



VIRTUOSO® CELEBRATES ITS 30TH ANNIVERSARY BY EXPANDING ITS MARQUEE EVENT, VIRTUOSO TRAVEL WEEK, TO OLYMPIC PROPORTIONS

“THE FASHION WEEK OF TRAVEL” SPANS THREE LAS VEGAS RESORTS AND BRINGS TOGETHER 5,257 ATTENDEES FROM 98 COUNTRIES

LAS VEGAS (August 9, 2016) – This weekend international luxury travel agency network [Virtuoso®](#) kicked off its Virtuoso Travel Week and, while the event itself has been going 28 years strong, this year marks the 30th anniversary of luxury travel’s premier network. Virtuoso Travel Week – an event akin to Fashion Week where travel buyers seek out the latest in luxury experiences by meeting with thousands of travel purveyors, all network partners – reached new heights this year. With nine percent growth in attendance, a record-breaking 5,257 travel professionals from 98 countries are congregating this week at Bellagio Resort & Casino, ARIA Resort & Casino and Vdara Hotel & Spa in Las Vegas, where they will conduct a staggering number of one-to-one meetings – over 320,000 of them, totaling more than 1.5 million meeting minutes or the equivalent of 2.9 years. The end goal for this global gathering: building relationships that lead to better traveler experiences.

During the event’s Opening Ceremony, Virtuoso Chairman and CEO Matthew D. Upchurch recalled his philosophy that led to the creation of Virtuoso: a firm belief that travel agencies and suppliers need each other to be successful and that Virtuoso’s function is to facilitate by creating tools and services that support each side. Ultimately, though, Virtuoso’s role is about fostering human connections.

“Thirty years ago I brought together Allied Travel and Percival Tours to create a vibrant, resilient global travel network focused not solely on transactions, but on catalyzing rich human experiences,” said Upchurch.

Drawing upon the message shared by the event’s keynote speaker, “Grit to Great” author and head of one of the leading advertising agencies in America Linda Kaplan Thaler, Upchurch spoke about the scenario that is helping propel success for its travel agency members: the desire for authentic human connections in a world plagued with volatility, uncertainty, complexity and ambiguity (VUCA).

Upchurch continued, “In an exponentially changing environment, we don’t offer a rulebook. We believe in principles, not protocols. And we have four guiding principles we believe will anchor our future: ensure success for our agency members, make it personal for both our partners and their clients, pioneer and innovate, and tell the advisor story again and again.”

Virtuoso also took the opportunity to honor some of the standout performers within its network of 391 travel agencies with 743 offices throughout 40 countries, and their 11,400 travel advisors. Joining Upchurch on stage was David Kolner, Virtuoso’s senior vice president of Global Member Partnerships, who announced Virtuoso’s key production awards:

- **Top Virtuoso Network Production:** Protravel International – New York, New York
- **Top Latin America Production:** ITG (International Travel Group) – Mexico City, Mexico
- **Top Australia/New Zealand Production:** Goldman Travel Corporation – Bondi Junction, Australia
- **Top Europe/Asia/Middle East Production:** Colletts Travel – London, United Kingdom

- **Highest Production per Advisor:** Northstar Cruises – Montclair, New Jersey
- **Top Year-Over-Year Growth (Percent):** Judy Perl Worldwide Travel – New York, New York
- **Top Year-Over-Year Growth (Revenue):** Travel Experts, Inc. – Raleigh, North Carolina
- **Virtuoso Network Engagement:** Travelworld of Coronado – Coronado, California
- **Top Virtuoso Air Production:** Travel Experts, Inc. – Raleigh, North Carolina
- **Outstanding Mentoring & Talent Development by an Agency:** Brownell Travel – Birmingham, Alabama
- **Outstanding Customer Service by an Advisor:** Gabrielle Thackray, Wentworth Travel – Sydney, Australia

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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 over 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 www.virtuoso.com.

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