritise accommodation near project sites to improve convenience and support local, independent businesses. However, balancing this with the need for cost-effective accommodation was a challenge.

THE SOLUTION 💡

Cairn Cross partners with Roomex to implement a holistic travel management platform that tackles the company's booking and expense management challenges.

This includes the following features:

- Booking management: Roomex's easy-to-use interface allows Cairn Cross to manage all hotel bookings in one place. The platform makes it simple to filter hotel options by price, location and other important factors, streamlining the booking process.
- Tracking and reporting: The detailed tracking and reporting features allow travel managers to monitor and optimise travel spending across various projects, helping to align costs with their operational needs.
- Supporting local businesses: Roomex's extensive accommodation database includes independent options, enabling Cairn Cross to prioritise local businesses near their project sites. This empowers the firm to balance its commitment to supporting the local economy while still making sure the accommodation they book is reliable and cost-effective.
- Streamlining invoicing and payments: The centralised billing system eliminates the need for employees to make on-site payments, simplifying the check-in process. Eliminating out-of-pocket expenses reduces administrative tasks and improves employee satisfaction.

Musgrave

CASE STUDY #4: MUSGRAVE

THE CHALLENGE

Food retail and wholesale giant [Musgrave](#) encountered several operational roadblocks managing hotel bookings for its workforce. Managing separate hotel relationships across five divisions while supporting a globally mobile workforce relied on manual processes, leading to inefficiencies and significant time consumption. The lack of unified data further hindered the company's ability to track spending and optimise costs effectively.

Specific hurdles included:

- Limited oversight: The absence of integrated data made it challenging to track accommodation expenses across the company's divisions. This disjointed approach meant it was tricky to identify spending patterns and uncover potential savings, resulting in missed opportunities for cost control.
- Disconnected processes: Each division operated independently when managing hotel bookings, with no standardised system in place. This siloed approach increased administrative strain, as each team independently managed bookings, negotiated hotel rates and processed payments. Without a unified system, workloads were higher and it was harder to ensure consistency across the organization. It also made it challenging to leverage collective buying power, ultimately leading to inconsistent rates and costlier outcomes.
- Manual booking systems: The absence of a centralised system made hotel contracting and rate comparisons cumbersome, wasting valuable time for employees and travel managers.

THE SOLUTION 💡

In 2012, Musgrave partners with Roomex to implement a comprehensive hotel booking, management and payment solution.

The impact is immediate and substantial:

- Centralised booking management: Roomex provides Musgrave with a personalised, user-friendly platform that includes pre-negotiated rates, preferred hotels and easy-access to their frequent locations. Employees can efficiently book accommodation using the portal, complete with self-service tools like cancellation functionality. This standardisation saves time across all divisions. Within the first year, 525 Musgrave staff register on the Roomex platform and are authorised to book their own hotels.
- Cost savings through live rate comparison: Every booking is rate-compared, allowing Musgrave to consistently secure the best deals. This results in a 19% reduction in accommodation expenses compared to standard rates.
- Integrated tracking and reporting: Roomex enables instant visibility into accommodation spending across divisions, staff and locations. This transparency allows travel managers to monitor expenditures in real-time, enabling them to better align travel costs with corporate budgets and goals.
- VAT compliance: Roomex improves VAT compliance by consolidating all hotel bookings and payments into a centralised system that provides detailed, accurate records for every transaction. The automated tracking reduces the risk of errors associated with manual data entry and makes sure that all relevant VAT information is captured and organised in a consistent format. This makes it easier for Musgrave to verify and claim VAT refunds where applicable.
- Outsourced hotel contracting: Roomex takes over the responsibility of rate negotiation and hotel contracting for Musgrave, freeing up travel managers to focus on other priorities while making sure the company consistently secures competitive rates with minimal effort on their part.
- Streamlined payments: The centralised billing system means employees no longer have to make on-site payments, simplifying the check-in process and resolving any reimbursement concerns. This improvement boosts employee satisfaction while creating a more efficient and stress-free experience for everyone involved.

CASE STUDY #5: KN GROUP

THE CHALLENGE

KN Group, a leading provider of managed services for the telecommunications, roads infrastructure and power sectors in the UK, Ireland and internationally, grappled with growing challenges in managing hotel bookings as the company expanded.

