The Travel Booker's Guide

Goodbye Stress!

How to Save Your Sanity When Booking Business Travel in 2024

☑ **Including: Your FREE Travel Planning Intake Checklist**

Roomex

Business travel is changing. Are you prepared to keep up?

INTRODUCTION
Tackling the stress of business travel

As far as job descriptions go, being an Office Manager or Personal Assistant is wide open. Every day really is different as you could be doing any number of things. One minute you're organising meetings, and the next you're managing databases, overseeing budgets, and making sure everything in the office is running smoothly.

That's not to mention time-consuming tasks that pop up like booking transport and accommodation or keeping track of senior staff.

Then there's Sharon from Marketing who keeps coming over to tell you the printer is jammed.

As if you didn't already have enough to do!

The truth is that you'll often find yourself overstretched and overworked, with a lack of time and resources. It's a balancing act and it only gets more difficult when you're thrown the curveball of looking after business travel too.

Your current system probably isn't as efficient as it could be, time- and money-wise, with emails flooding your inbox from colleagues who need to be somewhere else *tomorrow*; or from finance who are facing a messy trail of invoices and expenses that don't quite add up; or even at the end of the quarter when the MD wants oversight on how their money is being spent.

It's enough to cause major stress. But does it have to be like that? Do you *need* to manually track everything? *Should* your colleagues be hounding you with booking requests over email? And how are you meant to accurately keep track of invoices when all you have to go by is a paper trail of receipts that were stuffed into someone's wallet?
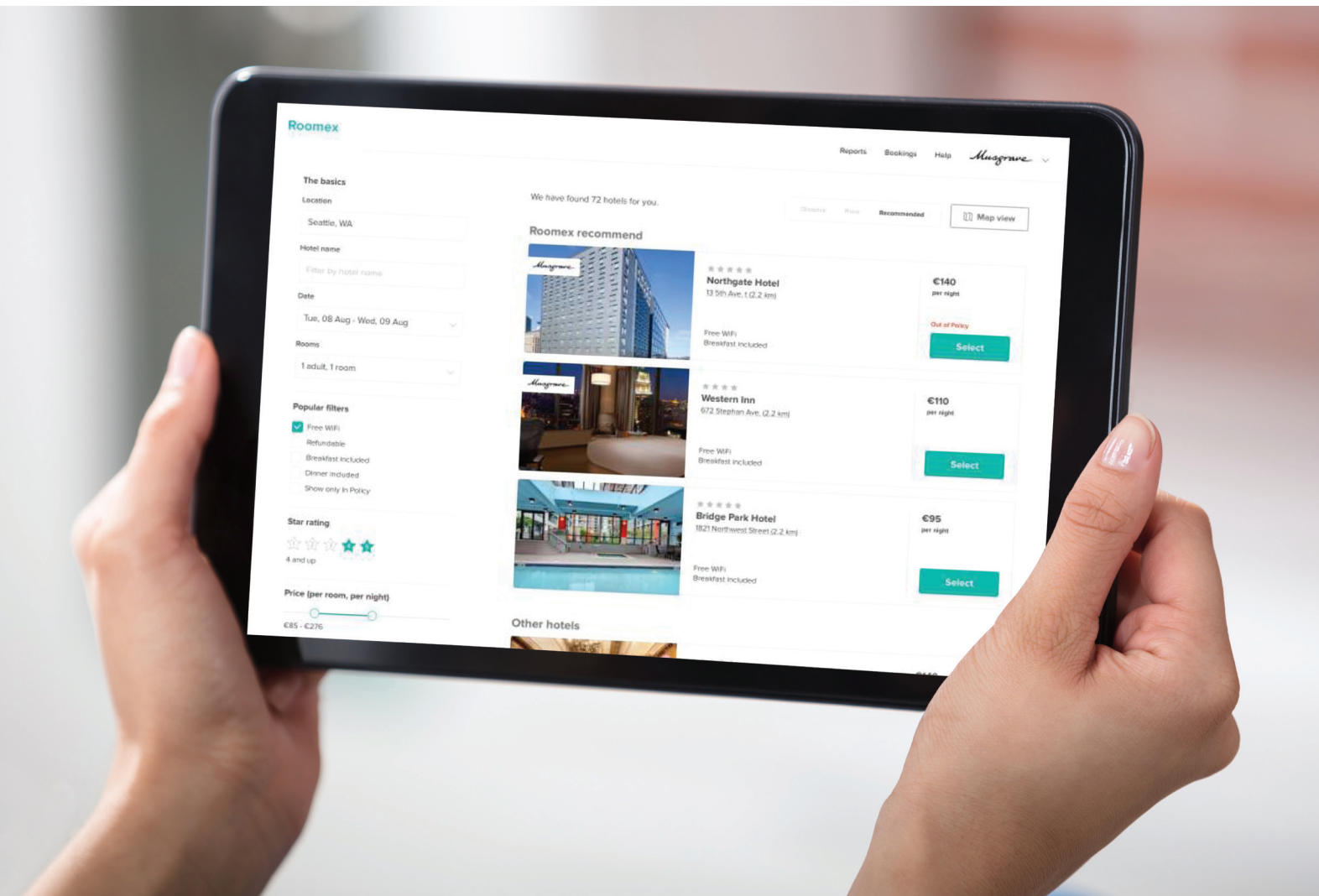
In this eBook, we're going to show you how to make business hotel booking easy as well as giving you the 'dos and don'ts' for saving time, and introducing you to the technology that will change everything.

