



## **VIRTUOSO® TRAVEL WEEK: FOUR GENERATIONS OF TRAVELERS, SALVATORE FERRAGAMO & WHY YOU CAN'T TAKE THE HUMAN OUT OF HUMANITY**

**LAS VEGAS (August 10, 2015)** – This weekend international luxury travel agency network Virtuoso® kicked off its 27<sup>th</sup> annual Virtuoso Travel Week – an event akin to Fashion Week where travel buyers seek out the latest offerings in luxury experiences by meeting with thousands of travel purveyors, all preferred partners of the network. A record-breaking 4,842 travel professionals from 90 countries are congregating this week at the Bellagio Resort & Casino in Las Vegas, where they will conduct a staggering number of one-to-one meetings – over 450,000 of them to be exact – with the end goal of building relationships that lead to better traveler experiences.

During the event's Opening Session, Virtuoso Chairman and CEO Matthew D. Upchurch took the opportunity to welcome the network's newest members, announcing that expansion into Europe, United Arab Emirates, Hong Kong and Singapore now brings its membership count to 373 travel agencies with 698 offices throughout 30 countries, accounting for a total of 9,850 travel advisors. Upchurch went on to speak about the unprecedented scenario that is helping propel the luxury travel industry and sales for its travel agency members: four generations of travel advisors serving four generations of travelers.

Drawing upon the message shared by the event's keynote speaker, "To Sell is Human" author Daniel Pink, Upchurch spoke about the power of its network to its clientele, "True sales is no longer about being the custodian of information. It's about helping clients find clarity amongst the flood of information online."

Commenting on why travel advisors are so well positioned for success in the future, Upchurch continued by saying, "You can't take the *human* out of *humanity*. As technology continues to spread into every facet of life, there is a desire— even a craving – for real human connection."

Upchurch also welcomed special guest Salvatore Ferragamo, CEO of Il Borro in Tuscany, Italy, who delighted the audience with his passion for hospitality, fine wine and delivering authentic experiences for his guests.

Virtuoso also took the opportunity to honor some of the standout performers within the network. 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:** Teresa Perez Tours – São Paulo, Brazil
- **Top Australia/New Zealand Production:** Goldman Travel Corporation – Bondi Junction, Australia
- **Highest Production per Advisor:** Churchill & Turen, Ltd. – Naperville, Illinois
- **Top Year-Over-Year Growth (Percent):** Andavo Travel – Englewood, Colorado
- **Top Year-Over-Year Growth (Revenue):** Travel Experts, Inc. – Raleigh, North Carolina
- **Virtuoso Network Engagement:** Valerie Wilson Travel – New York, New York
- **Top Virtuoso Air Production:** Travel Experts, Inc. – Raleigh, North Carolina

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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 370 agency members with more than 9,800 elite travel advisors in 30 countries throughout North America, Latin America, the Caribbean, Europe, Asia-Pacific 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 (US) \$14 billion in annual travel sales makes Virtuoso a powerhouse in the luxury travel industry. For more information, visit [virtuoso.com](http://virtuoso.com).

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