



## **VIRTUOSO® TRAVEL WEEK CELEBRATED ITS 30<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY BY INTRODUCING THE NOTION OF THE “COLLABORATIVE ECONOMY”**

### **LUXURY TRAVEL’S PREEMINENT EVENT SET A NEW RECORD WITH 6,071 ATTENDEES**

**LAS VEGAS (August 29, 2018)** – Recently international luxury travel agency network Virtuoso® held its 30<sup>th</sup> annual Virtuoso Travel Week, luxury travel’s answer to Fashion Week. From August 11 to 17, Virtuoso’s travel advisors, the most successful salesforce in the industry, sought out the latest offerings in luxury experiences by meeting with thousands of the network’s preferred partners. With six percent growth in attendance, a record-breaking 6,071 travel professionals from 100 countries spent a week at Bellagio Resort & Casino, ARIA Resort & Casino and Vdara Hotel & Spa in Las Vegas, where they conducted a staggering number of one-to-one meetings – over 330,000 of them, totaling more than 1.5 million meeting minutes or the equivalent of nearly three years. Building better human connections between Virtuoso’s travel agency members and preferred partners is the cornerstone of this legendary event, with the ultimate goal of creating better travel experiences for clients.

Virtuoso’s Opening Ceremony on Sunday, August 12 marked the event’s official beginning, featuring a keynote address from Virtuoso Chairman and CEO Matthew D. Upchurch, followed by a thought-provoking one-on-one conversation with renowned author Simon Sinek. Drawing upon his upcoming book, *The Infinite Game*, Sinek discussed with Upchurch how to win at a game that never ends.

During his opening presentation, Upchurch introduced a notion that gets at the heart of how the Virtuoso network functions and continues to thrive: the Collaborative Economy.

“Bringing together the people who can satisfy the growing craving for authentic, human connection and experiences elevates the role of a trusted travel advisor because it transforms them into a specialist in the client,” said Upchurch. “It’s about what the client feels on every trip – before, during and after. It’s about how they want to spend their life’s energy, and everything we are doing at Virtuoso is guided by the spirit of collaboration. It is all focused on supporting powerful emotions and creating lasting memories.”

Upchurch spoke of Virtuoso’s powerfully diverse global network, which continues to grow its membership to keep pace with consumer demand. Virtuoso’s ongoing expansion – having announced its 50<sup>th</sup> country with the addition of its newest member in Ecuador – owes its success to the network’s view on creating a highly configurable environment that allows for adaptability on a per market basis.

Virtuoso also honored some of the standout performers within its network of over 1,000 travel agency locations throughout 50 countries, and their 17,500 travel advisors. Joining Upchurch on stage was David Kolner, Virtuoso’s senior vice president of Global Member Partnerships, who announced Virtuoso’s key production and innovation awards:

- **Top Virtuoso Network Production:** Protravel International – New York, New York
- **Top Latin America Production:** Teresa Perez Tours – Sao Paulo, Brazil
- **Top Australia/New Zealand Production:** Goldman Travel Corporation – Bondi Junction, Australia
- **Top Europe/Asia/Middle East Production:** Grand Luxury Group – Paris, France
- **Highest Production per Advisor:** Churchill & Turen, Ltd. – Naperville, Illinois
- **Top Year-Over-Year Growth (Percent):** Savenio – Brisbane, Australia
- **Top Year-Over-Year Growth (Revenue):** Direct Travel – North America
- **Virtuoso Network Engagement:** Cruises Etc. Travel LLC – Fort Worth, Texas
- **Top Virtuoso Air Production:** Travel Experts, Inc. – Raleigh, North Carolina
- **Virtuoso Innovation Award – Best Agency Office:** Sanders Travel Centre – Fort Worth, Texas
- **Virtuoso Innovation Award – Consumer Events:** PIQUE Travel Design – Excelsior, Minnesota
- **Virtuoso Innovation Award – Personnel Empowerment:** Ovation Vacations – New York, New York

To learn more about the Virtuoso network, visit [Virtuoso.com](http://Virtuoso.com). For a visual infographic of Virtuoso Travel Week, click [here](#).

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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 1,000 travel agency partners with 17,500 elite travel advisors in 50 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.) \$23.7 billion in annual travel sales makes Virtuoso a powerhouse in the luxury travel industry. For more information, visit [www.virtuoso.com](http://www.virtuoso.com).

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