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VIRTUOSO® WELCOMES LOLA AS ITS NEWEST TRAVEL AGENCY MEMBER

Evolving Agency Models Identified as an Industry Trend to Watch by Virtuoso

NEW YORK (June 8, 2016) – International luxury travel agency network Virtuoso® welcomes Lola as its latest travel agency member. Representing a new take on travel advisors, Lola provides on-demand, personal travel service through a smartphone app that instantly connects people to its team of travel consultants. Consumers can find hotels, book flights, research vacation dreams, and consult with their advisor on anything else they may need during their trip. According to Virtuoso, Lola represents a broader trend it is seeing within the industry: travel agency models are evolving beyond the traditional.

“Lola is merging human interaction with technology in a smart and seamless way,” says David Kolner, Virtuoso’s senior vice president of Global Member Partnerships. “This is a natural progression in our industry because it appeals to consumers who like the convenience of working with an advisor via an app or chat technology.”

Kolner further explains that Lola is not the only travel agency breaking new ground when it comes to servicing consumers. He cites Quintessentially, which has Virtuoso-affiliated offices in New York and London, and 10 Lifestyle Management also in London as well as others across the global Virtuoso network, as concierge-based models where travel planning is only one aspect of the personal service they provide their clients. Agencies such as Austin-based Departure Lounge, which has reimaged the traditional travel agency as a coffee and wine bar, as well as Travel & Transport with its event spaces that include large touchscreens and plenty of space to interact, are redefining the storefront space.

Virtuoso has experienced rapid growth over the past 18 months since opening up participation to travel planning organizations throughout Europe, Asia and the Middle East. Now in 40 countries, Virtuoso member agencies have more than 730 office locations and 11,400 advisors. These non-traditional agency models factor into that growth and are attracting younger consumers who traditionally may have shied away from using travel advisors.

For its part, Lola is developing end-to-end technology to deliver a messaging-based mobile interface for Lola members and a proprietary agent console for its travel consultants. The agent console will be powered with artificial intelligence to support personalization for constrained-choice recommendations and chatbot-supplemented communication.

“The name Lola is shorthand for longitude and latitude, a system created to make seaborne navigation easier, and in that same spirit, we started Lola to give more people access to a premium level of travel care,” says Krista Pappas, Vice President of Lola. “We’re excited to be part of the Virtuoso network, to keep company with some of the biggest names in the business while drawing upon its unrivaled supplier relationships and negotiated amenities to provide even better travels for our clients.”

Founded by Paul English, former CTO and cofounder of KAYAK, Lola consists of a 45-person team, with management that includes three additional members of KAYAK’s original management team and several leaders from leading technology companies.

“For consumers who value a more traditional travel agency, we have an outstanding group of professionals who are dedicated to delivering exceptional experiences to their clients,” continued Kolner. “Lola has the same commitment, but is going about it in a way that we find exciting for our industry. As the saying goes, this is not your father’s travel agency.”

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About Virtuoso

Virtuoso® is the leading international travel agency network specializing in luxury and experiential travel. This by-invitation-only organization comprises nearly 390 agency members with more than 11,400 elite travel advisors in 40 countries throughout North America, Latin America, the Caribbean, Europe, Asia-Pacific, Africa and the Middle East. Drawing upon its preferred relationships with 1,700 of the world's best hotels and resorts, cruise lines, airlines, tour companies and premier destinations, the network provides its upscale clientele with exclusive amenities, rare experiences and privileged access. More than (U.S.) \$15.5 billion in annual travel sales makes Virtuoso a powerhouse in the luxury travel industry. For more information, visit virtuoso.com.

To learn more about Lola, visit lolatravel.com or download the [Lola app](#) from the AppStore

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