



Travel Platform Guide

# The 5 Essentials of a Travel Management Platform

Make Business Travel Easier



## The pain without the platform

**The travel industry is coming out the other side of an incredibly difficult period and as travel starts to open up again, the old headaches of traveling for work are starting to rear their ugly heads once more. Despite an abundance of online travel and hotel booking options, business travel can still be overly complicated and time consuming.**

Between a lack of visibility on spending, receipts going missing or out-of-the-blue requests to book a hotel stay for an entire team tomorrow, travel booking can cause you serious stress and really eat into your time and budget.

Imagine what you could achieve if you were freed from the thankless and inefficient drudgery of tracking expenses with Excel sheets or having to pull together reports for every single hotel stay?

It's simple: travellers want easy-to-use tech to store and keep track of all their information in one place while travel bookers like you need an easy way to keep track of bookings and expenses on the road while also cashing in on better hotel rates.

Say goodbye to annoying Excel hell once and for all with a travel management platform built specifically for mobile workforces.

Automation beats hard labour all day long and any business travel platform is a step forward.

But the question remains: how do you know which platform is right for you? You'll want a solution that understands the industry, that employs best practices and that makes your job easier. In this guide we've outlined some of the key areas that you should be thinking about when it comes to picking this platform.

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# Why you shouldn't use consumer websites



**Your boss asks you to handle a hotel booking request for an upcoming project. You might go straight to a consumer travel website, thinking that you'll get a good deal...**

But that's a big misstep. Sure, it aggregates a list of hotels and seems to offer you a good deal, but you'll be short-changed because you're not getting the full picture.

It's all-too easy for travel bookers to get caught up in the whirlwind of consumer sites apparently offering lots of tasty deals, but consumer sites don't consider the intricacies of hotel pricing; availability; and if the options are the right choice for your staff.

## The requirements are different

The requirements of a someone traveling for work are fundamentally different to those of other hotel bookers – for example, a stag party heading to Leeds.

You want your team to get a good night's sleep and be refreshed and ready to kickstart that new project or you want your engineer to be wide awake for the job onsite

You also have corporate responsibilities. Compliance can go out the window when you cede control of your travel arrangements to a host of consumer-oriented travel sites.

Your company must look after the health and safety of employees at all times, no matter where they are in the world.

Bearing that in mind, you don't want your employee booking themselves into a hotel in a bad area because they didn't have time to research the location properly.

You need to know where your employees are staying – and that their accommodation is safe and appropriate for a work trip.

The solution for many companies is a travel management platform that minimizes the risk, cost and potential chaos of managing hotel bookings.

With hotel costs rising fast, it's also worth mentioning that there are significant savings to be made with the right software.

## Security and hotel stays

Hotels can be particularly vulnerable to data threats given the high volume of personal information and payment card transactions, as well as third-party info around POS systems, concessions, and their own bookings/marketing efforts.

Using a single specialized hotel/travel management platform can mitigate the risk by paying your hotel bills centrally, with one invoice a month, which completely eradicates the hassle of bulk billing, expenses etc.

It's one less thing to worry about!

## Duty of care: A big consideration

While duty of care has always been a consideration for those in charge, the pandemic has made it an absolute priority . You need to strongly consider duty of care as it's the employer's legal and moral responsibility to ensure that employees are well looked after and safe no matter where they are.

Solutions could be as simple as ensuring the hotel is safe (i.e. no fire hazards, in a good location, etc.); or logging traveller details (for example in case of a medical incident); and using a platform that gives you oversight on where they are.

## How hotel pricing works

It's simple: there's no such thing as fixed hotel pricing, so it's very easy to be sucked into a quagmire of ever-changing rates, even within the same hotel.

A big player is the various sources of hotel rooms: wholesalers, OTA (Online Travel Agents), GDS (Global Distribution System) and direct for example, all of which impact rates.

Plus, every hotel will have its own policy for setting prices, though the basics remain much the same across the globe: pricing is predominantly affected by location, seasonality, demand, star rating, amenities, value of service, and other competition.

Hotels may drive up cost if there's a spell of pleasant weather or a flurry of online searches for their services. For example, The Royal Palm in Dubai is noted for changing its rates up to 14 times per day.

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**Evidently, getting the best price requires savvy and smart technology – otherwise, you could face a losing battle against managing hotel spend**

# 5 things to look out for in a business hotel booking platform

## Streamline your business hotel booking workflow

**You’ve just decided to take the plunge and use a travel management platform.**

Great. Your working life is going to get a lot easier, cheaper, efficient and productive.

