

MEDIA RELEASE

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GTA establishes multi-lingual team in Dubai to support travel businesses outside office hours

- Global Assistance Team moves to Dubai to provide even higher standards of service to the world's travel agents and support travellers if they encounter problems during their trip
- The team provides support outside office hours and in all major languages
- Dubai's reputation as an 'always on' international hub with strong links to every part of the world has created a valuable multi-lingual workforce
- The news comes as the Middle East & Africa region becomes increasingly influential to GTA's success and the wider global economy
- Sales to the region's travel trade rose 17% last year with Turkey overtaking Saudi Arabia as the biggest source of travellers from the region
- Over 70% of MEA source markets have seen the number of room nights booked increase
- The Middle Eastern culture of building friendships from business relationships has given Dubai a strong reputation for high standards of customer service

Global travel distributor [GTA](#) has moved one of its most valued functions to Dubai to provide even higher standards of service to travel agents around the world. An improved Global Assistance Team will support travellers who encounter problems during their trip outside typical office hours.

GTA has long been renowned for the strength of its 'on the road' customer support as travel agents and tour operators can easily telephone or email the company should travellers be delayed, need to make last minute changes to their booking or have problems checking in. The world's travel trade books nearly 13 million room nights every year through GTA and its retail brands TravelCube or Travel Bound and relies on GTA's ability to take care of their customers once they arrive in their destination.

Thanks to the new team in Dubai, GTA now extends its customer service to provide support outside office hours and in all major languages, wherever the traveller may be. It means the company provides a market-leading customer support service, available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year. People travelling with a GTA voucher can rest easy knowing that, if they cannot reach their travel agent or tour operator back home in an emergency, a member of the GTA team is available to help.

Although the service is provided predominantly in English, Dubai's reputation as an 'always on' international hub with strong links to every part of the world has created a valuable multi-lingual, often expatriate workforce. GTA's Global Assistance Team already has a dozen languages between them. However, if a caller does struggle to communicate, the team can call on live interpretation in all major languages.

Andy Aitkenhead, GTA's Senior Vice President for Global Operations, is responsible for ensuring world-class standards of customer support. He says: "Businesses choose to work with us in part because they know that we have real people at the end of the telephone to reassure and help their travellers when there is an urgent problem. Establishing our Global Assistance Team in Dubai allows us to take advantage of the Emirate's close ties with many parts of the world. This team will handle urgent enquiries from customers, who may have nowhere else to turn. It is vital that they be ready to serve at any time of the day or night."

GTA's Middle East & Africa region is increasingly influential as sales to the region's travel trade rose 17% last year. Turkey has overtaken Saudi Arabia as GTA's biggest source of travellers from the region with Qatar joining these two countries, the UAE and South Africa in the top five most important markets. Over 70% of source markets have seen the number of room nights booked increase year on year. This is in large part due to the strength of GTA's general sales agents in the region who have a deep knowledge of consumer travel trends in their particular markets and valuable insight into the political, economic, cultural and technological circumstances influencing travel businesses.

Flavia Alzetta, GTA's Senior Vice President for Global Sales & Marketing, says: "2014 has been another fantastic year of growth for us in the region and economic forecasts suggest there will be even more potential in 2015. Middle Eastern relationships with Asia – core to our future growth prospects – make it the right location for our customer service team. Its culture of building friendships from business relationships has also given Dubai a strong reputation for high standards of customer service."

Celebrating 40 years in business in 2015, GTA is today part of the Kuoni Group's 100 year heritage. It's longevity in the industry and financial stability, coupled with its global presence, technological performance and the expertise of its people, will keep it powering global travel for years to come.

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Notes to Editors

- Powering global travel, [GTA](#) provides ground travel products and services for fully independent travel, supporting the biggest and best in travel. Part of Kuoni Global Travel Services, a division of Kuoni, GTA is trusted to deliver because of its wealth of experience, privileged relationships and on the ground expertise. Its technology solutions easily connect travel suppliers and sellers worldwide. As well as XML, booking sites – GTA retail, TravelCube and Travel Bound, as well as GTA wholesale – process over 21,000 bookings daily, in more than 25 languages. Connect now with GTA. www.gta-travel.com