



The Career of a *Lifetime*

From post-college to three decades

Paul Travaglianti has been with Great Day! Tours for thirty-two years, joining straight from college as director of marketing. Great Day! Tours owner Allen Kinney hired the graduate, who had a dual degree in production management and marketing and fell in love with the travel industry. Today, Travaglianti is vice president of group sales and runs the group tour department—which includes sales calls to area senior centers, churches, schools, and group leaders booking motorcoaches; writing group tour brochures; participating in company planning; problem solving; delegating group tour duties; planning the annual group leader travel marketplace and dinner party; and presenting at travel seminars.

Travaglianti enjoys people. He enjoys talking to group leaders and school leaders; being part of a panel to help educate hotels, restaurants, attractions, and other industry suppliers; and seeing the industry change. When he started in travel, the company published a book and clients selected a package. Now, almost all packages are customized; group leaders peruse the Internet and request customization. In return, Great Day! Tours strongly recommends tour leaders work with a qualified tour company offering the proper insurance to cover them.

Staff attend several travel shows yearly. "Developing tours for the baby boomers

has become one of our specialties," Travaglianti said. "Retirees and travelers prefer more of a flex tour. They'll go to New York City or Chicago and want a downtown room and a meal or show, but would like time on their own to explore—with the option to do a few attractions."

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The company developed beer-and-wine tours and festival tour packages, and its cruise and fly division has an annual tour that travels via motorcoach to New York, for an overnight with rooms in Times Square and a guided tour before boarding a Princess Cruise for a seven-night trip up the East Coast.

This year, Great Day! Tours celebrated

its fiftieth year. "About 250 people traveled with us to Louisville and Pigeon Forge to help celebrate." Its education division works with schools to ensure an educational aspect of tours to such destinations as Chicago and Washington, D.C. The company has also helped band groups perform at Walt Disney World.

The casino tour and travel market is also big. "Work with a travel company. Casinos have our insurance on file and we can arrange a gaming bonus for passengers. We have one-day and multiday tours. Sometimes the casino's the destination; other times, we use the casino hotel as place to stay and for gaming in the evening, but during the day the group ventures out to explore the area."

To those new to the travel industry and arranging tours, Travaglianti suggests talking with a Great Day! Tours travel professional. "We've helped many 'rookies' to make the job easy. If you're a supplier marketing to a tour operator, remember that you're marketing more than your restaurant, attraction, or hotel: You're marketing the region." He also suggests visiting area attractions to learn about them, attending social functions (usually coordinated by a CVB) to get to know people in the industry, and networking with industry members. "Invite them to see your attraction. They could then tell their clients about your attraction." **G**