But which travel management platform should you go for? There are several that will do a good job – and many of them are better than having none at all.

However, you want the best platform, right?

Like every business decision, you need to put the software through its paces, asking the right questions about how it can transform your business.

To help you on your way, here are five features to watch out for:

### 1. The right hotels – in the right places

Consumer booking sites are brilliant for holiday-makers – But when it comes to booking travel for your teams and employees, you’ll probably need a bit more expertise.

When assessing a platform, ask if it has access to the most relevant hotels – including hotels you’d get on consumer sites, specific business hotels and rooms, hotel rooms from sources such as GDS(Global Distribution Systems) and wholesalers, and access to chains such as Premier Inn, which aren’t available on most booking sites.

Roomex, for one, offers the best choice of business hotels of any hotel-booking platform on the market. It provides access to 1.2 million hotels and hotel chains around the world, including millions of hotel rooms not available on leisure hotel booking sites.

Roomex is always working to add new hotels to its portfolio, including many hotel chains that aren’t available on any other site.

### 2. Visibility and real-time reporting

Timely solutions require timely information. Today’s managers want analytics and metrics that tell them what’s going on right now.

It’s not much use knowing your travel budget was blown sky-high three months ago.

Nor will it win you any plaudits if the finance manager wants a read on your travel budget and it takes you four days to come up with a report.

And those four days will be hellish, trawling through Excel sheets and various credit card statements and tracking down that errant traveller who’s always missing an important receipt.

Instead, go with a good business hotel booking solution that includes real-time reports. You’ll get it done at the click of a button and be able to get on with the important stuff.

Roomex, for instance, streamlines everything you need in one place by automatically linking up cost centres and cost codes for projects.

In a customised Roomex portal, it’s easy to have your company cost codes set up for projects, purchase orders, geographies, suppliers or divisions, etc. Your itemised Roomex invoice will provide a clear breakdown based on the cost codes, supporting speedy account reconciliation and delivering complete visibility of all workforce hotel costs and savings.

Your hard-pressed office management staff will thank you for it!

### 3. Single payment

With the right travel management platform, scrambling at the end of each month to find all travel receipts and invoices will be a distant memory. One of the key benefits to look for, is having the ability to combine all your company’s hotel booking expenses into one single payment. Meaning your end of month will be a walk in the park and finance will be your biggest fan!

Roomex consolidates all your company’s hotel booking expenses in a single monthly payment. You receive a single invoice matching internal cost codes and you get a month’s free credit.

This means you no longer need to waste time reconciling multiple payments with company credit cards, expenses and hotel invoices.

Say goodbye to complex hotel payments forever.

### 4. Duty of care

Duty of care has always been an important part of work travel, but this has shot up the priority list since the start of the pandemic, but what does duty of care actually mean? Essentially, it’s based around ensuring that staff are safe and well – which can be difficult if they’re on the road.

Once a staff member books into a hotel on your Roomex portal, the system records where they are staying and how to contact them. Staff hotel locations can be instantly displayed on the Duty of Care interactive map, so you can pinpoint anyone, at any location in the world, in seconds. Our best in class care team also ensures that you have the support you need if any problems arise while your team is on the road.

### 5. Great savings

A good platform will save you time and money. It’s that simple.

With the benefit of rates negotiated by a major booking engine, you should pay less for accommodation, and if you choose the right one, a good deal less.

Roomex, for example, saves clients on room rates by booking through its seamless, integrated platform with Exclusive Roomex Rates.

There are no set-up costs. Once your company is registered, you and your colleagues can use Roomex for all your company’s business hotel booking, management, and payment needs. What’s not to like?

**Roomex provides access to close to 1.2 million hotels and hotel chains around the world, including millions of hotel rooms not available on leisure hotel booking sites**







# Roomex Business Hotel Booking Platform Still Delivering Savings for Musgrave after Ten Years

**Musgrave has been using Roomex for its workforce hotel booking, management, reporting and payment since 2012. The 140-year-old retail group is one of the company's longest standing customers.**

The relationship started when David O'Flynn was appointed as Musgrave Group Financial Director. One of the key initiatives he kicked-off was to find a solution that would enable the company to improve control and

visibility over accommodation spend, while safeguarding and enhancing existing relationships with preferred hotels.

The goal was to move away from fragmented and time consuming processes, where each of Musgrave's five divisions managed separate relationships with different hotels. Under the old system it was difficult to accurately track ongoing accommodation spend, and the company lacked the data and visibility needed to improve processes and reduce cost.