Oh, and you'll get a travel planning intake checklist too.

In short: there absolutely is an easier way – and this eBook is it!

> **Do you need to manually track everything? Should your colleagues be hounding you with booking requests over email?**

Is the travel booking process broken?

In your travel booking process include:

- A traveller profile: Date of birth, contact info, billing details, their expense information, any relevant health and safety information, and hotel preferences.
- A business trip booking form/template: A standardised form that will make life a lot easier as it'll cut down on the back-and-forth of trip planning. It should be easy to fill out and act as an overview on who they are, where they're going, relevant information on the project or customer, and why.

While having a travel booking process won't solve all your admin problems, it'll give you one place to store traveller information so at the very least, you won't need to worry about accidentally giving your boss an allergic reaction.

3 big considerations when booking corporate hotels

Corporate hotel costs can creep up fast, but these considerations can help to stop budget bloat and travel stress.

1. Dynamic vs. negotiated rates
Or both? Use a technology platform that compares prices in real-time for you from the widest-available choice so you get the best deal for your team.

2. Duty of care
Staff safety is super-important. You'll want full visibility on where they are and what they're doing — so look into a **technology platform that can help**.

3. Track and manage expense
Make sure you have a process to track, manage and analyse ongoing expenses — otherwise they can quickly get out of hand.

Do you have a travel booking process? If you've answered 'yes', is this process actually documented and distributed to staff? And do colleagues follow it?

If not, you're going to be mired in a mess of too many invoices, receipts, and spreadsheets.

Some businesses will have a detailed travel policy that lays out expense guidelines and how and where staff

should book. However staff can get bogged down in the details and many colleagues won't even read the policy document — so it's more wasted time and effort. Instead, you should lay out a clear travel booking process for business bookings. The big considerations are obvious: pricing (especially around hotel booking providers and dynamic pricing), traveller preference, and efficiency.

Traveller preference can be particularly important when it comes to senior management — you don't want to send your boss to a hotel, for example, that serves a breakfast food they're wildly allergic to.

"**Dynamic pricing is a flexible approach to rates wherein hotels can adjust pricing on the fly. On the other hand, negotiated prices are generally set for 12 months, so make sure you have full visibility on all pricing to get the right deal for you.**"

How to save time on business travel

Managing a busy office can turn even the calmest of OMs into a serious workaholic. It can be hard to leave on time when your biggest customer needs three engineers on site in Glasgow for the next week, or Bob from accounting drops the bomb that he's going to a business conference with five of his colleagues this Thursday. They all want to know how quickly you can sort out the travel and hotel accommodation plans.

Sure, you've sent the email about the travel booking process and they'll dutifully fill it in, but you're still left scrambling to balance the travel budget because of the last-minute request.

You might think that you're going to be spending the next few hours scouring hotel booking sites to find the best price for each trip, but there are some things you can do to avoid situations like this.

1. Encourage early bookings
The customer request may have just sprung up, but Bob likely knew about the conference for weeks – if not months, so encourage early bookings where possible. Make sure Bob understands the booking process and how last-minute bookings eat into your time (and budget). If needs must, get his supervisor involved for gentle encouragement to follow the booking process.

2. Avoid using the wrong website
Booking.com might be your go-to for personal travel, but it's not the right fit for business hotel booking. You'll want a site that compares as many hotels as possible for corporate use – otherwise you'll waste time and money.

3. Ditch manual price comparisons
If you're manually going through websites and looking at prices, you're wasting time that could be far better spent elsewhere. Instead, look for a platform that will compare the prices from many different sources in one place.

4. Don't waste time looking at the wrong hotels
The problem with booking a hotel is that there are so many options. It's very easy to fall into the trap of scouring pages and pages of hotels that look much the same. You could scroll for hours.

For business travel, preferred hotels are often convenient to where the work will be carried out, or with facilities such as parking, or room rates that include evening meals as well as breakfast.

5. Allow out-of-policy hotel bookings (with good reasons)
If your company has a travel policy, you'll have certain hotels that you're absolutely supposed to use – however, sometimes using a hotel that's out-of-policy can save you time. It could be that it's right beside Bob's conference and it'll save you having to book taxis – so be prepared to be flexible for the right reasons.

"Sick of being handed receipts? Look for a hotel booking platform that includes invoice, payment, and expense management so you never have to worry about it again."

Travel planning intake checklist

How to use this checklist

Being an Office Manager/the unofficial chief travel booker is so complicated because of the constant stream of requests coming in through your email.