Its unique travel requirements, driven by a mobile workforce primarily travelling by company vehicles, set it apart from the typical needs addressed by traditional Travel Management Companies (TMCs).

Specific points of focus included:

- Disjointed booking processes: Hotel bookings required cross-referencing and manual checks from travel managers, making the process time-consuming and inefficient.
- Lack of visibility: Without a centralised system, KN Group struggled to consolidate travel information or generate reports on overall spending.
- Credit card risks: Employees frequently working in remote areas created security risks when using credit cards for payments.
- Need for cost management: KN Group sought a solution to control travel costs while maintaining long-standing relationships with preferred hotels.

THE SOLUTION

KN Group partners with Roomex in 2014 to redefine its approach to workforce travel management:

- Customised booking platform: Roomex tailors its platform based on KN Group's booking behaviour and frequent destinations. Favourite and frequently booked hotels are highlighted, making the process even faster. Employees can now complete bookings in less than a minute – saving 10–15 minutes per booking. Across hundreds of bookings monthly, this translates into significant time savings for the procurement team.
- Cost-effective and flexible bookings: Roomex enables KN Group to maintain long-standing negotiated rates with existing hotel partners while also securing the best available rates elsewhere.
- Better visibility and reporting: Robust reporting capabilities with real-time insights into hotel spending and savings allow KN Group to monitor and optimise travel costs effectively.
- Streamlined billing: Roomex consolidates all hotel bookings into a single monthly invoice, drastically reducing administrative workloads.
- Secure and scalable payment processes: In eliminating the need for credit card payments in remote areas, Roomex reduces security risks. The platform's scalability also creates consistency and efficiency as the organisation grows.

PROVEN STRATEGIES FOR ACHIEVING COST SAVINGS IN TRAVEL

Drawing insights from the above case studies, several strategies emerge as essential for reducing travel costs while maintaining operational efficiency and employee satisfaction. The table below summarises these insights:

Strategy	Description
Centralise all areas of travel management for enhanced oversight	Managing bookings, travel-related expenses and payments through a single platform avoids fragmented workflows and gives travel managers real-time visibility on travel spending. This makes it much easier to accurately pinpoint areas where time and cost savings can be made.
Leverage pre-negotiated business accommodation rates	Access to pre-negotiated rates provides businesses with significant cost savings, particularly for companies booking frequent or long-term stays. As a result of securing lower rates upfront, companies can better control their travel budgets and avoid fluctuating market prices. Over time, these savings accumulate, leading to substantial reductions in overall accommodation expenses.
Automate expense management	Manual expense management is resource-intensive and prone to errors. Automated tools simplify cost tracking by automatically categorising expenses and verifying compliance with company policies. Removing the human element from data entry helps businesses reduce the risk of overspending and achieve more accurate financial reporting. Additionally, automation speeds up the approval and reimbursement process, allowing finance teams to dedicate their time to higher-value tasks while enhancing the overall employee experience.
Data-driven decision-making	Access to detailed reporting tools allows organisations to closely analyse travel patterns and identify inefficiencies in their current processes.
Avoid employees paying out-of-pocket expenses	Reducing the financial burden on employees improves their travel experience and streamlines workflows.
Support local and sustainable businesses	Prioritising accommodation close to project sites supports the local economy and improves convenience for employees. With shorter travel times between their lodgings and work locations, employees can focus more on their tasks, reducing stress and logistical concerns.
Simplify accommodation booking and modification processes	User-friendly travel management software empowers employees to efficiently book or adjust their reservations, boosting flexibility and reducing the time spent on administrative tasks. At the same time, these platforms provide travel managers with comprehensive oversight, allowing them to monitor compliance with company policies and budgets.

ACHIEVING CORPORATE TRAVEL SAVINGS AND OPERATIONAL EFFICIENCY

As business travel costs continue to rise, organisations face the pressing problem of balancing corporate travel savings with employee satisfaction. The case studies presented in this white paper demonstrate how several companies have successfully addressed this challenge by adopting Roomex's centralised travel management platform.

The strategies discussed– centralising travel management, optimising accommodation sourcing, automating expense workflows and eliminating out-of-pocket expenses– are proven methods for reducing travel costs without compromising employee satisfaction.

To begin implementing these strategies and achieve similar results as the case studies highlighted above, we invite you to <u>schedule a demo with Roomex</u> today.
Discover how our solutions can optimise your travel programme and improve cost control.