Musgrave went live with Roomex, the business hotel booking platform, in June 2012. Roomex provides

organizations with a fast, simple, and free, hotel booking, management and payment solution.

"From an operational point of view, Roomex is a seamless online booking tool, personalised for our business, staff and preferences," said Ingrid de Doncker, Musgrave Group eAuction Executive. The solution provides the company with a standard way of booking, managing and paying for all its workforce hotel needs, across the entire group.

"Roomex goes a long way to ensure that we are getting the best rates, and by 'rate-comparing' every single booking, they are not only measuring the savings we make, but also ensuring that we never pay over the odds. As experts in their field, they have allowed Musgrave to bring our accommodation spend under control and proactively manage it more effectively and efficiently," de Doncker added.

Within a year of go-live, Musgrave had already used Roomex to book 452 different hotels, in 135 cities across nine countries, at reduced rates. Moreover, the company had registered 525 Musgrave staff who were authorised to book their own hotels on its Roomex platform, which was customised to include Musgrave's negotiated rates, preferred hotels and most-frequent locations.

The benefits started to flow immediately, including:

- 19% measured savings against standard rates.
- Instant visibility on bookings by person, hotel, division and Group.

- Completely outsourced negotiation and contracting with hotels.
- Live benchmarking between actual booked and negotiated rates.
- Standardized booking workflow with self-cancel functionality, which helps avoid additional cost.
- Significant time saved across the board, including reduced time taken to make bookings, speedier report generation, better staff communication, and easier hotel contracting.
- Better accounts and VAT compliance.
- Personal, fast and expert Roomex customer service.

...all in a portal that experienced 100% uptime.

Fast forward 10 years, Musgrave is still benefitting from its partnership with Roomex. "I am satisfied that Roomex is delivering savings to the business and strongly recommend the continued use of Roomex as a group requirement in order to achieve lowest cost. Roomex saves us money and time, gives us live reporting, manages our contracting and provides top level support... and there's no cost," said Musgrave Group Financial Controller Michael Kelleher.

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**Michael Kelleher,**  
Musgrave Group Financial Controller



# Hello from Roomex

## Who are we?

**Supported by travel experts, Roomex is the leading travel and expense management platform for the mobile workforce who carry out project-based travel. Roomex helps you book, manage, pay and analyze all of your accommodation, rail and expenses in one place - saving both time and money.**

Roomex brings visibility and control into your travel and expense management, helping you create business efficiencies.

We'll help you answer:

- Do you need to be using multiple platforms to book your hotel stays?
- Are your negotiated rates still saving you money?
- How much was saved this quarter compared to last?
- What hotels are costing you the most?
- Is your travel policy really driving down costs?
- Is your team paying out of pocket for expenses?
- How are you keeping track of hotel payments?
- How much time is your team spending on avoidable admin tasks?
- Are you paying more than your peers for travel?

Roomex is the only workforce Travel and Expense Management Platform.

No matter where your workforce needs to be, we make travel easier for you so you can search, book, manage and pay for all your travel bookings in one place, whether you're at your desk or on the road with our mobile app.



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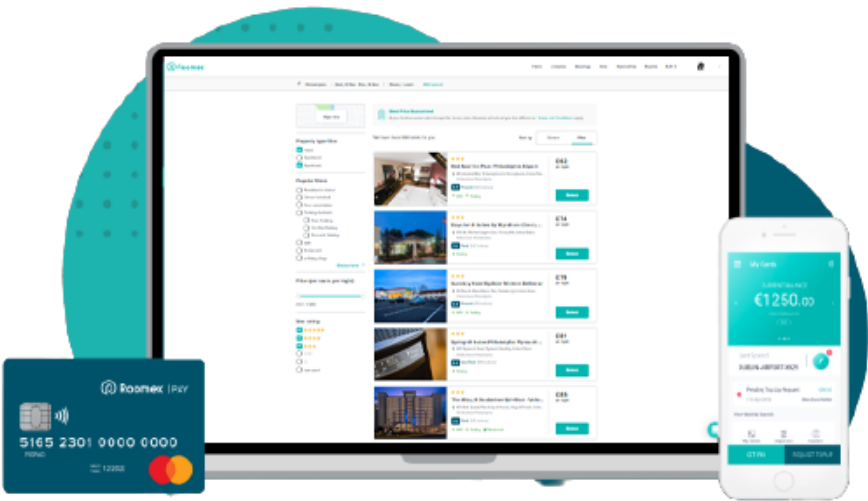
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Control & visibility of travel spend, backed by data



Smart end-to-end spend management solution







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