You need one place to keep everything, so if you don't yet have the tech in place, you can use our travel planning document below to track travel requests, traveller information, hotel booking dates and preferences, and very important information in case there's an emergency.

Using the document is easy: download the file that came with this eBook, send it to your colleagues, and ask them to fill it in and send it back to you with their name and date (example: cathal_murray_february_2024.docx) as the file name.

Be sure to save it in one centralised place on your server for easy access.

BUSINESS TRAVEL INTAKE CHECKLIST

Is this an amendment to a travel booking?	NO		YES		if yes, original date?	

Date submitted:	
Name of traveller:	
Approved by:	

TRAVELLER INFORMATION

Name:	
DOB:	
Department:	
Job title:	

HOTEL BOOKING DATE REQUESTS

Date	Check-in time:	Check-out time:	Location:

HOTEL PREFERENCE INFORMATION

Hotel Information	Hotel choices: _____ Preferred hotels: _____ _____ _____ Preferred room size: _____ Preferred room type: ☐ King ☐ Double ☐ Queen Hotel address: _____ Hotel website: _____ Any other information? _____ _____

Reasons for travel (please provide information on your division, the client you're meeting applicable, and the cost code where relevant)

Reasons for travel:

Customer / Project:
Cost Code:

CONTACT DETAILS (ETC.) IN CASE OF EMERGENCY

Passport number:	
Driver License Number / expiry	
Office building number:	
Security code access # (for office, etc., if applicable):	
Insurance company phone numbers (health/car etc.):	
Next of kin:	
Next of kin contact information:	
Home address:	
Home phone number:	
List of allergies:	
Doctor's name and contact details:	
Please detail any medical information we should know about:	
Anything else we should know?	

Introducing: business hotel booking platforms

While the travel intake document is handy, you might be thinking that you're adding more paperwork to your already-massive pile.

A business hotel booking platform could solve that problem for you.

Like many other industries, travel is changing. It's being disrupted by technology that's been created to make your life easier.

You'll likely have heard the saying about how Uber, the world's largest taxi company, owns no vehicles, or how Facebook, the world's most popular media owner, creates no content of its own.

Hotels are moving the same way: the world's largest hotel providers now own no hotels of their own either.

Instead, companies like us are looking to change the game – to save time and money and stress for overworked Office Managers by creating a business hotel booking platform that pulls together a massive trove of hotels (nearly 1.2 million with Roomex) to find you the best deals.

A good hotel booking platform isn't just a website for booking hotels for your workforce. Instead, it's a one-stop platform that lets you find, book, manage, and analyse your business accommodation needs, wherever they are. You'll be able to easily manage the expenses side of things too, including invoicing, receipts, and payments – and most of all, the platform should be easy to use. A business hotel booking platform truly is the simplest solution to the nightmare that organising business travel can be.

12 top things to look out for in a business hotel booking platform

Not sure which business hotel booking platform to go with? Look out for these 12 absolute musts before signing up.

- ○ Onboarding support.
- ○ Customer care/support.
- ○ Duty of care/compliance for staff.
- ○ Access to a wide range of hotels.
- ○ Real-time price comparisons, so what you see is what you get.
- ○ An easy booking experience.
- ○ Accounting options, for invoices, expenses, and spend.
- ○ Analytics overview, with real-time access to your data.
- ○ Travel spend reporting that can be optimised to your budget.
- ○ Ability to save traveller's data and set preferred hotels.
- ○ Payment options to suit your business, including pre-pay and credit.
- ○ One monthly invoice.

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About Roomex

Roomex is the hotel booking platform for your workforce, wherever work takes them. It provides organisations like yours with a fast, simple, secure and free online business hotel booking, management and payment solution to:

- ● Find and book the right hotels, in the right locations, at the right price.
- ● Understand your business hotel costs and usage, in real-time.
- ● Improve control of and compliance to your business travel policies.
- ● Measure ongoing savings in comparison to the best market rates.
- ● Manage payment for all your workforce hotel needs through a single monthly invoice.
- ● Eliminate the need for traveller expense claims and receipts tracking when it comes to business hotel needs.

Roomex offers the best choice of business hotels of any hotel-booking platform on the market. We have access to over 2 million properties and hotel chains around the world, including millions of hotel rooms not available on leisure hotel booking sites.

Hotel supply is a core value for Roomex. Our team is always working to add new hotels to our portfolio, including many hotel chains not available on any other site.

Working with Roomex takes the stress out of business hotel management. You're looking for a solution. We're it.

Why choose Roomex over any other platform?

- ● We don't charge fees.
- ● We have a better choice of hotels.
- ● We get better rates.
- ● We allow all payment options including on account.
- ● We give you a self-booking tool, so book or cancel anytime 24/7.
- ● We give you live reporting.
- ● We measure savings on every booking.
- ● We bring your cost codes into the booking process.
- ● We don't tie you to a contract.

What more could you want?

Try Roomex now

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